

***LENOX PUBLIC SCHOOLS
POLICY MANUAL***

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SCHOOL DISTRICT LEGAL STATUS

The legal basis for public education in the district is vested in the will of the people as expressed in the Constitution of Massachusetts and state statutes pertaining to education.

Under the General Laws of Massachusetts,

“...Every town shall maintain...a sufficient number of schools for the instruction of all children who may legally attend a public school therein.”

The public educational system of Lenox structurally is a department of the town operated under laws pertaining to education and under regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education. The area served by the Lenox Public Schools is coterminous with the Town of Lenox.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS.: Constitution of Massachusetts, Part 11, Chapter V, Section 11
M.G.L. 71:1

CROSS REF.: BB, School Committee Legal Status

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR SCHOOL DISTRICT

The School Committee has the dual responsibility for implementing statutory requirements pertaining to public education and local citizens' expectations for the education of the community's youth. It also has an obligation to determine and assess citizens' desires. When citizens elect delegates to represent them in the conduct of public education, their representatives have the authority to exercise their best judgment in determining policies, making decisions, and approving procedures for carrying out the responsibility.

The School Committee therefore affirms and declares its intent to:

1. Maintain two-way communications with citizens of the community. The public will be kept informed of the progress of and challenges facing the school system, and citizens will be urged to bring their aspirations and concerns about their public schools to the attention of this body, which they have chosen to represent them in the management of public education.
2. Establish policies and make decisions on the basis of declared educational philosophy and goals. All decisions made by this Committee will be made with priority given to the purposes set forth, most crucial of which is the optimal learning of the children enrolled in our schools.
3. Act as a representative body for members of the community in matters involving public education. The Committee recognizes that ultimate responsibility for public education rests with the state, but individual School Committees have been assigned specific authority through state law. The Committee will not relinquish any of this authority since it believes that decision-making control over the children's learning should be in the hands of local citizens as much as possible.

NONDISCRIMINATION

The Committee's policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of the town or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. If you have a complaint or believe that you have been discriminated against because of your race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, register your complaint with the Title IX compliance officers:

Mr. Timothy J. Lee, Superintendent, and
Ms. Ellen M. Farris, Director of Student Services.
6 Walker Street, Lenox, MA 01248. (413) 637-5550

This commitment to the community is affirmed in the following statements of School Committee's intent to:

1. Promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
2. Encourage positive experiences in human values for children, youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups.
3. Work toward a more integrated society and to enlist the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
4. Use all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and reduce the grievances of individuals and groups.
5. Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school system, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society.
6. Initiate a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The Committee's policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business. 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, sexual orientation or disability. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, their complaint should be registered with the Title IX compliance officer.

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment
Opportunity Act of 1972
Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. II 375
Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972
Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Education For All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
M.G. L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
M.G.L. 76:5; Amended 2011
M.G.L. 76:16
BESE regulations 603 CMR 26.00, Amended 2012
BESE regulations 603 CMR 28.00

CROSS REFS.: ACA-ACE Subcategories for Nondiscrimination
GBA, Equal Opportunity Employment
JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX

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

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

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

Mr. Timothy J. Lee, Superintendent, and
Ms. Ellen M. Farris, Director of Student Services.
6 Walker Street, Lenox, MA 01248. (413) 637-5550

LEGAL REFS.: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
45 CFR, Part 86, (Federal Register, 6/4/75)
M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)
BESE 603 CMR 2600

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

It is the goal and policy of Lenox Public Schools to promote a workplace and learning environment that is free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment of current or prospective employees, students, or others occurring in the workplace, in school, on school grounds, at school-related activities, or in other settings in which employees or students may find themselves in connection with their employment or education is unlawful and will not be tolerated by this organization. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated, such action being regarded as a separate and distinct matter under this procedure. To achieve our goal of providing a workplace and learning environment free from sexual harassment, the conduct that is described in this policy will not be tolerated and we have provided a procedure by which inappropriate conduct will be dealt with, if encountered by employees, students or others.

Because Lenox Public Schools takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting a workplace and learning environment that is free of sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace or learning environment conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

II. Definition of Sexual Harassment

In Massachusetts, the legal definition for sexual harassment is this: "sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

(a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or success as a student or as a basis for employment or education decisions; or,

(b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work and educational environment.

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

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

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

Unwelcome sexual advances--whether they involve physical touching or not;

Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references, to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life, comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;

Displays of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;

Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;

Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and,

Discussion of one's sexual activities.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

By definition, sexual harassment is not limited to prohibited conduct by a male toward a female, by a supervisory employee toward a non-supervisory employee or by a teacher toward a student. The Lenox Public Schools' view of sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following considerations;

a. A man, as well as a woman, may be the victim of sexual harassment, and a woman, as well as a man, may be the harasser.

b. The harasser does not have to be the victim's supervisor. (S)he may also be an agent of the employer, or supervisory employee who does not supervise the victim, a non-supervisory employee (co-worker), or, in some circumstances, even a non-employee (student, parent, or other).

c. The victim may be the same or opposite sex as the harasser.

d. Sexual harassment includes any verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, which is considered offensive and directed toward another person. For example, inappropriate attempts at humor or the sexual harassment of one female (or male) employee may create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or education environment for another female (or male) or may unreasonably interfere with an individual's work or educational performance.

e. Sexual harassment does not depend on the victim's having suffered concrete economic injury as a result of the harasser's conduct. For example, improper sexual advances, which do not result in the loss of promotion by the victim or the discharge of the victim, may, nonetheless, constitute sexual harassment where they unreasonably interfere with the victim's work or education, or create a harmful or offensive work or educational environment.

All personnel will be responsible for implementing, monitoring and enforcing the above policy. All personnel are to adhere strictly to this policy and report any violations to their appropriate supervisor, or, if that person is the alleged harasser, then to another appropriate management person or the persons identified hereinafter.

III. Complaints of Sexual Harassment

A complaint shall be an accusation by an individual that there has been a violation of the Sexual Harassment Policy. If any of our employees, applicants, or students believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, the employee, applicant, or student has the right to file a complaint with our organization. This may be done verbally or in writing. Those authorized to receive complaints shall in the case of a verbal complaint complete the Lenox Public Schools Sexual Harassment Record of

Contact form to the extent information is obtained from the complainant. Those submitting a written complaint are encouraged to use the Lenox Public Schools Sexual Harassment Report form. All matters involving complaints of sexual harassment will remain confidential to the extent practicable.

Persons who would like to file a complaint may do so by contacting any of the following:

Mr. Timothy J. Lee
Superintendent of Schools
6 Walker Street
Lenox, MA 01240
413-637-5550

Ms. Ellen M. Farris
Director of Student Services
6 Walker Street
Lenox, MA 01240
413-637-5550

These persons are also available to discuss any concerns and to provide information about the Lenox Public Schools' policy on sexual harassment and the complaint process.

IV. Complaint Process

When a complaint is received, the allegation will be promptly investigated in a fair and expeditious manner. At his/her discretion, the Superintendent of Schools shall designate a Complaint Officer to conduct an investigation. The Complaint Officer may be the Superintendent of Schools, the Principal of the Lenox Memorial and High School, the Principal of the Morris Elementary School or other person. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. The investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. The person alleged to have committed the act of sexual harassment will also be interviewed. Such investigation may also consist of, but may not be limited to, interview(s) with other employees or individuals at the discretion of the Complaint Officer, and review of pertinent records. When the investigation is complete, the Complaint Officer will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person(s) filing the complaint and the person(s) alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

The Complaint Officer will attempt to resolve the matter informally through reconciliation.

If the Complaint Officer determines that the allegations are not credible, the matter shall be closed. The school system shall keep the documents, notes and other material from the investigation as a record for an appropriate period of time. The purpose for retaining this record is to enable the school system to prove that an appropriate investigation was conducted and to provide a historical record for use in the event of a subsequent complaint.

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by an employee(s), student(s) or others, action as is appropriate under the circumstances will be taken. Because of the private nature of certain incidents, particularly those involving sexual harassment, and the emotional and moral complexities surrounding such issues, effort will be made to resolve problems on an informal basis. When a complaint is resolved informally, only a short summary of the incident will be maintained on file. An admission of guilt, an acknowledgment of a verbal warning, a promise not to commit such abuse again, and action taken to provide appropriate relief for the individual may be sufficient resolution. At

this informal stage, it is hoped to sensitize the person at fault to the effects of such behavior, to be constructive and not unduly punitive in the disciplinary action. If informal resolutions are not adhered to, or if the allegations involve conduct for which informal resolutions are not appropriate, the Complaint Officer may take action as is appropriate under the circumstances. Such action may range from counseling to termination from employment or expulsion from school, and may include other forms of remediation and disciplinary action as deemed appropriate under the circumstances. Remedial action will depend on the severity of the incidents. If the matter is not informally resolved, the Complaint Officer shall assemble the documents, notes, and other materials from the investigation as well as the Complaint Officer's determination of the complaint and action taken and submit them to the Superintendent of Schools. (If the Superintendent of Schools is the Complaint Officer, he/she shall do the same.) The school system shall keep the same as a record for an appropriate period of time and for submission to the School Committee in the event of an appeal.

V. Appeal

If the complainant(s) or alleged harasser(s) are not satisfied with the result of the investigation or remedial or disciplinary action, he/she/they may appeal for a hearing before the School Committee by filing a written appeal request with the Superintendent of Schools. Upon receiving an appeal request, the Superintendent of Schools will submit the documents, notes and other materials from the investigation as well as the Complaint Officer's determination of the complaint and action taken. The School Committee shall hold a hearing at which hearing the parties, with or without the assistance of legal counsel or other person, present evidence by examining and cross-examining witnesses and presenting other evidence.

After the hearing is completed, the School Committee shall render a written decision. The parties, to the extent permissible by law, shall be informed of the School Committee's decision.

VII. State and Federal Remedies

In addition to the above, an employee(s) or student(s) who believes he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below.

Using the school district's complaint process does not prohibit an employee(s) or student(s) from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim:

(EEOC - 180 days; MCAD – 300 days)

1. The United States Equal Opportunity Commission ("EEOC")
One Congress Street
10th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
617-565-3200
2. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination ("MCAD")
Boston Office
One Ashburton Place
Room 601

Boston, MA 02108
617-727-3990

Springfield Office
436 Dwight Street
Room 220
Springfield, MA 01103
413-739-2145

Legal Ref.: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended 45
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq. (Title IX)
Board of Education 603 CMR 26:00

Revised Policy Adopted: November 7, 2011

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF HANDICAP

Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1992 requires that no qualified individual with a disability shall, because the district's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, and activities of the district or be subject to discrimination. Nor shall the district exclude or otherwise deny services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability of a person with whom the individual is known to have a relationship or association.

Definition

A "qualified individual with a disability" is an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the district.

Reasonable Modification

The district shall make reasonable modification in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the district can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.

Communications

The district shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. To this end, the district shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy benefits of, a service, program, or activity conducted by the district. In determining what type of auxiliary aid or service is necessary, the district shall give primary consideration to the requests of the individuals with disabilities.

Auxiliary Aids and Services

"Auxiliary aids and services" includes (1) qualified interpreters, note takers, transcription services, written materials, assisted listening systems, and other effective methods for making aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments; (2) qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, Braille materials, large print materials, or other effective methods for making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments; (3) acquisition or modification of equipment or devices and (4) other similar services and actions.

Limits of Required Modification

The district is not required to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. Any decision that, in compliance with its responsibility to provide effective communication for individuals with disabilities, would fundamentally alter the service, program, or activity or unduly burden the district shall be made by the School Committee after considering all resources available for use in funding and operating the program, service, or activity. The decision shall be accompanied by a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

In today's society our children are continuously excited by new and challenging stimuli; adaptability to change therefore becomes a paramount objective of learning.

The mastery of basic skills is essential to our children as they prepare to function as responsible individuals. Children must also know how to direct their own learning by mastering the skills of independent inquiry, because circumstances do not enable us to predict with certainty just what today's children will need to know when they become tomorrow's adults. The optimum environment should be sought so that each child can develop physically and emotionally and acquire the information, academic skills, critical judgment, and creativity needed to lead to a better understanding of himself/herself, his/her fellow man, and the world around him/her.

The school system must continually strive to create, implement, and improve programs that are compatible with appropriate curricula and provide opportunities for innovation in teaching and learning. If this is accomplished, children will then come to realize more fully their own potential as individuals and be better prepared to appreciate and act responsibly in the society in which they live.

CROSS REFS.: ADA, School. District Goals and Objectives
 IA, Instructional Goals

SCHOOL DISTRICT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of this school system is to accept responsibility for the development of each child into an adult who can stand confidently, participate fully, learn continually, and contribute meaningfully to society.

Five objectives that contribute to the achievement of this goal, listed without priority in arrangement, define desirable outcomes to be incorporated into plans for the school system.

1. To ensure that each student develops proficiency in basic academic skills
2. To ensure that each student develops the capacity to recognize and cope with the problems of an unknown future
3. To ensure the development of meaningful, interpersonal relationships among students, staff and community
4. To ensure maximum efficiency in the allocation of material resources
5. To ensure maximum efficiency in the allocation of human resources

CROSS REF.: AD, Educational Philosophy

DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS

Policy

It is the policy of the school district that no person may use, possess, sell, or distribute alcohol or other substances, nor may use or possess drug paraphernalia, on school grounds or at school sponsored events, except drugs prescribed by a physician. The terms "alcohol and other substances" will be construed throughout the policy to refer to the use of all substances including, but not limited to: alcohol, inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, PCP, amphetamines, heroin, steroids, look-alikes, and any use of prescription and over-the-counter drugs will also be prohibited.

Additionally, the following persons will be prohibited from entering school grounds or school-sponsored events: any person exhibiting behavior, conduct, or personal and physical characteristics indicative of having used or consumed alcohol or other substances.

The District will endeavor to prevent substances use/abuse through communication, dissemination of information, community awareness, curriculum development, staff development, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), intervention and discipline, as appropriate and needed, and student guidance and assistance programs directed toward individual and group education and intervention.

It is the responsibility of each student or employee to seek assistance through the student guidance and assistance programs or the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) before alcohol and drug problems lead to disciplinary actions. Once a violation of this policy occurs, subsequently using these programs on a voluntary basis will not necessarily lessen disciplinary action and may, in fact, have no bearing on the determination of appropriate disciplinary action.

Exceptions to the Policy

Drugs as prescribed by a physician and as defined by Policy on Student Medication.

Tobacco use is defined and limited by policy on Clean Indoor Act and District student handbooks and Policy on Student Conduct and Discipline.

SMOKING AND TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL PREMISES

Use of any tobacco products or nicotine delivery systems, such as e-cigarettes or other similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization, within the school buildings and school facilities, at school events, or on school grounds or school buses by any individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

A student determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the student discipline code.

This policy shall be promulgated to all staff and students in appropriate handbook(s) and publications.

Signs shall be posted in all school buildings informing the general public of the district policy and requirements of state law.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H

Revised: May 13, 2019

COMMITMENT TO ACCOMPLISHMENT

The Lenox School Committee accepts ultimate responsibility for all facets of school operations. Because it is accountable to residents of the district, the School Committee will maintain a program of accountability consisting of the following elements:

- Clear statements of expectations and purpose as these relate to operations, programs, departments, and positions.
- Provisions for the staff, resources, and support necessary to achieve stated expectations and purposes, subject to financial support by residents of the district.
- Evaluation of operations and instructional and staff development programs to determine how well expectations and purposes are being met.
- Specific performance objectives to enable individuals to direct their own efforts to the goals and objectives of the district.
- Evaluation of the efforts of employees in line with stated objectives, with the first purpose of evaluation being to help each individual make a maximum contribution to the goals of the district.

Every effort will be made by the School Committee and staff to fulfill the responsibilities inherent in the concept of accountability.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS

The Lenox School Committee is responsible to the people for whose benefit the school system has been established. The Committee's current decisions will influence the course of education in our schools for years to come. The Committee and each of its members must look to the future and to the needs of all people more than the average citizen finds necessary. This requires a comprehensive perspective and long-range planning in addition to attention to immediate problems.

The School Committee's primary responsibility is to establish those purposes, programs, and procedures that will best produce the educational achievement needed by our students. The Committee is charged with accomplishing this while also being responsible for wise management of resources available to the school system. The Committee must fulfill these responsibilities by functioning primarily as a legislative body to formulate and adopt policy, by selecting an executive officer to implement policy, and by evaluating the results. It must carry out its functions openly, while seeking the comments of public, students, and staff in its decision-making processes.

In accordance with these principles, the technique will involve:

1. Periodically setting performance objectives for the School Committee itself and evaluating their accomplishment.
2. Setting objectives for performance for each position and function in the system.
3. Allowing the people responsible for carrying out objectives to have a role in setting them.
4. Establish practical and simple goals.
5. Conducting a concrete and periodic review of performance against these goals.

CROSS REF.: ADA, School District Goals and Objectives

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The School Committee will periodically establish realistic objectives related to Committee procedures and relationships. At the end of a specified length of time, the Committee will measure its performance against the stated objectives.

The following areas of School Committee operations and relationships are representative of those in which objectives may be set and progress appraised:

1. Communication with the public
2. School Committee-Superintendent relationships
3. School Committee member development and performance
4. Policy development
5. Educational leadership
6. Fiscal management
7. School Committee meetings
8. Performance of subcommittees of the School Committee
9. Interagency and governmental relationships

When the Committee has completed its self-evaluation, the members will discuss the results in detail and formulate a new series of objectives. At the same time, the Committee will set an approximate date on which the next evaluation will be conducted.

Implied in the concept of evaluation is an assumption that individuals and committees are capable of improvement. The School Committee believes that its performance will be improved if evaluation is carried out systematically in accordance with good planning, conscientious follow-through, and careful assessment of results.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS

State law provides that:

Every town at its annual meeting shall in every year when the term of office of any incumbent expires, and except when other provision is made by law, choose by ballot from its registered voters the following town officers for the following terms of office:

Seven members of the School Committee for terms of three years ...

The School Committee is the governing board of the town's public school system. Although its functions as a duly elected Committee of town government, the School Committee has, unlike other town boards, autonomous and absolute authority within limitations established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to carry out the educational policies of the state and guide the educational process.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L 41:1 and 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the General Laws of Massachusetts Relating to School Committees

CROSS REFS.: AA, School District Legal Status
BBA, School Committee Powers and Duties

REF: By-laws of Town of Lenox, Ch. 3, Sec. 5

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

The School Committee has all the powers conferred upon it by state law and must perform those duties mandated by the state. These include the responsibility and right to determine policies and practices and to employ a staff to implement its directions for the proper education of the children of the community.

The Committee takes a broad view of its functions. It sees them as:

1. Legislative or policymaking. The Committee is responsible for the development of policy as guides for administrative action and for employing a Superintendent who will implement its policies.
2. Appraisal. The Committee is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of its policies and their implementation.
3. Provision of financial resources. The Committee is responsible for adoption of a budget that will enable the school system to carry out the Committee's policies.
4. Public relations. The Committee is responsible for providing adequate and direct means for keeping the local citizenry informed about the schools and for keeping itself and the school staff informed about the needs and wishes of the public.
5. Educational planning and evaluation. The Committee is responsible for establishing educational goals and policies that will guide the Committee and staff for the administration and continuing improvement of the educational programs provided by the school district.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the Massachusetts General Laws.

CROSS REF.: BB, School Committee Legal Status

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY

Authority

Because all powers of the School Committee derived from state laws are granted in terms of action as a group, members of the School Committee have authority only when acting as a Committee legally in session.

The School Committee will not be bound in any way by any statement or action on the part of an individual member except when such statement or action is a result of specific instructions of the Committee.

No member of the Committee, by virtue of his/her office, will exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or command the services of any school employee.

The School Committee will function as a body and all policy decisions and other matters, as required by law, will be settled by an official vote of the Committee sitting in formal session.

Duties

The duties and obligations of the individual Committee-member may be enumerated as follows:

1. To become familiar with the General Laws of the Commonwealth relating to education and School Committee operations, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, policies and procedures of this School Committee and School Department.
2. To keep abreast of new laws and the latest trends in education.
3. To have a general knowledge of the goals, objectives, and programs of the town's public schools.
4. To work effectively with other Committee members without trying either to dominate the Committee or neglect his/her share of the work.
5. To respect the privileged communication that exists in executive sessions by maintaining strict confidentiality on matters discussed in these sessions, except that which becomes part of the public record, once it has been approved for release.
6. To vote and act in Committee impartially for the good of the students.
7. To accept the will of the majority vote in all cases, and to remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.

8. To represent the Committee and the schools to the public in a way that promotes interest and support.
9. To refer questions and complaints to the proper school authorities.
10. To comply with the accepted code of ethics for School Committee members.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE/SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

School Committee members (either acting as the School Committee or Subcommittee) represent the public and are entitled to district information regarding district performance that will assist them in governance. All Committee member requests for documents or information should be made directly to the superintendent.

Documents subject to the state public records law will be provided, as they are provided to all citizens under State Law. Should requests be for information that already exists or data that can be easily gathered and analyzed (provided the request is not for privileged management information, as outlined below), the superintendent will, in a timely manner, provide the information in its most accessible format, with copies to all Committee/Subcommittee members.

Should the information not exist or be difficult to obtain, and should the superintendent determine that the value of the information to the district be insufficient to justify the time/cost of obtaining it, he or she shall bring the request to the School Committee, with an estimate of the time/cost of responding to it. By School Committee action, the Committee will direct the superintendent to provide, or not provide, the requested information.

By this policy, the Committee/Subcommittee wishes to distinguish between district information and privileged management information. District information is normally data based on numerical measures of results, district operations or practice patterns. Documents or other management information relating to individuals, contracts, meetings, events or any ongoing management process are privileged management information and not within the purview of the Committee/Subcommittee, unless the information is subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act, or the School Committee has the right to the information based upon the required functions of the School Committee as provided in State Law and regulations.

Revised 11-4-2013

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE

In order to serve on the School Committee, an individual must be a registered voter in the town from which he/she is elected or appointed and must take an oath of office as required by law.

Each new member will present to the Committee secretary official certification of having sworn the oath before an officer duly qualified to administer oaths prior to entering on his/her official duties as a member of the Committee. From the Town Clerk, newly qualified Committee members, by law, receive, and sign a receipt for, a copy of the Massachusetts open meeting law governing the conduct of Committee meetings in general and executive sessions in particular.

Membership on a School Committee is not limited by race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 39:23B; 41:1; 41:107
 M.G.L. 76:5 Amended 1993

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION

An existing School Committee member who submits his/her resignation to the appropriate certifying authority terminates his/her duties at the time of their resignation unless he/she states in that resignation a specific time at which the resignation will take effect.

Should a School Committee member move out of the town, he/she shall be deemed to have vacated his/her office.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:2; 41:109

UNEXPIRED TERM FULFILLMENT

When a vacancy on the School Committee occurs for any reason, the board of selectmen and the remaining members of the Committee share the responsibility for filling it.

As provided in the law, the School Committee will notify the selectmen that a vacancy has been created within 30 days after it has occurred. After one week's notice has been given by the Committee to the selectmen, so that voters of the town may have the opportunity to state their candidacy, the two governing bodies will meet to fill the vacancy by roll call vote.

For election to fill a vacancy, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes of the officers entitled to vote. The person so elected will fill the seat on the Committee until the next town election, at which time a member will be elected to serve the remainder of the term, if any.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 41:11

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS
(Massachusetts Association of School Committees Code of Ethics)

Preamble

The acceptance of a code of ethics implies the understanding of the basic organization of School Committees under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The oath of office of a School Committee member binds the individual member to adherence to those state laws which apply to School Committees, since School Committees are agencies of the state.

This code of ethics delineates three areas of responsibility of School Committee members in addition to that implied above:

1. Community responsibility
2. Responsibility to school administration
3. Relationships to fellow Committee members.

School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her community should:

1. Realize that his/her primary responsibility is to the children
2. Recognize that his/her basic function is to be policy making and not administrative
3. Remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made
4. Be well informed concerning the duties of a Committee member on both a local and state level
5. Remember that he/she represents the entire community at all times.
6. Accept the office as a Committee member as means of unselfish service with no intent to "play politics," in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from his/her Committee activities

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her school administration should:

1. Endeavor to establish sound, clearly defined policies which will direct and support the administration
2. Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration
3. Give the chief administrator full responsibility for discharging his/her professional duties and hold him/her responsible for acceptable results
4. Refer all complaints to the administrative staff for solution and only discuss them at Committee meetings if such solutions fail

A School Committee in his/her relations with his/her fellow Committee members should:

1. Recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that he/she alone cannot bind the Committee outside of such meetings
2. Realize that he/she should not make statements or promises of how he/she will vote on matters that will come before the Committee
3. Uphold the intent of executive sessions and respect the privileged communications that exists in executive sessions.
4. Not withhold pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems, either from members of his/her own Committee or from members of other committees who may be seeking help or information on school problems
5. Make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

For the purpose of organizing, the School Committee, at its first regular meeting following the town's annual elections, will elect from its membership a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and a secretary, all of whom will hold their respective offices for a term of one year or until a successor is elected.

A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum. The election will proceed as follows:

1. The Superintendent will serve as temporary Chairperson and will conduct the election process for the Chairperson. Once a Chairperson is elected, the Superintendent will step down.
2. Nominations for the office of Chairperson will be made from the floor. The Chairperson will be elected by a majority roll-call vote of the members present and voting. If no nominee receives a majority vote, the election will be declared null and void and nominations will be reopened.
3. Upon election, the new Chairperson will preside, calling for the election of a vice-chairperson and secretary, in order. The procedure used for their election will be the same as that for electing the chairperson.

Any vacancy among the officers occurring between organizational meetings will be filled by a member elected by the School Committee. The election will be conducted as described above.

Following election of officers at its organizational meeting, the School Committee may proceed into such regular or special business as scheduled on the agenda.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Duties of the Chairperson

The Chairperson of the School Committee has the same powers as any other member of the Committee to vote upon all measures coming before it, to offer resolutions and to discuss questions. He/she will perform those duties that are consistent with his/her office and those required by law, state regulations, and this Committee. In carrying out these responsibilities, the chairperson will:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Committee
2. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Committee's agendas
3. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between Committee meetings
4. Appoint subcommittees, subject to Committee approval
5. Call special meetings of the Committee as found necessary
6. Be public spokesman for the Committee at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others
7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Committee meetings.

As presiding officer at all meetings of the Committee, the Chairperson will:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time
2. Announce the business to come before the Committee in its proper order
3. Enforce the Committee's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of meetings
4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference
5. Explain what the effect of a motion would be if this is not clear to members
6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Committee
7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries
8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof

Duties of the Vice-Chairperson

The Vice-Chairperson of the Committee will act in the absence of the Chairperson as presiding officer of the Committee and will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to him/her.

Secretary

The secretary will keep or cause to be kept an accurate journal of all Committee meetings; will comply with state law and Committee policy regarding notification of meetings; and will render such reports as may be required by the state or the town.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:36

Note: The treasurer of the town serves as treasurer of the School Committee.

APPOINTED COMMITTEE OFFICIALS

The Superintendent shall be elected by the Committee as provided by law and shall serve as secretary and perform all the duties that are prescribed by law and such other duties, not inconsistent there to, as majority of the Committee may direct.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP

The Committee will leave to the Superintendent all matters of decision and administration that come within his/her scope as executive officer or as professional leader of the school system. While the Committee reserves to itself the ultimate decision of all matters concerning general policy or expenditures of funds, it will normally proceed in these areas after receiving recommendations from its executive officer. Further:

1. The Superintendent will have the privilege of asking guidance from the Committee with respect to matters of operation whenever appropriate. If it is necessary to make exceptions to an established policy, he/she will submit the matter to the Committee for advice and direction.
2. The Superintendent will assist the Committee in reaching sound judgments and establishing policies, and will place before the Committee all relevant facts, information, and reports necessary to keep the Committee adequately informed of situations or business at hand.

SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The School Committee will have such standing committees and special subcommittees as it may establish from time to time at its annual organizational meeting or as deemed necessary. These subcommittees may be created for a specific purpose and to make recommendations for Committee action.

1. The subcommittee will be established through action of the Committee.
2. The subcommittee chairperson and its members will be appointed by the Committee chairperson, subject to approval by the Committee.
3. The subcommittee will be provided with a list of its functions and duties.
4. The subcommittee may make recommendations for Committee action, but it may not act for the School Committee.
5. The Committee chairperson and Superintendent will be ex-officio members of all special subcommittees.
6. A subcommittee will be dissolved by the Committee upon completion of its assignment, or it may be dissolved by a vote of the Committee at any time.

CROSS REF.: BEC, Executive Sessions

ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The following general policies will govern the appointment and functioning of advisory committees to the School Committee other than the student advisory committee, which is governed by the terms of the Massachusetts General Laws.

1. Advisory committees may be created by the School Committee to serve as task forces for special purposes or to provide continuing consultation in a particular area of activity. However, there will be no standing overall advisory committee to the School Committee.
2. If an advisory committee is required by state or federal law, its composition and appointment will meet all the guidelines established for that particular type of committee.
3. The composition of task forces and any other advisory committees will be broadly representative and take into consideration the specific tasks assigned to the committee. Members of the district staff may be appointed to the committee as members or consultants, as found desirable.
4. Appointments to such advisory committees will be made by the School Committee; appointment of staff members to such committees will be made by the Committee upon recommendation of the Superintendent.
5. Tenure of committee members will be one year only unless the member is reappointed.
6. Each committee will be clearly instructed as to:
 - a. The length of time each member is being asked to serve.
 - b. The assignment the School Committee wishes the committee to fulfill and the extent and limitations of its responsibilities.
 - c. The resources the School Committee will provide.
 - d. The approximate dates on which the School Committee wishes to receive major reports.
 - e. School Committee policies governing citizens, committees and the relationship of these committees to the School Committee as a whole, individual School Committee members, the Superintendent, and other members of the professional staff.
 - f. Responsibilities for the release of information to the press.
7. Recommendations of committees will be based upon research and fact.

8. The School Committee possesses certain legal powers and prerogatives that cannot be delegated or surrendered to others. Therefore, all recommendations of an advisory committee must be submitted to the School Committee.

The Committee will have the sole power to dissolve any of its advisory committees and will reserve the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any committee.

CROSS REF.: JIB, Student Involvement in Decision-making

SCHOOL COUNCILS

The School Committee believes that the school is the key unit for educational improvement and change and that successful school improvement is best accomplished through a school-based decision-making process. By involving those directly affected by any action or decision of the school council in the process of determining that action or decision, it helps to strengthen the commitment to those decisions by those most affected by its implementation.

Under this policy, the Principal shall have primary responsibility for the management of the school. Decisions which are made at the school level must be aligned with the budget, policies, curriculum, and long-range and short-range goals adopted by the School Committee. In addition, decisions must comply with any state and federal laws and regulations and with any negotiated agreements of the school district.

As enacted by the state legislature in the Education Reform Act of 1993, a school council shall be established in each school to advise the Principal in specific areas of school operation. The Principal, except as specifically defined in the law, shall have the responsibility for defining the composition of and forming the group pursuant to a representative process approved by the Superintendent and School Committee.

The following guidelines define the role of the school council:

The School Council shall meet regularly with the Principal of the school and shall assist in:

1. Adoption of educational goals for the school that are consistent with state and local policies and standards.
2. Identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school.
3. Review of the school building budget.
4. Formulation of a school improvement plan that may be implemented only after review and approval by the School Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:38Q, 71:59C

SCHOOL ATTORNEY

The School Committee may use the services provided by the town counsel. The Committee and the Superintendent may seek his/her services to counsel and represent the school system at various times.

However, because the complexity of school department operations often requires specialized legal services, the Committee may also retain an attorney or law firm to provide additional legal services.

It will be the duty of the counsel for the Committee to advise the School Committee and the Superintendent on the specific legal problems submitted to him. He/she will attend meetings upon request and will be sufficiently familiar with Committee policies, practices, and actions under these policies, and with requirements of the school law to enable him/her to offer the necessary legal advice.

A decision to seek legal advice or assistance on behalf of the school system will be made by the Committee. **Members of the School Committee shall notify the Chairperson of the Committee to access the school department legal counsel.** The Superintendent may also take such action at the direction of the Committee.

Many types of legal assistance are routine and do not require specific Committee approval or prior notice. However, when the Superintendent concludes that unusual types or amounts of professional legal service may be required, he/she will advise the Committee and seek either initial or continuing authorization for such service.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37E: 71:37F

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The School Committee will transact all business at official meetings of the Committee. These may be either regular or special meetings, defined as follows:

1. Regular meeting: the usual official legal action meeting, held regularly
2. Special meeting: an official legal action meeting called between scheduled regular meetings to consider specific topics.

Every meeting of the School Committee, regular or special, will be open to the public unless an executive session is held in accordance with state law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 39:23A; 39:23B; 39:23C

CROSS REFS.: BEC, Executive Sessions
BEDA, Notification of School Committee Meetings

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

All meetings of the School Committee are open to attendance by the public and media representatives. However, the Committee has the right to convene in a closed executive session when it meets the following procedural conditions imposed by state law:

1. The Committee will first convene in an open session for which due notice has been given.
2. The Chairperson (or, in his/her absence, the presiding member) will state the purpose for the executive session by stating all subjects that may be revealed without compromising the purpose for which the executive session was called.
3. A majority of the members must vote to enter the executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.
4. The Chairperson or presiding member will state before entering the executive session whether the Committee will reconvene in open session after the executive session.

The law puts specific limitations on the purposes for which executive sessions may be convened. The Committee may enter executive sessions only to deliberate:

1. The reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than the professional competence, of a single individual.
2. The discipline or dismissal, including the hearing of charges against, a member of the Committee, a school department employee or student, or other individual. **The** individual has certain rights enumerated in the law including requiring the Committee to hold an open session should the individual so request.
3. Strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect. Collective bargaining may also be conducted.
4. The deployment of security personnel or devices.
5. Allegations of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints.
6. Transactions of real estate, if an open meeting might be detrimental to the negotiating position of the Committee or another party.
7. To comply with the provisions of any general or specific law of federal grant-in-aid requirements.
8. And to consider and interview applicants for employment (The only position that the School Committee would be involved in that might qualify would be for the position of Superintendent). This exemption only applies if it can be determined that an open meeting will have a detrimental affect in obtaining qualified applicants.
9. To meet or confer with a mediator with respect to any litigation or public business.
10. To discuss trade secrets or confidential competitively-sensitive or other proprietary

information conducted by a governmental body as an energy supplier.

(In the first two cases listed, an open meeting will be held if the individual involved so requests.)

Accurate records of the proceedings conducted in executive session will be kept and may remain secret only so long as their publication would defeat the purpose of the session. The School Committee chair and the Superintendent will review executive session minutes for possible declassification at least quarterly each year and, if necessary, will consult with legal counsel. The School Committee Chair will bring minutes recommended for declassification to the School Committee for a vote either as part of a consent agenda or for individual action. In either case, there shall be an announcement of the declassification of minutes.

When a specific set of executive session minutes, not yet declassified, is requested by a member of the public, the School Committee shall render a decision on declassification at its next meeting or within 30 days after the request, whichever occurs first.

All votes taken in executive session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions.

Established by law and Committee policy

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:21; 30A:22

CROSS REFS.: BDE, Subcommittee of the School Committee
BE, School Committee Meetings
KEB, Public Complaints about School Personnel

NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

As required by law, a minimum of 48 hours' advance notice will be given for any meeting of the School Committee, including all subcommittee meetings. The only exception permitted is in case of emergency, which the law defines as "a sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate action."

Notification of the dates, times, and places of regular meetings will be accomplished by periodic publication of the schedule for the ensuing months. Notification of a change in a regular meeting time or place and notification of a special meeting will be filed with the town clerk at least 48 hours in advance, as required by law.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 39:23A; 39:23B

CROSS REF.: BE, School Committee Meetings

AGENDA FORMAT

The Superintendent, conferring with the chairperson of the School Committee, will arrange the order of items on meetings agendas so that the Committee can accomplish its business as expeditiously as possible. The particular order may vary from meeting to meeting in keeping with the business at hand.

The Committee will follow the order of business established by the agenda except as it votes to rearrange the order for the convenience of visitors, individuals appearing before the Committee, or to expedite Committee business.

Items of business may be suggested by any School Committee member, staff member, or citizen. The inclusion of such items, however, will be at the discretion of the chairperson of the Committee. A staff member who wishes to have a topic scheduled on the agenda should submit the request through the Superintendent.

The agenda will also provide for time when any citizen who wishes may speak briefly before the School Committee.

The agenda, together with supporting materials, will be distributed to School Committee members three days prior to the meeting to permit adequate time to prepare for the meeting.

Agendas will be posted and made available to the press.

RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised will govern the proceedings of the Committee, except when those rules are in conflict with the Committee's approved policies and regulations.

In accordance with *Robert's Rules*, the Committee may suspend parliamentary rules of order by a two-thirds vote.

VOTING METHOD

Except on procedural matters, votes on all motions and resolutions shall be by “ayes” and “nays.” The ayes and nays will be recorded in the minutes. If the vote is unanimous only that fact need be recorded. No secret ballots shall be used. At the discretion of the Chairperson or on the request of a member, a show of hands vote shall be made and this vote shall be recorded. On a voice vote, any member may request his vote to be recorded.

All actions will require a majority vote of all members present and voting except as state law, *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, or policies of this Committee require a larger majority. A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum.

A two-thirds vote will be required to suspend parliamentary rules of order.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 39:23B; 71:42; 71:50

MINUTES

The minutes of a School Committee meeting constitute the written record of Committee actions; they are legal evidence of what the action was. Therefore, the secretary of the School Committee will be responsible for reporting in the minutes all actions taken by the Committee.

Minutes will include:

1. A statement on the nature of the meeting (regular or special), the time, the place, and the approval of the last regular and each subsequent special meeting.
2. Names of the members present or absent, annotated as to arrival and departure times, if during the meeting.
3. A complete record of official actions taken by the Committee relative to the Superintendent's recommendations, to communications, and to all business transacted. Resolutions and motions will be given in their exact wording, accompanied by the names of members moving and seconding and a record of the results of the vote. Reports and documents relating to a formal motion may be omitted if they are referred to and identified by title and date.
4. Notation of formal adjournment.

Copies of the minutes will be sent to all Committee members at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting at which the minutes are to be approved.

The approved minutes will become permanent records of the Committee. Minutes of public meetings and minutes of executive sessions that have been declassified will be in the custody of the Superintendent who will make them available to interested citizens upon request.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 39:23B; 66:10

CROSS REF.: KDB, Public Right To Know

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All regular and special meetings of the School Committee shall be open to the public. Executive sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The School Committee desires citizens of the district to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of our local public schools. In addition, the Committee would like the opportunity to hear the concerns and ideas of the public.

In order that all citizens who wish to be heard before the Committee have a chance and to insure the ability of the Committee to conduct the district's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. At the start of each regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, individuals or group representatives will be invited to address the Committee. The length of the public participation segment shall be determined by the Chairperson.
2. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material. The presiding Chairperson may permit extension of this time limit.
3. Improper conduct and remarks will not be allowed. Defamatory or abusive remarks are always out of order. If a speaker persists in improper conduct or remarks, the Chairperson may terminate that individual's privilege of address.
4. All remarks will be addressed through the Chairperson of the meeting.
5. Speakers may offer such objective criticisms of the school operations and programs as concern them, but in public session the Committee will not hear personal complaints of school personnel nor against any member of the school community. Under most circumstances, administrative channels are the proper means for disposition of legitimate complaints involving staff members.
6. Comments longer than three (3) minutes may be presented in writing to the Committee before or after the meeting for the Committee members' review and consideration at an appropriate time.

SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS

In conducting all public hearings required by law, and others as it deems advisable, the School Committee will:

1. Give due and public notice in line with statutory requirements and seek to publicize the meeting in all local media.
2. Make available printed information on the topic of the hearing.
3. Give all persons an equal opportunity to be heard in accordance with the Committee's policy. The Chairperson of the Committee will preside at the hearing.

The public will be informed at the beginning of the hearing the particular procedure that will be followed in regard to questions, remarks, rebuttals, and any time limitations or other rules that must be followed to give everyone an opportunity to be heard.

In conformance with customary hearing procedures, statements and supporting information will be presented first by the Committee, or by others for the Committee; to comment, citizens must be recognized by the Chairperson, and all remarks must be addressed to the Chairperson and be germane to the topic. To assure, that all who wish get a chance to speak, the Chairperson will recognize persons who have not commented previously during the hearing before recognizing persons who wish to remark a second time.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The School Committee will develop policies and put them in writing so that they may serve as guides for the discretionary action of those to whom it delegates authority.

The formulation and adoption of these written policies will constitute the basic method by which the School Committee will exercise its leadership in providing for the successful and efficient functioning of the school system. Through the study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its policies, the School Committee will exercise its control over school operation.

The School Committee accepts the definition of policy set forth by the National School Boards Association:

Policies are principles adopted by a School Committee to chart a course of action. They tell what is wanted; they may include why and how much. Policies should be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be followed by the administration in meeting day-to-day problems, yet be specific enough to give clear guidance.

The policies of the School Committee are framed, and are meant to be interpreted, in terms of state law, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and other regulatory agencies of the various levels of government.

POLICY ADOPTION

Adoption of new policies or changing existing policies is solely the responsibility of the School Committee. Policies will be adopted and/or amended only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the School Committee when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting.

To permit time for study of all policies or amendments to policies and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to react, proposed policies or amendments will be presented as an agenda item to the Committee in the following sequence:

1. Information item: distribution with agenda
2. Discussion item: first reading of proposed policy or policies; response from Superintendent; report from any advisory committee assigned responsibility in the area; Committee discussion and directions for any redrafting
3. Action item: discussion, adoption or rejection.

Amendments to the policy at the action stage will not require repetition of the sequence, unless the Committee so directs.

The School Committee may dispense with the above sequence to meet emergency conditions.

Policies will be effective upon the date set by the School Committee. This date will ensure that affected persons have an opportunity to become familiar with the requirements of the new policy prior to its implementation.

POLICY REVISION AND REVIEW

In an effort to keep its written policies up to date so that they can be used consistently as a basis for School Committee action and administrative decision, the Committee will review its policies on a regular basis.

The Committee will evaluate how the policies have been executed by the school staff and will weigh the results. It will rely on the school staff, students, and the community for providing evidence of the effect of the policies it has adopted.

The Superintendent is given the continuing commission of calling to the Committee's attention all policies that are out of date or for other reason appear to need revision.

The School Committee directs the Superintendent to periodically recall all policy and regulations manuals for administrative updating and Committee review.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROCEDURES OR REGULATIONS

It is expected that the Superintendent and administrative staff will need to issue regulations implementing policies of the School Committee. Many of these will be routine from year to year; others will arise in special circumstances; some will be drawn up under specific directions from the Committee.

The Committee may review the regulations developed by the Superintendent for the school system whenever they appear inconsistent with policy, goals, or objectives of the district, but it will revise or veto such regulations only when, in the Committee's judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the Committee.

The Committee will not officially approve regulations except as required by state law or in cases when strong community attitudes, or possible student or staff reaction, make it necessary or advisable for a regulation to have the Committee's advance approval.

Rules Pertaining to Staff and Student Conduct

Under Massachusetts law, the Superintendent is required to publish "rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students which have been adopted." Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes shall be filed with the Department of Education for information purposes only. Standards of conduct will be included in staff and student handbooks. These handbooks will be reviewed and approved annually by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37H

POLICY DISSEMINATION

The Superintendent is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies adopted by the Committee and the regulations needed to put them into effect.

Accessibility is to extend at least to all employees of the school system, to members of the Committee, and, insofar as conveniently possible, to all persons in the community. A policy concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to those groups prior to the policy's effective date.

All policy manuals distributed to anyone will remain the property of the Committee and will be considered as "on loan" to anyone, or any organization, in whose possession they might be at any time. They are subject to recall at any time deemed necessary for purposes of updating.

The School Committee's policy manual will be considered a public record and will be available for inspection at the Superintendent's office.

SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

The operation of any section or sections of School Committee policies not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a two-thirds vote of Committee members present at any regular or special meeting. Any action to suspend policy must be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting and will be so noted on the agenda for that meeting.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The School Committee wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Superintendent.

Staff Communications to the School Committee

All communications or reports to the Committee or any of its subcommittees from Principals, supervisors, teachers, or other staff members will be submitted through the Superintendent. This procedure does not deny the right of any employee to appeal to the Committee from administrative decisions on important matters, except those matters that are outside of the Committee's legal authority, provided the Superintendent has been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Committee's policy on complaints and grievances. Staff members are also reminded that Committee meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe firsthand the Committee's deliberations on problems of staff concern.

School Committee Communications to Staff

All official communications, policies, directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent. The Superintendent will develop appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the Committee's problems, concerns and actions.

Visits to Schools

Individual School Committee members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will inform the Superintendent of such visits and make arrangements for visitations through the Principals of the various schools. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Committee members will be carried on only under Committee authorization.

USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As elected public officials, School Committee members shall exercise caution when communicating between and among themselves via electronic messaging services including, but not limited to, electronic mail (e-mail), Internet web forums, and Internet chat rooms.

Under the Open Meeting Law, deliberation by a quorum of members constitutes a meeting. Deliberation is defined as movement toward a decision including, but not limited to, the sharing of an opinion regarding business over which the Committee has supervision, control, or jurisdiction. A quorum may be arrived at sequentially using electronic messaging without knowledge and intent by the author.

School Committee members should use electronic messaging between and among members only for housekeeping purposes such as requesting or communicating agenda items, meeting times, or meeting dates. Electronic messaging should not be used to discuss Committee matters that require public discussion under the Open Meeting Law.

Under the Public Records Law, electronic messages between public officials may be considered public records. Therefore, in order to ensure compliance, the School Committee chairperson, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, shall annually designate a member of the central office staff who shall be copied on all electronic correspondence between and among members of the School Committee. These copies shall be printed and retained in the central office in the same fashion as any other School Committee records. School Committee members who do not have a computer or access to these messages shall be provided copies on a timely basis.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 4:7; 39:23A, 23B; 66:10

NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

The School Committee and Superintendent shall assist each new member to understand the Committee's functions, policies and procedures of the Committee as soon after election as possible. All new members shall receive copies of all agendas, reports, and other communications received by Committee members. Each new member shall be given the following materials:

- A. A copy of the School Committee policy manual (to be returned upon leaving the Committee)
- B. A copy of the Open Meeting Law
- C. A copy of the Conflict of Interest Regulations
- D. A copy of the District's budget
- E. Collective bargaining agreements and contracts
- F. Student and staff handbooks
- G. NSBA Policy Guide

Each new member shall also receive any other materials the chairperson and/or the Superintendent determines to be necessary. The Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc. shall furnish a copy of the latest Massachusetts General Laws relating to education.

The chairperson and/or Superintendent shall also clarify policy:

- A. arranging visits to schools or administrative offices
- B. requesting information regarding school district operations
- C. responding to community requests/complaints concerning staff or programs
- D. handling confidential information

In districts where members are appointed as well as elected, prior to assuming their official duties (i.e. cities) they may be invited to attend all meetings of the Committee with the exception of executive sessions.

Whether appointed or elected, new members should be advised that they are also members of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc. and should be encouraged to utilize the services and resources MASC provide by attending meetings or workshops specifically designed for new Committee members. Their expenses at these meetings or workshops will be reimbursed in accordance with established Committee policy.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, AND WORKSHOPS

To provide continuing in-service training and development for its members, the School Committee encourages the participation of all members at appropriate School Committee conferences, workshops and conventions. However, in order to control both the investment of time and funds necessary to implement this policy, the Committee establishes these principles and procedures for its guidance:

1. A calendar of School Committee conferences, conventions and workshops will be maintained by the Committee secretary. The Committee will periodically decide which meetings appear to be most promising in terms of producing direct and indirect benefits to the school system. At least annually, the Committee will identify those new ideas or procedures and/or cost benefits that can be ascribed to participation at such meetings.
2. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted for on an annual basis. When funds are limited, the Committee will designate which of its members would be the most appropriate to participate at a given meeting.
3. Reimbursement to Committee members for their travel expenses will accord with the travel expense policy for staff members.
4. When a conference, conventions or workshop is not attended by the full Committee, those who do participate will be requested to share information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES

The School Committee shall serve without compensation, except that a member of a School Committee may be compensated for his/her services by a majority vote at a town meeting. No member of the School Committee in any town shall be eligible to the position of teacher or Superintendent of Schools therein.

Upon submitting vouchers and supporting bills for expenses incurred in carrying out specific services previously authorized by the Committee, members may be reimbursed from school funds.

Reimbursable expenses may include the cost of attendance at conferences of School Committee associations and other professional meetings or visitations when such attendance and expense payment has had prior School Committee approval.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 71:52

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

The Committee may maintain memberships in the national, state and regional school committee (board) associations and take an active part in the activities of these groups.

It may also maintain institutional memberships in other educational organizations, which the executive officer and Committee find to be of benefit to members and personnel.

The materials and benefits of institutional memberships will be distributed and used to the best advantage of the Committee and the staff.

ADMINISTRATION GOALS

It is the intent of the School Committee that the district employ qualified personnel to administer the school system efficiently and to require the Superintendent to organize the administration in a manner that will make clear the functions of each position and the relationships among them.

The Superintendent will establish clear lines of communication, both vertically and horizontally, and will form any staff councils or committees needed to provide for efficient conduct of school business. In order to engage in this process in an orderly and effective fashion, each individual and group will be given clearly defined responsibilities. Channels will be established so that the recommendations and decisions of each group can be heard and reviewed by the administrator concerned, and, where appropriate, by the Superintendent and School Committee.

The organization and administration of the schools will balance responsibility with commensurate authority, subject to the reserved legal powers of the School Committee. This means that a staff member, when assigned a responsibility or a position, will be given the authority to make the decisions necessary to perform the assigned tasks.

For the schools to operate effectively, each administrative officer will be responsible and accountable for making a plan of development for all staff assigned to his/her area of operation.

SUPERINTENDENT'S CONTRACT

The Committee, upon the election of a candidate or upon reelection of the incumbent Superintendent will enter into a written contract with the Superintendent, which will meet the requirements of law and will protect the rights of both the Committee and the Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:41; 71:42

EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Through evaluation of the Superintendent, the School Committee will strive to accomplish the following:

1. Clarify for the Superintendent his/her role in the school system as seen by the School Committee.
2. Clarify for all Committee members the role of the Superintendent in light of his/her job description and the immediate priorities among his/her responsibilities as agreed upon by the Committee and the Superintendent.
3. Develop harmonious working relationships between the School Committee and Superintendent.
4. Provide administrative leadership of excellence for the school system.

The School Committee will periodically develop with the Superintendent a set of performance objectives based on the needs of the school system. The Superintendent's performance will be reviewed in accordance with these specified goals. Additional objectives will be established at intervals agreed upon with the Superintendent.

LINE AND STAFF RELATIONS

The School Committee expects the Superintendent to establish clear understandings on the part of all personnel of the working relationships in the school system.

Personnel will be expected to refer matters requiring administrative action to the administrator to whom they are responsible. The administrator will refer such matters to the next higher administrative authority when necessary.

Additionally, lines of authority do not restrict in any way the cooperative, sensible working together of all staff members at all levels in order to develop the best possible school programs and services. The established lines of authority represent direction of authority and responsibility; when the staff is working together, the lines represent avenues for a two-way flow of ideas to improve the program and operations of the school system.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCILS, CABINETS, AND COMMITTEES

The Superintendent may establish such permanent or temporary councils, cabinets, and committees as he/she deems necessary for assuring staff participation in decision making, for implementing policies and regulations and for the improvement of the educational program.

Functioning in an advisory capacity all councils, cabinets, and committees created by the Superintendent may make recommendations for submission to the Committee through the Superintendent. Such groups will exercise no inherent authority. Authority for establishing policy remains with the Committee and authority for implementing policy remains with the Superintendent.

The membership, composition, and responsibilities of administrative councils, cabinets, and committees will be defined by the Superintendent and may be changed at his/her discretion. However, the School Committee wishes to be kept informed of the establishment and dissolution of these groups as well as their membership and their purpose.

Expenses incurred by such groups for consultative services, materials, and any investigative travel will be paid by the school system, but only within budgetary allotments and when approved in advance by the Superintendent.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Superintendent has responsibility for carrying out, through regulations, the policies established by the School Committee.

The policies developed by the Committee and the regulations developed to implement policy are designed to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the school system. Consequently, it is expected that all School Committee employees and students will carry them out.

Administrators and supervisors are responsible for informing staff members in their schools, departments, or divisions of existing policies and regulations and for seeing that they are implemented.

DEVELOPMENT OF REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

The Superintendent will be responsible for specifying required actions and designing the detailed arrangements under which the school system will be operated in accordance with School Committee policy. These detailed arrangements will be designed to implement policies, goals, and objectives of the Committee and will be one of the means by which the school system will be governed.

In the development of regulations, the Superintendent may involve at the planning stage those who would be affected by the regulations, including staff members, students, parents/guardian, and the public. He/she must weigh with care the suggestions given by representatives of staff, student and community organizations. He/she will inform the Committee of such suggestions in presenting pertinent reports of regulations and in presenting regulations for Committee approval.

As long as the Superintendent operates within the guidelines of policy adopted by the Committee, he/she may issue regulations without prior Committee approval unless Committee action is required by law, or the Committee has specifically asked that certain types of regulations be given Committee approval, or the Superintendent recommends Committee approval in light of strong community attitudes or probable staff reactions.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

It is expected that the Superintendent and administrative staff will need to issue regulations implementing policies of the School Committee. Many of these will be routine from year to year; others will arise in special circumstances; some will be drawn up under specific directions from the Committee.

The Committee may review the regulations developed by the Superintendent for the school system prior to their issuance, but it will revise or veto such regulations only when, in the Committee's judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the Committee.

The Committee will not officially approve regulations except as required by state law or in cases when strong community attitudes, or possible student or staff reaction, make it necessary or advisable for a regulation to have the Committee's advance approval.

Rules Pertaining to Staff and Student Conduct

Under Massachusetts law, the Superintendent is required to publish "rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students which have been adopted." (Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes shall be filed with the Department of Education for information purposes only.) Standards of conduct will be included in staff and student handbooks. These handbooks will be reviewed and approved annually by the School Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37H

REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURE DISSEMINATION

It will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to see that the regulations developed to implement Committee policies and administer the school system are appropriately coded and included as regulations in the School Committee's policy manual.

A regulation concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to the group(s) prior to the effective date of the regulation.

APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES

The law directs that in each school building containing the grades nine to twelve, inclusive, the Principal, in consultation with the school council, shall prepare and distribute to each student a handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to conduct of students. The school council shall review the handbook each spring to consider changes in the disciplinary policy to take effect in September.

It is essential that the contents of all handbooks conform to School Committee policies. It is also important that all handbooks bearing the name of the school system or one of its schools be of a quality that reflects positively on the school department. Therefore, the Committee expects handbooks requiring approval to be approved prior to publication by the Committee and/or the Superintendent.

Committee approval is necessary for any handbooks that pertain to required standards of conduct for employees or students so that their contents may be accorded the status of Committee-approved policy or regulation. The Superintendent will use his/her judgment as to whether other specific handbooks need Committee approval; however, all handbooks published will be made available to the Committee for informational purposes.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37H

ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY ABSENCE

When action must be taken within the school system where the Committee has provided no guides for administrative action, the Superintendent will have the power to act. The Superintendent's decisions, however, will be subject to review by the Committee.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

The School Committee will require reports from the Superintendent concerning conditions of efficiency and needs of the schools.

School building administrators will be required to keep such records and make reports as the Superintendent may direct or require.

Upon receipt of the Superintendent's reports, the Committee will take steps to appraise the effectiveness with which the schools are achieving the educational purposes of the school system.

Because statistical information often has a time value, each administrator will give careful consideration to all procedures related to reports, accounting, and general business matters that are required for the administration of the school program and will make accurate and prompt return on scheduled dates of all statistical and other information required.

SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

An annual report covering the diversified activities of the school system and the administration's recommendations for their improvement will be prepared by the Superintendent and presented to the School Committee. Upon Committee approval, the report will be made available to the public and used as one means for informing the parents/guardian and citizens, the Commissioner of Education, and others of the programs and conditions of the town's public schools.

Established by law and Committee policy

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 72:4

FISCAL MANAGEMENT GOALS

The quantity and quality of learning programs are directly dependent on the effective, efficient management of allocated funds. It follows that achievement of the school system's purposes can best be achieved through excellent fiscal management.

As trustee of local, state, and federal funds allocated for use in public education, the Committee will fulfill its responsibility to see that these funds are used wisely to achieve the purposes to which they are allocated.

Because of resource limitations, there is sometimes a temptation to operate so that fiscal concerns overshadow the educational program. Recognizing this, it is essential that the school system take specific action to make sure education remains central and that fiscal matters are ancillary and contribute to the educational program. This concept will be incorporated into Committee operations and into all aspects of school system management and operation.

In the school system's fiscal management, it is the Committee's intent:

1. To engage in thorough advance planning, with staff and community involvement, in order to develop budgets and to guide expenditures so as to achieve the greatest educational returns and the greatest contributions to the educational program in relation to dollars expended.
2. To establish levels of funding that will provide high quality education for the students.
3. To use the best available techniques for budget development and management.
4. To provide timely and appropriate information to all staff with fiscal management responsibilities.
5. To establish maximum efficiency procedures for accounting, reporting, business, purchasing and delivery, payroll, payment of vendors and contractors, and all other areas of fiscal management.

ANNUAL BUDGET

The annual budget is the financial expression of the educational program of the school department, and it mirrors the problems and difficulties that confront the school system.

The budget then is more than just a financial instrument and requires on the part of the Committee, the staff, and the community orderly and cooperative effort to ensure sound fiscal practices for achieving the educational goals and objectives of the school system.

Public school budgeting is regulated and controlled by legislation, state regulations, and local school Committee requirements. The operating budget for the school system will be prepared and presented in line with state policy and will be developed and refined in accordance with these same requirements.

The Superintendent will serve as budget officer but they may delegate portions of this responsibility to members of their staff as they deem appropriate. The three general areas of responsibility for the Superintendent as budget officer will be budget preparation, budget presentation, and budget administration.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:34; 71:37 and 71:38N

BUDGET PLANNING

The major portion of income for the operation of the public schools is derived from local property taxes, and the school Committee will attempt to protect the valid interest of the taxpayers. However, the first priority in the development of an annual budget will be the educational welfare of the children in our schools.

Budget decisions reflect the attitude and philosophy of those charged with the responsibility for educational decision making. Therefore, a sound budget development process must be established to ensure that the annual operating budget accurately reflects this school system's goals and objectives.

In the budget planning process for the school system, the School Committee will strive to:

1. Engage in thorough advance planning, with staff and community involvement, in order to develop budgets and guide expenditures in a manner that will achieve the greatest educational returns and contributions to the educational program in relation to dollars expended.
2. Establish levels of funding that will provide high quality education for all our students.
3. Use the best available techniques for budget development and management.

The Superintendent will have overall responsibility for budget preparation, including the construction of, and adherence to, a budget calendar.

BUDGET ADOPTION PROCEDURES

Authority for adoption of the final school budget lies with the citizens who comprise, and who are entitled to vote at, the town meeting. The school budget is presented as part of the total town budget for action at the annual town meeting.

Established by law and charter

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:34
 Town Charter (See local reference)

BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY

The Committee recognizes that it may be in the best interest of the school department to transfer funds from account to account within the operating budget during the course of a fiscal year, and hereby authorizes the Superintendent to do so under the following guidelines:

- In no case may a transfer result in the aggregate operating budget being more than authorized by the town.
- The Superintendent or his designee will maintain records of all transfers during the course of a fiscal year and shall, upon request, provide a list of same to the Committee. In addition, all subsequent budget documents shall reflect actual expenditures, including transfers, from previous years.
- No expenditure shall be made from a School Committee revolving fund, nor shall any transfers between revolving funds be made, unless duly authorized by the Committee.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES

The School Committee designee and the Superintendent or his/her designee will sign payrolls presented for approval.

The town treasurer, who also serves as the school department treasurer, signs all checks drawn against school department funds. No other signature is valid.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 41:52

BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS

Each employee of the school system who is assigned the responsibility of receiving and dispensing school funds will be bonded individually or covered by a blanket bond. The cost of the bond will be paid by the town.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5

FISCAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING

The Superintendent will be ultimately responsible for receiving and properly accounting for all funds of the school system.

The accounting system used will conform with state requirements and to good accounting practices, providing for the appropriate separation of accounts, funds, and special monies.

The School Committee will receive periodic financial statements from the Superintendent showing the financial condition of the school department. Such other financial statements as may be determined necessary by either the Committee or the administration will be presented as found desirable.

LEGAL REF.: Board of Education 603 CMR 10:00

AUDITS

An audit of the school department's accounts shall be conducted annually. In addition, the Committee may request a private audit of the school system's accounts at its discretion.

The Committee will consider recommendations made by the auditor for maintaining an efficient system for recording and safeguarding the school department's assets.

PURCHASING

The School Committee declares its intention to purchase competitively and to seek maximum value for every dollar expended.

The acquisition of materials, equipment and services will be centralized in the Superintendent's office.

The Superintendent or his/her designee will serve as purchasing agent and will develop and administer the purchasing program for the schools in keeping with legal requirements and with the adopted school budget.

School purchases will be made only on official purchase orders approved for issuance by the appropriate school administrator and signed by the Superintendent or his/her designee, with such exceptions as may be made by the latter for emergency purchases or as otherwise authorized by law or School Committee policy.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 7:22A; 7:22B; 30B; 71:49A

PURCHASING AUTHORITY

Authority for the purchase of materials, equipment, supplies, and services is extended to the Superintendent or his/her designee through the detailed listing of such items compiled as part of the budget-making process.

The purchase of items and services on such lists requires no further Committee approval except when by law or Committee policy the purchases or services must be put to bid.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 30B

CROSS REF.: DJEA, Bidding Requirements

PURCHASING PROCEDURES

All purchases of goods and services (other than goods and services otherwise exempt under Chapter 30B) shall conform to the Town of Lenox's Purchasing Policies and Procedures as now or hereafter in effect:

1. All purchases that are over \$1,000 but are under \$4,999.99 require a purchase order signed by the Superintendent or Director of Business Services. This should be done prior to the actual purchase, except in emergencies. Sound business practices are to be followed.
2. All purchases that are over \$4,999.99 but are under \$14,999.99 require a purchase order or contract and a completed procurement checklist form. This form must be filled out to comply with Chapter 30B. A minimum of three quotes should be solicited. If the item being purchased is exempt from the provisions of this chapter, this must be stated on the form. If a State or County Bid has been used as a procurement source, this must also be stated on the form along with the bid number/date.
3. All purchases that are over \$14,999.99 require a request for sealed bids in conformity with Policy DJEA.
4. The purchase of telephone services, electricity, natural gas, oil, and propane does not require a purchase order.

BIDDING REQUIREMENTS

Except as modified by Town policy, all purchases of materials and equipment and all contracts for construction or maintenance in amounts exceeding \$25,000 will be based upon competitive bidding.

An effort will be made to procure multiple bids for all purchases in excess of \$25,000. When recommending acceptance of a bid, the Superintendent or his/her designee will inform the School Committee whenever possible of the competitive price a reasonable substitute for the item specified.

When bidding procedures are used, bids will be advertised appropriately. Suppliers will be invited to have their names placed on mailing lists to receive invitations to bid. When specifications are prepared, they will be mailed to all merchants and firms who have indicated an interest in bidding.

All bids will be submitted in sealed envelopes, addressed to the Superintendent or his/her designee and plainly marked with the name of the bid and the time of the bid opening. Bids will be opened in public at the time specified, and all bidders will be invited to be present.

The Committee reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to accept the bid that appears to be in the best interest of the school system. The Committee reserves the right to waive any informality in, or reject, any or all bids or any part of any bid. Any bid may be withdrawn prior to the scheduled time for the opening of the bids. Any bid received after the time and date specified will not be considered. All bids will remain firm for a period of 30 days after opening.

The bidder to whom an award is made may be required to enter into a written contract with the school system.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 7:22A; 7:22B; 30B

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

All claims for payment from school department funds will be processed in accordance with regulations developed by the Superintendent. Payment will be authorized against invoices properly supported by approved purchase orders, with properly submitted vouchers, or in accordance with salaries and salary schedules approved by the School Committee.

As an operating procedure, the Committee will receive periodic lists of bills for payment from school department funds. The lists will be certified as correct and approved for payment by the School Committee and then forwarded to the town for processing and subsequent payment by the town treasurer. Actual invoices, statements, and vouchers will be available for inspection by the School Committee.

The Superintendent will be responsible for assuring that budget allocations are observed and that total expenditures do not exceed the amount allocated in the budget for all items.

The school administrators will be responsible for observing budget allocations in their respective schools.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:41; 41:52 41:56

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS

Personnel and school department officials who incur expenses in carrying out their authorized duties will be reimbursed by the school department upon submission of a properly completed and approved voucher and any supporting receipts required by the Superintendent.

When official travel by personally-owned vehicle is authorized, mileage payment will generally be made at the rate currently approved by the Committee.

To the extent budgeted for such purposes in the school budget, approval of travel requests will be as follows:

1. Travel by School Committee members must have prior approval of the School Committee.
2. Each individual request will be judged on the basis of its benefit to the school system.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 44:58

SCHOOL PROPERTY DISPOSAL PROCEDURE

Any surplus property shall be disposed of in accordance with applicable town regulations and state laws.

SAFETY PROGRAM

Accidents are unplanned occurrences that can result in tragic consequences—bodily harm, loss of school time, property damage, legal action, and even fatality. The School Committee will guard against such occurrences by taking every reasonable precaution to protect the safety of all students, employees, visitors and others present on school property or at school-sponsored events.

The Committee will comply with safety requirements established by governmental authorities and will insist that its staff adhere to recommended safety practices as these pertain, for example, to the school plant, special areas of instruction, student transportation, school sports and occupational safety.

The practice of safety will also be considered a facet of the instructional program of the school system.

The Superintendent will have overall responsibility for the safety program of the school system. It will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to see that appropriate staff members are kept informed of current state and local requirements relating to fire prevention, civil defense, sanitation, public health, and occupational safety.

Efforts directed toward the prevention of accidents will succeed only to the degree that all staff members recognize that preventing accidents is a daily operational responsibility.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:55C and Acts of 1985c 614 Sec 1
Board of Education 603 CMR 36:00

CROSS REFS.: EEAE, School Bus Safety Program
GBGB, Staff Personal Security and Safety
IHAM, Health Education
JLI, Student Safety

PEST MANAGEMENT & PESTICIDES POLICY

The Lenox Public Schools are committed to providing a safe and properly maintained environment for all staff, students and visitors. To achieve this end, the School District will implement integrated pest management procedures for its buildings and grounds.

The integrated pest management procedures shall include implementation of appropriate prevention and control strategies, notification of certain pesticide and herbicide uses, record keeping, education and evaluation.

Integrated pest management procedures will determine when to control pests and what method of control to choose. Strategies for managing pest populations will be influenced by the pest species, location and whether and at what population level its presence poses a threat to people, property or the environment. The full range of action alternatives, including no action, will always be considered.

Pesticides:

Lenox Public Schools prohibits the use of pesticides indoors while students are on the property (ant traps are an exception to this policy and may be used according to the manufacturer's directions for use.) In addition, Lenox Public Schools must notify, in writing, students and their parents/legal guardians, and employees at least two work days before pesticides are used outdoors at school. Schools, which utilize pesticides inside the building, must be closed for a minimum of five days both during and immediately after application. A *Notice of Pesticide Use*, which will be provided by the pesticide manufacturer, must be posted on the school bulletin board at least two days before pesticides will be used and for at least 72 hours following their use. Any questions with regard to pesticides use should be directed to your principal and or superintendent of schools (MGL 132B, 6C-6I.)

Updated October 4, 2010

FIRST AID

The school attempts to provide a safe environment. If an accident or sudden illness occurs, properly trained school personnel, if available, will administer first aid and, if warranted, call the school physician or emergency services personnel – dial 9-1-1.

First aid is defined as the immediate and temporary care given in case of an accident or sudden illness, which enables the child to be taken safely home, to a physician or to a medical facility. First aid does not include diagnosis or treatment. Any care beyond first aid will not be given.

At each school, procedures will be developed for the proper handling of an injury to, or sudden illness of, a child or staff member. These will be made known to the staff and will incorporate the following requirements:

1. The school nurse or another trained person will be responsible for administering first aid.
2. When the nature of an illness or an injury appears in any way serious, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian and/or family physician immediately.
3. No young child who is ill or injured will be sent home alone, nor will any older child unless the illness or injury is minor. A young child who is ill or injured will not be taken home unless it is known that someone is there to receive him/her.
4. In extreme emergencies, the school nurse, school physician or Principal may make arrangements for immediate hospitalization of injured or ill students, contacting parent/guardian or guardian in advance if at all possible.
5. The teacher or other staff member who is responsible for supervising a child at the time an accident occurs will make out a report on an official Accident Report form providing details about the accident. This will be required for every accident for which first aid is given.
6. All accidents resulting in serious injuries to students or staff members will be reported as soon as possible to the Superintendent and/or his/her designee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:55A; 71:56

CROSS REF.: JLC, Student Health Services and Requirements

MULTI-HAZARD EMERGENCY PLANS

Advance planning for emergencies and disasters is essential to provide for the safety of students and staff; it also strengthens the morale of all concerned to know that plans exist and that students and staff have been trained in carrying out the plans.

The Superintendent will develop and maintain plans that meet the requirements of state law for preparedness in case of fire, civil emergencies, and natural disasters. A consistent template shall be used between schools, including the central office. Each fall, prior to the first day of school, the superintendent shall meet with the Chief of Police and Fire Chief to review the multi-hazard emergency plans, as required by law.

The Superintendent shall develop, in consultation with school nurses, school physicians, athletic coaches, trainers, and local Emergency Services agencies, an Emergency Medical Response Plan for each school in the district. Each Plan shall include:

1. A method establishing a rapid communications system linking all parts of the school campus, including outdoor facilities, to local Emergency Management Services along with protocols to clarify when EMS and other emergency contact will be called.
2. A determination of EMS response times to any location on the campus.
3. A list of relevant contact with telephone numbers and a protocol indicating when each person shall be called, including names of experts to help with post-event support.
4. A method to efficiently direct EMS personnel to any location on campus, including the location of available rescue equipment.
5. Safety precautions to prevent injuries in classrooms and on the school campus.
6. A method of providing access to training in CPR and first aid for teachers, athletic coaches, trainers, and other school staff which may include CPR training for High School students; provided that School Committees may opt out of instruction in CPR pursuant to Section 1 of Chapter 71.
7. In the event the school possesses Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), the location of all available AEDs, whether the location is fixed or portable, and a list of personnel trained in its use.

Plans shall be submitted at least every 3 years by September 1. Plans must be updated in the case of new construction or other physical changes to the school campus.

Building Principals will meet all requirements for conducting emergency drills and security drills to give students practice in moving with orderly dispatch to designated areas under emergency conditions, and the staff practice in carrying out their assigned responsibilities for building evacuation.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 69:8A Section 363 of Chapter 159 of the Acts of 2000

File: EBCC

BOMB THREATS

The School Committee acknowledges its basic responsibility to ensure the safety of the children under its care. At the same time, it wishes to deal firmly with the problem of bomb threats to the public schools and to discourage this type of unwarranted disruption which poses a danger to everyone in the schools even when it is merely an idle threat and a nuisance. Accordingly, the Superintendent will develop a procedure to be observed in case of a bomb threat.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

The Superintendent may close the schools or dismiss them early in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the health or safety of students and personnel. While it may be prudent, under certain circumstances, to excuse all students from attending school, to delay the opening hour or to dismiss students early, the Superintendent has the responsibility to see that as much of the administrative, supervisory and operational activity is continued as maybe possible. Therefore, if conditions affect only a single school, only that school will be closed.

In making the decision to close schools, the Superintendent will consider many factors, including the following principal ones relating to the fundamental concern for the safety and health of the children:

1. Weather conditions, both existing and predicted.
2. Driving, traffic, and parking conditions affecting public and private transportation facilities.
3. Actual occurrence or imminent possibility of any emergency condition that would make the operation of schools difficult or dangerous.
4. Inability of teaching personnel to report for duty, which might result in inadequate supervision of students.

The Superintendent will weigh these factors and take action to close the schools only after consultation with public works and public safety authorities and with school officials from neighboring towns. Students, parents/guardians and staff will be informed early in each school year of the procedures that will be used to notify them in case of emergency closings. When schools are closed for emergency reasons, staff members will comply with School Committee contracts in reporting for work.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:4; 71:4A

CROSS REF.: EBC, Emergency Plans

FACE COVERINGS

The Lenox Public Schools District is committed to providing a safe environment as schools reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic and in whatever other situation rooted in concern for public health the District may someday find itself. According to public health experts, one of the best ways to stop the spread of coronavirus and to keep members of our school community safe is the use of face masks or face coverings. Therefore, in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the following requirements are in place until further notice.

A face covering that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals – students, District employees, and visitors -- in school buildings, on school grounds and on school transportation, even when social distancing is observed.

Individuals may be excused from the requirement for the following list of reasons, per CDC guidance:

The individual:

- has trouble breathing;
- is unconscious;
- is incapacitated; or
- cannot remove the mask or face covering without assistance.

In addition, masks or face coverings will not be required for anyone who has a medical, behavioral or other challenge making it unsafe to wear a face mask or face covering. A written note from a physician is required for a requested exemption. Parents may not excuse their child from the face mask requirement by signing a waiver. The District's student dress code as enacted by the Lenox School Committee in Policy JICA is applicable to masks.

In order to protect the wearer of a mask and others properly, a mask must:

- be of medical grade if disposable, OR
- be manufactured with multiple layers of fabric and be washed daily without damage or change to shape;
- cover both the nose and mouth of the wearer for breathing without restriction;
- fit snugly against the skin; be put on and removed using ear loops, without touching the front of the mask;
- not have a one-way valve that allows unfiltered exhaled air to escape

Additionally, face masks or face coverings will not be required when appropriate social distancing is enforced:

- during mask breaks;
- while eating or drinking;
- during physical education classes;
- while outside.

Exceptions to this policy under certain circumstances, such as for students with medical, behavioral or other challenges who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse or local Board of Health. Face shields or physical barriers may provide an alternative in some instances.

A student's mask or face covering is to be provided by the student's family. Except where circumstances warrant a mask of specific quality, staff members are responsible for providing their own face coverings. However, the district will supply disposable face covering for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one.

If students are in violation of this policy, the building principal will consult with the parent/guardians to determine whether an exception is appropriate, or the student may be removed from the school building for in-person learning until such time as they can comply with the requirement or the requirement is lifted. Disciplinary action may be taken if warranted.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

This policy will remain in place until rescinded by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.:

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, COVID-19 Order No. 31

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/may-1-2020-masks-and-face-coverings/download>

REFS.:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention - Considerations for Wearing Masks

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education - Reopening Guidelines -

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>

Commonwealth of Massachusetts - Mask Up MA!

<https://www.mass.gov/news/mask-up-ma>

SOURCE: MASC - August 2020 (with additions)

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT

The Lenox School Committee's most important function is to provide for the education of children, and it recognizes that the education of children is dependent upon many factors, including a proper physical environment that is safe, clean, sanitary, and as comfortable and convenient as the facilities will permit or the use requires.

The supervision over the care and safekeeping of property used by the school department will be the general responsibility of the Superintendent. He/she will work with other administrators and town departments, as necessary, to develop a comprehensive and well-defined plan for the proper maintenance, cleanliness, and safekeeping of all school buildings and grounds to ensure that each school is equally well maintained, equipped, and staffed.

The Superintendent will establish procedures and employ such means as may be necessary to provide accurate information in regard to the nature, condition, location, and value of all property used by the school department; to safeguard the property against loss, damage, or undue depreciation; to recover and restore to usefulness any property that may be lost, stolen or damaged; and to do all things necessary to ensure the proper maintenance, cleanliness, and safe-keeping of school property.

Within the separate schools, the building administrator will be responsible for proper care, maintenance, and cleanliness of buildings, equipment and grounds.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:68

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SECURITY

Public school buildings and grounds are one of the greatest investments of the town. It is deemed in the best interest of the school department and town to protect the investment adequately.

Security should mean not only maintenance of a secure (locked) building, but protection from fire hazards and faulty equipment, and safe practices in the use of electrical, plumbing, and heating equipment. The Committee expects close cooperation with fire and law enforcement departments and with insurance company inspectors.

Access to school buildings and grounds outside of regular school hours will be limited to personnel whose work requires it and to those authorized in advance by the building Principal or Superintendent. An adequate key control system will be established, which will limit access to buildings to authorized personnel and will safeguard against the chance of entrance to buildings by unauthorized persons.

Funds and valuable records will be kept in a safe place and under lock and key.

Protective devices designed to be used as safeguards against illegal entry and vandalism will be installed when appropriate to the individual situation. Employment of watchmen may be approved in situations where special risks are involved.

VANDALISM

The Lenox School Committee recognizes that acts of vandalism committed against public and private property are costly and require positive action through educational programs. Consequently, the Committee will support various programs aimed at reducing the amount of vandalism.

Every citizen of the town, staff members, students, and members of the police department are urged by the School Committee to cooperate in reporting any incidents of vandalism to property under control of the school department, and the name(s) of the person or persons believed to be responsible. Each employee will report to the Principal of the school every incident of vandalism known to him/her and, if known, the names of those responsible.

The Superintendent is authorized to sign a criminal complaint and to press charges against perpetrators of vandalism against school property, and is further authorized to delegate, as he/she sees fit, authority to sign such complaints and to press charges.

Parents/guardians and students will be made aware of the legal implications involved. Reimbursement will be sought for all or part of any damages.

AUTHORIZED USE OF SCHOOL-OWNED MATERIALS

The Lenox School Committee wishes to be of assistance, whenever possible, to other town departments and community organizations. Therefore, permission to use school equipment and facilities may be granted by the Superintendent upon request by responsible parties or organizations.

School equipment and facilities may be used by staff members when the use is related to their school employment, and by students when the equipment is to be used in connection with their studies or extracurricular activities.

Proper controls will be established by the Superintendent to assure the user's responsibility for, and return of, all school equipment and for the proper use of facilities.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The major purpose of the school district's transportation services is to aid students in getting to and from school in an efficient, safe, and economical manner.

The school system will contract for transportation services. Contracts will be awarded on a competitive bid basis by the School Committee. Bus contractors and taxi contractors, who will be held responsible for the safe operation of school buses, will comply with all applicable state laws and regulations, including but not limited to:

1. Specifications for school bus design and equipment
2. Inspection of buses
3. Qualifications and examinations of bus drivers
4. Driving regulations
5. Small vehicle requirements, if applicable
6. Insurance coverage
7. Adherence to local regulations and directives as specified in bid contracts.

The Director of Business Services, working with the bus contractor and other appropriate administrators, will be responsible for establishing bus schedules, routes, stops, and all other matters relative to the transportation program.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 71:7A, B and C; 71:37D; 71:48A; 71:68; 71:71A;
71B:4; 71B:5; 71B:8; 74:8A; 76:1; 76:12Bi; 76:14

CROSS REF.: EEAA, Walkers and Riders

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. Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted periodically to acquaint student riders with procedures in emergency situations.
3. All vehicles used to transport children will be inspected periodically for conformance with state and federal safety requirements.
4. 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

BUS DRIVER EXAMINATION AND TRAINING

The School Committee will reserve the right to approve or disapprove persons employed by the bus contractor to drive school transportation vehicles.

1. Courteous and careful drivers will be required.
2. Drivers are required to pass a medical exam and be free from tuberculosis.
3. No person less than 18 years nor over 70 years of age and only persons of high character will be allowed to operate school buses.
4. Only persons who are properly licensed by the state and have completed the driver training program will be permitted to drive school buses.
5. The contractor will furnish the School Committee with a list of names of drivers and their safety records for the last three years, as well as proof of a negative TB test and a negative CORI report.
6. In case of any change of bus drivers, the contractor will notify school officials as soon as possible.

LEGAL REFS.: Highway Safety Program Standard No. 17
M.G.L. 90:7B; 90:8A; 90:8A ½

BUS STOP SUPERVISION

While the law requires the school system to furnish transportation, it does not relieve parents/guardians of students from the responsibility of supervision until such time as the child boards the bus in the morning and after the child leaves the bus at the end of the school day.

The way students behave at bus stops is, of course, of concern to the school system and the administration will cooperate with parents/guardians in an attempt to solve behavioral problems at bus stops. If such behavior creates a problem after the children board the bus, it may be necessary to suspend the riding privileges of those involved.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The Lenox School Committee is guided by and is subject to the rules and regulations of the Department of Education and the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Mass. with respect to a student's entitlement to transportation privileges. Such entitlement, however, is subject to observance of district and school rules and regulations for student conduct on buses (see EEAEC-R). The School Committee or its designees may suspend such riding privileges, including field trips and athletic trips, if the conduct of the student is deemed to warrant such action.

Suspension of bus privileges does not relieve the student of the responsibility to attend school. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to arrange for transportation for the child to and from school during periods of suspension from bus riding privileges.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

Normally school buses and other vehicles contracted by the school district will be used for the transportation of students participating in co-curricular or extracurricular activities. However, if district contracted vehicle are not available, private vehicles may be permitted to transport students to or from school-related activities provided all the following conditions are met:

1. The number of students to be transported in one vehicle will not exceed the manufacturers recommended limit or the limits established by law.
2. All volunteer drivers must receive prior approval from the school Principal/designee to use private vehicles for transporting students.
3. Approval must be obtained by completing all applicable forms provided through the Principal's office.
4. The driver must possess a valid driver's license and meet Registry of Motor Vehicle regulations pertaining to the number of passengers he/she may transport and the time when he/she may be driving.
5. The owner of the vehicle being used must file evidence with the Principal of personal liability and property insurance coverage on the vehicle in the amounts of \$100,000- \$ 300,000 or more.
6. The parents/guardians of students to be transported in this manner will be fully informed as to this means of transportation and will sign a statement that they approve of their child being transported in this manner.

**LENOX PUBLIC SCHOOLS
MEAL CHARGE POLICY**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent meal charge account procedures throughout the district. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the Food Service Department. The goals of this policy are:

- To establish a consistent district policy regarding charges and collection of charges.
- To treat all students with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts.
- To support positive situations with district staff, district business policies, students and parents/guardians/adult students to the maximum extent possible.
- To establish policies appropriate for age.
- To encourage parent/guardian/adult students to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY:

The Food Service Department: Responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying the school district of outstanding balances. The Food Service department is also responsible for notifying the student's parent/guardian/adult student of low or outstanding balances.

The School District: Responsible for supporting the Food Service Department in collection activities.

The Parent/Guardian/Adult Student: Immediate payment.

REGULATIONS:

1) All students

a) All students will be allowed to charge up to a maximum dollar equivalent of three (3) meals which will be known as the "account cap".

(1) These meals will include anything on the menu;

(2) Notices of low or deficit balances will be sent to parents/guardians at regular intervals during the school year.

3) When the child reaches the "account cap" they will only be offered designated a menu alternate of a cold cheese sandwich with milk, fruit and a vegetable.

(4) The designated menu alternate will be charged to the child's lunch account at the standard lunch rate. It will be reported as a meal to the state and federal school lunch authorities and thus

will be eligible for reimbursement. Parents/Guardians are responsible for payment of these meals to the food service program.

b) Middle and High school students:

(1) When a student has a negative balance, no a la carte items will be sold to the child.

2) Checks Returned for Non-Sufficient Funds will result in a \$10.00 penalty fee that is charged by the bank to the Town for a NSF check. The penalty fee and the amount of the check will be deducted from the child/children's lunch account immediately upon notice from the bank. A Payment must be received within ten (10) days of the date of the letter.

3) At the first of June the food service program must begin to close the books for the school year. As a result all meals must be prepaid.

a) Parents/Guardians/Adult students will be sent a written request for "Payment in Full."

4) Both school cafeterias possess computerized point of sale or cash register systems that maintain a record of all monies deposited and spent for each student and said record will be made available to the parent upon request.

5) Meals can be prepaid at any time. Prepayments are a convenience for families. Prepayments can be made by check presented to your child's cafeteria. Prepayments can also be made through My School Bucks by going to www.myschoolbucks.com. This gives the parents the capability of using their credit/debit card for lunches and al la carte purchases. There are numerous advantages to using My School Bucks, including updated account balances, e-mail notification of low balance accounts and a history of purchases made by the student.

a) **Blocks on Accounts:** A parent may call or email the Food Service Director to place a block on their child's account to prohibit the purchase of a la carte items or set dollar caps.

b) **Refunds**

1) **Withdrawn Students:** For any student who is withdrawn, a written request for a refund of any money remaining in their account must be submitted within 90 days of departure.

2) **Graduating Students:** Any funds remaining on a graduating students account will be transferred to a siblings account if applicable. All other graduating students will be issued a refund.

3) **Unclaimed Funds:** All refunds must be requested within 90 days. Any unclaimed funds after 90 days will then become the property of the Lenox Public Schools Food Service Program.

FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Lenox School Committee believes that any educational program is influenced greatly by the environment in which it functions. The development of a quality educational program and school facilities that help to implement the program must go hand in hand.

Therefore, it is the Committee's goal to provide the facilities needed for the number of students in the school system, and to provide the kind of facilities that will best support and accommodate the educational program.

In planning facilities, the Committee recognizes that capital outlay funds are limited, and that priorities must be established to make the best use of the school building dollar. The Committee's first objective will be to develop a plan that eliminates overcrowding and minimizes the need for extended day programs and double sessions. Whenever possible, the cultural as well as educational needs of the community will be considered in planning facility expansions.

Architects retained by the Committee are expected to plan for simplicity of design; sound economics, including low long-range maintenance costs, efficiency in energy needs, low insurance rates; high educational use; and flexibility.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:07

FACILITIES PLANNING

School Building Committee

The town creates a school building committee for specific building projects. This Committee acts as the administrative authority for the projects, subject to approval of various actions by the School Committee and town.

The school building committee has the following responsibilities:

1. To study and make recommendations to the town with respect to school building needs.
2. To review thoroughly with the Superintendent and the School Committee the educational requirements in relation to school buildings.
3. To review previous studies and initiate needed studies with or without consultative assistance.
4. To employ the services of architects and cost estimators and such other professional assistance as it may deem necessary.

Staff Planning

Arrangements will be made by the Superintendent, working through principals, for the school staff to contribute in the planning of new school buildings. Teachers will be given the opportunity to submit suggestions for possible inclusion in the educational specifications.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37C and D; 71:68; 71:70
Massachusetts Board of Education Regulations Governing the School Building Assistance Act, Chapter 645 of the Acts of 1948 as amended, FY 79
Board of Education 603 CMR, 38:00 and 603 CMR 26:07

RETIREMENT OF FACILITIES

When a school building becomes inadequate by virtue of age, condition, size of site, lack of need, or other overriding limitations, and cannot reasonably and economically be brought up to the current educational standards, the building should be considered for a comprehensive closing study. The Superintendent will recommend to the School Committee which facilities appear to justify further analysis.

The School Committee may seek both professional advice and the advice of the community in making its recommendations as to the retirement of any school facility. This will permit the public, which originally acquired the property, to benefit from its recycling or retirement.

A closing study will include direct involvement by those neighborhoods considered in the study and will be concerned with all or some of the following factors:

1. Age and current physical condition of the facilities, its operating systems, and program facilities.
2. Adequacy of site, location, access, surrounding development, traffic patterns, and other environmental conditions.
3. Reassignment of children, including alternative plans according to Committee policy.
4. Transportation factors, including numbers of children bussed, time, distance, and safety.
5. Alternative uses of the building.
6. Cost/Savings
 - a. Personnel
 - b. Plant Operation
 - c. Transportation
 - d. Capital Investment
 - e. Alternative Use
7. Continuity of instructional and community programs.

NAMING NEW FACILITIES

Naming a school is an important matter that deserves thoughtful attention. Personal prejudice or favoritism, political pressure, or temporary popularity should not be an influence in choosing a school name. A name with educational significance or inspiration should be chosen. The Committee also feels that it is appropriate to name schools for physical locations; geographical areas; distinguished local, state, and national leaders whose names will lend dignity and stature to the school; or significant or pertinent events.

The Superintendent will prepare for the approval of the Committee a procedure to follow in recommending names for school buildings to the school building committee. Whenever possible, the wishes of the community, including parents and students, should be considered in naming new facilities.

It is expected that an orderly, announced procedure will lessen the community or factional pressures that so quickly build up when the selection is delayed or seems uncertain. A prompt decision will reduce disappointments and advance community solidarity. Much confusion in accounts, files, and records can be avoided if a new school can be identified by name before the planning starts.

PERSONNEL POLICIES GOALS

The District's specific personnel goals are:

1. To develop and implement those strategies and procedures for personnel recruitment, screening, and selection that will result in the employment and retention of individuals with the highest capabilities, strongest commitment to quality education, and greatest probability of effectively implementing the system's learning program.
2. To develop a general staff assignment strategy that will contribute to the learning program and to use it as the primary basis for determining staff assignments.
3. To provide positive programs of staff development that contribute both to improvement of the learning program and to each staff member's career development aspirations.
4. To provide for a genuine team approach to education.
5. To develop and use for personnel evaluation positive processes that contribute to the improvement of both staff capabilities and the learning program.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:08 paragraph 3,7,8,9

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The School Committee subscribes to the fullest extent to the principle of the dignity of all people and of their labors and will take action to ensure that any individual within the district who is responsible for hiring and/or personnel supervision understands that applicants are employed, assigned, and promoted without regard to their race, creed, color, age, sex, gender identity, national origin or sexual orientation. Every available opportunity will be taken in order to assure that each applicant for a position is selected on the basis of qualifications, merit and ability.

LEGAL REF.: BESE Regulations 603 CMR 26:00

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The School Committee wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Superintendent.

Staff Communications to the School Committee

All communications or reports to the Committee or any of its subcommittees from principals, supervisors, teachers, or other staff members will be submitted through the Superintendent. This procedure does not deny the right of any employee to appeal to the Committee from administrative decisions on important matters, except those matters that are outside the Committee's legal authority, provided that the Superintendent has been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Committee's policy on complaints and grievances. Staff members are also reminded that Committee meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe firsthand the Committee's deliberations on problems of staff concern.

School Committee Communications to Staff

All official communications, policies, and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent. The Superintendent will develop appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the Committee's problems, concerns and actions.

Visits to Schools

Individual School Committee members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will inform the Superintendent of such visits and make arrangements for visitations through the principals of the various schools. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Committee members will be carried on only under Committee authorization.

STAFF ETHICS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The School Committee expects members of its professional staff to be familiar with the code of ethics that applies to their profession and to adhere to it in their relationships with students, parents, coworkers, and officials of the school system.

No employee of the Committee will engage in or have a financial interest in, directly or indirectly, any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his/her duties and responsibilities in the school system; nor will any staff member engage in any type of private business during school time or on school property.

Employees will not engage in work of any type where information concerning customer, client, or employer originates from any information available to them through school sources.

Moreover, as there should be no conflict of interest in the supervision and evaluation of employees, at no time may any administrator responsible for the supervision and/or evaluation of an employee be directly related to him/her.

All school employees, full and part time, must take the Attorney General State Ethics Test online and deliver the completion certificate page to the Superintendent's office. This page will become part of the employee's personnel file.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:52; 268A:1 et seq.

Updated: January 10, 2011

STAFF CONDUCT

All staff members have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with and abide by all laws as these affect their work, the policies of the School Committee, and the regulations designed to implement them.

In the area of personal conduct, the Committee expects that teachers and others will conduct themselves in a manner that not only reflects credit to the school system but also sets forth a model worthy of emulation by students.

All staff members will be expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern.

Essential to the success of ongoing school operations and the instructional program are the following specific responsibilities, which will be required of all personnel:

1. Faithfulness and promptness in attendance at work.
2. Support and enforcement of policies of the Committee and their implementing regulations and school rules in regard to students.
3. Diligence in submitting required reports promptly at the times specified.
4. Care and protection of school property.
5. Concern for and attention to their own and the school system's legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, including the need to ensure that students are under supervision at all times.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37H; 264:1 1; 264:14

CIVILITY POLICY

Civility/Conduct of Parents, Other Visitors, and District Employees

It is the intent of the Lenox Public Schools to promote respect, civility, and orderly conduct among District employees, parents, and the public. It is not the District's intent to deprive any person of his or her right to freedom of expression. The intent of this policy is to maintain, to the greatest extent reasonably possible, a safe, harassment-free environment for teachers, students, administrators, staff, parents, and other member of the community. The District encourages positive discussion and discourages volatile, hostile, or aggressive communications or actions.

1. Expected Level of Behavior:

- District personnel will treat parents and other members of the public with courtesy and respect.
- Parents and other visitors will treat teachers, administrators, and other District employees with courtesy and respect.

2. Unacceptable and Disruptive Behavior:

- Using loud or offensive language, swearing, cursing, or displays of temper;
- Threatening to do physical harm to a teacher, school administrator, school employee, or student;
- Abusive, threatening, or obscene letters, e-mail, or voice mail messages;
- Any other behavior that disrupts the orderly operation of a school, classroom, extra-curricular school activity, and/or administrative function.

3. Parent Recourse:

Any parent who believes he or she has been subjected to unacceptable behavior on the part of any staff member should bring such behavior to the attention of the staff member's immediate supervisor, appropriate administrator, and/or the Superintendent of Schools.

4. Authority of School Personnel:

Any individual who acts in the following may be directed to leave school premises or School Committee premises by a school principal or assistant principal, or their designee, any school administrator, including the Superintendent of Schools, and school security personnel. If the person refuses to leave the premises as directed, the administrator or other authorized personnel shall seek the assistance of law enforcement and request that law enforcement personnel take such action as they deem necessary:

- Disrupts or threatens to disrupt school or school district operations;
- Threatens or attempts to do or does physical harm to District personnel, students or others lawfully on school or School Committee premises;
- Threatens the health or safety of students, District personnel, or others lawfully on school or School Committee premises;
- Intentionally causes damage to District property or the property of others lawfully on school or School Committee premises;
- Uses offensive language; or
- Comes onto school premises without authorization.

Should an individual persist in violating the terms of this policy, the District may limit and restrict the methods of communication which may be used by said individual.

In the event that there is a serious threat of harm to student(s) or school personnel, the administration may obtain an Order of No Trespass prohibiting the individual making said threat from entering on District property.

5. Authority to Deal with Persons who are Verbally Abusive to School Personnel:

- If any member of the public uses obscenities or speaks in a loud, demanding, insulting, and/or demeaning manner, the employee to whom the remarks are addressed shall calmly and politely warn the speaker to communicate civilly.
- If the verbal abuse continues, the employee may, after giving appropriate notice to the speaker, terminate the meeting, conference, or telephone conversation.
- If the meeting or conference is on school premises, any employee may request that an administrator or other authorized person direct the speaker to promptly leave the premises.
- If the person refuses to leave, the administrator or other authorized personnel shall seek the assistance of law enforcement and request that law enforcement personnel take such action as is deemed necessary. If the employee is threatened with personal harm, he or she may contact law enforcement.

Updated October 4, 2010

GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF

Gifts

The acceptance of personal gifts by school personnel from school suppliers, from parents and/or students can be subject to misinterpretation and a source of embarrassment to the school system and all persons involved. When families, students, or others wish to express personal appreciation to a teacher or other staff member, the School Committee urges them to find modes of expression that do not involve personal gifts.

In keeping with this policy, no employee of the School Committee will accept a personal gift from a business concern supplying, or with an interest in supplying, goods, materials, equipment, or services to the school system. This restriction does not relate to the acceptance of gifts for the school system, nor to the acceptance of small and clearly identifiable advertising and promotional materials.

Solicitations

In spirit, the School Committee supports the many worthwhile charitable drives that take place in the community and is gratified when school employees give them their support. However, the solicitation of funds from staff members through the use of school personnel and school time must be held at a minimum. Therefore, no solicitations of funds for charitable purposes will be made among staff members except with specific School Committee approval. Whenever such solicitations are made, no pressure will be exerted to obtain contributions even though the drive is one that the School Committee has specifically approved.

The solicitation of funds for the United Way will be permitted on an annual basis.

CROSS REFS.: KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools
 JP, Student Donations and Gifts

DRUG-FREE/ALCOHOL-FREE WORKPLACE

It is the intent and obligation of the Lenox Public Schools to provide a drug-free/alcohol-free, healthful, safe and secure work environment. Employees are expected and required to report to work on time and in an appropriate mental and physical condition for work. No employee shall report to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. Further, the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance, or the use of alcohol, on school department premises or at any school-sponsored activity is absolutely prohibited.

Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and may have legal consequences. Discipline will be taken in accordance with existing collective bargaining contracts and/or personnel policy practices.

The Lenox Public Schools recognizes substance use and abuse as a potential health, safety and security problem. Employees needing help in dealing with such problems are encouraged to participate in a recognized treatment/rehabilitation program. Discretion and reasonable confidentiality in this regard will be observed. Conscientious efforts alone to seek such help will not jeopardize any employee's job and will not be noted in any personnel record.

As required by law, and as a condition of employment, any employee who is convicted of any violation of the Massachusetts criminal laws regarding illegal drugs shall report such conviction in writing to the Superintendent of Schools within 5 days of the conviction. The school system has an obligation to notify the appropriate federal agency within 10 days of receiving such a notice of conviction. Further, no later than 30 days after notice of conviction, the Superintendent will take appropriate disciplinary action.

TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY BY STAFF MEMBERS

Smoking or the use of tobacco within school buildings, the school facilities or on school property or buses, by any individual, including school personnel, is prohibited.

Staff members who violate this policy will be referred to their immediate supervisor.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37H

STAFF PERSONAL SECURITY AND SAFETY

Through its overall safety program and various policies pertaining to school personnel, the Committee will seek to assure the safety of employees during their working hours and assist them in the maintenance of good health.

To the extent required by law, prior to employment in the school system, all employees will submit evidence of freedom from tuberculosis, as specified by state law. Additional physical examinations will also be required of bus drivers and food handlers as law or state regulations require.

The Superintendent may require an employee to submit to a physical examination by a physician appointed by the school system whenever that employee's health appears to be a hazard to children or others in the school system or when a doctor's certificate is needed to verify need for sick leave.

Adoption date: January 1996

SOURCE: MASC Policy

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:54; 71:55B; 71:55C

CROSS REFS.: EB, Environmental and Safety Program
G CBD, Professional Staff Fringe Benefits
G DBD, Support Staff Fringe Benefits

STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The School Committee recognizes that employees of the school system have the same fundamental civic responsibilities and privileges as other citizens. Among these are campaigning for an elective public office and holding an elective or appointive office.

In connection with campaigning, an employee will not: use school system facilities, equipment or supplies; discuss his/her campaign with school personnel or students during the working day; use any time during the working day for campaigning purposes. Under no circumstances, will students be pressured into campaigning for any staff member.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:44

PERSONNEL RECORDS

Information about staff members is required for the daily administration of the school system, for implementing salary and other personnel policies, for budget and financial planning, for responding to appropriate inquiries about employees, and for meeting the School Committee's education reporting requirements. To meet these needs, the Superintendent will implement a comprehensive and efficient system of personnel records maintenance and control under the following guidelines:

1. A personnel folder for each present and former employee will be accurately maintained in the central administrative office. In addition to the application for employment and references, the folders will contain records and information relative to compensation, payroll deductions, evaluations, and any other pertinent information.
2. The Superintendent will be the official custodian for personnel files and will have overall responsibility for maintaining and preserving the confidentiality of the files within the provisions of the law.
3. Personnel records are considered confidential under the law and will not be open to public inspection. Access to personnel files will be limited to persons authorized by the Superintendent to use the files for the reasons cited above.
4. Each employee will have the right, upon written request, to review the contents of his/her own personnel file.
5. Employees may make written objections to any information contained in the file. Any written objection must be signed by the staff member and will become part of the employee's personnel file. Further, no negative comment will be placed in a staff member's file unless it is signed by the person making the comment and the staff member is informed of the comment and afforded the opportunity to include his/her written response in the file.
6. Absent authorization by an employee, lists of school system employees' names and home addresses will be released only to governmental agencies as required for official reports or by the laws.

LEGAL REFS.: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Sec. 438, P.L. 90-247, Title IV, as amended 88 Stat. 571-574 (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and regulations. M.G.L. 4:7; 71:42C Teachers' Agreement

CONTRACT REF.: All Agreements

CROSS REF.: KDB, Public's Right to Know

CRIMINAL AND SEXUAL OFFENDER RECORD INFORMATION

The following statement of policy applies to requests for and dissemination of information obtained from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board, and Sexual Offender Registry Board, in conjunction with the Lenox Public Schools grant of access to Criminal Offender Record Information, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 6, Section 172 (c) and Section 95 of Chapter 71 of the Acts of 1993 and c.239 of the Acts of 1996.

Criminal Offender Record Information and Sexual Offender Registry Board Information shall be defined as records and data obtained from the Criminal History Systems Board and Sexual Offender Registry Board pursuant to a valid written request on the appropriate form by the Superintendent of schools which concerns an identifiable individual and relates to the nature or disposition of a criminal charge.

Recognizing the confidential and sensitive nature of the information involved, only the Superintendent of Schools and designated administrators shall have access to such data and only to the extent such information is needed for the performance of his or her duties, for the purpose of considering making decisions regarding otherwise qualified applicants for employment. The Superintendent shall request data only regarding individuals who perform or are applicants for positions which have opportunity for unsupervised contact with children.

Requests for data will be made on the appropriate form in writing to the Criminal History Systems Board or Chief of Police. Any prospective employee will be required to sign a form acknowledging request of such information and will be advised in advance that a record check will be done.

Any such information gained will be treated in a confidential manner and retained in secured files with access only by the Superintendent of Schools and his or her confidential secretary.

For the purpose of securing CORI or Sexual Offender information regarding a prospective employee, such information will be sought only after it has been determined that the applicant is otherwise qualified to do the job and will be the recommended candidate for the position. CORI or Sexual Offender information will operate to disqualify only those candidates where a connection between the conviction of a criminal offense and position applied for can be reasonably established.

STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

The School Committee will encourage the administration to develop effective means of resolving differences that may arise among employees and between employees and administrators; reduce potential areas of complaints; and establish and maintain recognized channels of communication between the staff, administration, and School Committee.

It is the Committee's desire that complaint procedures provide for prompt and equitable adjustment of differences at the lowest possible administrative level, and that each employee be assured the opportunity for an orderly presentation and review of complaints and concerns.

Channels established will provide for the following:

1. That teachers and other school employees may appeal a ruling of a Principal or other administrator to the Superintendent.
2. That all school employees may appeal a ruling of the Superintendent to the Committee, except in those areas where the law or collective bargaining agreement has specifically assigned authority to the Principal and/or the Superintendent and Committee action would be in conflict with that law.
3. That all hearings of complaints before the Superintendent or Committee be conducted in the presence of the administrator who made the ruling that is the subject of the grievance.

The process established for the resolution of grievances in contracts negotiated with recognized employee bargaining units will apply only to "grievances" as defined in the particular contract.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 150E:5; 150E:8

CONTRACT REFS.: All Contract Agreements

PROFESSIONAL STAFF POSITIONS

All professional staff positions in the school system will be created initially by the School Committee. It is the Committee's intent to activate a sufficient number of positions to accomplish the school system's goals and objectives and to provide for the equitable staffing of each school building. Although such positions may remain temporarily unfilled, only the Committee may abolish a position it has created.

Each time a new position is established by the Committee, the Superintendent will present for the Committee's approval a job description for the position, which specifies the job holder's qualifications and the job's performance responsibilities. The Superintendent will maintain a comprehensive set of job descriptions for all positions.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SALARY SCHEDULES

Teachers

The School Committee will adopt a salary schedule for regular teaching personnel as part of the contract negotiated with the teachers' bargaining unit.

Principals

Salaries will be reviewed annually prior to July 1. The School Committee, with the advice of the Superintendent, will establish levels of compensation for each position based on the circumstances, dynamics, and requirements of each position. Consideration may be given to individuals for exceptional performance as a basis for establishing merit increases for principals. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to present evidence to the School Committee to support recommendations for merit increases.

Administrators

Salaries will be reviewed annually prior to July 1. The Superintendent may, upon the request of the Committee, survey other school systems to determine salaries being paid for comparable positions in each system. The survey will include the effective date of the specified salary.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:40; 71:43

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers' Agreement

EMPLOYMENT OF PRINCIPALS

Principals shall be employed by the Lenox Public Schools under individual contracts of employment. Said contracts shall be submitted to the School Committee for its approval of all terms concerning compensation/benefits, prior to the presentation of a contract of employment to the Principal. The compensation/benefit levels, above referenced, may be exceeded only with the approval of the School Committee.

Contracts issued to principals will be up to three years in length, and may be reissued by the Superintendent at levels of compensation/benefits, determined by the School Committee, provided that the Superintendent may employ a Principal under the terms and conditions of the previous contract of employment.

As a condition of employment, each Principal must maintain current certification, adhere to the policies and goals of the School Committee and the directives of the Superintendent, and annually before April 1 must submit, with the school council, the educational goals and school improvement plan for the school building(s) under his/her direction.

RELIGIOUS LEAVE

It is the policy of the Lenox Public Schools to reasonably accommodate the religious convictions of its staff members by allowing release time for the observance of religious holidays. Paid release time will be allowed according to the terms of negotiated collective bargaining contracts or at the discretion of the superintendent.

Adopted: February 25, 1980

Revised: December 7, 2010

Approved: January 24, 2011

SOURCE: Lenox

EMPLOYEE FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

Lenox Public Schools shall comply with the mandatory provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 and its subsequent amendments. The Superintendent shall ensure compliance with those regulations either personally or by delegation, or by some combination of personal oversight and delegation.

LEGAL REFS.: P.L. 103-3, "Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993."
 P.L. 110-181, "National Defense Authorization Act"

Adopted

Lenox Public Schools

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

A. Leave Without Pay

1. Employees may take leave without pay when they have exhausted their leave benefits and need additional leave to cover personal illness; the illness of a spouse, child, or parent; the birth or adoption of a child; for any “qualifying exigency” arising out of the fact that the employee’s spouse, son, daughter, or parent is on active duty, or has been notified of an impending call or order to active duty as a member of the National Guard or Reserves, in support of a contingency operation; or to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the employee is the service member’s spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin.
2. An employee is not entitled to leave without pay unless:
 - a. that employee has been employed for at least twelve (12) months by the School Committee*
and
 - b. that employee has worked at least 1250 hours in the previous 12 month period or has a salaried position of at least .5 F.T.E.s

* While the twelve (12) months of employment need not be consecutive, employment periods prior to a break in service of seven (7) years or more need not be counted unless the break is occasioned by the employee’s fulfillment of his/her National Guard or Reserve military obligation (as protected under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)), or a written agreement, including a collective bargaining agreement, exists concerning the employer’s intention to rehire the employee after the break in service.
3. Extent of leave:
 - a. An eligible employee may take up to twelve weeks (or twenty-six (26) weeks if leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness is also used) of leave total during a twelve (12) month period, including any paid leave used. The employee must exhaust all sick leave as per contracts with any collective bargaining units, available paid vacation leave and personal leave before being entitled to take leave without pay.
4. Definitions:
 - a. "Child" means a son or daughter, whether biological adopted, foster child, a stepchild, legal ward or child to whom the employee stands in loco parentis, if the child is either under the age of eighteen (18) years or is incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability.
 - b. "Health care provider” means a doctor of medicine or osteopathy who is authorized to practice medicine or surgery by the state where the doctor practices, or any person determined by the Secretary of Labor to be capable of providing health care services.
 - c. "Intermittent Leave" means leave taken in whole day periods but less than a whole work

week.

- d. "Parent" means a biological parent of an employee or an individual who stood in loco parentis to an employee when the employee was a child.
- e. "Reduced leave schedule" means a leave schedule that reduces the usual number of hours per work week, or hours per workday, of an employee.
- f. "Serious health condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition which involves either

(1) inpatient care (i.e., an overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity (i.e., inability to work, attend school, or perform other regular daily activities) or subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care;

or

(2) continuing treatment by a health care provider, which includes:

- (a) A period of incapacity lasting more than three (3) consecutive, full calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition, that **also** includes:
 - a. treatment two (2) or more times by or under the supervision of a health care provider (i.e., in-person visits, the first within seven (7) days and both within thirty (30) days of the first day of incapacity); **or**
 - b. one (1) treatment by a health care provider (i.e., an in-person visit within seven (7) days of the first day of incapacity) with a continuing regimen of treatment (e.g., prescription medication, physical therapy); **or**
- (b) Any period of incapacity related to pregnancy or for prenatal care. A visit to the health care provider is not necessary for each absence; **or**
- (c) Any period of incapacity or treatment for a chronic serious health condition which continues over an extended period of time, requires periodic visits (at least twice a year) to a health care provider, and may involve occasional episodes of incapacity. A visit to a health care provider is not necessary for absence; **or**
- (d) A period of incapacity that is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective. Only supervision by a health care provider is required, rather than active treatment; **or**
- (e) Any absences to receive multiple treatments for restorative surgery or for a condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three (3) days if not treated.

g. "Spouse" means a husband or wife, as defined by state law.

h. "Twelve Month Period" the preceding twelve-month period from when the leave commences.

B. Types of Leave With and Without Pay

1. Personal Medical Leave: The Superintendent may grant a medical leave of absence without pay to an employee who, because of a serious health condition is unable to perform the functions of his or her job. An employee must exhaust all available sick leave, vacation and personal days, before taking leave without pay.

- a. Medical Certification:
- (1) The Superintendent may require a medical certification from the employee's health care provider, stating—
 - i. the date on which the health condition began,
 - ii. the probable duration of the condition,
 - iii. the appropriate medical facts within the health care provider's knowledge regarding the condition,
 - iv. a statement that the employee is unable to perform the functions of his/her job.
 - (2) If the Superintendent has reason to doubt the validity of the medical certification provided by the employee's health care provider, he or she may require, at the School Committee's expense, a second opinion. The employee must obtain the opinion of a health care provider designated by the Superintendent concerning the information in b., above.

The health care provider giving the second opinion may not be a person regularly employed by the School Committee.
 - (3) If the second opinion conflicts with the first, the Superintendent may require, at the School Committee's expense, a third opinion. The third health care provider's opinion shall be final and binding on the School Committee and the employee.
 - (4) The Superintendent may require an employee on medical leave whether paid or unpaid to provide medical certifications at reasonable intervals.
- b. If the necessity for leave is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment, the employee:
- (1) shall make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment so as not to disrupt unduly the operations of the school, subject to the approval of the employee's health care provider.
 - (2) shall give the employee's supervisor at least thirty (30) days' notice, before the date the leave is to begin, of the employee's intention to take personal medical leave, except that if the date of treatment requires the leave to begin in less than thirty (30) days, the employee shall provide such notice as practicable.
- c. If the necessity for leave is foreseeable less than thirty (30) days in advance, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable – generally, either the same or next business day.
- d. If the necessity for leave is not foreseeable, the employee must provide notice to the employer as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of the particular case. Absent unusual circumstances, employees must comply with the employer's usual and customary notice and procedural requirements for requesting leave.
- e. The employee may take intermittent leave or take leave on a reduced leave schedule when

medically necessary and operationally feasible.

- f. Before the employee may resume work, the employee must present his or her supervisor with written medical certification from the employee's health care provider that the employee is able to resume work. If reasonable safety concerns exist, the Superintendent may, under certain circumstances, require such a certification for employees returning from intermittent FMLA leave.

2. Family Medical Leave Without Pay: The Superintendent may grant a medical leave of absence without pay to an employee who needs the time off to care for the employee's spouse, child or parent, if the spouse, child or parent has a serious health condition.

a. Medical Certification

(1) The Superintendent may require a medical certification from the health care provider for the spouse, child, or parent, as the case may be, stating -

- i. the date on which the health condition began,
- ii. the probable duration of the condition,
- iii. the appropriate medical facts within the health care provider's knowledge regarding the condition,
- iv. that the employee is needed to care for the spouse, child, or parents, as the case may be, and an estimate of the amount of time that such employee is needed to care for the spouse, child, or parent.

(2) If the Superintendent has reason to doubt the validity of the medical certification provided by the employee's health care provider, he or she may require, at the School Committee's expense a second opinion. The employee must obtain the opinion of the School Committee's designated health care provider concerning the information in b., above. The health care provider giving the second opinion may not be a person regularly employed by the School Committee.

(3) If the second opinion conflicts with the first, the Superintendent may require, at the School Committee's expense, a third opinion. The third provider's opinion shall be final and binding on the School Committee and the employee.

(4) The Superintendent may require an employee on medical leave to provide medical certification at reasonable intervals.

b. If the necessity for leave is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment, the employee—

(1) Shall make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatments so as not to disrupt unduly the operations of the school, subject to the approval of the health care provider for the spouse, child, or parent of the employee, as the case may be, and

- (2) Shall give the employee's supervisor at least thirty (30) days notice, before the date the leave is to begin, of the employee's intention to take family medical leave, except that if the date of the treatment requires the leave to begin in less than thirty (30) days, the employee shall provide such notice as practicable.
 - c. If the necessity for leave is foreseeable less than thirty (30) days in advance, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable – generally, either the same or next business day.
 - d. If the necessity for leave is not foreseeable, the employee must provide notice to the employer as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of the particular case. Absent unusual circumstances, employees must comply with the employer's usual and customary notice and procedural requirements for requesting leave.
 - e. the employee may take intermittent leave or take leave on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary.
3. Parental Leave: An employee may take parental leave without pay within one year of the birth of the child in order to care for that child or within one year of the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care.
 - a. When the need for parental leave is foreseeable based on expected birth or placement, the employee shall give his or her supervisor at least thirty (30) days' notice before the date the leave is to begin. If the date of the birth or placement requires leave to begin in less than thirty (30) days, the employee shall provide such notice as is practicable. Absent unusual circumstances, employees must comply with the employer's usual and customary notice and procedural requirements for requesting leave.
 - b. An employee taking parental leave may not take intermittent leave or work on a reduced leave schedule without the express consent of the Superintendent in writing.
4. Qualifying Exigencies Leave Without Pay: An employee may take leave without pay for qualifying exigencies arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is on active duty or call to active duty status as a member of the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation. Qualifying exigency leave is not available to family members of military members in the Regular Armed Forces. A qualifying exigency is defined as: (1) Short-notice deployment (i.e., deployment on seven or less days of notice) for a period of seven days from the date of notification; (2) Military events and related activities; (3) Childcare and school activities; (4) Financial and legal arrangements; (5) Counseling; (6) Rest and recuperation; (7) Post-deployment activities; and (8) Additional activities not encompassed in the other categories, but agreed to by the employer and employee.
 - a. Certification
 - (1) Leave for a qualifying exigency must be supported by a copy of the covered military member's active duty orders and certification providing the appropriate facts related to

the particular qualifying exigency for which leave is sought, including contact information if the leave involves meeting with a third party. A second and third opinion and recertification are not permitted for certification of a qualifying exigency. The employer may contact the individual or entity named in a certification of leave for a qualifying exigency for purposes of verifying the existence and nature of the meeting.

- b. An employee must provide notice of the need for foreseeable leave due to a qualifying exigency as soon as practicable. When the need is not foreseeable, the employee must provide notice to the employer as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of the particular case. Generally, it should be practicable to provide notice for unforeseeable leave within the time prescribed by the employer's usual and customary notice requirements.
- c. Leave may be taken intermittently for a qualifying exigency.

- 5. Care for Service Member Leave Without Pay: An employee who is a spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, with a serious injury or illness may take leave without pay for up to a total of twenty-six (26) workweeks during a single twelve (12) month period to care for the service member.

A covered service member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness. A serious injury or illness is one that was incurred by a service member in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform the duties of his or her office, grade, rank, or rating. The "single 12-month period" for leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness begins on the first day the employee takes leave for this reason and ends 12 months later, regardless of the 12 month period established by the employer for other types of FMLA leave. An eligible employee is limited to a combined total of 26 workweeks of leave for any FMLA-qualifying reason during the "single 12-month period." (Only 12 of the 26 weeks total may be for a FMLA-qualifying reason other than to care for a covered service member).

- a. Medical Certification

- (1) Leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness must be supported by a certification completed by an authorized health care provider or by a copy of an Invitational Travel Order (ITO) or Invitational Travel Authorization (ITA) issued to any member of the covered service member's family. Second and third opinions and recertification are not permitted. The employer may use a health care provider, a human resource professional, a leave administrator, or a management official – but not the employee's direct supervisor – to authenticate or clarify a medical certification of a serious injury or illness, or an ITO or ITA.
- b. Employees seeking to use military caregiver leave must provide thirty (30) days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave for planned medical treatment for a serious injury or illness of a covered service member. If leave is foreseeable, but thirty (30) days advance notice is not practicable, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable – generally, either the same or next business day. When the need is not foreseeable, the employee must

provide notice to the employer as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of the particular case. Generally, it should be practicable to provide notice for unforeseeable leave within the time prescribed by the employer's usual and customary notice requirements.

- c. Leave may be taken intermittently whenever medically necessary to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness. When leave is needed for planned medical treatment, the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the employer's operation.

C. Special Rules for Licensed Teachers

1. Rules Applicable to Instructors in Periods Near the Conclusion of the Academic Term:

The following rules apply to any employee who takes leave without pay under this policy and who is employed principally in an instructional capacity.

- a. If leave without pay begins more than five weeks before the end of an academic term, the principal may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of that academic term, if--
 - (1) the leave is of at least three weeks duration, and
 - (2) the return to work would occur during the three-week period before the end of the academic term.
- b. If leave because of the birth of a son or daughter; leave because of the placement of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care; leave taken to care for a spouse, parent, or child with a serious health condition; or leave taken to care for a covered service member without pay begins within five weeks before the end of an academic term, the principal, may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end' of that term, if--
 - (1) the leave is of at least two weeks duration, and
 - (2) the return to work would occur during the two-week period before the end of the academic term.
- c. If leave because of the birth of a son or daughter; leave because of the placement of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care; leave taken to care for a spouse, parent, or child with a serious health condition; or leave taken to care for a covered service member without pay begins within three weeks before the end of an academic term the principal may require the employees to continue taking leave until the end of that term, if the leave is for more than five working days.
- d. The extended leave is counted against the teacher's FMLA allotment. If the teacher's FMLA allotment expires during the extension, the additional time is nevertheless deemed FMLA leave.

2. Intermittent Leave and Reduced Leave Schedules:

- a. If the intermittent leave or reduced leave schedule is foreseeable based on planned medical treatment, the Superintendent may require the employee to transfer temporarily to an available alternate position—
 - (1) which is offered by the Superintendent,
 - (2) for which the employee is qualified,
 - (3) which has equivalent pay and benefits, and
 - (4) which better accommodates recurring periods of leave than the regular employment position of the employee.
- b. If a teacher does not give the School Committee the required thirty (30) days' notice for intermittent leave or a reduced leave schedule which is foreseeable, he or she must delay the taking of leave until the notice provision is met.
- c. If a teacher takes intermittent leave or a reduced leave schedule which is for more than 20% of the normal working days over the period of the leave, that teacher must instead take the entire period as FMLA leave.

3. Benefits during Leave:

- a. While the employee is on leave, the Lenox Public Schools shall maintain coverage of that employee under its group health plan at the level and under the conditions which would have been provided if the employee had continued in employment instead of being on leave.
- b. If the employee normally had a monthly payment to that plan, the employee must make that monthly payment. If the employee fails to make such payments, then the employee shall be excluded from the group health plan.

4. Employment and Benefits upon Return to Work:

- a. Any employee who takes leave under this Policy for the intended purpose of the leave shall be entitled, on return from leave--
 - (1) to be restored to his or her former job, or
 - (2) to be placed in an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment.
- b. The taking of leave under this policy shall not result in the loss of any employment benefit accrued before the date on which the leave began, nor be counted against the employee under

a “no fault” attendance policy. If a bonus or other payment, however, is based on the achievement of a specified goal such as hours worked, or perfect attendance, and the employee has not met the goal due to FMLA leave, payment may be denied unless it is paid to an employee on equivalent leave status for a reason that does not qualify as FMLA leave.

- c. No employee shall accrue seniority or employment benefits during any period of leave, nor shall the employee be entitled to any right, benefit, or position of employment other than those to which the employee would have been entitled if the employee had not taken the leave. This policy does not change the legal status of probationary teachers or the Superintendent's authority under M.G.L. Chapter 71, sec. 41 and 42.

5. Failure to Return from Leave: The Lenox Public Schools may recover the premium which it paid for maintaining coverage of the employee under its group health plan during the employee's unpaid leave under this policy if--

- a. the employee fails to return from unpaid leave under this policy after the period of leave to which the employee is entitled has expired; and
- b. the employee fails to return to work for a reason other than--
 - (1) the continuance, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition which would entitle the employee to personal or family medical leave without pay, or
 - (2) other circumstances beyond the control of the employee.

6. Prohibited Acts:

- a. No employee of the Lenox Public Schools shall interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of or the attempt to exercise any right provided under this policy.
- b. No employee of the Lenox Public Schools shall discriminate against any individual for opposing any practice contrary to this policy.
- c. No employee of the Lenox Public Schools shall discriminate against any individual for:
 - (1) filing any charge, instituting or causing to be instituted any proceeding, under or related to this policy,
 - (2) giving, or being about to give, any information in connection with any inquiry or proceeding relating to any right provided under this policy, or
 - (3) testifying, or being about to testify, in any inquiry or proceeding relating to any right provided under this policy.

LEGAL REFS.: P.L. 103-3 "Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993"
29 U.S.C. S 2601 et seq.
Department of Labor Regulations, 29 C.P.R. Part 825
Va Code S 22.1-303.
P.L. 110-181, "National Defense Authorization Act"

Adopted

MASSACHUSETTS MATERNITY/PATERNITY LEAVE

I. Administrative Policy

It is the Administrative Policy of the Lenox School Committee to implement and administer the provisions of the Massachusetts Maternity Leave Act. This law is intended to balance the demands of the workplace with the needs of the family, promote stability and economic security of families, promote national interests in preserving family integrity and entitle employees to take reasonable leaves for qualifying reasons.

II. Definitions

Eligible Employees: An employee who has worked in a full-time position for 3 consecutive months is covered by the MMLA.

Qualifying events: The leave is for the time period immediately after childbirth or adoption.

Length of Leave: The leave entitlement under the MMLA is 8 weeks for each child birth or adoption. If twins are born or there are 2 adoptions then the entitlement is up to 8 weeks for each child. Therefore, in the above circumstances, the employee would be entitled to up to 16 consecutive weeks of leave.

Leave for FMLA and MMLA will run and be determined concurrently. Leave under this policy runs concurrently with workers' compensation leave when the work-related injury qualifies as a serious health condition and maternity leave under M.G.L c. 149, § 105D.

III. Procedure

Notice Requirement: An employee is required to give at least two weeks' notice of his or her anticipated date of departure and intention to return.

IV. Effect of Benefits

- A. An employee granted a maternity or paternity leave under this policy will continue to be covered under the School's group health insurance plans and life insurance plans under the same conditions as coverage would have been provided if he/she had been continuously employed during the leave period.
- B. Employee contributions will be required either through payroll deduction or by direct payment to the Business Office. The employee will be advised in writing at the beginning of the leave as to the amount and method of payment. Employee contribution amounts are subject to change in rates that occur while the employee is on leave.
- C. If an employee's contribution is more than 30 days late, the Business Office may terminate the employee's insurance coverage. A written notification of intent to terminate coverage will be sent to the employee by certified mail at least five business days prior to said termination date.

- D. If the employee fails to return from maternity or paternity leave, the School may seek reimbursement from the employee for the portion of the premiums it paid on behalf of that employee (also known as the employer contribution) during the employee's leave.
- E. An employee is not entitled to seniority or benefit accrual during periods of unpaid leave, but will not lose any seniority or accrued benefits earned prior to the leave.
- F. Under an MMLA leave the employee will be placed in an unpaid leave status for the duration of the leave. The only exception is where a female employee, as a result of child birth, is physically incapacitated for a specific period of time, as determined by her attending physician in which case the female employee may use her own accrued and unused sick time during that period of time.

V. Job Protection

- A. If the employee returns to work within the 8 weeks of the maternity leave, he/she will be reinstated to his/her former position or an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, status and authority.
- B. The employee's restoration rights are the same as they would have been had the employee not been on leave. Thus, the employee will be subject to any pay or benefit reductions or other adverse actions, including layoff that she would have experienced if he or she had not taken leave under this policy.
- C. If the employee fails to return after 8 weeks of a maternity leave, the employee may be terminated, unless reinstated to his or her same or similar position, in accordance with applicable laws, other leave-related policies, and/or appropriate bargaining unit contract language.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. c. 149, § 105D

SMALL NECESSITIES LEAVE ACT

It is the policy of the Lenox Public Schools to follow the Massachusetts Small Necessities Leave Act, and to provide a process and procedure by which employees may access this right and provide for an accounting of time used by employees for this purpose.

The forms associated with the Massachusetts Small Necessities Leave Act are contained in this Policy.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L., c. 149, s. 52D

The Lenox School Committee will assure compliance with the Small Necessities Leave Act (SNLA) as indicated in this policy. Compliance with other state or local laws or regulations may be concurrent with this policy, where indicated, or will be outlined in separate policies.

A. ELIGIBILITY

Employees are eligible for small necessities leave (SNLA leave) under this policy if they have been employed for at least twelve (12) months and have worked at least twelve hundred and fifty (1,250) hours during the twelve (12)-month period immediately preceding the commencement of SNLA leave.

B. COVERAGE - WHEN LEAVE CAN BE TAKEN

Eligible employees are entitled to SNLA leave for one or more of the following reasons:

- To participate in school activities directly related to educational advancement of a son or daughter of the employee, such as parent-teacher conferences or interviewing for a new school (school is a public or private elementary or secondary school, a Head Start program and/or a children's day care facility);
- To accompany the son or daughter of the employee to routine medical or dental appointments, such as check-ups or vaccinations; or
- To accompany an elderly relative of the employee to routine medical or dental appointments and for "other professional services related to the elder's care," such as interviewing at nursing or group homes. (An elderly relative is defined as one who is sixty (60) years of age or older and related by blood or marriage.)

C. DURATION AND TIMING OF LEAVE

Eligible staff members may take a total of twenty-four (24) hours of SNLA leave per calendar year.

D. NOTICE TO EMPLOYER AND SCHEDULING OF LEAVE

Eligible staff members must provide not less than seven (7) days' notice before the date the SNLA leave is to begin where the need for the leave is foreseeable. However, if circumstances require leave to begin in less than seven (7) days, the staff member must provide such notice as soon as is practicable.

E. COMPENSATION DURING LEAVE

Employees who have accrued paid leave under the school committee's policies must utilize such leave when taking SNLA leave. The paid leave will count against the twenty-four (24) hours of allowable SNLA leave. When all accrued time has been paid, the staff member is then considered on unpaid leave for the remainder of the SNLA leave. Only Personal or Vacation time is eligible to be used for SNLA leave. Sick time may not be used for SNLA leave.

Employees must explain the reasons for their leave requests, so as to allow the School to determine if such leave qualifies as SNLA leave. Use of paid or unpaid leave for circumstances that qualify as SNLA leave will count against both the twenty-four (24) hour SNLA entitlement and the employee's leave entitlement under the

School's other policies, or applicable law. However, use of paid or unpaid leave for circumstances that do not qualify as SNLA leave will not count against the twenty-four (24) hour SNLA leave entitlement.

F. EMPLOYEE PROTECTION

The School will not interfere with an employee's right under the SNLA or applicable state or local law. No person shall be discriminated against for exercising, attempting to exercise, or supporting another in the exercise of rights under the SNLA.

G. ADMINISTRATION

SNLA leave requests should be directed to the Principal of the school building where the employee works. Requests will be reviewed by the Principal, or designee, to determine eligibility, length of the leave, paid or unpaid status, and benefit status. It is the responsibility of the employee to obtain all necessary documentation needed to determine leave status. The employee will meet with the Principal or designee, to discuss the leave request, whether it is granted, its terms, and the responsibilities of the employee.

Further questions may be directed to the Superintendent of Schools.

REQUEST FOR TIME UNDER THE SMALL NECESSITIES LEAVE ACT

(To be completed and submitted to your Principal with a copy to the Superintendent of Schools.)

I am requesting the following time off for reasons covered under the Small Necessities Leave Act. If this need was foreseeable, I have provided at least seven (7) days' notice, if it was not foreseeable, I have provided as much notice as possible. I understand that if eligible, this time will be counted towards the twenty-four (24) hour time bank allowed per calendar year under the Small Necessities Leave Act and the following Lenox Public Schools' Policy.

Requested time off: (date and time) _____

This time is for one of the reasons specified below:

- To participate in school activities directly related to educational advancement of a son or daughter of the employee, such as parent-teacher conferences or interviewing for a new school (school is a public or private elementary or secondary school, a Head Start program and/or a children's day care facility);

- To accompany the son or daughter of the employee to routine medical or dental appointments, such as check-ups or vaccinations; or
- To accompany an elderly relative of the employee to routine medical or dental appointments and for “other professional services related to the elder’s care”, such as interviewing at nursing or group homes. (An elderly relative is defined as one who is sixty (60) years of age or older and related by blood or marriage.)

I understand that if eligible, I will be using any paid time which I have available to cover this Small Necessities Leave Act time. If I do not have any paid time left, I understand that the time taken will be unpaid.

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____

Approval and Designation of SNLA Time

Date: _____

Request received from: _____

Department: _____ Date of hire: _____

No. of hours worked in previous twelve (12) months: _____

Time requested: (date and time): _____

SNLA time taken this calendar year: _____

As of this date: SNLA time remaining: _____

Paid time remaining: _____

Approved:

_____ As requested

_____ With the following modifications: _____

Not Approved:

_____ Employee is ineligible due to length of employment, i.e. less than one year.

_____ Employee has worked less than 1250 hours in the previous 12 months.

_____ The reason for the requested time off does not fall under the guidelines of the Act.

_____ SNLA entitlement has been exhausted for the current period.

_____ Other: _____

Principal: _____ Date: _____

Copies distributed: Employee _____ Principal: _____

Superintendent: _____ Payroll: _____

Name: _____

Anticipated dates of leave of absence: _____

Types of leave: _____

Date of hire: _____

Benefit time as of: _____

_____ Personal time

_____ Vacation time

_____ Total

As of _____ worked _____ hours in the previous fifty-two (52) weeks.

Eligible for SNLA? _____ Yes _____ No

Previous SNLA and dates: _____

Comments: _____

Approved by: _____ Date: _____

PROFESSIONAL STAFF VACATIONS AND HOLIDAYS

Vacations

All administrators and other professional personnel employed on a 12-month basis will be entitled to annual vacation days.

Vacations for supervisory professional staff members who are employed on a 12-month basis and are members of a recognized bargaining unit will be established through negotiations. Vacations for supervisory personnel not in bargaining units will be established by the Committee and delineated in their individual contracts.

Holidays

Professional staff members will not be required to work on legal holidays. Paid holidays for the professional staff will be established when the School Committee approves the calendar for the school year and will include all legal holidays.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECRUITING/POSTING OF VACANCIES

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent, with the assistance of the administrative staff, to determine the personnel needs of the school system and it is the responsibility of the Principal, in consultation with the Superintendent to determine the personnel needs of the individual schools. In addition, school councils may review personnel requirements as a means of evaluating the needs of a school. Any recommendations for the creation or elimination of a position must be approved by the School Committee.

The search for good teachers and other professional employees will extend to a wide variety of educational institutions and geographical areas. It will take into consideration the characteristics of the town and the need for a heterogeneous staff from various cultural backgrounds.

Recruitment procedures will not overlook the talents and potential of individuals already employed by the school system. Any current employee may apply for any position for which he or she has certification and meets other stated requirements.

Openings in the schools will be posted to permit current employees to submit applications.

REFS.: Collective Bargaining Agreements

PROFESSIONAL STAFF HIRING

Through its employment policies, the district will strive to attract, secure, and retain the highest qualified personnel for all professional positions. The selection process will be based upon an awareness to candidates who will devote themselves to the education and welfare of the children attending the schools.

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent, and of persons to whom he or she delegates this responsibility, to determine the personnel needs of the school system and to locate suitable candidates. No position may be created without the approval of the School Committee. The district's goal is to employ and retain personnel who are motivated, will strive always to do their best, and are committed to providing the best educational environment for the children

It will be the duty of the Superintendent to see that persons considered for employment in the schools meet all certification requirements and the requirements of the Committee for the type of position for which the nomination is made.

The following guidelines will be used in the selection of personnel:

1. There will be no discrimination in the hiring process due to age, sex, gender identity, creed, race, color, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or place of residence.
2. The quality of instruction is enhanced by a staff with a wide variation in background, educational preparation, and previous experience.
3. The administrator responsible for the hiring of a staff member is directed to establish a representative screening committee (In the case of district-wide positions, for the position of principals, it is the Superintendent. For building based personnel, it is the Principal). The administrator has the final say in determining who will be hired but it is expected that the screening committee's input will be a factor in the decision. For those positions where the hiring authority rests with the School Committee a representative screening committee may be established by the School Committee or the School Committee may direct the Superintendent to establish a screening committee to assist the Superintendent in making his/her recommendations to the School Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 69:6; 71:38; 71:38G; 71:39; 71:45; 71:55B
Massachusetts Board of Education Requirements for Certification of Teachers,
Principals, Supervisors, Directors, Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents in
the Public Schools of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, revised 1994
BESE Regulations 603 CMR 7:00, 26:00, and 44:00

PART-TIME AND SUBSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL STAFF EMPLOYMENT

Part-Time Teachers

Teachers may be employed on a part-time basis. The salary of part-time teachers will bear the same ratio to the salary schedule that a teacher would earn if employed full-time (for example, a teacher employed for half of the number of hours would receive half of the salary of a full-time teacher).

Substitute Teachers

Each building principal will have the authority to employ as many substitute teachers as may be necessary to take the place of teachers who are temporarily absent. Substitutes are referred to building principals by Central Office after they have completed an application, have a CORI check, and have been fingerprinted as required (MGL Chapter 71 Section 38R).

The school district will employ, to the extent possible, persons who meet the requirements for teacher appointments and will assign substitute teaching positions on the basis of their areas of competence. When the supply of potential substitutes in a particular subject area is too limited to meet school or department needs, there will be active recruitment for substitutes in those areas (i.e., special education, math, science, etc.). All substitute teachers will be expected to provide educational services, rather than to assume merely a student supervisory role. They will be provided with as much support as possible by building administrators and teachers.

The School Committee will establish the daily rate of pay for substitute teachers.

**SUBSTITUTE COMPENSATION
FOR PROFESSIONAL & SUPPORT STAFF**

There shall be three categories of professional staff substitutes:

- 1) Per Diem: One who substitutes intermittently in various positions but for no more than 10 consecutive days in any one position.
- 2) Short-term: A substitute in one position for more than 10 consecutive days but not anticipated by the Superintendent to serve more than 60 consecutive school days.
- 3) Long-term: A substitute in one position who is anticipated by the Superintendent to serve 61 or more consecutive school days.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF COMPENSATION - Effective July 1, 2019

Per Diem Substitutes (1-10 Days)

\$90.00 per day (currently or previously licensed professionals)

\$85.00 per day (non-licensed)

Per Diem substitutes are not eligible for medical leave or other benefits. Full-day per diem substitutes shall report in the morning at the same time as the teacher for whom they are subbing, and may leave at the end of the workday when all reports and forms have been completed and submitted.

Short-term Substitutes (11-60 Days)

Short-term substitute salary will be based on the initial step of the BA column, effective on the first day of the short-term assignment, and shall be paid on a per diem basis only for those days that he/she actually works including workshop days when requested to be in attendance by the principal. Short-term substitutes are not eligible for medical leave or other benefits. Short-term substitutes shall have the same workday as the teacher for whom they are subbing and will be expected to plan lessons, correct papers, confer with parents, attend meetings, and to attend all professional tasks normally associated with that teaching assignment. If a Per Diem substitute is asked to continue in the same position on a short-term basis, the new rate shall become effective immediately upon appointment but such rate shall not be applied retroactively.

Long-term Substitute (61 + Days)

Long-term substitutes will hold MA teaching license (whenever possible) and will be placed on the LEA Unit A salary schedule, effective on the first day of the long-term assignment. Long-term substitutes are eligible for medical and personal leave, on a prorated basis, but are not eligible for health insurance, etc. Long-term substitutes shall have the same workday as the teacher for whom they are subbing and will be expected to plan lessons, correct papers, confer with parents, attend meetings, and attend to all professional tasks typically associated with that teaching assignment. If a short-term substitute is asked to continue in the same position long-term, the new rate shall become effective immediately upon appointment but such rate shall not be applied retroactively.

NURSES

Per Diem substitute (1-10 Days)

\$125.00 per day

Short-term Nurse Substitutes (11-60 Days)

Short-term substitute nurse salary will be based on the initial step of the BA column effective on the first day of the short-term assignment, and shall be paid only for those days he/she actually works including workshop days when requested to be in attendance by the building principal. Short-term substitute nurses are not eligible for medical leave or other benefits. Short-term substitutes shall have the same workday as the school nurse and will be expected to attend to sick children, complete reports, communicate with parents, and attend meetings the same as the school nurse would. If a Per Diem substitute nurse is asked to continue in the same position on a short-term basis, the new rate shall become effective immediately, but that rate shall not be applied retroactively.

Long-term Nurse Substitutes (61+ Days)

Long-term substitute nurses will be placed in the LEA Unit A salary schedule, effective on the first day of the long-term assignment. Long-term nurse substitutes are eligible for medical and personal leave, on a pro-rated basis, but are not eligible for health insurance, etc. Long-term substitute nurses shall have the same workday as the school nurse and will be expected to attend to sick children, complete reports, communicate with parents, and attend meetings the same as the school nurse would. If a short-term substitute nurse is asked to continue in the same position long-term, the new rate shall become effective immediately, but that rate shall not be applied retroactively.

SUPPORT STAFF SUBSTITUTE COMPENSATION

Substitute support staff shall be compensated at the rates below. A support staff member will receive 100% of the beginning rate of the appropriate salary scale if the duration of the substitute period exceeds 60 continuous days, beginning on the 61st day. This rate may be effective at an earlier date, at the Superintendent's discretion.

UNIT C

Cafeteria: \$12.00 per hour

Paraprofessionals
and other UNIT C: \$12.00 per hour

Bus Driver (CDL): \$20.00 per hour

UNIT D

Custodial: \$15.00 per hour (plus differential for night shift)

Effective August 27, 2019

Approved: April 28, 1980 (effective September 1, 1980)
Revised: February 6, 1984 (effective February 13, 1984)
Revised: December 15, 1986
Revised: October 19, 1987 (effective October 19, 1987)
Revised: September 1, 1989
Revised: July 20, 1999
Revised: September 19, 2011
Revised: September 16, 2019 (effective August 27, 2019)

PHILOSOPHY OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

All staff members will be encouraged in and provided with suitable opportunities for the development of increased competencies beyond those they may attain through the performance of their assigned duties and assistance from supervisors.

Opportunities for professional growth may be provided through such means as the following:

1. Planned in-service programs and workshops offered within the school system from time to time; these may include participation by outside consultants.
2. Membership on curriculum development committees drawing personnel from within and without the school system.
3. Released time for visits to other classrooms and schools and for attendance at conferences, workshops, and other professional meetings.
4. Leaves of absence for graduate study, research, and travel.
5. Partial payment of tuition for approved courses.

The Superintendent will have authority to approve or deny released time for conferences and visitations, and reimbursements for expenses, provided such activities are within budget allocations for the purpose.

PROFESSIONAL TEACHER STATUS

Teachers and certain other professional employees who have served in the school district for three consecutive years shall be entitled to professional teacher status. The Superintendent, upon recommendation of the Principal, may award such status to a teacher who has served in the Principal's school for not less than one year or a teacher who has obtained such status in any other public school district in the Commonwealth. The Superintendent will base his/her decisions on the results of evaluation procedures conducted according to Committee policy.

At the end of each of the first three years of a teacher's employment, it will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to notify each employee promptly in writing of the decision on reappointment. Notification to a teacher not being re-appointed must be made by June 15 or at an earlier date if required by a collective bargaining agreement.

A teacher who attains professional teacher status will have continuous employment in the service of the school system. A teacher with professional teacher status whose position is abolished by the School Committee may be continued in the employ of the school system in another position for which he or she is legally qualified.

Nothing in these provisions will be considered as restricting the Superintendent from changing teaching assignments or altering or abolishing supervisory assignments except that, by law, no teacher may be assigned to a position for which he or she is not legally qualified.

Established by law and Committee policy

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:38; 71:38G; 71:38H; 71:41; 71:42; 71:43

ADMINISTRATOR TIME SCHEDULES

The nature of the duties and responsibilities of administrators and supervisors will require their hours of work to vary and extend as necessary to fulfill the requirements of their positions.

During the course of their contract year, all administrators will be expected to work during the hours and on the days that the Superintendent's office is open unless special scheduling arrangements have been made with the Superintendent. On days schools are closed because of bad weather or other emergencies, all staff members except those who work only on teacher work days are required to report to work as soon as they are able to do so.

The working year for administrators will be established individually through their contracts.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:80

EVALUATION OF TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Authority, Scope and Purpose

The specific purposes of evaluation under M.G.L. c. 71, Section 38 and 603 CMR 35:00 are:

- (A) to provide information for the continuous improvement of performance through an exchange of information between the person being evaluated and the evaluator, and
- (B) to provide a record of facts and assessments for personnel decisions.

The purpose of 603 CMR 35:00 is to ensure that every School Committee has a system to enhance the professionalism and accountability of teachers and administrators which will enable them to assist all students to perform at high levels. 603 CMR 35:00, together with the Principles of Effective Teaching and Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership adopted by the Board of Education, set out what Massachusetts teachers and administrators are expected to know and be able to do. 603 CMR 35:00 requires that School Committees establish a rigorous and comprehensive evaluation process for teachers and administrators. Consistent with these principles, the School Committee policy is to assure effective teaching and administrative leadership in the Lenox Public Schools.

Definitions

Administrator: shall mean any person employed in a school district in a position requiring a certificate as described in 603 CMR 7.10 (34) through (38) or who has been approved as an administrator in the area of vocational education as provided in 603 CMR 4.00 et seq.

Evaluation: shall mean the ongoing process of defining goals and identifying, gathering and using information as part of a process to improve professional performance (the "formative evaluation") and to assess total job effectiveness and make personnel decisions (the "summative evaluation").

Evaluator: shall mean any person designated by a Superintendent, consistent with the procedures set out in 603 CMR 35.06, who has responsibility for evaluation.

Performance Standards: shall mean the performance standards locally developed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, Section 38, 603 CMR 35:00, and the Principles of Effective Teaching and Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership adopted by the Board of Education.

School Committee: shall mean the School Committee in all cities, towns and regional school districts, local and district trustees for vocational education, educational collaborative boards and boards of trustees for the county agricultural schools.

Superintendent: shall mean the person employed by the School Committee pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, Section 59, or Section 59A. The Superintendent is responsible for the implementation of 603 CMR

35:00 S/he shall be evaluated by the School Committee pursuant to 603 CMR 35.00 and such other standards that may be established by the School Committee.

Teacher: shall mean any person employed in a school district in a position requiring a certificate as described in 603 CMR 7.10 (1) through (33), and 603 CMR 7.10 (39) through (42) or who has been approved as an instructor in the area of vocational education as provided in 603 CMR 4.00 et seq.

Principles of Evaluation

- (1) The performance standards shall be measurable.
- (2) The performance standards shall reflect and allow for significant differences in assignments and responsibilities. These differences shall be described in evaluation reports.
- (3) The performance standards shall be shared with the person being evaluated in advance of the evaluation process.
- (4) The purpose of evaluation shall be stated clearly, in writing, to the person being evaluated.
- (5) The evaluation process shall be free of racial, sexual, religious and other discrimination and biases as defined in state and federal laws.
- (6) The person being evaluated shall be allowed to gather and provide additional information on his/her performance. Such information must be provided in a timely manner and must be considered by the evaluator.
- (7) The person being evaluated shall have an opportunity to respond in writing to the evaluation reports.

Performance Standards for Teachers and Administrators

- (1) School committees shall establish performance standards for teachers upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and in accordance with the process described in M.G.L. c. 71 Section 38, including conducting a public hearing and engaging in collective bargaining and, if necessary, binding interest arbitration. All performance standards established for teachers shall be consistent with and meet the Principles of Effective Teaching adopted by the Board of Education.
- File: GCO
- (2) School committees shall establish performance standards for the evaluation of all administrators upon the recommendation of the Superintendent. Performance standards for those administrators who are subject to collective bargaining shall be developed in accordance with M.G.L. c. 150E. All performance standards established for administrators shall be consistent with and meet the Principles of Effective Administrative Leadership adopted by the Board of Education.
 - (3) School committees are encouraged to establish programs and standards which provide for a rigorous and comprehensive evaluation process for teachers and administrators. The evaluation process may include

the extent to which students assigned to teachers and administrators satisfy student academic standards or individual education plans, and the successful implementation of professional development plans, as provided in M.G.L. c. 69 Section IB and c.71, Section 38.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. c.69, Section IB; c. 71, Section 38
603 CMR 35.00

REDUCTION IN PROFESSIONAL STAFF WORK FORCE

In the event it becomes necessary to reduce the number of staff members, the school department will follow the procedure below:

1. Teachers without professional teacher status generally will be terminated first if there is a qualified teacher with professional teacher status to fill the position.
2. Should all teachers in the areas subject to reduction be fully certified, the Superintendent will review the performance of teachers with professional teacher status and make recommendations for termination.

Prior to making a decision, the Superintendent must be sure that there are teachers who are qualified and certified to perform all of the needed duties of the terminated teachers.

All certified personnel terminated for purposes of reduction in force may be considered for reemployment as vacancies occur in positions for which they are qualified. Opportunity for re-employment will be extended for two years to personnel in the reverse order of the termination order above. If recall is refused, the staff member's name will be dropped from the list.

The district will follow all of the requirements of the law in terminating teachers in order to reduce staff.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:41; 71:42

CONTRACT REF.: Collective Bargaining Agreements

RESIGNATIONS

The School Committee hereby authorizes the Superintendent to accept resignations which have been tendered in writing by employees. Once receipt is acknowledged in writing by the Superintendent, no further action will be required by the School Committee in order for the resignation to be effective. Unless otherwise so specified in the letter of resignation, resignations are effective on the day they are acknowledged in writing by the Superintendent.

RETIREMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

The Superintendent will inform the Committee of the professional staff members who have indicated their intentions to retire at the end of the current school year. No further School Committee action is necessary unless approval is needed for the payment of or participation in continued local benefits.

LEGAL REF.: Age Discrimination in Employment Law, P.L. 95-256

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers Contract

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

The Superintendent will strive to assist personnel to perform their duties efficiently. However, the Superintendent may dismiss any employee in accordance with state law. Further, the Committee recognizes the constitutional rights of the district's employees and assures them the protection of due process of law. To guarantee such rights, a system of constitutionally and legally sound procedures will be followed in each case of suspension or dismissal of an employee.

When the Superintendent or a Principal determines that sufficient cause exists that a professional employee be suspended or dismissed from service in the school system, he or she will:

1. Be certain that each such case is supported by defensible records.
2. Determine if the individual is to be suspended immediately with the understanding that the suspension will be subject to restoration of salary and position if an appeal is decided in favor of the individual.
3. Follow the procedures for dismissal or suspension that are contained in applicable laws as well as those included in the current agreement with the teachers' bargaining unit.
4. Provide the individual involved with a written statement that will:
 - a. Indicate whether the action the Superintendent is taking is dismissal or suspension.
 - b. State the reason for the suspension or dismissal.
 - c. Guarantee that all procedures will be in accord with due process of law.
 - d. Inform employees who have a right to request a hearing under appropriate laws that they may be represented at such a hearing by counsel of their choice.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:42; 71:42D

TUTORING FOR PAY

Definition: "Tutoring" means giving private instruction or help to an individual or group for which the teacher receives remuneration other than through the School Committee.

Tutoring is not to be recommended for a student unless the appropriate teacher of the student involved is consulted and agrees that it will be of real help. If tutoring seems advisable, the Principal may give the parents a list of persons who are willing to tutor. This list may include teachers, but not the student's teacher of the subject in which he or she is to be tutored.

SUPPORT STAFF POSITIONS

Education is a cooperative enterprise in which all employees of the school system must participate intelligently and effectively for the benefit of the children. This school system will employ support staff members in positions that function to support the education program.

All support staff positions will be established initially by the Committee. In each case, the Superintendent will submit for the Committee's consideration and action a job description or job specifications for the position.

Although positions may remain temporarily unfilled, or the number of persons holding the same type of position reduced in event of de-staffing requirements, only the Committee may abolish a position it has created.

SUPPORT STAFF HIRING

All candidates will be considered on the basis of their merits, qualifications, and the needs of the school system. In each instance, the Superintendent and others playing a role in the selection process will seek to employ the best qualified person for the job.

Vacancies in positions will be filled by the Superintendent and/or the Principal in accordance with the law and with the applicable regulations.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:55B; 71:59B

SUBSTITUTES FOR CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

In addition to the official list of substitutes, the principal, at his or her discretion, may ask a Student Teacher or a Paraprofessional from his or her own staff to serve as a substitute teacher subject to the following conditions:

1. The principal shall not require such person to serve as a substitute teacher unless such person freely concedes to so serve.
2. Normally, support personnel shall not serve as a substitute teacher for more than three consecutive days. However, with the prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools such an arrangement may be continued beyond three days if the substitute is especially well-qualified to serve for a longer term.
3. Support personnel who serve as substitute teachers for a full day shall be paid the higher of per diem or regular hourly rate times the number of hours normally worked. Such salary shall be in lieu of the salary normally received. Support personnel who serve as substitute teachers shall, while serving, continue to be covered by the same fringe benefits stipulated in the regular contract for support personnel. Also, they will stay for their normal workday (as specified in the employment agreement) if this is a longer period than normally required for a substitute.
4. Normally, student teachers should be used to substitute only for their supervising teachers. In an emergency, exceptions may be granted. No student teacher may be employed as a substitute other than for the supervising teacher without approval by the Superintendent of Schools or designee.

An administrator may also arrange for part-time teachers to serve as substitutes when available. In such cases, the teacher will be paid a pro-rated share of the per diem substitute rate.

CROSS REF.: MFB, Practice Teaching

Adopted: April 1, 1974

Revised: October 13, 1977

SOURCE: Lenox

EVALUATION OF INTERSCHOLASTIC COACHES

The Superintendent shall develop evaluative criteria for interscholastic coaches and a procedure for evaluating their performance. Evaluation of coaches is to be treated as a continuing, cooperative process designed to improve the coach's performance and shall provide for a written assessment at the end of each coaching season. This assessment shall be based on information obtained from observations, participants, colleagues, supervisors, members of the community at large, and self-evaluative techniques.

Interscholastic coaches shall be appointed by the Superintendent and shall be paid in accordance with the salary schedule agreed to by the School Committee and the Lenox Education Association. Annual appointments shall reflect, where applicable, previous evaluations of the coach by the Athletic Director and the Principal in accordance with evaluative criteria.

Adopted: September 22, 1975

SOURCE: Lenox

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC COACHES

Administration

1. Care of equipment, uniforms and facilities.
 - a. Properly issued and inventoried?
 - b. Properly collected at season's end?
 - c. Necessary cleaning and repairs brought to the attention of the Athletic Director?
 - d. Problems with facilities are brought to the attention of the Athletic Director?

2. Organization of Staff
 - a. Clearly outlines duties of assistant coaches, timers, scorers, managers, etc.
 - b. Practices and game preparation show evidence of thoughtful planning and organization

3. Organization of Practices and Games
 - a. Budgets time properly
 - b. Provides effective supervision of practices and locker rooms
 - c. Drills and activities are pertinent to the needs of the team.

4. Adherence to district and school philosophy and policies
 - a. Eligibility of players
 - b. Budget requests are properly handled and purchasing procedures are followed
 - c. Rosters are maintained properly
 - d. Insurance forms and follow-up
 - e. Reporting of scores to press and Athletic Director

5. Program Development

Maintains effective contact with other relevant programs within school, with other systems, and with youth programs where applicable. Takes active role in promoting future development of individual athletes. Is alert for opportunities to assist individual athletes in pursuing possible college acceptance based on athletic ability and academic proficiency.

Coaching Ability

1. Coaching reflects excellent knowledge of the sport and instructional techniques.
2. Is able to develop the necessary physical and mental condition necessary for the sport.
3. Shows skills in preparing staff and team for games.
4. Shows good judgment in prevention and care of injuries (first aid kit is adequately supplied, all injuries are reported to the School Nurse, parents of injured players are contacted, etc.).
5. Is able to develop commitment, enthusiasm and spirit among team members.

6. Clearly sets high expectations for performance and behavior and is successful in getting participants to meet these goals.

7. Evaluates team personnel carefully and adjusts program to make maximum use of talent available.
8. Develops teams and players that display positive attitude and sportsmanship at all times.
9. Shows commitment to working with less-talented athletes.

Interpersonal Relations

1. Treats students, parents, colleagues and officials with respect and dignity.
2. Is able to develop an atmosphere of mutual respect within a team.
3. Develops effective working relationships with staff members, parents, etc.

Professional Growth

1. Has clear-cut goals and demonstration self-knowledge; is able to analyze his/her performance as a coach in a critical manner and make adjustments as required.
2. Shows initiative in improving skill in latest methods and techniques.

Coaches are encouraged to develop with the Athletic Director additional criteria to be used in assessing their performance.

The Athletic Director shall meet with each coach before each season to review the evaluative criteria and to discuss particular criteria which are to be stressed during the season. Throughout the season, the Athletic Director will observe the coach during practices and games and in other settings pertinent to the coach's responsibility and will communicate with the coach through a continuing cooperative process designed to improve the coach's performance. Within two weeks after the season has ended, the coach and Athletic Director shall meet to discuss the coach's performance; in addition, a written evaluation summary (Form GBI or a similar format) shall be given to the coach within one month of the end of the season. The evaluation summary shall be based on the above criteria plus additional criteria suggested by the coach and accepted by the Athletic Director. The procedures used for Form GBI shall be used for each evaluation summary: each summary shall be signed by the coach, Athletic Director, Principal, and Superintendent, and each shall receive copies of the summary.

RETIREMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

All full-time non-instructional personnel are required to participate in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Retirement System.

Periodically, the Superintendent will present to the Committee the names of support staff members who have indicated their intentions to retire.

LEGAL REFS.: Age Discrimination in Employment Law, P.L. 95-256

NEGOTIATIONS GOALS

The Lenox School Committee recognizes that education is a public trust; it therefore is dedicated to providing the best possible educational opportunities for the young people of this community. In negotiations, this objective may be best attained if there is a climate of mutual trust and understanding between the negotiating parties.

The School Committee believes that the best interests of public education will be served by establishing procedures that provide an orderly method for the School Committee and representatives of the staff to discuss matters of common concern.

It is further recognized that nothing in negotiations will compromise the School Committee's legal responsibilities nor will any employee's statutory rights and privileges be impaired.

NEGOTIATIONS LEGAL STATUS

All negotiations between the School Committee and recognized employee groups are conducted subject to Chapter 150E of the Massachusetts General Laws. The legal status of negotiations is defined in part by Section 2 of that chapter, as follows:

Employees shall have the right of self-organization and the right to form, join, or assist any employee organization for the purpose of bargaining collectively through representatives of their own choosing on questions of wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment, and to engage in lawful, concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection, free from interference, restraint, or coercion. An employee shall have the right to refrain from any or all of such activities, except to the extent of making such payment of service fees to an exclusive representative as provided in section twelve.

Basic to all employer/employee negotiations is the concept of "bargaining in good faith." It is the legal responsibility of both the School Committee and employee organizations to bargain in good faith as they conduct negotiations. However, such obligation does not compel either party to agree to a proposal or make a concession.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 150E:1 et seq.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE NEGOTIATING AGENTS

The School Committee is responsible for negotiations with recognized employee bargaining units. However, because of the expertise and time required for negotiations, the Committee may hire a negotiator to bargain in good faith with recognized bargaining units to help assure that mutually satisfactory agreements on wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment will be developed.

The School Committee will appoint the negotiator and the fee or salary for his services will be established in accordance with the law at the time of appointment.

The duties of the negotiator will be as follows:

1. To negotiate in good faith with recognized bargaining units to arrive at a mutually satisfactory agreement on wages, hours, and working conditions of employees represented by the units.
 - a. The negotiator may recommend members of the administration to serve on the negotiation team. They will not be members of any unit that negotiates with the Committee, and their participation in negotiations must be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the Committee.
 - b. He/she will direct accumulation of necessary data needed for negotiations, such as comparative information.
 - c. He/she will follow guidelines set forth by the Committee as to acceptable agreements and will report on the progress of negotiations.
 - d. He/she will make recommendations to the Committee as to acceptable agreements.
2. The negotiator will interpret the signed negotiated contracts to administrators and may be called upon to offer advice on various aspects of contract administration during the terms of the contracts with employee organizations.

LEGAL REF.:

M.G.L. 71:37E

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

The primary function of a school program is the instruction of students. All staff activities and efforts shall be directed toward providing a high quality, effective, and ever-improving instructional program.

There are primarily three functions involved in carrying out the instructional program:

- Operating Function
- Coordinating and Developing Function
- Evaluating Function

The operating function involves classroom instruction and building program management. The coordinating and developing function includes monitoring activities (curriculum development), in-service education, and special services. The evaluation function involves data collection and synthesis and establishing future direction.

LEGAL REFS.: 603 CMR 26:00

CROSS REF.: AD, Educational Philosophy
 ADA, School District Goals and Objectives

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The School Committee seeks to educate students in the democratic tradition, to foster a recognition of individual freedom and social responsibility, to inspire meaningful awareness of and respect for the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Fairness in procedures will be observed both to safeguard the legitimate interests of the schools and to exhibit by appropriate example the basic objectives of a democratic society as set forth in the Constitutions of the United States and the State.

LEGAL REFS.: Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar for the ensuing year will be prepared by the Superintendent and submitted to the School Committee for approval each year. The number of days or instructional hours scheduled for the school year will be determined in accordance with the following standards set by the Massachusetts Board of Education:

1. Elementary school will operate for a minimum of 180 days. Schools shall ensure that every elementary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 900 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in 603 CMR 27.02. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.
2. Secondary schools will operate for a minimum of 180 days. All schools shall ensure that every secondary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 990 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in 603 CMR 27.02. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.

For the information of staff, students, and parents, the calendar will set forth the days schools will be in session; holidays and vacation periods; in-service days; and parent conferences.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 4:7; 15:IG; 71:1; 71:4; 71:4A; 71:73; 136:12 Board of Education Regulations for School Year and School Day, effective 9/1/75 Board of Education, Student Learning Time Regulations, 603 CMR 27.00, Adopted 12/20/94

SCHOOL DAY

The length of the school day at various levels, as well as the specific opening and closing times of the schools, will be recommended by the Superintendent and set by the Committee.

The Superintendent is authorized to make minor changes in opening and closing times to simplify transportation scheduling; however, major changes in schedules will be subject to Committee approval.

Parents and guardians will be informed of the opening and closing times set by the Committee. To help insure the safety of all children, parents will also be notified that students may not be admitted into the school building until the start of the official day.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 15:IG; 71:1; 71:59
 Board of Education Regulations for School Year and Day, effective 9/1/75

ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION

The District offers a diversified educational program compatible with the needs of the community and state standards.

The organizational plan is designed to facilitate the philosophy of educating every student, each to his/her fullest potential.

The structure will consist of three levels -- Primary/Elementary, Middle and Secondary levels.

The Primary/Elementary level includes schools with kindergarten through grade five. The Middle level consists of schools for grades six, seven and eight. The Secondary level consists of schools with grades nine, ten, eleven, and twelve.

Special education services are integrated across each grade level in all schools.

The organization is designed to meet the standards established within the Curriculum Frameworks as required by the State Department of Education and to serve the needs of all students.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Constant adaptation and development of the curriculum is necessary if the District is to meet the needs of the students in its schools. To be successful, curriculum development must be a collaborative enterprise involving staff and administrators utilizing their professional expertise and gathering input from parents and community.

The Committee expects its faculty and administration to regularly evaluate the education program and to recommend modifications of practice and changes in curriculum content as well as the addition or deletion of courses to the instructional program.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 69:1E
 603 CMR 26:05

CURRICULUM ADOPTION

The School Committee will rely on its professional staff to design and implement instructional programs and courses of study that will advance the educational goals of the school system.

The Superintendent will have authority to approve new programs and courses of study after they have been thoroughly studied and found to support educational goals, subject to budgetary constraints. The Committee itself will consider, and officially adopt, new programs and courses when they constitute an extensive alteration in instructional content or approach.

The Committee wishes to be informed of all new courses and substantive revisions in curriculum. It will receive reports on changes under consideration. Its acceptance of these reports, including a listing of the high school program of studies, will constitute its adoption of the curriculum for official purposes.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:1; 69:1E

BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

State law requires that schools:

... shall give instruction and training in orthography, reading, writing, the English language and grammar, geography, arithmetic, drawing, music, the history and Constitution of the United States, the duties of citizenship, health education, physical education and good behavior...

The law further states that American history and civics, including the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, local history and government will be taught as required subjects in the public schools.

Physical education is compulsory for all students, except that no student will be required to take part in physical education exercises if a physician certifies in writing that such exercises would be injurious to the student.

The Fundamental Skills

The business of the schools is to equip all children with the skills, tools, and attitudes that will lay the basis for learning now and in the future. This means giving highest priority to developing skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and solving numerical problems.

The first claim of the community's resources will be made for the realization of these priorities. School dollars, school talent, school time, and whatever innovation in program is required must be concentrated on these top-ranking goals. No student should be bypassed or left out of the school's efforts to teach the fundamental skills. Schooling for basic literacy must reach all students, in all neighborhoods, and from all homes.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1; 71:2; 71:3; 71:13
 603 CMR 26:05

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The School Committee will attempt to provide every student with an opportunity for wholesome and enriched educational experiences. It is the Committee's belief that the following basic aims and objectives of the physical education program will contribute to this goal:

1. To aid the development of the entire student so that a well-trained mind may function properly in a healthy body.
2. To encourage student participation in vigorous physical activity while in school, and to teach the skills of those activities so that they will have value for later activities in everyday life.
3. To increase appreciation of physical fitness and its importance in regard to good health.
4. To impress upon students the importance of integrating one's mind, body and attitude in preparing to face the obligations of a complex society.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1; 71:3
Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to Physical Education, adopted
4/25/78, effective 9/1/78
603 CMR 26:05

CAREER EDUCATION

The School Committee recognizes that students in kindergarten through grade 12 should:

1. Be afforded the opportunity to be informed about the world of work.
2. Be aware of the many vocations available to them.
3. Develop a respect for the dignity of work.
4. Be allowed the opportunity to develop an understanding regarding the technical, consumer, occupational, recreational, cultural aspects of industry and technology; they should also be afforded the opportunity to develop skills related to such aspects through creative problem solving experiences.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37K; 71:38A through 71:38F; 74:1 et seq.
Board of Education Chapter 74 Regulations, adopted 6/28/77, effective 9/1/77

HEALTH EDUCATION

Good health depends upon continuous life-long attention to scientific advances and the acquisition of new knowledge.

The School Committee believes that the greatest opportunity for effective health education lies within the public schools, because of their potential to reach children at the age when positive, lifelong health habits are best engendered and because the schools are equipped to provide qualified personnel to conduct health education programs.

The School Committee is committed to a sound, comprehensive health education program as an integral part of each student's general education.

The health education program will emphasize a contemporary approach to the presentation of health information, skills, and the knowledge necessary for students to understand and appreciate the functioning and proper care of the human body. Students also will be presented with information regarding complex social, physical and mental health problems, which they might encounter in society. In an effort to help students make intelligent choices on alternative behavior of serious personal consequence, health education will examine the potential health hazards of social, physical and mental problems existing in the larger school-community environment.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:1

TEACHING ABOUT DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO

In accordance with state and federal law, the District shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally based drug and alcohol education and prevention programs.

The drug and alcohol education program shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of drug and alcohol use. It shall include special instruction as to the effects upon the human system; the emotional, psychological and social dangers of such use with emphasis on nonuse by school age children and the illegal aspects of such use. The program also shall include information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use illicit drugs or alcohol.

The objectives of this program, as stated below, are rooted in the Board's belief that prevention requires education, and that the most important aspect of the policies and guidelines of the District should be the education of each individual to the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

To create an awareness of the total drug problem-prevention, education, treatment, rehabilitation, and law enforcement on the local, state, national and international levels.

To relate the use of drugs and alcohol to physical, mental, social and emotional practices.

To develop the student's ability to make intelligent choices based on facts and to develop the courage to stand by one's own convictions.

To understand the personal, social and economic problems causing the misuse of drugs and alcohol.

To develop an interest in preventing illegal use of drugs in the community.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1

**COMPENSATORY EDUCATION
(Title 1)**

Title 1 funds shall be used to provide educational services that supplement and do not supplant the regular services provided for District students. By adoption of this policy, the School Committee ensures equivalence in the provision of curriculum materials and supplies.

HOME SCHOOLING

The Massachusetts General Law requires the School Committee to determine that a Home Schooling program meets the minimum standards established for public schools in the Commonwealth prior to approving such a program.

When a parent or guardian of a student below the age of 16 wants to establish a home-based educational program for his/her child, the following procedures shall be followed in accordance with the law:

Prior to removing the child from public school:

The parent/guardian must submit written notification of establishment of the home-based program to the appropriate administrator 14 days before the program is established, and resubmit notification on an annual basis as long as the child or children are being educated in a home-based environment.

The parent/guardian must certify in writing, on a form provided by the district, the name, age, place of residence, and number of hours of attendance of each child in the program.

The Superintendent shall give the notice to produce records required by law if there is probable cause to believe the program is not in compliance with the law.

Home education students residing with legal residence in the town of Lenox may participate in Lenox Public Schools academic courses, athletics, extra-curricular activities as outlined within this policy. However, this policy does not apply to students enrolled in private schools located within or out of the district. In order to be considered for participation in district programs, general and specific requirements must be met by the home education student.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 69:1D; 76:1, Care and Protection of Charles
Care and Protections of Charles - MASS. Supreme Judicial Court
399 Mass. 324 (1987)

PARTICIPATION OF HOME EDUCATION STUDENTS IN DISTRICT PROGRAMS

The opportunity to participate in interscholastic sports and/or other extracurricular activities should be considered a privilege rather than a right. The Lenox Public School permits students with approved home education plans to participate in athletics and extracurricular activities at the middle school and high school, provided they meet the same eligibility requirements as enrolled students.

A. General Requirements

1. The Lenox Public Schools must approve the Home Education Plan of each student prior to the start of the school year in which the request for participation is made.
2. The principal of each building shall determine the grade level placement for the student in conjunction with the chronological age and education plan of the student.
3. The student must reside with a parent or legal guardian in the Lenox Public Schools district.
4. The student must provide proof of receiving immunizations as per District policy.
5. The student must provide his/her own transportation to the school involved for all academic courses, athletic and extra-curricular activities.
6. The student or his/her parents or legal guardians must submit a letter requesting participation in a school district program activity or course prior to the start of the school year.
7. The home education student may not participate in any projects, field trips or programs connected to classroom activities or courses unless the student is also enrolled in the particular classroom or course for its full duration except that home education students shall not participate in overnight field trips without the approval of the Principal. All responsibilities outlined for the regular education student shall apply to the home education student.
8. The home education student may participate in the PTO/PTA sponsored enrichment programs with the approval of the building administrator.

B. Academic Courses

1. The Lenox Public Schools principal must approve participation of each home education student in academic courses. This approval shall be on an independent basis and may be restricted due to class size, the chronological age and abilities of the home education student and additional costs to the school or district.
2. The parent of the home educated student must submit a written request prior to the start of each academic year to the building principal requesting approval for the home education student to participate in a particular academic course.
3. The home educated student must take a full academic load of six subjects, plus physical education, through his or her home schooling program in order to be eligible for course work within one of the existing district programs.
4. The home education student must meet all course pre-requisites and complete all assignments and tests as required of other students within the course. In addition, the home education student will receive a grade as is typical for this class, course or program.

5. The home education student must adhere to all disciplinary guidelines as set forth by the District and the school. This will include all standard operating procedures within the school building as set forth in the student handbook and by the course teachers.
6. The home education student may take a maximum of two courses per semester. Courses taken by home education students at Lenox Memorial Middle and High School may not lead toward the granting of a LMMHS diploma.
7. The home education student enrolled in a course may use school facilities as directed by the teacher for the entire class. These facilities may include but will not be limited to the school library, media equipment, computers, and the school grounds for completion of specific course requirements.
8. The home education student's use of school facilities, supplies, texts or equipment may be granted provided such use does not deny or limit opportunities or services to the regular education student. The use must be directly related to either the home instruction education program of the student or the course activity or program to which the student is enrolled within the school.
9. The student and his/her parent or legal guardian's responsible for all lost, damaged and/or non-returned books, supplies, equipment or texts.
10. Home education students who attend public school academics, athletics, or extra-curricular courses, must complete an emergency card. They must also sign in and out at the main office each day they attend school.

C. Athletics (See Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association Guidelines)

1. The Lenox Memorial Middle and High School Principal must approve participation of home education students on each LMMHS Athletic Team.
2. The Principal must indicate on the school's annual M.I.A.A. membership form the intention to use home education students on athletic teams.
3. The principal must include a list of all home education students in his/her annual M.I.A.A. annual enrollment report.
4. The parents of the home education student must submit a written request by the 1st of August of each academic year to the Principal requesting approval of their son/daughter to participate in interscholastic athletics.
5. The principal must be satisfied that student meets the guidelines for athletic participation required for all other students as defined in the current M.I.A.A. Blue Book. It should include, but not be limited to, those rules governing transfers, academic eligibility, age requirements and the number of consecutive seasons of academic eligibility beyond grade 8.

Two aspects of a student's home education program have been identified as being important measures of academic eligibility. These are, attendance/daily completion of course work and acceptable academic performance. Students must complete their normal academic work on the day of a scheduled practice or game; and students must be doing satisfactory work in all subject areas in order to participate in extracurricular and/or athletic activities. Parents/guardians of home education students are expected to monitor these requirements.

On a quarterly basis, no later than three school days following the close of grades at the high school and middle school, the parent or guardian responsible for the home education program must submit to the superintendent a progress report on work completed.

6. The principal must review the M.I.A.A. requirements relative to academic eligibility at the same time that all other student athletes are to be certified as academically eligible. If the principal determines that all eligibility standards detailed above have been met, the principal may declare immediate eligibility for the home education student to participate in interscholastic competition.
7. The rights, privileges and responsibilities associated with all other student athletes attending an M.I.A.A. member school will apply to home education students who satisfy the requirements listed.
8. The home education student athlete who participates at Lenox Memorial Middle and High School is expected to conduct himself/herself at all times both on and off the field in a manner which will be a credit to himself/herself, the parents, the school and the community, plus follow all guidelines as stipulated under athletic policies found in the student activities booklet, i.e. training rules, drug and alcohol policy, Rule 19, academic requirements, and captain's practices.

D. Extra-curricular Activities

1. The Lenox Public Schools building principal must approve participation of each home education student in extra-curricular activities. This will be done on an individual basis as determined by the number of students already enrolled, the funding mechanism underwriting the program, equipment and other existing costs.
2. The parent of the home educated student must submit to the principal a written request prior to the start of each academic year requesting approval for his/her son/daughter to participate in a particular extracurricular activity.
3. The home education student must meet all the academic requirements as stipulated by the Education Reform Law of 1993 and in the student handbook. The home education student must take a full academic load of six academic credits plus physical education, through his/her home education program in order to be eligible for extra-curricular activities at Lenox Memorial Middle and High School.
4. The home education student, in order to be and remain eligible for participation, must adhere to all attendance requirements and disciplinary guidelines as set forth by the high school and middle school. The home education student will adhere to all rules, regulations, attendance requirements and guidelines set forth for each extra-curricular activity and be under the direction of the assigned advisor to that activity.
5. The home education student will be held responsible for satisfying all guidelines for disciplinary infractions.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

The primary objective of the library/media center is to implement its resources to enrich and to support the educational program of the school.

Definition of Library Resources

Library resources are those materials, both print and non-print, found in school libraries which support curricular and personal information needs. Print items include books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, microfiche or microfilm. Non-print items include films, disc records, filmstrips, slides, prints, audiotapes, videotapes, compact discs, and computer software.

Criteria for Selection of Library Resources

The criteria for selection of library resources in the District are:

- Needs of the individual student
 - Based on knowledge of students
 - Based on requests of parents and students
- Needs of the individual school
 - Based on knowledge of the curriculum of the school
 - Based on requests from the professional staff
- Provision of a wide range of materials on many levels of difficulty with a diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view.
- Provision of materials of high artistic quality.
- Provision of materials with superior format.
- Reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids are consulted as guides.

In accordance with the District's policy of providing instructional materials on opposing sides of controversial issues, it should be noted that neither the media centers nor the District serve as advocates for the ideas expressed in any materials, nor does the presence of any material indicate automatic endorsement of the ideas expressed therein.

Disclosure of Information/Privacy of Circulation Records

Circulation records shall not be made available to anyone except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized by law.

Re-evaluation (Weeding) of Library Resources

The continuous review of library/media center materials is necessary as a means of maintaining a useful and active collection. As new materials are selected and added, some older materials are withdrawn. The responsibility for determining which materials are to be withdrawn rests with the professional staff.

Among the reasons for withdrawing an item are the following:

- Curricular changes have rendered superfluous some materials (or multiple copies of materials) formerly used but no longer in demand.
- Some materials contain factual material that is no longer accurate nor current.
- Some materials intended for recreational reading have become dated or unattractive and are no longer in demand. (Some such books, which are deemed “standards” or “classics”, will be retained even though they rarely circulate).
- Some materials have become worn out, damaged or physically deteriorated and have lost utility and/or appeal.
- Some materials have been superseded by newer items, which present the same information, but in superior format.
- Withdrawn library/media center materials are processed in one or more of the following ways:
 - Made available to be used as resource or supplementary material by teachers.
 - Offered to other media centers in the District, as it is possible that a material, which lacks utility in one building, may have some usefulness in another.
 - Contributed to appropriate charitable or educational agencies.
 - Discarded, when warranted.

Continuing evaluation is closely related to the goals and responsibilities of library/media centers and is a valuable tool of collection development. This procedure is not to be used as a convenient or expedient means to remove materials presumed to be controversial or likely to be disapproved by segments of the community. Materials are not to be proscribed or removed because of actual or potential partisan or doctrinal disapproval, nor because of the origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation.

RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Material that is challenged belongs to one of three basic categories: religion, ideology, or profanity/obscenity. Board policies regarding these areas are as follows:

Religion -- Factual, unbiased material on religions has a place in school libraries.

Ideologies -- Libraries should, with no thought toward swaying reader judgment, make available a balanced collection of primary and factual material, on the level of their students on various ideologies or philosophies which exert or have exerted a strong force, either favorably or unfavorably, in government, current events, politics, education and other phases of life.

Profanity/obscenity -- Materials shall be subjected to a test of literary merit and reality in context using the criteria established.

When a problem concerning instructional resources in a school arises, the disposition of the problem will be made in a reasonable period of time using District-adopted procedures.

In accordance with the statement of philosophy, no questioned materials shall be removed from the school pending a final decision. Pending the outcome of the request for reconsideration, however, access to questioned materials can be denied to the students of the parents making the complaint, if they so desire.

If the decision of the School Committee is that the questioned instructional resource be retained, the District will not convene a Review Committee relative to the same complaint for a period of three years. If a substantially different point of view is advanced, it will be investigated. (The period of three years does not apply in this instance).

If an individual or a group undertakes action to keep material from the shelves by checking it out and failing to return it, or by taking turns in keeping it checked out so that it is not available for student use, the Superintendent shall request, in writing, the return of the material. If it is not returned within thirty (30) days, a bill for the current replacement cost of the item shall be rendered to the party holding the item.

After the School Committee has adopted new materials or approved certain methods, that decision will not be reconsidered for a period of three years beginning with the end of the school year when the adoption is made.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The School Committee believes that materials appropriate to the needs of the school program must be available to each student and teacher. These will be furnished by the School Committee subject to budgetary constraints.

The task of selecting instructional materials for programs will be delegated to the professional staff of the school system. Because instructional programs and materials are of great importance, only those that meet the following criteria will be approved by the Committee:

1. They should present balanced views of international, national, and local issues and problems of the past, present and future.
2. They should provide materials that stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic and ethical values.
3. They should help students develop abilities in critical reading and thinking.
4. They should help develop and foster an appreciation of cultural diversity and development in the United States and throughout the world.
5. They should provide for all students an effective basic education that does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, physical disabilities or sexual preference.
6. They should allow sufficient flexibility for meeting the special needs of individual students and groups of students.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:48; 71:49; 71:50
BESE Regulations 603 CMR 26:00

CROSS REF.: KEC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional
Materials

TEXTBOOK SELECTION AND ADOPTION

Responsibility for the review and selection of textbooks to be purchased shall rest with the Principal of each school. The Principal should establish a review committee to assist in the process to determine the textbooks that best meet the curriculum guidelines of the district. The committee should include teachers who will use the texts and other staff members as found desirable. Students and parents will be encouraged to serve.

Principles that apply generally to the selection of instructional materials and library materials shall apply to textbooks. Additionally, basic textbooks and textbook support materials shall be chosen:

To advance the educational objectives of the school system and particular objectives of the course program.

To contribute toward continuity, integration, and articulation of the curriculum.

To establish a general framework for the particular course or program.

Because the instructional purposes of textbooks are of such importance, particular care shall be taken in their selection as to content.

Although many points must be examined, the School Committee directs the staff to be mindful of the following considerations:

The needs of all learners.

Attention should be given to gender roles depicted in the materials.

The textbook and textbook support materials should lead the student and teacher beyond the textbook into a wide variety of other materials and educational experiences.

If the textbook deals with problems and issues of our times, it should present and encourage examination of varied points of view.

Because textbooks are selected for several years' use, special attention also shall be given their physical characteristics, durability, format and price.

LEGAL REFS.: 71:48; 30B:7; 71:50
603 CMR 26:05

CROSS REF.: KEC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The School Committee recognizes that knowledge is changing and expanding and that it may be necessary to use various types of supplementary materials in addition to the basic and fundamental textbooks.

For the purpose of this policy, supplementary materials shall be defined as any instructional materials other than textbooks including, but not limited to, books, periodicals, newspapers, pictures, diagrams, maps, charts, slides, filmstrips, films, records, audiotapes, video tapes, DVD's and suitable technological applications which relate directly to the adopted curriculum.

The School Committee believes that teachers and administrators should have a large role in selection and recommendation of supplementary materials. Teachers are encouraged to use a wide range of learning aids, provided the expense incurred in purchasing these aids remains within the limits of the budget.

The School Committee expects that any staff member who copies materials to supplement existing texts will follow all applicable copyright laws and regulations.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

SPECIAL INTEREST MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

Organizations, institutions, and individuals at times develop materials that are offered to schools free or inexpensively. As a general rule, sponsored materials present a particular point of view, and extreme care must be exercised in evaluating and using them. The responsibility for using sponsored materials rests with the certified staff member who recommends its use. In any questionable instance, the Principal should be informed and shall decide whether its use in the best interests of the students.

Sponsored materials must meet the same basic selection criteria as any other learning material, as well as the following special criteria.

Any expression of a point of view should be clearly identified.

Any advertising that appears on or with any material should be in good taste and unobtrusive.

The source of all material should be clearly identifiable.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY - TECHNOLOGY

Purpose

The Lenox Public Schools shall provide access for employees and students to the system/network, including access to external networks, for limited educational purposes. Educational purposes shall be defined as classroom activities, career and professional development, and high quality self-discovery activities of an educational nature. The purpose of the system/network is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work by providing access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with others. The system/network will be used to increase communication (staff, parent, and student), enhance productivity, and assist staff in upgrading existing skills and acquiring new skills through a broader exchange of information. The system/network will also be utilized to provide information to the community, including parents, governmental agencies, and businesses.

Availability

The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the district's system/network for instructional and administrative purposes. Access to the system/network, including external networks, shall be made available to employees and students for instructional and administrative purposes and in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures.

Access to the system/network is a privilege, not a right. All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations and procedures governing use of the system and shall agree in writing to comply with such regulations and procedures. Noncompliance with applicable regulations and procedures may result in suspension or termination of user privileges and other disciplinary actions consistent with the policies of the Lenox Public Schools. Violations of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the Lenox Public Schools.

Acceptable Use

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with the purposes and mission of the Lenox Public Schools as well as with law and policy governing copyright.

Monitored Use

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of electronic resources by students and employees shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use for instructional and administrative purposes.

Cyber-Bullying

Reports of cyber bullying by electronic or other means, occurring in or out of school will be reviewed and, when a nexus to work or school exists, will result in discipline. Parents of students alleged to have engaged in cyber harassment will be invited to attend a meeting at which the activity, words or images subject to the complaint will be reviewed. A student disciplined for cyber-bullying will not be re-admitted to the regular school program until his or her parent(s) attend such meeting.

“Cyber-bullying” means, bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communication. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creator or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the clauses (i) to (v) inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying may occur through the use of data, telephone or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network or any public education institute. As used in this Section, “electronic communication” also means any communication through an electronic device including, but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer or pager.

LIABILITY

The Lenox Public Schools shall not be liable for users' inappropriate use of electronic resources or violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users. The Lenox Public Schools shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy or usability of any information found on external networks.

1. Commercial use of the system/network is prohibited.
2. The district will provide training to users in the proper use of the system/network.
3. The district will provide each user with copies of the Acceptable Use Policy and Procedures.
4. Copyrighted software or data shall not be placed on the district system/network without permission from the holder of the copyright and the system administrator.
5. Access will be granted to employees with a signed access agreement and permission of their supervisor.
6. Access will be granted to students with a signed access agreement and permission of the building administrator or designee(s).
7. Account names will be recorded on access agreements and kept on file at the building level.
8. Initial passwords provided by the network administrator should be set to expire on login.

9. Passwords are confidential. All passwords shall be protected by the user and not shared or displayed.
10. Students completing required course work will have first priority for after-hours use of equipment.
11. Principals or their designees will be responsible for disseminating and enforcing policies and procedures in the building(s) under their control.
12. Principals or their designee will ensure that all users complete and sign an agreement to abide by policies and procedures regarding use of the system/network. All such agreements are to be maintained at the building level.
13. Principals or their designee will ensure that training is provided to users on appropriate use of electronic resources.
14. Principals or their designee shall be authorized to monitor or examine all system activities, including electronic mail transmissions, as deemed appropriate to ensure proper use of electronic resources.
15. Principals or their designee shall be responsible for establishing appropriate retention and backup schedules.
16. Principals or their designee shall be responsible for establishing disk usage limitations, if needed.
17. Individual users shall, at all times, be responsible for the proper use of accounts issued in their name.
18. The system/network may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any activity prohibited by district policy.
19. System users shall not use another user's account.
20. System users should purge electronic information according to district retention guidelines.
21. System users may redistribute copyrighted material only with the written permission of the copyright holder or designee. Such permission must be specified in the document or in accordance with applicable copyright laws, district policy, and administrative procedures.
22. System administrators may upload/download public domain programs to the system/network. System administrators are responsible for determining if a program is in the public domain.
23. Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy equipment, materials, data, or programs is prohibited.
24. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance may be viewed as violations of district policy and/or as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.
25. Vandalism will result in the cancellation of system privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with hardware, software, and system restoration.
26. Forgery or attempted forgery is prohibited.
27. Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other users or to interfere with the ability of other users to send/receive electronic mail is prohibited.

28. Use appropriate language; swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs, and other inflammatory language is prohibited.
29. Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving message is prohibited.
30. Transmitting or viewing obscene material is prohibited.
31. Revealing personal information (addresses, phone numbers, etc.) is prohibited.
32. The district will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the district's system/network.

Updated October 4, 2010

SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY OF THE LENOX PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1. Internet AUP still in force

This policy is adopted in addition to, and not as a substitute for, the School District's Internet Acceptable Use Policy, which governs use of the school district's technological resources.

2. General Concerns

The Lenox Public Schools recognizes the proliferation and, in some instances, usefulness, of online conversation between employees and students and/or their parents or guardians. However, due to the nature of social networking sites, there exists a risk, without care and planning, that the lines between one's professional life and personal life will be blurred. Our employees should always be mindful of how they present themselves to the world, online and otherwise. Should an educator "friend" a student on Facebook, subscribe to a student's "twitter" account, regularly engage in email "chat" with a student, exchange text messages with students or engage in other electronic communication, the school district is concerned, and the educator should be concerned, that such activities may: undermine the educator's authority to maintain discipline; encourage inappropriate behaviors; and compromise the educator's ability to remain truly objective with his or her students.

In addition, any online communication using one's own personal resources, as opposed to school district resources, compromises the teacher's, as well as the school district's, ability to retain public records in accordance with the requirements of the Commonwealth's public records laws. The law requires public employees who send, receive or maintain records in their capacity as public employees, to retain, disclose and dispose of such records in compliance with strict provisions of the public records law. This law applies whether or not the record is in the form of a paper document or an electronic communication. When employee members communicate through school-based resources, such as employee email or school sponsored web pages, such records are retained and archived through the school's information technology department. If, however, a teacher communicates outside of these resources, such information is not retained. The burden falls on the teacher to comply with public records laws when using personal email or social network accounts to communicate with students and/or parents and guardians.

3. Expectations of Employees

With these concerns in mind, the Lenox Public Schools has instituted this "Social Networking Policy," and announces its expectations for employees' use of social networks such as Facebook, Linked-in, Twitter, personal email accounts, text message features of cell phones, use of blogs, and other electronic or technologically based communication systems.

- A. Before endeavoring to establish any social networking account, employees should familiarize themselves with the features of any account they choose to use. For example, Facebook requires account holders to take specific steps to "privatize" the information they place online. You must educate yourself to these features of Facebook or any other social networking site you select. You will be responsible should any information you intended to be "private" becomes "public"

due to your own ignorance of the features of the social network you have decided to use or your failure to properly use such features.

- B. You must also know that any information you share privately with a recipient could be re-distributed by such recipient, without your knowledge or consent. The same principles you apply to in person communication should be applied to online conversation: use discretion, and do not place your trust in individuals who have not proven themselves trustworthy. In essence, nothing you post online is ever truly “private.”
- C. The school district expects you to keep the line between your professional life and your personal life clearly drawn at all times. There is no reason why this cannot be done, even in light of the proliferation of social networking sites. All that is required is some forethought before using social networking for both your professional and personal life, to be sure that these lines never become blurred. It is strongly recommended that employees will reject “friend” requests (Facebook) from individuals who are not consenting adults.
- D. At all times, and in the use of any form of communications, employees members will always adhere to student privacy rights and the rights of employees to have their personnel and medical information kept confidential. Information that is protected by law from disclosure to third parties will not be communicated online in a way that unreasonably exposes such information to retrieval by those third parties. For example, through an educational Facebook account, a teacher may not post confidential student information on the “wall,” the “information” section, or through any part of that Facebook account that would be accessible to other of the Teacher’s Facebook “friends” associated with that account
- E. Employees are encouraged to communicate with students and parents on educational matters only, and only through school-based resources, such as school-provided email or web portal accounts. Use of one’s personal email account or social networking account to discuss school business with students and parents is discouraged. It should be noted that, just because a teacher uses his/her personal email as opposed to a school email account, this does not shield such email from the provisions of the public records law or from discovery in litigation. It only prevents the archiving of such messages through the school district’s automatic email archiving system. We again remind employees that information sent or received by them, even through personal email or social network accounts that are related to their capacity as a school employee, are still subject to public records retention, exemption and disclosure requirements.” This protects you! Accusations can come from anyone- and you want to be protected by records that are retrievable and have been archived by the school district.
- F. If a teacher conveys school related messages to students and parents on his/her private account, he/she should save such email or any communication conveyed through a social networking site, or print and save a paper copy of such email or other online communication, and file it, and regard its privacy, as he/she would any other document concerning that student. The teacher should forward copies of any such emails or online communications to his or her school based email account so that it can be properly retained and archived in compliance with the requirements of the public records law. Any document created or received by a public employee in his or her capacity as such is subject to retention and perhaps disclosure under the public records law.

- G. No matter what medium of communication a teacher selects, he/she should adhere to appropriate teacher/student boundaries. You are a role model, not a student's friend, you are his/her teacher, and you should always conduct yourself in accordance with this understanding.
- H. This policy is not intended to infringe upon a teacher's right to speak publicly on matters of public concern, or to communicate with fellow members of their union on workplace issues, so long as such communication adheres to appropriate time, place and manner restrictions and does not interfere with the performance of your job duties. However, when you speak via social networking sites or tools on matters concerning your work, you are speaking as an employee and not as a citizen. Restrictions may be placed upon your freedom to express yourself. Those restrictions are intended to preserve student confidentiality, maintain your status as an educator who should command and receive the respect of students, be able to maintain order and discipline in your classroom, and remain objective with respect to your students.
- I. Employees are discouraged from using Social Networking site accounts to communicate with students. Your communications with students, even if you do not use school resources for such communications, are within the jurisdiction of the school district to monitor as they arise out of your position as an educator. Any conduct, whether online or not, that reflects poorly upon the school district or consists of inappropriate behavior on the part of an employee, may expose an employee to discipline up to and including discharge. Even if you are not using a school telephone, computer, classroom or the like to engage in contact with a student that such contact is not outside of the school district's authority to take appropriate disciplinary action. If your behavior is inappropriate, undermines your authority to instruct or maintain control and discipline with students, compromises your objectivity, or harms students, the school district reserves the right to impose discipline for such behavior. A teacher may also face individual liability for inappropriate online communications with students and/or parents and guardians, as well as exposing the district to vicarious liability in certain instances.
- a.
- At the same time, the district recognizes that, in limited cases, use of cell phone text messages or cell phone calls or emails outside of regular school hours may be reasonably necessary. For example, in connection with school sponsored events for which employees serve as duly appointed advisors, they may need to convey messages in a timely manner to students and may not have access to school based email accounts, school provided telephones or school based web pages. In such limited circumstances, the district anticipates that employees will make reasonable use of their cell phones or smart phones to convey time sensitive information on scheduling issues and the like.
- J. Employees may not access their personal/private social network pages using school district computer resources.
- K. If you are communicating as an employee of the district in your online communications, you must be aware that readers will assume you "speak for the school district." Therefore, all of your online communications, when you are actually acting on behalf of the district, or creating the appearance that you are doing so, must be professional at all times and reflect positively on the school district.

- L. In the use of your social networking site, or internet site, you may not, without express permission from the superintendent of schools, use the school's logo, likeness or any school photographs or other property that belongs to the school.
- M. References to "Facebook" and social network sites are not included to limit application of their policy to use of that program. All online, electronic or computerized means of communication are subject to this policy. Given the rapid pace of technological change it is not possible to identify all proprietary or commonly named or identified means of such communications.

Revision: March 12, 2012

FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

The School Committee recognizes that the first-hand learning experiences provided by field trips are an effective means of learning. Therefore, the Committee shall encourage field trips which provide worthwhile educational experiences and complement the educational program.

However, the School Committee reserves the right to cancel any field trip up to the time of departure if it feels that the safety of the participants might be jeopardized.

To be educationally beneficial, a field trip requires thoughtful selection, careful advance preparation of the class, and opportunities for pupils to assimilate the experience during and at the conclusion of the trip. To this end, teachers and principals will be expected to consider the following factors in providing field trips: (a) value of the activity to the particular class group or class groups; (b) relationship of the field trip activity to a particular aspect of classroom instruction or educational program; (c) suitability of the activity and distance traveled in terms of the age level; (d) mode and availability of transportation; (e) the opportunities for all students to participate; and (f) cost.

Definitions

Any trip organized or conducted by an employee of the school district for students of the school district shall be considered as a field trip or excursion unless the employee can establish to the satisfaction of the Principal that the school district is in no way responsible for such trip.

- (a) A field trip shall be construed to mean any trip organized or conducted by an employee of the school district as an integral part of the school program where students investigate or participate in real or lifelike experiences away from the classroom. Examples include class trips to the theater, to historic sites, or to nature centers. All field trips will be scheduled based upon the educational value to the students. There are two categories of field trips:
 - 1. Local (during school day)
 - 2. Extended (requires time before and/or after school day)
- (b) An excursion shall be construed to mean any trip organized or conducted by an employee of the school district as a supplement to the school program. Examples include trips by school sponsored clubs, student exchange programs, and trips planned through the school for special interest groups outside of school hours.

Charges to Students

- 1. Local Field Trips: It is the School Committee's goal that there be no cost to students participating in local field trips. The school system will pay for transportation costs and will attempt to pay all admission charges. With the advance approval of the Principal, the

Committee will allow a nominal fee (e.g. admission, meals, etc.) for such trips if they would otherwise be impossible to arrange. In such cases, the Principal shall seek other funds before approving any charge to students.

2. Extended Field Trips: The Committee recognizes that extended field trips (e.g., to Boston or New York City) will often require that students pay a share of the cost. These trips are to be planned well in advance so that parents and students are aware of the cost involved. Moreover, the Principal shall endeavor to reflect such trips in the budget planning process on an annual basis. As with local field trips, the school system will endeavor to pay for transportation and attempt to pay for admission charges. To cover any remaining balance for the cost of the trip, the Principal may approve a charge to students provided the charge is kept within reasonable limits. Further, the School Committee's expectation is that under normal circumstances students will not be asked to pay such a charge more than once annually.

The following regulations will apply to all extended field trips:

A. Trip Approval Process

1. Advance approval by the School Committee is required for any student trip involving late night or overnight travel.
2. The approval process will be completed prior to engaging students in fundraising activities or other preparations for the trip.
3. Overnight trips will offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips will be appropriate for the grade level.
4. Teachers and other school staff will be prohibited from soliciting privately run trips through the school system. The trip approval process will apply only to school-sanctioned trips; School Committees will not approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.
5. Policies and procedures for trip approval should take into account all logistical details involving transportation, accommodations, fundraising required of students, and the educational value of the trip in relation to its costs.

B. Transportation

1. The use of vans or private automobiles for trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel should be avoided. Such trips should generally use commercial motor coaches.
2. Trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel will involve pre-trip checks of companies, drivers and vehicles.
3. School officials will ensure that the selected carrier is licensed for passenger transportation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The district should not contract with any carrier that has an FMCSA safety rating of “conditional” or “unsatisfactory.” FMCSA carrier ratings are available at <http://www.saferys.org>.
4. Districts that are unable to conduct their own in-depth reviews of bus carrier qualifications may elect to use ratings and prequalifications established by other public entities, such as the Department of Defense’s approval list of motor carriers for troop transport (<http://www.mtmc.army.mil/content/504/approvedlist.pdf>).
5. The contract with the carrier should prohibit the use of a subcontractor unless sufficient notice is given to the district to allow verifications of the subcontractor’s qualifications.

C. Trip Scheduling

1. Overnight accommodations should be made in advance with student safety and security in mind. Whenever possible, the trip schedulers should avoid planning student travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m. due to the increased risk of vehicular accidents during this time period.
2. Whenever possible, overnight trips should be scheduled on weekends or during school vacations to minimize lost classroom time. Non-academic field trips are considered “optional school programs” and do not count toward meeting structured learning time requirements under 603 CMR 27.00. However, academic field trips may be considered structured learning time (see the Department’s Student Learning Time Regulations Guide). School districts may consider travel for field trips as included in students’ schedules, but the Department recommends that schools consider scheduling additional structured learning time when significant travel time is anticipated (i.e., time outside the hours of the regular school day).
3. Trip itineraries must leave enough time for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense.
4. Trip scheduling should take into account the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic, stragglers, and other unanticipated factors.
5. If substantially all members of a class are participating in a trip, the school should provide appropriate substitute activities for any students not participating.

D. Fundraising

1. The amount of time to be devoted to fundraising should be reasonable and commensurate with students' obligations for homework, after-school activities, and jobs.
2. Group fundraising activities are preferred. Students should not be assigned individual fundraising targets.
3. If students are charged individual fees for participation, the district should make every effort to provide scholarships where needed.

E. Student Supervision

1. Students shall be accompanied by a sufficient number of chaperones, taking into account scheduling and logistics. All chaperones, including parents and volunteers, must have a CORI check in accordance with MGL Chapter 71, Section 38R.
2. CORI checks are recommended but not required by law for bus drivers who do not regularly work for the school district and who will not have direct and unmonitored contact with students. If such check cannot be done, a chaperone must always be present whenever students are on the bus.
3. All participating students must submit a signed parent/guardian permission form. Such form shall include appropriate authorization for emergency medical care and administration of medication.

Senior Class Trip: Senior Class trips will be a day trip only. Multiple day trips may be allowed if the school administration and class sponsors believe enough interest exists, and the school has enough chaperones and corresponding substitutes to cover school days. Overnight Senior Class trips will not be sponsored by the school, or school district. The safety of students and the liability of Senior Class overnight trips outweigh any existing academic and social merit of overnight events.

A Senior Class trip must be discussed and approved by the school Senior Class advisors and school administration prior to any information being sent home to parents. Finally, Senior Class trips will be funded by each senior class through class fundraising and such, and not through the school department operational budget.

Addendum Recommended to the Lenox School Committee by a unanimous vote of the Lenox Safety & Wellness Task Force, April 10, 2013, approved by School Committee May 13, 2013.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/SPEAKERS

Individuals or groups may be invited into the schools to present supplementary information and ideas to the classroom course of study. These experiences afford students the opportunity to benefit from community viewpoints. Care should be taken in selecting these speakers so that they are individuals who respect diversity in thinking and varying views and who are not attempting to influence points of view inappropriately.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

It is the policy of the School Committee to encourage volunteer efforts in the schools. Parents, business representatives, senior citizens, and other community volunteers are recognized as important sources of support and expertise to enhance the instructional program and vital communication links with the community. The volunteer program will be coordinated in cooperation with building administrators. All volunteers shall be subject to Policy ADDA, C.O.R.I. Requirements.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The philosophy of the Lenox School Committee concerning academic achievement, as well as children's social growth and development, is based on the premise that children have diverse capabilities and individual patterns of growth and learning.

Therefore, the Committee feels it is important that teachers have as much and as accurate knowledge of each student as possible in order to assess his/her needs, his/her growth, and make instructional plans for him/her. A sharing of information among parent, teacher, and student is essential.

The School Committee recognizes the school's obligation to give periodic reports of a student's progress and grades. The School Committee further recognizes that these reports are a vital form of communication between the schools and parents. The School Committee also believes that all progress reports must be based upon full information, accurately and honestly reported with the proper maintenance of confidentiality.

A report depicting the student's progress will be issued periodically following an evaluation by the appropriate teacher, teachers, or other professional personnel.

In addition to the periodic reports, parents will be notified when a student's performance requires special notification.

Grading and promotion will be based on improvement, achievement, capability of the student, and the professional judgment of the teacher and Principal.

Major changes in the reporting system shall be preceded by a cooperative study and evaluation by teachers, principals, parents, and the Superintendent, who will submit the proposal to the School Committee for consideration and approval.

HOMEWORK

The term "homework" refers to an assignment to be prepared during a period of guided study in class or outside of class.

The purposes of homework are to improve the learning processes, to aid in the mastery of skills, and to create and stimulate interest on the part of the student.

Homework is a learning activity which should increase in complexity with the maturity of the student. With increased maturity, learning should become an independent activity. This should be established through consistent assignments which encourage students to investigate for themselves and to work independently as well as with others.

Homework assignments should be consistent in terms of the amount given each day and the time required for each assignment so that a pattern of meaningful homework can be established by the teacher and/or the student. Homework is not to be used as a form of punishment under any circumstances.

RANKING OF STUDENTS (RIC)

It is the policy of Lenox Memorial High School (LMHS) to provide colleges, universities, employers, etc. with the fairest and most accurate account of each student's academic performance as requested by the student. For higher education, in particular, academic performance in high school, summarized as Rank in Class (RIC) or Grade Point Average (GPA), is of significant importance. Many studies have shown the RIC/GPA is the single best predictor of academic success in the college freshman year.

We believe that where courses differ substantially in their levels of academic challenge, differential weighting for computing GPA is a means of more fairly assessing the academic achievements of students. Additionally, it has been found that a weighted system encourages students to take more challenging and difficult courses by rewarding them for doing so, yet not punishing those who are unable to do so.

At the same time, we anticipate that there will be instances where a non-weighted RIC will be more equitable for a particular student or preferred by a third party (e.g. college or employer). For this reason we will use the following dual approach:

1. Weighted

RIC is determined by weighing grades in the required curricular areas of Language Arts (including foreign languages), Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies and computing the GPA. No other curricular area shall be included.

2. Non-Weighted

RIC is determined by computing the GPA in a non-weighted manner for all credit granting courses awarding traditional letter grades, i.e., A, C-, B+, etc.

Both rankings will be listed on the transcript along with an explanation of each method. Third parties receiving the information are free to select whichever method they deem to be most appropriate for their use.

The rationale for weighing grades in the required curricular areas only is based on the belief that the quality of a student's academic achievement in certain secondary school courses is a better predictor of that student's subsequent performance in the college freshman year than would be his or her achievement in some other courses.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The School Committee is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

In evaluating student achievement, each teacher will make use of all available information, including results of teacher-made tests and other measures of skill and content mastery, standardized test results, and teacher observation of student performance. The Principal will direct and aid teachers in their evaluations and review grade assignments in order to ensure uniformity of evaluation standards.

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved. Exceptions will only be made after prior notification and explanation to each student's parents, but the final decision will rest with the building Principal.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to graduate, a student must have a minimum of 120 credits and meet such other standards as may, from time to time, be established by the Commonwealth. The 120 credits must include a minimum of 5 credits of World Language, 2.5 credits in the Arts, 2.5 credits in Technology, and 15 credits per subject in Math, Science, and Social Studies.

Subjects	Credits Required
English	20
Math	15
Science	15
Social Studies*	15
World Language **	5
Arts **	2.5
Technology **	2.5 or competency
P.E./Health	10
Other	30
Total	120

The Physical Education requirement may be waived by a doctor's certificate. Course credit is determined as follows:

Full Year Courses

- 9 periods per 6 day cycle – 7.5 credits
- 8 periods per 6 day cycle - 7 credits
- 6 periods per 6 day cycle - 5 credits
- 4 periods per 6 day cycle - 3 credits
- 3 periods per 6 day cycle – 2 ½ credits
- 2 periods per 6 day cycle - 2 credits

Semester Course

One-half the credit awarded for a full-year course

Meeting the New Requirements

The Technology requirement can be met by earning 2.5 credits in one of the following courses:

- Introductory Word Processing
- Advanced Word Processing
- Computer Applications (or competency test)
- Computer Aided Drafting & Design
- Basic, Intermediate or Advanced Graphics
- Engineering/Technology
- A+ Certification Program

The Arts requirement can be met by earning the 2.5 credits in one of the following courses:

- All high school courses listed in the Art program
- All high school Woodworking classes
- High School Computer Aided Drafting & Design classes
- High School Band

The World Language requirement can be met by earning 5 credits in one of the following courses:

- All high school Latin, French and Spanish courses
- Combination of French 7 & 8 in middle school
- Combination of Spanish 7 & 8 in middle school

One fourth the credits awarded for a full-year course:

- Students are required to select five major subjects plus physical education as a minimal class load at any given time. This requirement may be waived at the Principal's discretion when unusual circumstances are proven.

* Must include 5 credits of U.S. History

** The Principal may waive up to a total of 5 credits of the Arts, Technology, or Language requirements when unusual circumstances occur due to schedule conflicts, accommodating transfer students, or a student's special educational needs (as defined by the student's Educational Plan). Waiving of a requirement(s) shall not reduce the total credits required for graduation.

EARLY GRADUATION

Normally it is expected that a student will complete four years of secondary education and earn credits beyond the minimum requirements. However, if deemed appropriate, it is possible for a student to graduate in less than four years. To qualify for this "Early Graduation" program, a student must:

1. Satisfy stated Graduation requirements by completion date projected.
2. Submit to the student's counselor an application outlining the student's short range plans and his/her rationale for seeking "Early Graduation." A student wishing to graduate at the end of the junior year must apply by May 1st of his or her sophomore year. A student wishing to graduate at the end of the first semester of the senior year must apply by May 1st of his or her junior year. These deadlines may be waived by the Principal if he/she deems such action to be in the best interests of the student.
3. Submit written approval and a supporting recommendation from his/her parent with the above application.
4. Understand that he/she has the responsibility and must assume the initiative for:
 - a. Senior responsibilities, such as:
 1. Yearbook data
 2. Class obligations
 3. Graduation activities
 4. Checking the school calendar for senior activities
 - b. Contact with the guidance office for post-secondary, financial, academic and placement opportunities.

To act on a student's application, an Early Graduation Standards Committee will be appointed by the Principal and this Committee will consider the following factors in the context of what appears to be in the best interests of the student:

- a. Scholastic average: normally a "B" average would be expected
- b. In the context of the student's short-range and long-range plans, the extent to which the student can fulfill his/her educational goals in less than four years (Grades 9-12)
- c. Extenuating personal reasons
- d. Other factors which the Committee deems relevant.

The Committee will meet with the student and parents to review the application and, by June 1st, will decide whether a student will be permitted to graduate early.

Students accepted for Early Graduation and proceeding toward this end in a satisfactory manner shall be considered seniors beginning the first day of their final semester of study. This shall qualify these students for participation in all related activities including class day, senior banquet and scholarship awards.

EARLY COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

Normally, the Lenox School Committee expects students to complete four years of secondary education. However, the Committee recognizes that there may be students for whom it is appropriate to fulfill Lenox graduation requirements at a post-secondary institution.

To exercise this option, a student must meet the following conditions:

1. Upon entering his/her senior year, the student will need no more than one major subject to fulfill graduation requirements.
2. Submit to the student's counselor no later than February 1st an application outlining the student's short-range and long-range plans and his/her rationale for seeking early admission to college.
3. Submit written approval and supporting recommendation from his/her parent or guardian.
4. Understand that he/she has the responsibility and must assume the initiative for:
 - a. Submission of post-secondary grades to L.M.H.S.
 - b. Senior responsibilities, such as:
 1. Yearbook data
 2. Class obligations
 3. Graduation activities
 4. Checking the school calendar for senior activities
 - c. Contact with the guidance office for post-secondary financial, academic and placement opportunities

To act on a student's application, a Standing Committee will be appointed by the Principal and this Committee will consider the following factors in the context of what appears to be in the best interests of the student:

- a. Scholastic average, normally a "B" average would be expected;
- b. In the context of the student's short-range and long-range plans, the extent to which the student can fulfill his/her educational goals at L.M.H.S.
- c. Extenuating personal reasons;
- d. Other factors which the Committee deems relevant;

The Committee will meet with the student and parents to review the application and by March 1st will decide whether a student will be permitted to fulfill L.M.H.S. graduation requirements at a post-secondary institution. If the request is approved, the student's counselor will identify the college courses to be satisfactorily completed for the diploma to be awarded.

EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

The School Committee considers comprehensive and objective evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum to be of primary importance. The Superintendent will provide for the translation of the stated instructional goals into objectives and for appraisal of their implementation:

1. Determine educational needs and provide information for planning.
2. Indicate instructional strengths and weaknesses.
3. To check on the suitability of programs in terms of community requirements.
4. Show the relationship between achievement and the system's stated goals.
5. Provide data for public information.

Elements of this evaluation process may include:

1. Testing programs such as nationally standardized general achievement tests, nationally standardized tests in specific subject areas, and tests administered by other agencies.
2. Study of school achievement records.
3. Study of students' high school and drop-out records.
4. Use of outside services, participation in regional research studies, contracted evaluation services; evaluation services at cost to the school system must be approved in advance by the School Committee.
5. Teacher and parent evaluation of student behavior.
6. State Department of Education specialists and services.
7. Evaluation by the regional accrediting association.
8. Evaluation by other agencies.

An evaluation of the curriculum and its effectiveness will be made periodically and reported to the Committee by the Superintendent.

TEACHING ACTIVITIES/PRESENTATIONS

It is the desire of the School Committee that the best available strategies for bringing about learning be utilized in the District's schools. The instructional staff shall be expected to keep abreast of new and promising instructional ideas and practices developed in schools throughout the nation and to apply those which have potential for improving the learning program in the District's schools.

An educational climate shall be established which shall be conducive to rational thought, inquiry, and respect for the dignity of the individual. This educational climate will assist students in learning how to think and shall provide students the opportunity to identify, express, and defend their opinions without penalty or fear of reprisal or ridicule.

Nothing in this policy shall limit a parent/guardian's right to file a complaint to challenge the use of teaching activity or presentation.

TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

An important goal of the schools is to help prepare students for intelligent and conscientious participation as citizens in our democratic society. One step toward meeting this goal is to introduce students to reasoned and dispassionate approaches to the analysis of contemporary social and political issues. To insure that these issues can be examined in an atmosphere as free from emotion and prejudice as the times permit, the School Committee establishes the following guidelines for discussion of controversial issues in the schools.

Teacher-Planned Classroom Discussions

1. Controversial issues selected by teachers for classroom discussion must relate directly to the objectives and content of courses approved by the School Committee for inclusion in the curriculum.
2. The teachers' right to introduce controversial issues in classroom presentations does not include the right of advocacy. Teachers must refrain from using their positions to express partisan points of view.
3. The approach to discussion of these issues in the classroom must be objective and scholarly with minimum emphasis on opinion and maximum emphasis on intelligent analysis.
4. Teachers must ensure that the reasoned arguments of all sides of an issue are given equal presentation and emphasis in classroom discussions.
5. Teachers may invite visitors from outside the schools to give presentations on controversial issues when the visitors offer qualifications and resources not available in the schools. All visitors are to be guided by the standards of language usage that prevail in the classrooms and by the standards of scholarly inquiry set forth above. Whenever possible, teachers who invite visitors to present one side of an issue will also invite visitors to present the other side(s).
6. In all cases teachers must obtain from the appropriate Principal permission to invite visitors for classroom presentations. Permission must be requested at least 48 hours before the scheduled time of presentation.
7. Notification to parents of potentially controversial topics.

Student-Initiated Forums on Controversial Issues

Student groups may request permission to conduct forums on controversial issues in the schools. The Principal may grant such requests under the following conditions:

1. Preparation for presentation of a forum will not cause any student or teacher to miss class and will not cause the cancellation of any class.
2. Adequate advance planning must be conducted for each forum. A request to hold a forum must be received by the Principal at least three weeks before the scheduled date of presentation. For each request the Principal will appoint, after consultation with the requesting student group, an adult advisory group consisting of at least two parents and two faculty members.
3. The standards for approach to discussion, style of presentation, and use of visitors as defined above will apply to student-initiated forums.

Requests from Groups or Individuals Outside the Schools

No permission will be granted non-school groups or individuals to make presentations on controversial issues in the schools during school hours. Requests for after-school or evening use will be processed in accordance with the Committee's policy on community use of school facilities.

No permission will be granted outsiders for distribution of literature on controversial issues to students in general or to class groups.

A Principal may grant an outside group or individual permission to post one notice of a public meeting for discussion of issues if the language of that notice conforms to the standards that prevail in the community. The Principal will determine the appropriate bulletin board for such notices.

SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

The United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Massachusetts and related court rulings clearly establish the concept of "church and state separation" and the "preclusion of sectarian instruction in public schools."

In order to help staff members abide by the spirit and letter of the law, and to avoid compromising any student's religious or conscientious beliefs or freedoms, the following guidelines have been established:

The observance of religious holidays is not the responsibility of the public schools.

While it is recognized that many activities are initiated with the approach of major holidays in order to capitalize on the readiness and interest that is generated at these times, it should be understood that such occasions frequently have religious underpinnings. Care should be taken to relate only to secular aspects of these holidays.

Music programs given at times close to religious holidays should not use religious aspect of these holidays as the underlying motive or theme. Although religious music is appropriate in the schools to the extent that it is sung or presented for musical rather than religious content, its use should not violate the secular nature of the school. Pageants, plays, recitals, and other literary or dramatic activities should not be used to convey religious messages. While the holidays represent a valid source of ideas for meaningful school art experiences, teachers should avoid assigning or encouraging art work that promotes religious aspects of such holidays. If, however, individual students choose to use a religious personage, event, or symbol as the vehicle for an artistic expression, they should be allowed to take this action.

The above statements should not be interpreted to preclude the factual and objective teaching about religions, religious holidays, and religious differences. Such instruction will be permitted in the schools since insights in this area can enhance the mutual understanding needed by all the people in a pluralistic society.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

STUDENT POLICIES GOALS

The student is the focal point of all operations of a school system.

Consequently, the School Committee can expect to spend much of its time in study, deliberation, and policy formulation on matters directly related to students.

The Committee and staff will work together to establish an environment conducive to the very best learning achievements for each student through meeting the following goals regarding students:

1. To individualize the learning program in order to provide appropriately for each student according to his/her specific background, capabilities, learning styles, interests, and aspirations.
2. To protect and observe the legal rights of students.
3. To provide an environment in which students can learn personal and civic responsibility for their actions through meaningful experiences as school citizens.
4. To deal with students in matters of discipline in a just and constructive manner.
5. To provide in every way possible for the safety, health, and welfare of students.
6. To promote attendance, good work and effort.
7. To promote a cooperative and respectful environment between and among students, faculty, and staff.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:00

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

In recognition of the diversified characteristics and needs of our students and with the keen desire to be responsive to them, the School Committee will make every effort to protect the dignity of the students as individuals. It also will offer careful consideration and sympathetic understanding of their personal feelings, particularly with reference to their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or physical and intellectual differences.

To accomplish this, the Committee and its staff will make every effort to comply with the letter and the spirit of the Massachusetts equal educational opportunities law, which prohibits discrimination in public school admissions and programs. The law reads as follows:

No child shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and course of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, and extracurricular and athletic activities.

All implementing provisions issued by the Board of Education in compliance with this law will be followed.

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment
Opportunity Act of 1972
Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)
BESE Regulations 603 CMR 26:00
BESE Regulations 603 CMR 28:00

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination

STUDENT-TO-STUDENT HARASSMENT

Harassment of students by other students will not be tolerated in the Lenox Public Schools. This policy is in effect while students are on school grounds, school district property or property within the jurisdiction of the school district, school buses, or attending or engaging in school activities.

Harassment prohibited by the district includes, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis of race, sex, gender identity, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, marital status or disability. Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Harassment means conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, disturb or trouble students when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education or of a student's participation in school programs or activities;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's performance or creating an intimidating or hostile learning environment.

Harassment as described above may include, but is not limited to:

- Verbal, physical or written harassment or abuse; Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, or other school matter.
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student.

The district will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment. The Principal or designee of each building will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging harassment.

Retaliation against a student because a student has filed a harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment investigation or proceeding is also prohibited. A student who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion.

The Superintendent will develop administrative guidelines and procedures for the implementation of this policy.

REFS: "Words that Hurt," *American School Board Journal*, September 1999 National Education Policy Network, NSBA

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 15IB:3A Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended BESE 603 CMR 26:00

CROSS REF: JICFB, Bullying

ELEMENTARY STUDENTS—ASSIGNMENT TO CLASSES

The elementary Principal shall be responsible for making class assignments for the grades under the Principal's jurisdiction. The Principal shall develop criteria and a calendar for making such assignments and shall elicit teacher recommendations for each student.

The final decision for the placement of each child rests with the Principal.

In assigning students to classes, the elementary Principal will normally consider a variety of issues to ensure that each child will have a successful school year. Examples of such issues include but are not limited to the following: a fair distribution of sexes, specific health needs, special needs services required, interpersonal relationships, learning styles, and academic and social needs. The Principal will place heavy priority on teacher recommendations.

Parents who have information that may be relevant when assignments are being made are asked to contact the elementary Principal. Parent information should be submitted in writing to the elementary Principal by May 1st of each school year.

KINDERGARTEN ENTRANCE AGE

Children must be five years of age on or before September 1 to enter kindergarten.

Transfer Students

Children who move into Lenox after the start of the school year as transfer students and who do not meet our kindergarten age requirements may, at the discretion of the elementary Principal, enter our kindergarten program provided they were enrolled in a bona fide kindergarten program before moving to Lenox.

Resident Children (Under-Age)

Resident children who do not meet our kindergarten age (five years of age on or before September 1) and who have enrolled in a kindergarten program outside the Lenox Public Schools may not transfer to a kindergarten class in the Lenox Public Schools during that year.

GRADE 1 ENTRANCE AGE

To enter Grade 1, children must be six years of age or before September 1. However, children who do not meet the age requirement, but who have successfully completed a year of kindergarten instruction in a bona fide kindergarten program outside the Lenox Public Schools, may enter Grade 1 in the Lenox Public Schools at the discretion of the elementary Principal.

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

All children of school age who reside in the town will be entitled to attend the public schools, as will certain children who do not reside in the town but who are admitted under School Committee policies relating to nonresident students or by specific action of the School Committee.

Registration for prospective kindergarten students will take place in May. Every student seeking admission to school for the first time must present a birth certificate and/or equivalent proof of age acceptable to the Principal, proof of vaccination and immunizations as required by the state and the School Committee. Proof of residency or legal guardianship may also be required by the school administration.

Purpose and Construction of 603 CMR 26.00

- (1) 603 CMR 26.00 is promulgated to insure the right of access to the public schools of the Commonwealth and the equal enjoyment of the opportunities, advantages, privileges and courses of study at such schools without regard to race, color, sex, religion or national origin. 603 CMR 26.00 shall be liberally construed for these purposes.
- (2) The obligation to comply with 603 CMR 26.00 is not obviated or alleviated by any local law or rule or regulation of any organization, club, athletic or other league or association which would limit the eligibility or participation of any student on the basis of race, color, sex, religion or national origin.

School Admissions

- (1) The Lenox Public Schools shall admit students without regard to race, color sex, religion, sexual orientation or national origin.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 15:1G; 76:1; 76:5; 76:15; 76:15A
603 CMR 26:01; 26:02; 26:03

CROSS REFS.: JLCA, Physical Examination of Students
JLCB, Inoculations of Students
JFBB, School Choice

NON-RESIDENT-STUDENTS

The Superintendent may establish tuition and non-resident agreements with other area school districts as allowed by statute and with the approval of the School Committee.

ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS

A student may withdraw from a Commonwealth charter school at any time and enroll in the school district in which said student resides. To maintain enrollment stability, encourage promotion based on academic standards, and discourage social promotion, the school district will consult with the student's charter school regarding placement and eligibility for graduation and enroll the student at the grade level the school district determines appropriate.

The time of the school year when enrollment is sought shall be a factor in determining the student's grade level placement. The school district may determine that a student seeking enrollment after the mid-point of the academic year may not be eligible for promotion or graduation in that academic year.

The school district will enroll and place students who have left Commonwealth charter schools by adhering to the same policies and procedures in place for any other student enrolling in the school district including, but not limited to, examination of the course of study and level of academic attainment of the student when determining the student's appropriate grade placement or eligibility for high school graduation.

To the same extent provided for other students enrolling in the school district, students who enroll in the school district from a Commonwealth charter school shall be subject to the graduation requirements of the school district, may have certain graduation requirements waived, and may make-up certain graduation requirements.

LEGAL REFS.: Chapter 12, Section 11 of the Acts of 2010

SOURCE: MASC February 2011
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Approved: September 19, 2011

HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES

To the extent practical and as required by law, the district will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable preschool programs, Title 1, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence including:

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

The superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the district's liaison for homeless students and their families.

To the extent feasible, homeless students will continue to be enrolled in their school or origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living, or other schools. Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families resident in the district.

If there is an enrollment dispute, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or guardian shall be informed of the district's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The district's liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state rule. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled in pending resolution of the dispute.

SCHOOL CHOICE

It is the policy of this school district to admit non-resident students under the terms and conditions of the Inter-district School Choice Law (M.G.L. 76:12) and under the following local conditions:

1. On or before January 1st of every school year, the administration will determine the number of spaces in each grade of each school available to choice students.
2. On or before June 1st of every school year, if consideration is being given to participate in, or withdraw from the provisions of the choice law, a public meeting will be held to review this decision, make a determination, and vote whether or not to participate in school choice.
3. That the selection of non-resident students for admission when the number of requests exceeds the number of available spaces be in the form of a random drawing, except that any sibling of a student already enrolled under the choice program shall receive priority for admission. There may be two drawings for this purpose. The first will take place no later than January 31st (LMMHS). The second will be conducted no later than July 31st.
4. Any student who is accepted for admission under the provisions of this policy is entitled to remain in the district until graduation from high school. Exceptions to this provision include the lack of state funding for the program, and the negative disciplinary record of any student.
5. The School Committee affirms its position that it shall not discriminate in the admission of any child on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, ancestry, athletic performance, physical handicap, special need, academic performance, or proficiency in the English language, or genetic information.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:6; 71:6A; 76:6; 76:12; 76:12B

Revised: September 19, 2011

LENOX PUBLIC SCHOOLS



SCHOOL CHOICE INFORMATION & APPLICATION

ADMISSIONS PROCESS

The Lenox Public Schools admit non-resident students residing in Massachusetts in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 76: Section 12, otherwise known as the "School Choice Law." All decisions and judgments concerning all aspects of admissions, eligibility and continued attendance in the Lenox Public Schools are the complete and sole responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools. To be considered eligible for admission, four conditions must be met:

- (1) We must have space available in the particular school, grade level, and program for which you have applied. Each year, the school Principal will declare how many seats in each grade level are available for School Choice;
- (2) You must have a demonstrated record of good behavior and citizenship in your previous school(s);
- (3) You must complete the application process;
- (4) You must submit the completed application prior to the stated deadlines. Postmarked dates on stamps will be official documentation. If you hand deliver the application, a date stamp will be placed on your application.

Once an applicant is eligible for admission, the application is considered during one of two application rounds or during a rolling admission process depending upon the date of application. Students applying in the first round have priority over those applying in the second, and those applying in the second round have priority over those in the rolling admission. Within rounds, eligible students will be selected randomly. Applicants with currently enrolled siblings have priority over other applicants (as per state law).

NOTE: Applications are valid for one school year and are not carried over to the next school year.

Lenox does not discriminate in the admissions process on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sexual orientation, age, genetics, ancestry, athletic performance, physical handicap, special needs, academic performance, or proficiency in the English language.

APPLICATION DEADLINES:

Lenox Memorial Middle & High School

1. *For each school year, the application deadline for the first round of School Choice is January 31.*

*First round admission decisions will be mailed no later than **March 15**.
You must submit a signed enrollment agreement no later than **April 15** to reserve your first round selection.*

2. *The application deadline for the second round is **April 15**.
Second round admission decisions will be mailed no later than **July 15**.
You must submit a signed enrollment agreement no later than **July 25** to reserve your second round selection.*
3. *Applications received after **April 15** will be reviewed on a rolling basis.
Rolling admission decisions on applications received between **April 15 and June 30** will be mailed on or before **July 30**.*
4. *Decisions on applications received after **June 30** will be mailed within 30 days from the receipt of a completed application.*

You must submit a signed enrollment agreement within 5 days of the acceptance date to reserve your rolling admission selection. Normally, students must begin school within 5 days from the start of a new school year or on the first day of either the second or third quarter marking period. In any case, students will not be admitted after the start of the second semester. (third quarter)

MORRIS Elementary School

1. *The application deadline for the first round is **April 15** of the current year for school choice enrollment for the next school year.
First round admission decisions will be mailed no later than **May 15**.
You must submit a signed enrollment agreement no later than **May 25**.*
2. *Applications received after **April 15** will be reviewed on a rolling basis.
Rolling admission decisions on applications received between **April 15 and July 15** will be mailed on or before **July 30**.
You must submit a signed enrollment agreement no later than **August 10**.*
3. *Decisions on applications received after **July 15** will be mailed within 30 days from the receipt of a completed application.*

CHECKLIST OF STEPS FOR APPLICATION:

- (1) *Complete an application and return it to the Superintendent's Office (6 Walker Street,*

- Lenox;)*
- (2) Read the specific School Student Handbook (on our school website: www.lenoxps.org);*
 - (3) After receiving notice of acceptance, sign the Enrollment Agreement Form and return to the Supt. Office by the required date (those not returned by deadlines will forfeit their selection);*
 - (4) Schedule an interview with one of the school counselors by calling the specific school.*

ENROLLMENT AGREEMENTS

Non-resident students are eligible for all academic and support services and all school clubs, plays and other extra-curricular activities on an equal basis with resident students. Eligibility for interscholastic athletic competition is determined by the rules of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

All students must adhere to the rules and regulations of the Lenox Public Schools. Non-resident students are responsible for all transportation to and from school, including that caused by serving detention or attending any other after or before school activity. Non-resident students who withdraw from the Lenox Public Schools for any reason must reapply under the school choice program if they subsequently wish to re-enroll as a student in the Lenox Public Schools.

Non-resident students who fail to demonstrate good behavior and citizenship will not be accepted to Lenox the following year. The parent(s)/legal guardian of a student not accepted to Lenox the following year will be notified no later than July 1.

Revised: September 19, 2011

File:
JH

STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Committee does recognize that parents of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

A student's understanding of the importance of day to day school work is an important factor in the shaping of his/her character. Parents can help their children by refusing to allow them to miss school needlessly.

Accordingly, parents will provide an explanation for the absence and tardiness of a child. This will be required in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible.

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justifiable.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 76:1; 76:16; 76:20

EXCLUSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Denial of Admission

Denial of admission means the withholding of the privilege of enrolling in a school of the District.

The following shall be the grounds for denial of admission to school or diversion to an appropriate alternative program:

Graduation from the twelfth grade of any school or receipt of any document evidencing completion of the equivalent of a secondary curriculum;

Failure to meet the requirements of age, by a student who has reached the age of six years at a time after the beginning of the school year, as fixed by the School Committee as provided in Massachusetts General Laws;

Having been expelled from this district or any district in the Commonwealth;

Not being a resident of the District and the District has opted not to participate in the School Choice Law;

Failure to comply with the provisions of the Massachusetts School Entry Immunization Law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37H; 76:12; 76:12A; 76:12B 603 CM 26:00

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The School Committee has the responsibility to afford students the rights that are theirs by virtue of guarantees offered under the federal and state constitutions and statutes. In connection with rights there are responsibilities that must be assumed by students.

Among these rights and responsibilities are the following:

1. Civil rights—including the rights to equal educational opportunity and freedom from discrimination; the responsibility not to discriminate against others.
2. The right to attend free public schools; the responsibility to attend school regularly and to observe school rules essential for permitting others to learn at school.
3. The right to due process with respect to suspension, expulsion, and decisions the student believes injure his/her rights.
4. The right to free inquiry and expression; responsibility to observe reasonable rules regarding these rights.
5. The right to privacy, which includes privacy in respect to the student's school records.

It is the School Committee's belief that as part of the educational process students should be made aware of their legal rights and of the legal authority of the School Committee to make, and delegate authority to its staff to make, rules regarding the orderly operation of the schools.

Students have the right to know the standards of behavior that are expected of them, and the consequences of misbehavior.

The rights and responsibilities of students, including standards of conduct, will be made available to students and their parents through handbooks distributed annually.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:82 through 71:86

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

As appropriate to the age of students, class, or school organizations and school government organizations, such as student councils may be formed to offer practice in self-government and to serve as channels for the expression of students' ideas and opinions.

The Committee will take into consideration student opinions in establishing policies that directly affect student programs, activities, privileges and other areas of student sensitivity.

Students will be welcomed at Committee meetings and granted privileges of speaking in line with the privileges extended to the general public.

Student Advisory Committee

As required by state law, the Committee will meet at least once every other month while school is in session with its student advisory committee, which is composed of five students elected by the high school student body. The Chairperson of the student advisory committee shall be an ex-officio nonvoting member of the School Committee without the right to attend executive sessions unless such right is expressly granted by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:38M

CROSS REF.: BDF, Advisory Committee to the School Committee

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

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

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

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

The Principal may, as a disciplinary measure, remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the remainder of this policy, law, or regulation.

Suspension

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, a Principal shall consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Notice of Suspension

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

Emergency Removal

A Principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the Principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

The Principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal including a description of the danger presented by the student.

The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal shall: Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters required in the notice as referenced in the applicable regulation; Provide written notice to the student and parent/guardian as required above; Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with applicable regulations, and the parent/guardian an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Principal, student, and parent/guardian; Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of applicable law and regulation.

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

In School Suspension - not more than 10 days consecutively or cumulatively

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

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

Principal's Hearing - short-term suspension of up to 10 days

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

At a minimum, the Principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information.

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

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

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

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

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

Principal's Hearing - long-term suspension of more than 10 days but less than 90 days (consecutive or cumulative)

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

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

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

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

If the Principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal; Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as required by law and regulation; Inform the student of the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee, but only if the Principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information: The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent/guardian must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent/guardian may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the Principal's determination on appeal.

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

Superintendent's Hearing

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

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

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

The Superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian in the hearing. The Superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent/guardian and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent/guardian of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request. The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will

be provided to the student and parent/guardian upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the Principal's hearing for long-term suspension.

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

Expulsion

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently as allowed by law for possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

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

Academic Progress

Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other schoolwork as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The Principal shall inform the student and parent/guardian of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

The Principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents/guardians of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under the law.

The Principal shall notify the parent/guardian and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of

the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

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

Reporting

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

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

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#); [71:37H1/2](#); [71:37H3/4](#); [76:17](#)

603 CMR [53.00](#) (Student Discipline)

NOTE: The DESE regulations on student discipline and this policy, consistent with law, set forth the minimum procedural requirements applicable to the suspension of a student for a disciplinary offense other than: possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in the school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. [71, § 37H](#) or [37H1/2](#). The Principal, pursuant to the previously referenced statute may remove a student who has committed any of the disciplinary offenses above referenced from school for more than 90 days in a school year. Except that the removal from school for such offenses is subject to the provision of continuing educational services needed to make academic progress and, the requirement that all school districts regardless of the type of offense shall report school discipline data and analysis to DESE. Also, the prohibited actions above referenced are subject to the provision that allows the Commissioner to investigate each school that has a significant number of students suspended and expelled for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year and to make recommendations thereon.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Students are expected to dress appropriately for school and school-sponsored activities. A student's dress should show the respect that the community encourages for self and others. Therefore, a student's clothing is not to be sexually provocative, depict violence, promote illegal activities, contain profanity, pornographic material, or cause disruption or disorder.

Students will be asked to change their clothing if it falls into any of the above categories. A first offense will be considered a minor infraction of school rules. However, repeated offenses or a refusal to change inappropriate clothing will result in suspension.

SOURCE: Lenox

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The School Committee and its staff share with students and parents the responsibility for student safety during transportation to and from school. The authority for enforcing School Committee requirements of student conduct on buses will rest with the Principal.

To ensure the safety of all students who ride in buses, it may occasionally be necessary to revoke the privilege of transportation from a student who abuses this privilege. Parents of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges in accordance with regulations approved by the School Committee.

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Students will enjoy the constitutional rights of freedom of expression. They will have the right to express their views in speech, writing, or through any other medium or form of expression within limitations comparable to those imposed on all citizens but specifically designed for children and youth in a school setting.

The School Committee will encourage student publications not only because they offer an educational activity through which students gain experience in reporting, writing, editing, and understanding responsible journalism, but also because they provide an opportunity for students to express their views.

All student publications will be expected to comply with the rules for responsible journalism. This means that libelous statements, unfounded charges and accusations, obscenity, defamation of persons false statements, material advocating racial or religious prejudice, hatred, violence, the breaking of laws and school regulations, or materials designed to disrupt the educational process will not be permitted.

The Superintendent or designee will establish guidelines that are in keeping with the above and provide for the review of the content of all student publications prior to their distribution.

Review of content prior to publication is not censorship, but part of the educational process as this concerns student publications. It can be pointed out to students, as it frequently is to journalists, that a publisher (in this case, the school system) enjoys freedom to determine what it will and will not publish.

Distribution of Literature

Students have a right to the distribution of literature on school grounds and in school buildings, except that the Principal may prohibit the distribution in school buildings of a specific issue or publication if it does not comply with rules for responsible journalism. The Principal may require that no literature be distributed unless a copy is submitted to him/her in advance.

The time, place, and manner of distribution of literature will be reasonably regulated by the Principal.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:82

BULLYING PREVENTION and INTERVENTION**PLAN**

The school or district expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

I. POLICY

- A. It is the policy of the Lenox Public Schools, herein after referred to as the “district”, to provide a learning and working atmosphere for students, employees and visitors free from bullying, hazing, harassment, and intimidation. Such action may occur on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, genetics, disability, or for any other reason.
- B. It is the responsibility of every staff member, student, and parent to recognize acts of bullying and take appropriate action to ensure that the applicable policies and procedures of this school district are implemented. It is additionally the responsibility of the school and district to record and keep data, monitoring the prevalence of bullying issues to assist in the biennial review.
- C. It is a violation of this policy for any staff member, or for any student to engage in bullying in school or to fail to report or otherwise take reasonable corrective measures when they become aware of an incident of bullying. All employees are mandated to report all cases of bullying, as required by this policy and state law. Bullying is prohibited:
- On school grounds,
 - On property immediately adjacent to school grounds,
 - At a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place on or off school grounds,
 - At a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school.
 - Through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by a school district or school (for example, on a computer or over the internet)
 - At any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic device, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

- D. This policy is not designed or intended to limit the school's authority to take disciplinary action or take remedial action when such bullying occurs out of school but has a nexus to school, or is disruptive to or materially and substantially interferes with an employee's work, personal life, a student's school work, or participation in school-related opportunities or activities. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Reports of cyber-bullying by electronic or other means, occurring in or out of school, will be reviewed and, when a nexus to work or school exists, will result in discipline. Parents of students alleged to have engaged in cyber-bullying will be invited to attend a meeting at which the activity, words or images subject to the complaint will be reviewed. A student disciplined for cyber-bullying will not be re-admitted to the regular school program until his or her parent(s) attend such meeting.

- E. Any employee or student who believes that he or she has been subjected to bullying has the right to file a complaint and to receive prompt and appropriate handling of the complaint. Further, all reasonable efforts shall be made to maintain the confidentiality and protect the privacy of all parties, but proper enforcement of this policy may require disclosure of any or all information received.
- F. The Building Principal/Designee shall be responsible for assisting employees and students seeking guidance or support in addressing matters relating to any form of bullying.
- G. If an Individualized Education Program (IEP) indicates that a child has a disability which affects "social skills development" or the child is "vulnerable to bullying or teasing because of the child's disability" the IEP shall address the skills/proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to these issues.

II. BULLYING DEFINITIONS

- A. "Bullying" means repeated, unwelcome, written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, by one or more individuals, directed
- at a target that (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at the school for the target;
 - (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially
- disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of school.

The behavior must interfere with an employee's ability to perform his or her duties or

with a student's academic performance or ability to learn, or interfere with a student's

ability to participate in or benefit from services, activities or privileges:

1. That are being offered through the school district; or during any education program or activity; or
2. During any educational program or activity; or
3. While on school equipment or property, in school vehicles, on school buses, at designated school bus stops, at school sponsored activities, or at school sanctioned events.

B. "Cyber-bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs,

signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole

or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system,

including but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communication, instant messages

or facsimile communication. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web

page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages,

if the creator or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the clauses

(i) to (v) inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the

distribution by electronic means of communicating to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the

the

clauses (i) to (v) inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

1. Cyber-bullying may occur through the use of data, telephone, or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network or any public education institute.

2. As used in this Section, “electronic communication” also means any communication through an electronic device including, but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer or pager.
- C. “Hostile Environment” means, a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule and/or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the condition of a student’s education.
- D. “Involvement” If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day, residential school, or collaborative school, the school district or school first informed of the bullying or retaliation shall, consistent with state and federal law, promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school district or school so that both may take appropriate action.
- E. “Aggressor”: Is a person(s) who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.
- F. “Target”: Is a person(s) against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been directed.
- G. “Reporter”: The person who reports the act of bullying.
- H. “Retaliation”: Is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment, directed against a person(s) who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or provides reliable information about bullying.
- I. “Staff”: includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.
- J. “School Grounds”: is property on which a school building or facility is located or property that is owned, leased or used by a school district for a school-sponsored activity, function, program, instruction or training.

III. GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING BULLYING OR RETALIATION

In school systems, bullying takes many forms and crosses many lines. The situation may be an instance of student to student, student to staff member, staff member to student, or staff member to staff member. Guidelines for dealing with any report of bullying are as follows:

- A. By law, bullying is defined by the target's perception in combination with objective standards or expectations. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may be viewed as bullying by another person. Therefore, in order to protect the rights of both parties, it is important that the target or a Principal or designee to whom a complaint was made or reported make it clear to the aggressor that the behavior is objectionable.
- B. In all reports of bullying, the target, and or reporter, should describe in writing the specifics of the complaint to ensure that the subsequent investigation is focused on the relevant facts. Anonymous complaints of bullying or retaliation will be reviewed but are inherently difficult to investigate and may not be procedurally fair; as a result no disciplinary action shall be taken on anonymous complaints unless verified by clear and convincing evidence. All other complaints will be reviewed based on a preponderance of evidence standard. The *Bullying Reporting Form* (Appendix A) shall be completed. Reporting forms are available to all students and staff at each school as well as online on the Lenox Public School website.
- C. Any school employee that has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is an instigator/participant or a target of bullying, shall immediately report it to the Principal/Designee; each school shall document any prohibited incidents of bullying or cyber-bullying and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals, to the Superintendent's office as they occur. The *Bullying Reporting Form* shall be completed.
- D. A good faith report from a staff member renders the staff member immune from discipline for making a report and is considered to have been made in the course of the staff member's employment for purposes of M.G.L.c.258. As a result, the school district shall indemnify staff members from any cause of action arising out of a good faith report of bullying or the district's subsequent actions or inaction in connection therewith.

- E. In a situation involving a report of *student to student* bullying that is reported to a staff member other than an administrator, the staff member must inform the Building Principal. The student must also complete the *Bullying Reporting Form*.
- F. In a situation involving a report of *staff member to student* bullying, it should be brought to the attention of any staff member, and that staff member shall notify the Building Principal immediately. The *Bullying Reporting Form* must be completed.
- G. In a situation involving a report of *student to staff member* bullying, the staff member shall notify the Building Principal.
- H. In a situation involving a report of *staff member to staff member* bullying the staff member shall notify the Building Principal.
- I. If the alleged aggressor is the person responsible for conducting an investigation, the Superintendent or School Committee shall designate an alternative bullying investigator.
- J. If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day, residential school, or collaborative school, the school district or school first informed of the bullying or retaliation shall, consistent with state and federal law, promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school district or school so that both may take appropriate action.
- K. If an incident of bullying or retaliation occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in a local school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day, residential school, or collaborative school, the school district or school informed of the bullying or retaliation shall contact law enforcement officials consistent with the provisions of state law.
- L. In all cases of alleged retaliation, the reporting and investigating procedures shall adhere to those procedures that apply to cases of alleged bullying.

IV. PROTOCOL FOR INVESTIGATING BULLYING CLAIMS

Once a report of bullying or retaliation has been made, including reports of mental, sexual, emotional, or physical harassment as well as threats to a person's safety, property or position in the school or work environment, the following course of action shall be taken.

- A. The Building Principal/Designee shall promptly investigate the report through discussions with the individual(s) involved. The outcome shall be documented in the *Investigator's Report Form*.(Appendix B)

In situations involving allegations against a staff member, he/she should be informed of his/her right to have a third party present at the time of the discussion.

- In situations involving allegations by one student against another student, the Principal/Designee should engage the appropriate classroom or special subject area teachers. Parents of both sides of this report will be informed of the situation and will be invited to participate in resolution discussions. It is important that the situation be resolved as confidentially and as quickly as the circumstances permit. The *Investigator's Report Form* shall specify the outcome.

- B. If the aggressor and target are willing to discuss the matter indicated in the *Investigator's Report Form*, in the presence of the Principal/Designee, a supportive faculty member and/or parent should be included in the discussion. During the discussion the offending behavior should be described by the target and the administration, a request for a change in behavior should be made, and a promise should be made that the described behavior will stop. If the circumstances do not permit a face-to-face meeting, the administration will present the target's position. Follow-up verification procedures will be explained. Failure to comply after a resolution meeting will result in appropriate discipline outlined in the *Student Handbook* and listed on the *Bullying Rubric* (Appendix D) and determined by the Building Principal. The matter shall be documented in the *Investigator's Report Form*.

- C. If after a resolution meeting with the involved parties, the Building Principal/Designee determines that further, more formal investigation or additional disciplinary action must be taken, the following could occur:

1. In instances involving *student to student or student to staff member* bullying, the student may be subject to discipline including but not limited to counseling, suspension, and, in appropriate cases, expulsion. Please refer to Appendix D for the full range of disciplinary actions that may be used by the school administration.
 2. In instances involving a *staff member to student* and *staff member to staff member* bullying, findings will be referred to the Superintendent of Schools for further action. Personnel action may also be initiated at this point, up to and including discharge consistent with the applicable law and collective bargaining agreement.
- D. Appropriate staff will be notified of the investigation and any follow up, within limitations of applicable law.

V. GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORT SERVICES AND SAFETY PLANS

In an effort to provide the target, or other involved individuals such as reporters, witnesses or others, with a learning and working atmosphere where the target feels safe, and to prevent the re-occurrence of bullying, a target's *Safety Plan Form* will be developed to ensure these basic rights can be achieved. This Safety Plan will provide clear procedures for restoring a sense of safety for a target and assessing that target's need for protection. The Safety Plan can include change of schedule, locker, lunch period, counseling, teacher notification, and a daily check in person. The Building Principal/Designee shall complete the *Safety Plan Form* and share it with the target, his/her parent(s) and appropriate school personnel in an efficient time frame (Refer to Appendix C.)

In addition, the school will offer appropriate support services, education and or intervention services for targets, aggressors, and appropriate family members of the involved students. The school may consider current tools including, but not limited to, behavioral intervention plans, social skills groups, and individually focused curricula.

VI. NOTIFICATIONS

1. TO OTHER INVOLVED PARTIES

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All

notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations

2. TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Building Principal shall determine when acts of bullying need to be reported to local law enforcement. School officials will coordinate with the Lenox Police Department to identify a police liaison for bullying cases.

VII. RETALIATION AND FALSE ACCUSATIONS

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be prohibited. Any student or staff member who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

In any situation where relational and/or false accusations occur in any form against any person who has made or filed a complaint relating to bullying, reprisal is forbidden. If either action occurs, it could be considered grounds for dismissal of staff personnel and/or removal from the educational setting for a student. A referral to law enforcement may be made.

VIII. CONFIDENTIALITY

Reports of bullying should be kept confidential, consistent with necessary investigation procedures and legal restraints on the dissemination of information about students with the goal of protecting the target and stopping the behavior. This is in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA.)

IX. SCHOOL-HOME PARTNERSHIP

- A. **PARENT EDUCATION AND RESOURCES:** The Lenox Public Schools are committed to working collaboratively with families in order to ensure that we have a safe and supportive school community. In partnership with the Lenox Public Schools, parents share in the responsibility to (i) reinforce the curriculum at home and support the school district or school plan; (ii) learn the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) reinforce proper online safety and cyber-bullying. To assist parents in this partnership, the Lenox Public Schools will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components

of the anti-bullying and social curricula used by each school in the district. These programs will be offered in collaboration with the PTO, School Counsels, Special Education Advisory Council and any other appropriate community organizations.

- B. NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS AND/OR GUARDIANS: Each year the Lenox Public Schools will inform parents and guardians of the anti-bullying curricula that will be used in each of our schools. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyber bullying and online safety. The Lenox Public Schools will send parents a written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the Lenox Public Schools' Internet Safety Policy. All notices and information will be made available to parents in hard copy and electronically on the Lenox Public Schools' website. The Lenox Public Schools are committed to supporting the diversity of our community and will offer this policy in other languages if needed by families.

Parents will be informed about each school's bullying prevention and intervention plan and trainings.

X. PREVENTION & TRAINING

- A. The professional development of staff and training for students is a critical part of this policy. All staff and students will receive annual trainings on this policy. Newly hired staff shall be trained promptly on this policy and its procedures and will receive professional development as needed.
- B. The content of professional development for this policy shall include, but not be limited to, (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target and witnesses to the bullying; (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying; and (vi) internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.
- C. Each school shall provide age-appropriate instruction at each grade level for all

students
on bullying prevention annually.

- D. The school district shall update their bullying prevention and intervention plans biennially, in consultation with teachers, staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians.
- E. Specialized training for staff of students with special education IEPs and for students with special needs.

XI. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the Lenox Public Schools, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and course of study of such public school on account of race, color, gender, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. Nothing in this Plan prevents the Lenox Public Schools from taking action to remediate discrimination or bullying based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state or federal law or Lenox Public School Policies.

In addition, nothing in this Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the Lenox Public Schools to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71 37H or 37 H ½ , other applicable laws or school policies in response to violent, harmful or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

For further information about these guidelines, or for help with bullying problems or any other form of bullying, consult a member of the administration.

LEGAL REFERENCES

1. Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 703
2. Title IX of the 1972 U.S. Civil Rights Act.
3. Chapter 151B, Massachusetts General Laws
4. M.G.L. Chapter 76 § 5
5. M.G.L. Chapter 269 § 17, 18, 19
6. M.G.L. Chapter 71, §370, 82, 84 93
7. Family Education Rights and Privacy Act
8. Mass Student Records Laws and Regulations
9. Senate 2404 Bill: An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools
10. MGL C71, S 370

Approved by School Committee: December 6, 2010; May 16, 2011.

APPENDIX

A. Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form

B. Bullying Incident Investigator's Report Form

C. Lenox Safety Plan Form

D. Bullying Behavior Rubric

LENOX PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Policy on Transgender and Gender Non-conforming Students

The purpose of this policy is:

- (1) to foster an educational environment that is safe and free from discrimination for all students, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, and
- (2) to facilitate compliance with local, state, and federal laws concerning bullying, harassment, and discrimination.

This policy should be interpreted consistent with the goals of reducing the stigmatization of and improving the educational integration of transgender and gender nonconforming students, maintaining the privacy of all students, and fostering cultural competence and professional development for school staff. Furthermore, this policy will support healthy communication between educators and parents/guardians to further the successful educational development and wellbeing of every student.

Definitions

These definitions are provided not for the purpose of labeling students but rather to assist in understanding this policy and the legal obligations of District staff. Students may or may not use these terms to describe themselves.

GENDER IDENTITY: A person's deeply held sense or psychological knowledge of their own gender. One's gender identity can be the same or different than the gender assigned at birth. Most people have a gender identity that matches their assigned gender at birth. For some, however, their gender identity is different from their assigned gender. All people have a gender identity, not just transgender people. Gender identity is an innate, largely inflexible characteristic of each individual's personality that is generally established by age four, although the age at which individuals come to understand and express their gender identity may vary based on each person's social and familial social development.

GENDER EXPRESSION: The manner in which a person represents or expresses gender to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice or mannerisms.

TRANSGENDER: An adjective describing a person whose gender identity or expression is different from that traditionally associated with an assigned sex at birth.

TRANSITION: The process in which a person goes from living and identifying as one gender to living and identifying as another.

GENDER NONCONFORMING: A term for people whose gender expression differs from stereotypical expectations, such as "feminine" boys, "masculine" girls, and those who are

perceived as androgynous. This includes people who identify outside traditional gender categories or identify as both genders. Other terms that can have similar meanings include gender diverse or gender expansive.

BULLYING: Bullying means written, verbal, or physical conduct that adversely affects the ability of one or more students to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs or activities by placing the student (or students) in reasonable fear of physical harm. This includes conduct that is based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, [or any other distinguishing characteristics that may be included by the state or local educational agency]. This also includes conduct that targets a student because of a characteristic of a friend, family member, or other person or group with whom a student associates.

Scope

This policy covers conduct that takes place in the school, on school property, at school sponsored functions and activities, on school buses or vehicles, and at bus stops. This policy also pertains to usage of electronic technology and electronic communication that occurs in the school, on school property, at school sponsored functions and activities, on school buses or vehicles, at bus stops, and on school computers, networks, forums, and mailing lists. This policy applies to the entire school community, including educators, school and District staff, students, parents, and volunteers.

Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination

Discrimination, bullying, and harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression shall be prohibited within the School District. It is the responsibility of each school and the District and all staff to ensure that all students, including transgender and gender nonconforming students, have a safe school environment. The scope of this responsibility includes ensuring that any incident of discrimination, harassment, or bullying is given immediate attention, including investigating the incident, taking age and developmentally appropriate corrective action, and providing students and staff with appropriate resources. Complaints alleging discrimination or harassment based on a person's actual or perceived gender identity or expression are to be taken seriously and handled in the same manner as other discrimination, bullying, or harassment complaints.

School administrators shall make every effort to keep transgender and gender nonconforming students at the original school site. Transfers shall not be a school's first or preferred response to harassment of transgender and gender nonconforming students and shall be considered only when necessary for the protection or personal welfare of the transferred student or when requested by the student or the student's parent. The student or the student's parent or guardian must consent to any such transfer.

Privacy/Confidentiality

All persons, including students, have a right to privacy, and this includes the right to keep one's gender identity private at school. Information about a student's gender identity, legal name, or gender assigned at birth also may constitute confidential medical information. Disclosing this information to other students, their parents, or other third parties may violate privacy laws, such as the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The District shall ensure that all medical information relating to transgender and gender nonconforming students shall be kept confidential in accordance with applicable state, local, and federal privacy laws. School staff shall not disclose information that may reveal a student's transgender status to others, including parents and other school staff, unless legally required to do so or unless the student has authorized such disclosure.

Transgender and gender nonconforming students have the right to discuss and express their gender identity and expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much to share private information. The fact that a student chooses to disclose his or her gender identity to staff or other students does not authorize school staff to disclose other medical information about the student. When contacting the parent or guardian of a transgender student, school staff should use the student's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the student's gender assigned at birth unless the student, parent, or guardian has specified otherwise. (See "Student Transitions" below.)

Media and Community Communication

When communicating to the media or community about issues related to gender identity, the school or District shall have a single spokesperson to address the issue. Rather than directly commenting on the issue, other District and school staff shall direct parents and the media to the designated spokesperson. Protecting the privacy of transgender and gender nonconforming students must be a top priority for the spokesperson and all staff, and all medical information shall be kept strictly confidential. Violating confidentiality of this information is a violation of this policy and may be a violation of local, state, or federal privacy laws.

Official Records

Massachusetts' law recognizes common law name changes. An individual may adopt a name that is different from the name that appears on his or her birth certificate provided the change of name is done for an honest reason, with no fraudulent intent. Nothing more formal than usage is required. Hence, when requested, schools should accurately record the student's chosen name on all records, whether or not the student, parent, or guardian provides the school with a court order formalizing a name change.

If situations arise where school staff or administrators are required to use or to report a transgender student's birth name or gender, such as for purposes of standardized testing, school staff and administrators shall adopt practices to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of such confidential information.

Names and Pronouns

Every student has the right to be addressed by the name and pronouns that correspond to the student's gender identity. A court ordered name or gender change is not required, and the student

need not change his or her official records. It is strongly recommended that teachers privately ask transgender or gender nonconforming students at the beginning of the school year how they want to be addressed in class, in correspondence to the home, or at conferences with the student's guardian.

Access to Gender-Segregated Activities and Areas

With respect to all restrooms, locker rooms, or changing facilities, students shall have access to facilities that correspond to their gender identity. Schools may maintain separate restroom, locker room, or changing facilities for male and female students, provided that they allow students to access them based on their gender identity.

In any gender segregated facility, any student who is uncomfortable using a shared facility, regardless of the reason, shall, upon the student's request, be provided with a safe and non-stigmatizing alternative. This may include, for example, addition of a privacy partition or curtain, provision to use a nearby private restroom or office, or a separate changing schedule. However, requiring a transgender or gender nonconforming student to use a separate, nonintegrated space threatens to publicly identify and marginalize the student as transgender and should not be done unless requested by a student. Under no circumstances may students be required to use sex segregated facilities that are inconsistent with their gender identity.

Where available, schools are encouraged to designate facilities designed for use by one person at a time as accessible to all students regardless of gender, and to incorporate such single user facilities into new construction or renovation. However, under no circumstances may a student be required to use such facilities because they are transgender or gender nonconforming.

Physical Education Classes and Intramural and Interscholastic Athletics

All students shall be permitted to participate in physical education classes and intramural sports in a manner consistent with their gender identity. Furthermore, [unless precluded by other states' interscholastic association policies,] all students shall be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

Other Gender-Based Activities, Rules, Policies, and Practices

As a general matter, schools should evaluate all gender based activities, rules, policies, and practices — including classroom activities, school ceremonies, and school photos — and maintain only those that have a clear and sound pedagogical purpose. Students shall be permitted to participate in any such activities or conform to any such rule, policy, or practice consistent with their gender identity.

Dress Code

Schools may enforce dress codes pursuant to District policy. Students shall have the right to dress in accordance with their gender identity, within the constraints of the dress codes adopted by the school. School staff shall not enforce a school's dress code more strictly against transgender and gender nonconforming students than other students.

Student Transitions

In order to maintain privacy and confidentiality regarding their transition and gender identity, transgender students may wish — but are not required — to transition over a summer break or between grades. Regardless of the timing of a student’s transition, the school shall act in accordance with the following age appropriate policies.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: Generally, it will be the parent or guardian that informs the school of the impending transition. However, it is not unusual for a student’s desire to transition to first surface at school. If school staff believes that a gender identity or expression issue is presenting itself and creating difficulty for the child at school, approaching parents about the issue is appropriate at the elementary level. Together, the family and school can then identify appropriate steps to support the student.

SECONDARY SCHOOL: Generally, notification of a student’s parent about his or her gender identity, expression, or transition is unnecessary, as they may be already aware and be supportive. In some cases, however, notifying parents carries risks for the student, such as being kicked out of the home. Prior to notification of any parent or guardian regarding the transition process, school staff must consider the health, wellbeing, and safety of the transitioning student and should work closely with the student to assess the degree to which the guardian will be involved.

When a student transitions during the school year, the school shall hold a meeting with the student (and parents if they are involved in the process) to ascertain their desires and concerns. The school should discuss a timeline for the transition in order to create the conditions supporting a safe and accepting environment at the school. Finally, the school shall train school administrators and any educators that interact directly with the student on the transition plan, timelines for transition, and any relevant legal requirements.

Training and Professional Development

The District shall conduct staff training for all staff members on their responsibilities under applicable laws and this policy, including teachers, administrators, counselors, social workers, and health staff. Information regarding this policy shall be incorporated into training for new school employees.

To the extent funding is available, the School District shall implement ongoing professional development to build the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying, harassment, and discrimination. The content of such professional development shall include, but not be limited to:

- (i) terms, concepts, and current developmental understandings of gender identity, gender expression, and gender diversity in children and adolescents;
- (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for communication with students and parents about issues related to gender identity and gender expression that protect student privacy;
- (iii) developmentally appropriate strategies for preventing and intervening in bullying incidents, including cyberbullying;

(iv) school and district policies regarding bullying, discrimination, and gender identity and expression issues and responsibilities of staff. Publication

This policy will be distributed annually and will also be included in any student codes of conduct, disciplinary policies, student handbooks, and school websites.

ADAPTED FROM GUIDANCE FROM THE Gay, Lesbian, Straight Education Network (GLSEN), the ESE Guidance for Massachusetts Public Schools on Gender Identity, and the ESE Guidance on Notifying Parents When a Student Has Been Bullied Based on Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity/Expression.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED: October 19, 2015

File:
JICG

TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS AND AT SCHOOL-SPONSORED EVENTS

Smoking, chewing, or other use of tobacco products by staff, students, and members of the public is banned from all district buildings. All forms of tobacco use shall be prohibited on all district property. In addition, tobacco use by students is banned at all school-sponsored events, even though this use may not take place on school grounds.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L 71:37H

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED

A student shall not, regardless of quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol, any tobacco product, any vaporizer or E-cigarette; marijuana in any form; steroids; or any controlled substance on school property, on school buses, or at any school-sponsored activity. Students found to be in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and referral to the Lenox Police Department.

Additionally, any student who is under the influence of drugs, (including controlled substances, marijuana in any form, or prescription medications not prescribed for the student) or alcoholic beverages prior to, or during, attendance at or participation in a school-sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and may be subject to disciplinary action.

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and communicated annually through newsletters. Notice of this policy shall be provided annually to all students and parents in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy annually in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

SOURCE: MASC 2016

LEGAL REFS. : M.G.L.71:2A; 71:96; 272:40 A

CROSS REF: GBEC, Drug Free Workplace

REVISED AND ADOPTED: January 23, 2017

WEAPONS

Possession of a dangerous weapon, not limited to a gun, gun replica (starting gun, flare gun, etc.) or knife, on school property or when associated with or participating in any school-sponsored activity may result in expulsion or other disciplinary action. A variety of objects when used for the purpose of intimidation or injury will be considered as weapons. A student who wishes to bring to school, for the purpose of display or other school-related reason, any item that may be considered as a weapon may do so only with the express written consent of the Principal.

In accordance with Massachusetts law (Sec. 37L of C. 71), all school personnel shall report in writing to the Assistant Principal or Principal incidents involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises or at any school-sponsored or school-related activity at any time.

The Assistant Principal or Principal shall file reports with the Superintendent, who shall file them with the Chief of Police, Department of Social Services and School Committee.

The student shall receive an assessment arranged by the Superintendent, police chief and the Department of Social Services. The student shall be referred to counseling and be reassessed by those involved in the initial assessment upon conclusion of the counseling.

In accordance with Massachusetts law 269:10, anyone other than a law enforcement officer who carries a loaded or unloaded firearm or other dangerous weapon into any building or on the grounds of any elementary or secondary school without written authorization of the School Committee, Principal or Superintendent shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both.

Any Principal that fails to report violations of this law shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37L; 269:10

PREGNANT STUDENTS

Pregnant students will be given the same access to all programs, courses, and activities as all students. Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible; that health counseling services, as well as instruction, are offered; that return to school after delivery is encouraged; and that every opportunity to complete high school is provided.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:84

Updated January 10, 2011

INTERROGATIONS AND SEARCHES

Searches by Staff

Teachers and other school officials are permitted to search a student and/or the student's possessions such as handbags, book bags, backpacks, etc., when such school official has reasonable grounds to believe that a student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. Reasonable grounds may include a school official's personal observation that the student possesses contraband material on school grounds or the school official's receipt of a report to that effect by a teacher, another school employee, a student, or some other reliable source. Lockers are considered school property and are subject to search by school officials at any time. A search will be limited to areas and objects that reasonably could be expected to contain the contraband material.

Interrogations by Police

The schools have legal custody of students during the school day and during hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to make an effort to protect each student's rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials. Therefore:

1. When law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students concerning school-related incidents during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the school Principal or his/her designee will be present when possible. An effort will be made to contact the student's parent or guardian so that the responsible individual may be notified of the situation.
2. If custody and/or arrest are involved, the Principal will request that all procedural safeguards, as prescribed by law, be observed by the law enforcement officials.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

The School Committee recognizes that there may be conditions in the school system that are in need of improvement and that students should have some means by which their concerns may be effectively expressed, considered, and dealt with fairly. Such means, if well-conceived and understood in advance, can do much to maintain harmonious relationships among the schools and the students and community.

Every attempt will be made to seek a satisfactory solution to any legitimate grievance in a friendly and informal manner. In order to keep such discussions within a practical size, no more than six student representatives will be permitted to participate with the Principal, staff members, or School Committee members who may be involved.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 76:17

CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The School Committee believes that student activities are a vital part of the total educational program and should be used as a means for developing wholesome attitudes and good human relations and knowledge and skills. Therefore, the schools will endeavor to provide a broad and balanced program of activities geared to the various ages, interests, and needs of students.

The following will serve as guides in the organization of student activities:

1. Participation is a privilege.
2. The schools will observe a complementary relationship to the home and community, planning activities with due regard for the widespread and rich facilities already available to students.
3. The goal for each student will be a balanced program of appropriate academic studies and activities.
4. Guidance will be offered to encourage participation of all students in appropriate activities and to prevent over-emphasis on extracurricular activities at the cost of academic performance.
5. All activities will be supervised; all clubs and groups will have a faculty advisor.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:47 603 CMR 26:06

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Student organizations in the District shall be encouraged when they met the criteria of contributing to student self-esteem and performance and should operate within the framework of state statutes, School Committee policies, and administrative procedures.

Each building Principal shall develop general guidelines for the establishment and operation of student organizations within the particular school. Among other provisions, such guidelines shall require the approval of the Principal prior to the formation of any club or organization in the school and the assignment of at least one faculty or designated adult advisor to each approved student organization. Within such guidelines will be provisions for a periodic review of all student organizations.

The formation of any student organization that may engage in activities of a controversial nature shall require approval by the Committee.

All student organizations shall be required to open membership to all interested and/or eligible students. Disruptive groups, secret societies, and/or gangs shall not receive recognition in any manner under this policy.

All forms of hazing in initiations shall be prohibited in a student organization.

The faculty or designated adult advisor must attend every meeting of the student organization whether conducted on school premises or at another location.

In addition to the above requirements, all clubs or organizations at the high school level will relate to the subject matter covered by the curriculum. The Principal is responsible for determining that the purpose of a student organization is related to the curriculum. The Principal is authorized to deny requests by unauthorized student organization desiring to meet or form in a particular school, the Principal shall inform the group of the reasons for the denial. The students and/or group may submit a written request to the Superintendent for review of the Principal's decision.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26.06

FUND-RAISING

The Committee believes that, in general, funds should not be solicited from the general public to meet the normal needs of the schools. It shall be the policy of the Committee to familiarize the townspeople with the needs of the schools and to request the taxpayers to support the school program adequately. Therefore, fund-raising activities normally will not be undertaken by students or employees to support programs which are supported through the annual operating budget. Exceptions to this provision may be made only by the Superintendent or Principal/designee.

At the same time, the School Committee recognizes that some school, school-related, and community service organizations need to generate funds to support projects or activities either beyond the scope of programs funded directly through the school budget or which benefit students in some way. The School Committee acknowledges that such fund-raising activities associated with the school need to follow clear guidelines and be carried out under controlled conditions. The objectives of this policy are:

- to minimize the disruptive effects of any fund-raising or solicitation activity on the educational program
- to prevent undue pressure on students or professional staff that could result from fund-raising or solicitation activities
- to permit activities that reflect the moral and ethical values of the community and enhance the good relationship of school and community

STUDENT ACTIVITY FUNDS

Student funds may be raised to finance the activities of authorized student organizations. Student activity funds are considered a part of the total fiscal operation of the district and are subject to policies established by the School Committee and the office of the Superintendent. The funds shall be managed in accordance with sound business practices which include accepted budgetary and accounting practices.

1. The Town Treasurer shall be requested to open an interest bearing account to be known as the "Student Activity Agency Account" into which all deposits of student activity receipts shall be made. An agency fund general ledger account shall be established by the Town to account for Student Activity Agency Account transactions, and this agency fund general ledger account shall, on a monthly basis, be reconciled by the Town Treasurer and the Principal or his/her designee to the Town-held Student Activity Agency Fund bank account and to the corresponding account on the school's records
2. The existing checking account, which shall continue to be controlled and managed by the Principal of LMMHS, shall be called the "Student Activity Checking Account" and shall be the checking account from which all student activity bills and expenses are paid. Checks drawn on the Student Activity Checking Account for \$1,000.00 or less shall require one signature from among the authorized signatories listed herein, while checks in excess of \$1,000.00 shall require two authorized signatures from among the following: Principal, Assistant Principal, Superintendent, and Director of Business Services. If required by law in order to allow the use of the Town's tax exemption, the Town Treasurer shall also be a signatory on the Student Activity Checking Account. To the extent available and practicable, the Principal shall attempt to arrange for the Student Activity Checking Account to be an interest bearing account.
3. The maximum balance for the Student Activity Checking Account shall be \$25,000. When the Principal believes that the balance in the Student Activity Checking Account needs to be replenished, he/she shall be entitled, through the warrant process, to draw upon funds in the Student Activity Agency Account to restore to the Student Activity Checking Account up to the limit established by the School Committee. Copies of all receipts shall be appended to such warrant in order to account for the disbursements. To the extent permitted by law, the School Committee may designate one or more members to sign any such warrant(s) on its behalf.
4. The Principal shall continue to be responsible for the maintenance of accounting records for the various student activity accounts, subsidiary accounts and funds. A monthly reconciliation of the Student Activity Checking Account shall be conducted, and a copy of the reconciliation shall be signed by the Principal. The Principal shall maintain a file copy of all such reconciliations and shall, upon request, forward a copy to the Director of Business Services.

5. At least once per year an audit of the books, records and procedures relating to the Student Activity Checking Account shall be conducted, as arranged for by the Superintendent or Director of Business Services. The scope of the annual Town audit shall, to the extent possible, be modified to include an audit of the student activity funds. If and to the extent the Town is unable to pay for such audit, the cost of the audit shall be paid from the interest earned on the Student Activity Agency Account or the Student Activity Checking Account.
6. The Superintendent and Director of Business Services, in consultation with the Principal, shall establish such policies and procedures as they deem necessary to govern the operation of the student activity accounts.
7. As required by law, the Principal and the Principal's Secretary shall give bond to the Town and the School Committee to secure his/her faithful performance of his/her duties in connection with the student activity accounts. To the extent permitted by law, such bond may be in the form of a blanket indemnity public employee dishonesty rider (or substantially equivalent rider) to the Town's general liability insurance policy.
8. Interest earned by the Student Activity Agency Account and the Student Activity Checking Account shall be retained by the respective Accounts and expended for costs relating to the operation of the accounts, including but not limited to bank charges, audits, forms and tickets and bookkeeping costs. Interest not used for operational costs may be turned over to the clubs, classes and organizations having monies in the student activity account on a pro rata basis determined at the time of the distribution.
9. Funds for classes that have graduated shall be transferred to a separate, independent bank account in the name and under the control of the class officers within 120 days of graduation. Any funds which remain in the class account for more than 120 days after graduation shall be transferred to the class account of the next senior class.
10. If any student activity sub-account (other than a class account as described immediately above) shall be inactive for a period of more than three (3) years, the assets of the sub-account shall be disposed of by distributing such assets on a pro rata basis to the other then-existing student activity sub-accounts.

CONTESTS FOR STUDENTS

The schools may cooperate with community organizations and agencies desiring to sponsor activities in the District when consistent with the purposes and educational aims of the school. Such activities must be integrated into the school program without disruption or loss of instructional time for students and without imposing an unreasonable added work load on school staffs. Involvement in contests shall be approved by the appropriate building Principal.

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

The School Committee believes that students will benefit from the experiences in self-discipline and team effort made possible through participation in inter-school sports.

Participation in interscholastic athletics is a privilege. The district's participation will be subject to approval by the School Committee and will be in accordance with regulations and recommendations of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

At the high school level, interscholastic athletic competition will include a variety of sports. Students will be allowed to participate in individual sports on the basis of their abilities and desire. Additionally, intramural athletic activities will be offered as an outgrowth of class instruction in physical education.

The School Committee is aware that team participation in athletic contests by members of the student body requires that "away games" be scheduled. It also recognizes that there is a need to regulate certain aspects of student participation in such contests. Therefore, the Superintendent will establish regulations to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff members who participate in these activities.

The parent/guardian of all students participating in competitive athletics or any other extracurricular activity shall be required to sign a waiver and indemnification form as set forth in Exhibit JLA-E.

STATE-LEVEL PLAYOFF GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

When Lenox public school students earn the right to compete in state-level curricula and co-curricular events, the following guidelines will apply:

- (1) Transportation: LPS will pay travel expenses (bus). If a bus is not needed, LPS will pay for coaches and parent drivers of students (mileage & tolls)
- (2) Lodging: If an activity (i.e. Cross Country, Golf, etc.) requires an advance review of the playing course, LPS will pay for the hotel expense of the competing students (those listed on a MIAA tournament roster) and for the coach(es)/sponsor(s).
- (3) Meals: LPS will not reimburse for any meals. All meals are paid for by participants.
- (4) Fan Bus: LPS believes in the mission of transporting students, rather than having student drivers on the road at nights. Therefore, students are encouraged to participate in using the Fan Bus. A shared responsibility for financing a Fan Bus is as follows:
 - (a) At least 25 students sign up for the bus 24 hours in advance;
 - (b) LPS will pay for 50% of the cost of the bus;
 - (c) The sport or organization's Booster Club will be asked to help defray the Fan-Bus expense;

- (d) Student riders will be assessed a rider fee of the remaining 50% of the cost, minus any donation by the Booster Club.
- (5) The School Committee policy on Field Trips and Excursions may be waived regarding the School Committee vote for overnight trips due to the timeliness of notice of the playoff brackets set by state organizations.

(Revised 3-25-19)

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:47; 71:54A 603 CMR 26.06
CROSS REFS.: AC, Nondiscrimination (and sub codes)
JLA, Student Insurance Program

LENOX CONCUSSION POLICY

Introduction:

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities¹ including, but not limited to, interscholastic sports, in order to protect their health and safety as required by Massachusetts law and regulations. The requirements of the law apply to all public middle and high schools, however configured, serving grades six through high school graduation. In addition to any training required by law, the following persons shall complete one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) as found on its website: coaches; certified athletic trainers; trainers; volunteers; school and team physicians; school nurses; athletic directors; directors responsible for a school marching band; employees or volunteers; and students who participate in an extracurricular athletic activity and their parents.

Upon the adoption of this policy by the School Committee, the Superintendent shall ensure that DPH receives an affirmation on school district letterhead that the district has developed policies and the School Committee has adopted a final policy in accordance with law. This affirmation shall be updated by September 30, 2013 and every two years thereafter upon review or revision of its policies.

The Lenox Athletic Director shall maintain or cause to be maintained complete and accurate records of the district's compliance with the requirements of the Concussion Law, and shall maintain the following records for three years or, at a minimum, until the student graduates, unless state or federal law requires a longer retention period:

1. Verifications of completion of annual training and receipt of materials;
2. DPH Pre-participation forms and receipt of materials;
3. DPH Report of Head Injury Forms, or school based equivalents;
4. DPH Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms, or school based equivalents; and
5. Graduated reentry plans for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.

This policy also applies to volunteers who assist with extracurricular athletic activities¹. Such volunteers shall not be liable for civil damages arising out of any act or omission relating to the

¹ Extracurricular Athletic Activity means an organized school sponsored athletic activity generally occurring outside of school instructional hours under the direction of a coach, athletic director or marching band leader including, but not limited to, Alpine and Nordic skiing and snowboarding, baseball, basketball, cheer leading, cross country track, fencing, field hockey, football, golf, gymnastics, horseback riding, ice hockey, lacrosse, marching band, rifle, rugby, soccer, skating, softball, squash, swimming and diving, tennis, track (indoor and outdoor), ultimate frisbee, volleyball, water polo, and wrestling. All interscholastic athletics are deemed to be extracurricular athletic activities.

requirements of law, unless such volunteer is willfully or intentionally negligent in his act or omission.

Most student athletes who sustain a concussion can fully recover as long as their brain has time to heal before sustaining another hit; however, relying only on an athlete's self-report of symptoms to determine injury recovery is inadequate as many high school athletes are not aware of the signs and symptoms or the severity concussive injuries pose, or they may feel pressure from coaches, parents, and/or teammates to return to play as quickly as possible. One or more of these factors will likely result in under-diagnosing the injury and a premature return to play. Massachusetts General Laws and Department of Public Health regulations make it imperative to accurately assess and treat student athletes when concussions are suspected.

Student athletes who receive concussions may appear to be "fine" on the outside, when in actuality they have a brain injury and are not able to return to play. Incurring a second concussion can prove to be devastating to a student athlete. Research has shown that young concussed athletes who return to play before their brain has healed are highly vulnerable to more prolonged post-concussion syndrome or, in rare cases, a catastrophic neurological injury known as Second Impact Syndrome.

The following protocol will discuss and outline what a concussion is, the mechanism of injury, signs and symptoms, management and return to play requirements, as well as information on Second Impact Syndrome and past concussion syndrome. Lastly, this policy will discuss the importance of education for our athletes, coaches and parents and other persons required by law.

This protocol should be reviewed on a yearly basis with all extracurricular staff to discuss the procedures to be followed to manage sports-related concussions. This protocol will also be reviewed on a yearly basis by the athletic department as well as by nursing staff. Any changes in this document will be approved by the Superintendent and school committee and given to athletic staff, including coaches and other school personnel in writing. An accurate synopsis of this policy shall be placed in the student and faculty handbooks.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 111:222; 105 CMR 201.000

Approved: February 6, 2012.

ATHLETIC CONCUSSION REGULATIONS

Section I. What is a Concussion?

A concussion is defined as a transient alteration in brain function without structural damage, but with other potentially serious long-term ramifications. In the event of a concussion, the brain sustains damage at a microscopic level in which cells and cell membranes are torn and stretched. The damage to these cells also disrupts the brain at a chemical level, as well as causing restricted blood flow to the damaged areas of the brain, thereby disrupting brain function. A concussion, therefore, is a disruption in how the brain works; it is not a structural injury. Concussions are difficult to diagnose because the damage cannot be seen. A MRI or CT Scan cannot diagnose a concussion, but they can help rule out a more serious brain injury to a student athlete. Because concussions are difficult to detect, student athletes must obtain medical approval before returning to athletics following a concussion.

Section II. Mechanism of Injury:

A concussion is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body. Any force that causes the brain to bounce around or twist within the skull can cause a concussion. A bump, blow or jolt to the head or body can be caused by either indirect or direct trauma. The two direct mechanisms of injury are coup-type and contrecoup-type. Coup-type injury is when the head is stationary and struck by a moving object such as another player's helmet, a ball, or sport implement, causing brain injury at the location of impact. Contrecoup-type injury occurs when the head is moving and makes contact with an immovable or slowly moving object as a result of deceleration, causing brain injury away from the site of impact. Indirect forces are transmitted through the spine and jaw or blows to the thorax that whip the head while the neck muscles are relaxed. Understanding the way in which an injury occurred is vital in understanding and having a watchful eye for athletes who may exhibit symptoms of a concussion so these student athletes can receive the appropriate care.

Section III. Signs and Symptoms:

Signs (what you see):

- Confusion
- Forgets plays
- Unsure about game, score, opponent
- Altered coordination
- Balance problems
- Personality change
- Slow response to questions
- Forgets events prior to injury (retrograde amnesia)
- Forgets events after injury (anterograde amnesia)
- Loss of consciousness (any duration)

Symptoms (reported by athlete):

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Double vision/ blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light (photophobia)
- Sensitivity to noise (tinnitus)
- Feels sluggish
- Feels foggy
- Problems concentrating
- Problems remembering
- Trouble with sleeping/ excess sleep
- Dizziness
- Sadness
- Seeing stars
- Vacant stare/ glassy eyed
- Nervousness
- Irritability
- Inappropriate emotions

If any of the above signs or symptoms is observed after a suspected blow to the head, jaw, spine or body, they may be indicative of a concussion and the student athlete must be removed from play immediately and not allowed to return until cleared by an appropriate allied health professional.

Post Concussion Syndrome:

Post-Concussion Syndrome is a poorly understood condition that occurs after a student athlete receives a concussion. Student athletes who receive concussions can have symptoms that last a few days to a few months, and even up to a full year, until their neurocognitive function returns to normal. Therefore, all school personnel must pay attention to and closely observe all student athletes for post-concussion syndrome and its symptoms. Student athletes who are still suffering from concussion symptoms are not ready to return to play. The signs and symptoms of post-concussion syndrome are:

- Dizziness
- Headache with exertion
- Tinnitus (ringing in the ears)
- Fatigue
- Irritability
- Frustration
- Difficulty in coping with daily stress
- Impaired memory or concentration

- Eating and sleeping disorders
- Behavioral changes
- Alcohol intolerance
- Decreases in academic performance
- Depression
- Visual disturbances

Impact Syndrome:

Second impact syndrome is a serious medical emergency and a result of an athlete returning to play and competition too soon following a concussion. Second impact syndrome occurs because of rapid brain swelling and herniation of the brain after a second head injury that occurs before the symptoms of a previous head injury have been resolved. The second impact that a student athlete may receive may only be a minor blow to the head or it may not even involve a hit to the head. A blow to the chest or back may create enough force to snap the athlete's head and send acceleration/deceleration forces to an already compromised brain. The resulting symptoms occur because of a disruption of the brain's blood autoregulatory system which leads to swelling of the brain, increasing intracranial pressure and herniation.

After a second impact a student athlete usually does not become unconscious, but appears to be dazed. The student athlete may remain standing and be able to leave the field under his/her own power. Within fifteen seconds to several minutes, the athlete's condition worsens rapidly, with dilated pupils, loss of eye movement, loss of consciousness leading to coma and respiratory failure. The best way to handle second impact syndrome is to prevent it from occurring altogether. All student athletes who incur a concussion must not return to play until they are asymptomatic and cleared by an appropriate health care professional.

Section IV. Management and Referral Guidelines:

1. When an athlete loses consciousness for any reason, the coach, EMT, athletic director, and/or first responder will start the EAP (Emergency Action Plan) by activating EMS; check ABC's (airway, breathing, circulation); stabilize the cervical spine; and transport the injured athlete to the appropriate hospital via ambulance. If the athletic director is not available, the coach should immediately call EMS, check ABCs and not move the athlete until help arrives and help coordinate the transport of the student to the appropriate hospital.
2. Any athlete who is removed from the competition or event and begins to develop signs and symptoms of a worsening brain injury will be transported to the hospital immediately in accordance with the EAP. **Worsening signs and symptoms requiring immediate physician referral include:**
 - A. Amnesia lasting longer than 15 minutes
 - B. Deterioration in neurological function
 - C. Decreasing level of consciousness

- D. Decrease or irregularity of respiration
 - E. Decrease or irregularity in pulse
 - F. Increase in blood pressure
 - G. Unequal, dilated, or unreactive pupils
 - H. Cranial nerve deficits
 - I. Any signs or symptoms of associated injuries, spine or skull fracture, or bleeding
 - J. Mental-status changes: lethargy, difficulty maintaining arousal, confusion, agitation
 - K. Seizure activity
 - L. Vomiting/ worsening headache
 - M. Motor deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
 - N. Sensory deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
 - O. Balance deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
 - P. Cranial nerve deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
 - Q. Post-Concussion symptoms worsen
 - R. Athlete is still symptomatic at the end of the game
3. After a student athlete sustains a concussion, the student's Health Care Provider will use the Standardized Assessment for Concussion (SAC) to assess and document the student athlete's concussion and will also report on the student athlete's signs and symptoms by using the Signs and Symptoms Check-List. On the signs and symptoms checklist, the Health Care Provider will also check pulse and blood pressure of each student athlete with a suspected concussion. After the initial evaluation of a concussion, all signs and symptoms will be tracked on the computer using the ImPact Test- if recommended by the Health Care Provider.
 4. Any athlete who is symptomatic but stable is allowed to go home with his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) following the head injury.
 - A. If the head injury occurs at practice, parent(s)/guardian(s) will immediately be notified and must come and pick up the student athlete and talk to the athletic director in person.
 - B. If the injury occurs at a game or even the student athlete may go home with the parent/guardian(s) after talking with the athletic director.
 - C. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will receive important information regarding signs and symptoms of deteriorating brain injury/function prompting immediate referral to a local emergency room as well as return to play requirements. Parent(s)/guardian(s), as well as student athletes, must read and sign the Concussion Information and Gradual Return to Play form and bring it back to the athletic director before starting with the return to play protocol.

V. Pre-Participation and Gradual Return to Play Protocols:

1. Student athletes, with the consent of their parent(s)/guardian(s), will start taking the ImPact Test. The ImPact Test is a tool that helps manage concussions, determine

recovery from injury, and is helpful in providing proper communication between coaches, parents and clinicians. The ImPact Test is a neurocognitive test that helps measure student athletes' symptoms, as well as test verbal and visual memory, processing speed and reaction time. It is **mandatory** for all student athletes to take the ImPact Test for a baseline score in accordance with Massachusetts State Law. The law states that all public schools must develop safety protocols on concussions and all public schools must receive information on past concussion history. The ImPact Test appears to be a promising tool in monitoring a student athlete's prior concussions, as well as any future concussions.

2. Each student athlete will complete a baseline test at the beginning of their sport season. **All student athletes will undergo ImPact testing.** Student athletes will be re-tested every other year. If a student athlete plays more than one sport during the academic year, their test will remain valid. For example, if a soccer student athlete also plays basketball in the winter, the student athlete will not have to take the ImPact Baseline Test again in the winter. If a student athlete posts scores below the norm, the student athlete will be re-tested at another time with the athletic director and the school nurse.
 - A. At the beginning of every sport season, student athletes are required to complete a concussion history form and return it to the athletic department. This information will be recorded in the student information system for tracking purposes.
 - B. Following any concussion the Health Care Provider shall notify the athletic director and school nurse.
 - C. Following a concussion the student athlete will be referred to their Health Care Provider- (see the Return to Play protocol within this policy).
 - D. The student must have the Concussion Information and Gradual Return to Play form signed by their Health Care Provider stating when the athlete is allowed to return to play.
 - E. Following a post-injury test, the athletic director will file the Concussion Information and Gradual Return to Play form signed by the parent(s)/guardian(s).
 - F. **Student athletes who continue to exhibit concussion symptoms must be evaluated by Health Care Provider before returning to play.**

Section VI. School Nurse Responsibilities:

1. Assist in testing all student athletes with baseline ImPact testing.
2. Participate and complete the CDC training course on concussions. A certificate of completion will be recorded by the nurse leader yearly.
3. Complete symptom assessment when student athlete enters Health Office (HO) with questionable concussion during school hours. Repeat in 15 minutes.
4. Observe students with a concussion for a minimum of 30 minutes.

5. If symptoms are present, notify parent/guardian(s) and instruct parent/guardian(s) that student must be evaluated by their Health Care Provider.
 - (a) If symptoms are not present, the student may return to class.
6. If symptoms appear after a negative assessment, Health Care Provider referral is necessary.
7. Allow students who are in recovery to rest in HO when needed.
8. School nurse will notify teachers and guidance counselors of any students or student athletes who have academic restrictions or modifications related to their concussion.
9. Help educate parents and teachers about the effects of concussion and returning to school and activity.
10. If injury occurs during the school day, inform administrator and complete accident/incident form and contact parents/guardian.
11. Enter physical exam dates and concussion dates into the student information system.

Section VII. School Responsibilities:

1. Review and, if necessary, revise, the concussion policy every 2 years.
2. Once the school is informed of the student's concussion, a contact or "point person" should be identified (e.g. the guidance counselor, athletic director, school nurse, school psychologist or teacher).
3. Point person to work with the student on organizing work assignments, making up work and giving extra time for assignments and tests/quizzes.
4. Assist teachers in following the recovery stage for student.
5. Develop the school academic assistance plan for the student.
6. Educate staff on the signs and symptoms of concussions and the educational impact concussions may have on students.
7. Include concussion information in student handbooks.

Section VIII. Athletic Director Responsibilities:

1. Provide parents, athletes, coaches, and volunteers with educational training and concussion materials yearly.
2. Ensure that all educational training programs are completed, recorded, and maintained at school, in a secured file.
3. Ensure that all students meet the physical exam requirements consistent with 105 CMR 200.000 prior to participation in any extracurricular athletic activity
4. Ensure that all students participating in extracurricular athletic activity have completed and submitted their pre-participation forms, which include concussion history form, and MIAA form.
5. Ensure that athletes are prohibited from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that endangers the health or safety of an athlete, including using a helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon.
6. Ensure that all head injury forms are completed by parent/guardian(s) or coaches and reviewed by the coach, athletic trainer, and school nurse and school physician.

7. Inform parent/guardian(s) that, if all necessary forms are not completed, their child will not participate in athletic extracurricular activities.

Section IX. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

1. Complete and return concussion history form to the athletic department.
2. Inform school if student sustains a concussion outside of school hours. Complete new concussion history form following new injury.
3. If student suffers a concussion outside of school, complete head injury form and return it to the school nurse.

Complete a training provided by the school on concussions and return certificate of completion to the athletic department see www.nfhslearn.com .

4. Watch for changes in your child that may indicate that your child does have a concussion or that your child's concussion may be worsening. Report to a physician:
 - A. Loss of consciousness
 - B. Headache
 - C. Dizziness
 - D. Lethargy
 - E. Difficulty concentrating
 - F. Balance problems
 - G. Answering questions slowly
 - H. Difficulty recalling events
 - I. Repeating questions
 - J. Irritability
 - K. Sadness
 - L. Emotionality
 - M. Nervousness
 - N. Difficulty with sleeping
5. Encourage your child to follow concussion protocol.
6. Enforce restrictions on rest, electronics and screen time.
7. Reinforce recovery plan.
8. Request a contact person from the school with whom you may communicate about your child's academic needs.
9. Observe and monitor your child for any physical or emotional changes.
10. Request to extend make up time for work if necessary.
11. Recognize that your child will be excluded from participation in any extracurricular athletic event if all forms are not completed and on file with the athletic department.

Section X. Student Responsibilities:

1. Complete Baseline ImPact Test prior to participation in athletics.
2. Return required concussion history form prior to participation in athletics.
3. Participate in all concussion training and education and return certificate of completion to the athletic department prior to participation in athletics.
4. Report all symptoms to your coach and school nurse.
5. Follow recovery plan as created by your Health Care Provider.

6. BE HONEST!

7. Keep strict limits on screen time and electronics.
8. Don't carry books or backpacks that are too heavy.
9. Tell your teachers if you are having difficulty with your classwork.
10. Return to sports only when cleared by your Health Care Provider.
11. Follow Gradual Return to Play Guidelines.
12. Report any symptoms to your coach, school nurse and parent(s)/guardian(s) if any occur after return to play.
13. Return medical clearance form to the school nurse prior to return to play.
14. Students who do not complete and return all required trainings, testing and forms will not be allowed to participate in sports.

Section XI. Coaches and Volunteer Coaches Responsibilities:

1. Participate in Concussion Education Course offered by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) on a yearly basis. Complete certificate of completion and return to the athletic department.
2. Ensure all student athletes have completed ImPact baseline testing before participation.
3. Ensure all student athletes have returned concussion history and health history form prior to participation in athletics.
4. Complete a head injury form if their player suffers a head injury and the athletic director is not present at the athletic event. This form must be shared with the athletic director and school nurse.
5. Ensure all students have completed a concussion educational training and returned their certificate of completion prior to participation in athletics.
6. Remove from play any student athlete who exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion.
7. Do not allow student athletes to return to play until cleared by a Health Care Provider (in writing).
8. Follow Gradual Return to Play Guidelines.
9. Refer any student athlete with returned signs and symptoms back to the school nurse and the Health Care Provider.
10. Any coach, band instructor, or volunteer coach for extracurricular activities shall not encourage or permit a student participating in the activity to engage in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that unnecessarily endangers the health of a student athlete, including using a musical instrument, helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon.

Section XII. Concussion Education:

It is extremely important to educate coaches, athletes and the community about concussions. On a yearly basis, all coaches must complete the online course called "Concussion In Sports: What You Need to Know". This course is offered by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). Student athletes also need to understand the importance of reporting a concussion to their coaches, parents, athletic trainer and other school personnel. Every year

student athletes and parents will participate in educational training on concussions and complete a certificate of completion. This training may include:

- CDC Heads-Up Video Training, or www.nfhslearn.com
- Training provided by the school district

The school district may also offer seminars, speakers, and discussion panels on the topic of concussions. Seminars offer an opportunity for the certified athletic trainer, athletic director and nurse leader to speak about concussions on the field at practices and games and to discuss the protocol and policy that the district has enacted. Providing education within the community will offer the residents and parents of athletes an opportunity to ask questions and voice their concerns on the topic of brain injury and concussions. When it comes to concussions, everyone needs to be aware of the potential dangers and remember that a concussion is a brain injury. Whenever anyone has a doubt about a student athlete with a concussion, **SIT THEM OUT and have them see the appropriate healthcare professional!**

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

State law provides that:

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

Established by law

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37G

LENOX PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Physical Restraint and Behavior Support Policy

*This policy complies with the revised physical restraint regulations at
603 CMR 46.01 et seq., effective on January 1, 2016*

Physical restraint is defined as direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort, after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. Physical restraint shall only be used when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the Lenox school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. Furthermore, any such physical restraint shall be administered so as to prevent or minimize any harm to the student.

This policy shall be reviewed annually and provided to Lenox Public Schools staff and made available to the Parents of enrolled students. Nothing in this policy precludes any teacher, employee, or agent of the Lenox Public Schools from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons, or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

1. Methods for Preventing Student Violence, Self-Injurious Behavior, and Suicide

The schools in the district strive to create a positive school culture that serves to diminish incidence of violence.

Students have access to School Adjustment Counselors, Guidance Counselors, behaviorist at Morris and Student Support Center at LMMHS.

Staff use verbal de-escalation strategies, positive behavioral supports, behavior and intervention plans.

Staff may provide a change of environment, i.e. relocation to a quiet room, as well as adjustment of equipment used as needed.

Body/pocket checks, if indicated.

Levels of supervision and proximity of staff may be increased if needed.

2. Methods for Engaging Parents

- a. Any parent with concerns about the use of physical restraint at any school within Lenox Public Schools may request a meeting with the building Principal or the Superintendent to discuss such concerns. Any individual who believes that a physical restraint of a student may have been unwarranted or conducted inappropriately may also make use of the Grievance Procedure described in Section 10, below.

3. Alternatives to Physical Restraint and Methods of Physical Restraint

a. Alternatives

Physical restraint shall not be used unless the following, less intrusive behavior interventions and supports have been unsuccessful or deemed inappropriate by school staff:

- Positive behavioral interventions
- Verbal redirection
- Verbal directive to cease behavior
- Opportunity for a break
- De-escalation techniques
- Loss of earned tokens/rewards/privileges
- Opportunity for time-out
- Physical escort to a separate space for time-out

b. Methods of Physical Restraint:

Physical restraint shall not be used as a means of discipline or punishment; if the student cannot be safely restrained due to medical contraindications which have been documented by a licensed physician and provided to the District; as a response to property destruction, disruption, refusal to comply with rules or staff directives, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. Physical restraint shall not be used as a standard response for any individual student. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.

The following forms of physical restraint shall only be administered by trained personnel, using only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or other member(s) of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. The staff member(s) administering physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation. Staff shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student during restraint, and the student shall be immediately released from the physical restraint if the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress.

All physical restraints must terminate as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger, or if the student indicates that he/she cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress. If any physical restraint approaches twenty (20) minutes, staff will obtain the approval of the building Principal to continue the restraint based upon the student's continued agitation. All physical restraints shall be administered in compliance with 603 CMR 46.00.

4. Prohibited Forms of Restraint

- a. Medication restraint, mechanical restraint, and seclusion restraint, as defined in 603 CMR 46.02, are prohibited in the Lenox Public Schools.
- b. Any form of physical restraint used in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00 is prohibited in the Lenox Public Schools.

- c. Prone restraint, as defined in 603 CMR 46.02, shall only be permitted under the following, limited circumstances:
 - i. The student has a documented history of serious self-injury and/or injuries to other students or staff;
 - ii. All other forms of physical restraint have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or the safety of others.
 - iii. There are no medical contraindications documented by a licensed physician;
 - iv. There are no psychological or behavioral contraindications documented by a licensed mental health professional;
 - v. The student's Parent has provided voluntary, informed, written consent to the use of prone restraint; and
 - vi. The building Principal, or designee, has provided written approval.

Lenox Public Schools will not use prone restraint unless the above circumstances have been documented in advance.

5. Staff Training, Physical Restraint Reporting, and Follow-Up Process

a. Staff Training:

- i. All staff/faculty will receive training regarding the District's physical restraint policy within the first month of each school year, and employees hired after the school year begins will receive training within one month of starting their employment.
- ii. Required training for all staff will include review of the following:
 - 1) Lenox Public Schools Physical Restraint and Behavior Support Policy
 - 2) School building-level physical restraint procedures, including the use of time-out as a behavior support strategy;
 - 3) The role of the student, family, and staff in preventing physical restraint;
 - 4) Interventions which may preclude the need for restraint, including de-escalation of problematic behaviors and alternatives to restraint;
 - 5) When in an emergency, the types of permitted physical restraints and related safety consideration, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when any restraint is used;
 - 6) Identification of Lenox Public Schools' staff who have received in-depth training(as set forth below in section (a)(iii)) in the use of physical restraint.
- iii. In-Depth Training
 - 1) Prior to the beginning of the school year, the building Principal will identify those designated staff who will participate in in-depth training and who will then be authorized to serve school-wide resources to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint.
 - 2) Designated staff members shall participate in at least sixteen (16) hours of in-depth training in the use of physical restraint, with at least one refresher training annually.

- 3) In-depth training will include:
 - A. Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building and the use of alternatives to restraint;
 - B. A description and identification of specific dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may lead to the use of physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted;
 - C. The simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
 - D. Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints;
 - E. Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint; and
 - F. Instruction regarding the impact of physical restraint on the student and family, including but not limited to psychological, physiological, and social-emotional effects.

b. Physical Restraint Reporting

- i. Report to building Principal:
 - 1) Staff shall verbally inform the Principal of any physical restraint as soon as possible, and by written report within one (1) school day.
 - 2) The Principal or designee shall maintain an ongoing record of all reported instances of physical restraint.
- ii. Report to Parent(s) of Physically Restrained Student:
 - 1) The Principal or designee shall make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's Parent of the physical restraint within twenty-four (24) hours.
 - 2) The Principal or designee shall provide the Parent a written report of the physical restraint within three (3) school days. This written report may be provided via email, if the Parent has provided the District with a personal email address.
 - 3) The Parent and/or student may respond to the Principal or designee to comment on the use of the physical restraint and the information in the written report. The Parent and/or student may also pursue the Grievance Procedure described in Section 10, below.
- iii. Report to Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE):
 - 1) Whenever a physical restraint results in injury to the student or any school community member, the District shall send a copy of the written

report to DESE within three (3) school days. A copy of the ongoing physical restraint log from the past thirty (30) days will also be provided to DESE.

- 2) Lenox Public Schools shall also report physical restraint data annually to DESE, as directed by DESE.

iv. Report to Law Enforcement and Other State Agencies:

- 1) Nothing in this policy prevents any individual from reporting a crime to the appropriate authorities;
- 2) Nothing in this policy prevents any individual from exercising their responsibilities as a mandated reporter under M.G.L, c. 119, §51A.

v. Contents of Written Report

- 1) The written report of any physical restraint shall include:

- A. Name of the student; name(s) and job title(s) of staff who administered the physical restraint, and observers, if any; the date, time restraint began, and the time that restraint ended; the name of the Principal or designee who was verbally informed following the restraint, and who approved continuation of the restraint beyond twenty (20) minutes, if applicable.
- B. A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff in the vicinity were engaged immediately preceding the use of the physical restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to prevent escalation of behavior, including specific de-escalation strategies used; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint.
- C. A description of the administration of the restraint including the holds used and reasons such holds were necessary; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how the restraint ended; and documentation of injury to the student and/or staff, if any, and any medical care provided.
- D. Information regarding any further action(s) that the school has taken or may take, including any consequences that may be imposed on the student.
- E. Information regarding opportunities for the student's Parent(s) to discuss the administration of the restraint and any consequences with school officials.

c. Follow-Up Procedures

- i. After a student is released from a physical restraint, staff shall implement follow-up procedures, including:

- 1) Reviewing the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the physical restraint;
- 2) Reviewing the incident with the staff member(s) who administered the physical restraint to ensure proper restraint procedures were followed; and
- 3) Consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the physical restraint, if any.

6. Building Principals Shall Develop and Implement Procedures for Period Review of Physical Restraint Data.

- a. These procedures shall include weekly review of physical restraint data to identify individual students who have been restrained multiple times during the week, and if any such student(s) is identified, to convene a review team to assess the student's needs.
- b. These procedures shall include monthly, administrative review of school-wide physical restraint data.

7. Building Principals Shall Develop And Implement Procedures To Ensure that the Reporting Requirements of this Policy and 603 CMR 46.06 Are Met.

8. Building Principals Shall Develop and Implement Procedures for Providing Timely, Oral and Written Notice to the Parents of Any Student Who Undergoes Physical Restraint.

9. Building Principals Shall Develop and Implement a Procedure for the Use of Time-Out.

- a. Such procedure shall include the process by which staff will obtain the Principal's approval for any time-out lasting longer than thirty (30) minutes. Such approval shall be based on the student's continuing agitation.

10. Grievance Procedures.

This grievance procedure is established to ensure procedures are in place for receiving and investigating complaints regarding physical restraint practices. Any individual who believes that a physical restraint of a student may have been unwarranted or conducted inappropriately may file a complaint by utilizing this procedure:

The complaint must be submitted in writing or on audiotape to the Superintendent of Schools.

The Superintendent will meet with the complainant within ten (10) school days of receipt of the complaint.

A thorough investigation will be conducted which may include interviewing witnesses, staff involved and/or the student; reviewing all written documentation leading up to and

pertaining to the incident and all reports filed with the Superintendent and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

A written report will be developed by the Superintendent and provided to the complainant.

STUDENT WELFARE

Supervision of Students

School personnel assigned supervision are expected to act as reasonably prudent adults in providing for the safety of the students in their charge.

In keeping with this expected prudence, no teacher or other staff member will leave his/her assigned group unsupervised except as an arrangement has been made to take care of an emergency.

During school hours or while engaging in school-sponsored activities, students will be released only into the custody of parents or other persons authorized in writing by a parent or guardian.

Reporting to Authorities - Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

Any school official or employee shall report any suspected child abuse or neglect as required by M.G.L. Ch. 119, S 51A. In accordance with the law, the District shall establish the necessary regulations and procedures to comply with the intent of the Act consistent with the District's responsibility to the students, parents, District personnel, and the community.

Student Safety

Instruction in courses such as industrial arts, science, art, physical education, health, and safety will include and emphasize accident prevention.

Safety instruction will precede the use of materials and equipment by students in applicable units of work, and instructors will teach and enforce all safety rules set up for the particular courses. These include the wearing of protective eye devices in appropriate activities.

Safety on the Playground and Playing Field

The District shall provide safe play areas. Precautionary measures which the District requires shall include:

- A periodic inspection of the school's playground and playing fields by the Principal of the school and others as may be deemed appropriate;
- Instruction of students in the proper use of equipment;
- Supervision of both organized and unorganized activity;

Fire Drills

The District shall cooperate with appropriate fire departments in the conduct of fire drills.

File:
JLA

STUDENT INSURANCE PROGRAM

A noncompulsory accident insurance plan totally administered by an insurance company may be made available to students. The District does not assume any responsibility regarding service, claims, or other matters relating to the insurance program.

All students participating in competitive athletics or any other extracurricular activity shall be required to be covered by a medical insurance plan. In addition, all such students' parents/guardians shall be required to sign a waiver and indemnification form as set for the as Exhibit JLA-E.

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS

Activities may include identification of student health needs, health screening tests (including vision, hearing and scoliosis screening tests), communicable disease prevention and control, promotion of the correction of remediable health defects, emergency care of the ill and injured, health counseling, health and safety education, and the maintenance of a healthful school environment.

The District recognizes that parents have the primary responsibility for the health of their students. The school will cooperate with appropriate professional organizations associated with maintaining individual and community health and safety.

The District shall provide the services of a medical consultant who shall render medical and administrative consultative services for personnel responsible for school health and athletics.

Procedures for Emergency at School

School personnel shall give only emergency care to students who become ill or injured on school property, buses, or while under school supervision.

Each year parents shall supply information indicating where the student is to be taken in case of an emergency; the name, address, and phone number of a secondary contact in case the parent is not available; and any allergies or diseases the student might have.

The District shall maintain a Medical Emergency Response Plan, as required by law, and an Emergency Procedures Handbook which shall be utilized by District personnel for handling emergencies. Emergency Health Plans for students with life threatening allergies requiring Epipens are developed by the school nurse in collaboration with the attending physician and the parent. Emergency procedures shall include the following:

Provision for care beyond First Aid, which would enable care by the family or its physician or the local Emergency Medical Services agencies. In instances when the EMS is required, every effort shall be made to provide the unit with the student's Emergency Card which lists any allergies or diseases the student might have;

Information relative to not permitting the administration of any form of medicine or drugs to students without written approval of parents. Requests made by parents for such administration of medication shall be reviewed and approved by the Principal or designee;

Provisions for reporting all accidents, cases of injury, or illness to the Principal. Provisions shall be made (in all cases of injury or illness involving possible legal or public relations implications) for reporting such to the appropriate executive director of education immediately;

Prompt reporting by the school nurse and teachers to the Principal or designee any accident or serious illness and such reports will be filed with the Building Principal.

Student Illness or Injury

In case of illness or injury, the parent or guardian will be contacted and asked to pick up the student and provide the transportation.

Transportation of an ill or injured student is not normally provided by the school. If the parent cannot be contacted or provide transportation and the student is ill or injured, an ambulance may be called. Expense incurred as a result of emergency ambulance use will not be borne by the District.

Transportation of a student by school personnel will be done only in an emergency and by the individual so designated by the school administrator.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:53;54;54A;54B;55;55A;55B;56;57; 69:8A
CROSS REF.: EBB, First Aid
EBC, Emergency Plans
JICD, Administration of Medications to Students

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS OF STUDENTS

Every student will be examined once in each school year for screening in sight or hearing and for other physical problems as provided in the laws. A record of the results will be kept by the school nurse.

Every student must receive a general physical examination four times: upon entering school and upon admittance to the fourth, seventh, and eleventh grades. The results of examinations will be a basis for determining what corrective measures or modifications of school activities, if any, should be recommended. A record of all examinations and recommendations will be kept.

Each candidate for a school athletic team will present a consent and waiver form, signed by a parent or guardian, in order to participate on a squad and will, with the signed consent of parent or guardian, be thoroughly examined to determine physical fitness. A written report stating the fitness of the student to participate signed by the physician will be sent to the school nurse.

The school nurse will maintain accurate records of those students who have visited the Health Room for treatment.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:53; 71:54; 71:56; 71:57

CROSS REF.: JF, School Admissions

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Students entering school for the first time, whether at preschool or kindergarten or through transfer from another school system, will be required to present a physician's certificate attesting to immunization against diphtheria, whooping cough, poliomyelitis, tetanus, measles, hepatitis B, varicella, and such other communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Public Health. The only exception to these requirements will be made on receipt of a written statement from a doctor that immunization would not be in the best interests of the child; or, the student's parent or guardian stating that vaccination or immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the student or parent.

Massachusetts law and regulations requires evidence of blood lead screening, date and results for preschool and kindergarten students as a condition for entry.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 76:15
105 CMR 460.050 and .060
CROSS REF.: JR, School Admissions

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The District is required to provide educational services to all school age children who reside within its boundaries. By law, however, admission to school may be denied to any child diagnosed as having a disease whereby attendance could be harmful to the welfare of other students and staff, subject to the District's responsibilities to handicapped children under the law.

The School Committee recognizes that communicable diseases which may afflict students range from common childhood diseases, such as whooping cough and chicken pox, acute and short-term in nature, to chronic, life-threatening diseases such as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

Management of common communicable diseases shall be in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Health guidelines. A student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease may be temporarily excluded from school attendance. The District reserves the right to require a physician's statement authorizing the student's return to school.

The educational placement of a student who is medically diagnosed as having a life-threatening communicable disease shall be determined on an individual basis in accordance with this policy and accompanying administrative procedures. Decisions about the proper educational placement shall be based on the student's behavior, neurological development, and physical condition; the expected type of interaction with others in school setting; and the susceptibility to other diseases and the likelihood of presenting risks to others. A regular review of the placement decision shall be conducted to assess changes in the student's physical condition, or based on new information or research that may warrant a change in a student's placement.

In the event a student with a life-threatening communicable disease qualifies for services as a handicapped child under state and federal law, the procedures for determining the appropriate educational placement in the least restrictive environment shall be used in lieu of the procedures designated above.

Neither this policy nor the placement of a student in any particular program shall preclude the administration from taking any temporary actions including removal of a student from the classroom as deemed necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the student, staff, and others.

In all proceedings related to this policy, the District shall respect the student's right to privacy. Only those persons with a direct need to know shall be informed of the specific nature of the student's condition. The determination of those who need to know shall be made by the Superintendent.

TUBERCULIN TESTING

Entering Students

In accordance with the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Lenox Public Schools recommends, but does not require, evidence of a TB skin test prior to student entry into school. However, the school department reserves the right to require a TB test prior to school entry for the following student exceptions:

1. Students enrolling from out-of-state, as recommended by Massachusetts Department of Public Health policy.
2. Students who are at known increased risk for active TB.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Purpose:

To facilitate and ensure the school attendance of children who require medication during the school day for the treatment of existing medical conditions.

1. Medication should be appropriately maintained in a secure location.
2. Medication should be administered by the school nurse. In exceptional situations (e.g. field permission from the parent or physician/dentist.
3. The school department requires written authorization for medications to be administered at school. Obtaining this completed authorization and returning it to the school nurse is a parental responsibility; recording and filing these authorizations is the responsibility of the school nurse. Authorizations for prescription and nonprescription medications shall be renewed on a yearly basis, or more frequently as required.
4. No medications will be permitted to be used on school property during school activities without written permission on file from parent and/or physician/dentist.
5. Medication should be delivered to the school nurse by parents of elementary children in the original container with prescription label and appropriate information reflecting current dosage and desired schedule. Secondary students may bring medication to school and deliver it to the health room at the beginning of the school day.

Special Exceptions:

1. Medications should be administered by the nurse whenever possible. In the event of special events or field trips the nurse may choose to delegate responsibility for medication administration to another responsible adult or parent. Current medications available in school currently include injectable medications for anaphylaxis and migraine headaches. The school nurse's responsibility will include determining if a suitable, responsible adult can safely administer the medication in question.

If, in the opinion of the nurse, delegating this responsibility represents an unreasonable risk to the student (either from the medication itself or from administration by untrained adults) then alternative arrangements will have to be made. In no case will students be allowed responsibility for their own medication, with the exception of international trips.

2. Programs of cooperative care can be arranged in very limited instances for children requiring medication for special health problems. For example, children with exercise-induced asthma may administer their own inhalant medications as long as the appropriate permission forms are obtained and the school nurse consents.

Medications will not be administered by the school nurse unless the above policies and procedures are followed.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:54B; Dept. of Health Regs; 105 CMR 210.00

Revised: April 8, 2019

USE OF EPINEPHRINE

Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening, rapid onset allergic reaction occurring in some students with allergies. Children who have had known episodes of anaphylaxis often are prescribed injectable epinephrine for use in the event of an anaphylactic reaction. Since this medication must be used immediately in order to be effective, and the allergic reaction can be rapidly life threatening, this policy delineates the school department's regulations regarding these medications.

1. Epinephrine shall be in the form of pre-measured, pre-prescribed, auto injectable syringes prescribed individually for each student by his/her own physician.
2. Parents supply the syringes after obtaining a prescription from the student's own doctor. Parents are responsible for insuring that medications are in-date and prescription is current.
3. A signed permission form for this medication will need to be on file in the health office (see permission form).
4. Written orders signed and dated by the physician will be on file in the health office (see permission form).
5. School nurse will administer the injection if he/she is available. Since many reactions of this type will occur in out-door school-sponsored activities (ex: bee stings on outdoor field trips, during physical education classes), the school nurse will review use of auto-injectors with non-medical school staff at the start of each school year and as needed. These injectors are designed for use by parents and other untrained and inexperienced people.
6. Teachers and coaches will be responsible for taking medications on field trips and outdoor activities. This will not be the student's responsibility solely.
7. In the event of an anaphylactic reaction, the following steps will be taken, in this order:
 - a. administer injectable medication as ordered. Do not wait for symptoms.
 - b. call 911 for an ambulance.
 - c. call parent or guardian.
 - d. call child's physician if necessary.

DEFIBRILLATOR POLICY

It is the purpose of this policy to establish the standard operating guidelines that are required to maintain and utilize an Automated External Defibrillators (AED) in the Lenox Public Schools according to the Massachusetts General Laws, Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the American Heart Association and the Lenox Ambulance Squad.

Anyone who has been trained in CPR/AED may use the defibrillator in an emergency. If a cardiac arrest occurs, activate the EMS system (9-911), begin CPR and utilize AED according to the guidelines of the American Heart Association. Most AED will verbally guide the user through the entire process when it is turned on. When Emergency Medical Assistance arrives, they will take over care and transport.

An incident report will be completed after use of the AED and given to the school nurse, who will keep the report on file and provide a copy to the administration and to the school physician as requested.

ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Animals can be effective teaching aids and are appropriate where they do not pose a significant health risk and are useful where they support the student learning standards as outlined in our district's curriculum guides. The positive benefits of the human-animal bond are well established. Animals, however, may carry parasites, bacteria and other potentially infectious organisms that can be transmitted to people. Diseases that can be transmitted from animals to people are called zoonotic diseases. Recent recommendations of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and State Laboratory Institute require certain safeguards for animals to be in the classroom. The following policy is intended to regulate the classroom use of all animal species.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

I. Animals that are prohibited:

Due to the high risk of salmonellosis and campylobacteriosis from baby domestic fowl such as chicks, ducks and geese, these animals are inappropriate in schools. Transmission of these diseases from domestic fowl to children is well documented, and therefore the use of these animals in the classroom is not permitted.

Rabies is a fatal, viral infection of certain wild and domestic animals. Wild mammals and stray domestic animals pose a risk for transmitting rabies and should never be brought into schools or handled by children.

II. Animals that are permitted, with special precautions

In order to prevent the transmission of disease-causing organisms, students should always receive very clear instructions on how to wash their hands thoroughly after handling animals, their cages, or surfaces animals have come in contact with, and always before eating.

Because of the risk of contracting salmonellosis from reptiles (including non-poisonous snakes, lizards, and iguanas) and amphibians, even when reared in captivity, special precautions are necessary when handling them. Because salmonellosis can be more severe in young children and because their hygiene practices are less thorough, handling of reptiles and amphibians by children in grades PK-5 is not permitted.

Psittacosis is a bacterial disease that can cause fever, chills, rash, and pneumonia. This disease is primarily transmitted through inhaling dust from the contaminated droppings of infected birds. Because psittacine birds (parrots, parakeets, budgies, and cockatiels) can carry psittacosis without showing signs of illness, these birds should not be handled by students. If psittacine birds are brought to school, they must be kept caged, their cages kept clean and the bird's wastes frequently and safely removed and discarded by an adult.

Since rabies is rare among small rodents such as domesticated, rats, hamsters, gerbils, mice and domesticated rabbits that are caged inside, their use, subject to reasonable precautions, is permitted. Fish, reptiles (such as snakes, turtles and lizards), amphibians (such as frogs and salamanders) and insects cannot get or spread rabies. As a general rule, only domesticated mammals with current rabies vaccinations and for which USDA-approved vaccines exist should be permitted to have contact with students. Currently, USDA-approved vaccines exist for the following domesticated animals *only*: dogs, cats, ferrets, cattle, horses, and sheep. Students should be educated on safe and proper handling procedures before handling or touching these animals. Current rabies vaccination by a licensed veterinarian should be documented for all dogs, cats, and ferrets brought onto the school campus for instructional purposes. Dogs and cats under three months of age (too young to be vaccinated for rabies) or not vaccinated against rabies are prohibited in the classrooms or on school grounds. Because of the high incidence of rabies in bats, skunks, raccoons, groundhogs (woodchucks), and wild carnivores (e.g. coyotes and foxes), these animals (including recently dead animals) must not be permitted on school grounds unless they are under the control of a licensed professional responsible for preventing exposures to students and staff. It is against the law to keep or transport wild animals without authorization from the Massachusetts Department of Fisheries and Wildlife.

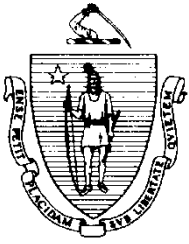
It is important that animals that are brought onto school campuses be clean and healthy so that the risk of transmitting diseases is minimal. Children are often more susceptible to exposure to zoonotic diseases and parasitic infections than adults because of their lack of hand washing and greater propensity for putting hands in their mouths. Therefore, animals, which are brought to school, should be clean and free of disease and external parasites such as fleas, ticks and mites, to decrease the likelihood of the animal transmitting these agents or vectors to the students.

Pursuant to the restriction stated above in the General Guidelines, the use of animals in the classroom is permitted, subject to the following procedures concerning safety, care and responsibility.

PROCEDURES

*Prior to introducing any animals into the classroom, teachers shall be certain that:

1. Approval is obtained in advance from the building principal.
2. Live animals in the classroom must have relevance to the objectives of the instructional program.
3. Students and classroom personnel are not allergic to their presence.
4. The animals are free from any diseases or parasites.
5. The animals will not present a physical danger to students.
6. Students will be instructed in the proper care and handling of the animal.
7. Students will be instructed in proper hand washing technique.
8. Adequate hand washing facilities are available for all staff and students.
9. Care of the animal(s) is the responsibility of the classroom teacher at all times.
10. The care of the animals on weekends and a holiday is the responsibility of the classroom teacher.
11. Animals are housed in suitable, sanitary, self-contained enclosures appropriate to the size of the animal.
12. Animals shall not be allowed to roam freely in the school.
13. All state and federal laws pertaining to the care and treatment of wild and domestic animals are observed.



MITT ROMNEY
GOVERNOR

KERRY HEALEY
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

RONALD PRESTON
SECRETARY

CHRISTINE C. FERGUSON
COMMISSIONER

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
State Laboratory Institute
305 South Street, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130
(617) 983-6800

See Attached: "Animals in Classroom – Recommendations for Schools"

ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

PURPOSE

To reduce human exposures to rabies and other zoonotic diseases (those transmitted from animals to people) in school classrooms.

INTRODUCTION

Animals can be effective teaching aids and the positive benefits of the human-animal bond are well established. However, animals in the classroom necessitate certain safeguards.

Animals may carry parasites, bacteria and other potentially infectious organisms that can be transmitted to people. Diseases that can be transmitted from animals to people are called zoonotic diseases. Zoonotic diseases can be spread by direct contact with an infected animal or its feces, through insects that bite or live on animals, and from contact with organisms that live in the environment where an animal lives. Certain groups of people may be more susceptible to zoonotic diseases, including infants, children, pregnant women and those with weakened immune systems.

DESCRIPTION OF ZOOONOTIC DISEASES AND GENERAL GUIDELINES

Enteric diseases (diseases predominantly of the digestive system) include illnesses caused by organisms such as *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *Cryptosporidium*, *E. coli* O157:H7 and *Giardia*. Enteric disease organisms primarily cause diarrhea in people, but in some cases, can infect the blood and cause life-threatening illness. People can be exposed to these enteric organisms by eating food contaminated with feces, or by touching a contaminated object and then touching one's mouth. Animals can carry these organisms without being ill.

Because of the high risk of salmonellosis and campylobacteriosis from baby chicks and ducks, these animals are inappropriate in schools. Transmission of these diseases from chicks and ducklings to children is well documented.

Because of the risk of contracting salmonellosis from reptiles (including non-poisonous snakes, lizards, and iguanas) and amphibians, even when reared in captivity, special precautions are necessary when handling them. These animals may intermittently shed salmonella, and negative cultures will not guarantee that the animals are not infected. Treatment of infected animals with antibiotics has not proven useful and may promote the development and spread of resistant bacteria. Because salmonellosis can be more severe in young children and because their hygiene practices are less thorough, handling of reptiles and amphibians by young children is not recommended.

In order to prevent the transmission of enteric disease-causing organisms, students should receive very clear instructions on how to wash their hands thoroughly after handling animals, their cages, or surfaces animals have come in contact with, and always before eating.

Psittacosis is a bacterial disease that can cause fever, chills, rash, and pneumonia. This disease is primarily transmitted through inhaling dust from the contaminated droppings of infected birds. The elderly and those with a weakened immune system may develop more serious forms of this illness. Because psittacine birds (parrots, parakeets, budgies, and cockatiels) can carry psittacosis without showing signs of illness, these birds should not be handled by children. Birds showing any signs of illness should not be brought into school. If psittacine birds are brought to school, they should be kept caged, their cages kept clean and the bird's wastes frequently and safely removed and discarded.

Rabies is a fatal, viral infection of certain wild and domestic animals. Rabies can infect any mammal, but it is more common among certain mammals like raccoons, skunks, bats and foxes. Rabies can be spread to domestic animals and to humans through contact with an infected animal's saliva, usually through a bite or scratch, or through contact with nervous tissues (brain and spinal cord) of infected animals. In people, rabies virus causes an infection of the brain, which is always fatal in those who are infected and do not receive protective treatment after an exposure. Rabies is rare among small rodents like squirrels, rats, hamsters and mice. Fish, reptiles (such as snakes, turtles and lizards), amphibians (such as frogs and salamanders) and insects cannot get or spread rabies.

Wild mammals pose a risk for transmitting rabies and should never be brought into schools or handled by children. Wild animals' behavior tends to be unpredictable. A wild mammal that has been raised in captivity is still a wild animal. Because of the high incidence of rabies in bats, skunks, raccoons, groundhogs (woodchucks), and wild carnivores (e.g. coyotes and foxes), these animals (including recently dead animals) should not be permitted on school grounds unless they are under the control of a licensed professional responsible for preventing exposures to students and staff. It is against the law to keep or transport wild animals without authorization from the Massachusetts Department of Fisheries and Wildlife.

Stray domestic animals also pose a risk for transmitting rabies because the health and vaccination status of these animals is unknown. Therefore, stray animals should never be brought into classrooms or onto school grounds.

As a general rule, only domesticated mammals with current rabies vaccinations and for which USDA-approved vaccines exist should be permitted to have contact with students. Currently, USDA-approved vaccines exist for the following domesticated animals *only*: dogs, cats, ferrets, cattle, horses, and sheep. Students should be educated on safe and proper handling procedures before handling or touching these animals. Current rabies vaccination by a licensed veterinarian should be documented for all dogs, cats, and ferrets brought onto the school campus for instructional purposes. Dogs and cats under three months of age (too young to be vaccinated for rabies) or not vaccinated against rabies should not be brought into classrooms or onto school grounds without taking precautions to prevent exposures.

In October 2003, a pet guinea pig tested positive for rabies in New York State. The guinea pig was infected with rabies during a brief encounter with a raccoon while the owner took the animal outdoors for fresh air and allowed the animal to roam free. This episode serves as a reminder that although small rodents are considered to be at low risk for rabies, all mammals are susceptible to rabies infection. Students who volunteer to foster classroom pets, especially mammals, during school vacations and summer should keep the animals exclusively indoors in order to prevent interaction with wild animals that may be infected with rabies.

If a student has been exposed to the saliva or nervous tissue of a wild or stray mammal (including recently dead animals), the wound or area of skin contact should be washed immediately with soap and water for at least 10 minutes. The student's parents or guardians should be notified and told to contact their child's pediatrician for evaluation. The local board of health should also be notified; they will help coordinate any follow-up by the town animal control officer or animal inspector, including quarantine of the animal (if appropriate), and can help determine if the person needs to be treated for rabies. The local board of health will also coordinate submission of the animal to the State Laboratory Institute/Rabies Laboratory for testing, if appropriate.

EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL-RELATED RABIES SITUATIONS

The following are specific instances where students or teachers brought animals that are generally unacceptable for classroom settings (because of their risk of transmitting rabies and other zoonotic diseases) into Massachusetts' schools:

A teacher brought a coyote that was found dead on the side of the road onto school property in order to show his students how to skin the animal. The coyote was later submitted to the State Laboratory Institute/Rabies Laboratory for testing but was found to be unsatisfactory for testing, as rabies could not be ruled out. Several students had contact with the dead animal and received post-exposure treatment for rabies.

A student brought a dead bat into school to use for "show and tell". The bat was submitted to the State Laboratory Institute/Rabies Laboratory by the school principal but was unsatisfactory for testing. Three children had contact with the bat and received post-exposure treatment for rabies.

While animals can be submitted to the State Laboratory Institute for testing for rabies, many times animals are not available or yield unsatisfactory results because the condition of the brain is not suitable for testing. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) must consider animals that test unsatisfactory as rabid.

CONCLUSION

It is important that animals that are brought onto school campuses be clean and healthy so that the risk of transmitting diseases is minimal. Children are often more susceptible to exposure to zoonotic diseases and parasitic infections than adults because of their lack of handwashing and greater propensity for putting hands in their mouths. Therefore, animals which are brought to school should be clean and free of disease and external parasites such as fleas, ticks and mites, to decrease the likelihood of the animal transmitting these agents or vectors to the students. Schools should consider developing standard procedures for bringing animals into classrooms, for fostering classroom pets to students during school vacations, and for responding to bites, other exposures, and reports of illness following contact with an animal.

If questions arise concerning human contact with animals that may carry zoonotic diseases, call the MDPH's Division of Epidemiology and Immunization at **(617) 983-6800**. For emergencies, an epidemiologist can be reached after hours and on weekends through this number.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR INFORMATION ON ZOO NOTIC DISEASES

MDPH website: www.state.ma.us/dph

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/index.htm>

***Exception: Guide, Hearing and Other Service Dogs or Law Enforcement Dogs** – These animals may be allowed in school or on school grounds with proof of current rabies vaccination.

Exceptions may be made with the prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

Service Animals (Guide or Assistance Dogs)

The Lenox School Committee does not permit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including those who require the assistance of a service animal. The District will comply with Massachusetts law concerning the rights of persons with guide or assistance dogs and with federal law and will permit such animals on school premises and on school transportation.

For purposes of this policy, a “service animal includes any dog that has been individually trained to do the work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.” The regulations further state that “a public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with the disability.”

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that individuals with disabilities cannot perform themselves. Service animals are not pets. There are several kinds of service animals that assist individuals with disabilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, animals that:

- assist individuals who are blind or have severe sight impairments as “seeing eye dogs” or “guide dogs;”
- alert individuals with hearing impairments to sounds;
- pull wheelchairs or carry and pick-up items for individuals with mobility impairments; and
- assist mobility-impaired individuals with balance.

The District shall not assume or take custody or control of, or responsibility for, any service animal or the care or feeding thereof. The owner or person having custody and control of the animal shall be liable for any damage to persons, premises, property, or facilities caused by the service animal, including, but not limited to, clean up, stain removal, etc.

If, in the opinion of the School Principal or authorized designee, any service animal is not in the control of its handler, or if it is not housebroken, the service animal may be excluded from the school or program. The service animal can also be excluded if it presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school. The parent or guardian of the student having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the service animal from District premises immediately.

If any student or staff member assigned to the classroom in which a service animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the animal, the person having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by the Building Principal or designee and an alternative plan will be developed with appropriate District staff.

Revised Policy Adopted: November 7, 2011

LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES

Lenox Public Schools realizes the increased frequency of life-threatening allergies (LTA) among students. It is imperative that parents notify school administration regarding allergies and health issues with their children. Upon notification of a student with life-threatening allergies by a parent/guardian, with documentation from a physician, the school will follow the six identified areas of care as identified below:

I. Annual Procedures

1. The principal will take all necessary steps to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to Lenox Students including, but not limited to, the following:
 - a) The parents, principal, school nurse, and teacher will communicate prior to the start of the school year to discuss the student's allergies and how best to provide a decreased risk environment.
 - b) The school will develop a Food Allergy Action Plan on behalf of the student which will be reviewed and practiced twice during the school year. The first review will occur during the first month of school.
2. The parents will assist the principal by providing the administration with materials about these allergies from their physician.
3. The school nurse will develop a Food Allergy Action Plan which will be signed by both the parent/guardian and the principal. The school nurse will also provide awareness training for all school personnel on life threatening allergies during the first month of school. Classroom teachers of students with LTA in their classrooms will be trained prior to the students' first day of school. The remainder of the staff will be trained before the end of the first quarter.
4. The school nurse will provide information to students in classrooms with LTA students about allergies prior to the end of September.
5. A Food Allergy Action Plan will be disseminated, with the parents' permission, to the appropriate staff. The Food Allergy Action Plan must delineate the following:
 - a) Prescribed medications and personnel responsible for administering them;
 - b) Prescribed indications for administering medication (i.e., immediately upon contact with allergen or only if the Student begins to demonstrate signs/symptoms of exposure);
 - c) Instructions for activating the emergency medical system (and school nurse if off site); and
 - d) Instructions for contacting the Student's parent(s) and physician.

II. Daily Procedures:

1. The Food Allergy Action Plan for a student will be active on a daily basis.
2. The teacher will communicate immediately with the nurse and office in the event of an emergency.
3. The school nurse will carry a stock Epipen that will go with the nurse during all school evacuations.
4. The school nurse will have a supply of Epipens in the nurse's office and in an unlocked safe area if needed.

III. Classroom Procedures:

1. All classroom faculty and staff will follow the procedures in the student's Food Allergy Action Plan every day.
2. Class projects will avoid known allergens.
3. The teacher and/or principal will send out reminder notes periodically on food safety rules and encourage non-food celebrations.
4. The School district, as well as the student's classroom will maintain the policy of no food-sharing.
5. The art teacher and/or classroom teacher will ensure that if food containers are used in class, all new product containers will be washed with soap and hot water prior to being used. Art supplies will be monitored for allergen content.

IV. Snacks, Lunches and Foods:

1. Students will be encouraged to wash hands before and after lunch and snack.
2. The cafeteria staff will ensure that tables and chairs are cleaned before and after lunch.
3. A policy of no trading or sharing food or snacks will be enforced district-wide.
4. If a food item is necessary to the project, the teacher will review the project with the Student's parents at least two days prior to the project to ensure that the food items are safe for the Student.

V. Field Trips:

1. This LTA policy extends beyond school grounds to include school-sponsored class trips. Students will not be permitted to eat on the bus; and bagged snacks will be kept in a closed container until snack/lunch time.
2. The teacher and nurse will ensure that a site-specific emergency plan is developed for each field trip.
3. The teacher will carry a cell phone on all field trips.

4. A designated staff person will be appointed and responsible for the supervision of the Student during the entire field trip.
5. The school nurse will delegate an EpiPen to the staff person responsible for the supervision of the LTA student.

VI. Substitute Teachers:

1. The Student's teacher will prepare a substitute file containing a copy of the Student's Food Allergy Action Plan, to be placed in a specific location in the classroom that is known to the nurse, principal, and teachers in adjacent classrooms.
2. In the event that a substitute teacher is assigned to the class, the principal will notify the nurse.
3. The nurse and/or principal will ensure that there is a trained designated staff person either in the Student's classroom or adjacent classroom at all times when a substitute teacher is assigned to the Student's class.

Approved January 10, 2011

REPORTING INSTANCES OF CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

Background

Section 51A of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 119, Public Welfare Statutes requires that any public or private school teacher, educational administrator, guidance or family counselor, day care worker or any person paid to care for or work with a child in any public or private facility or home or program funded by the Commonwealth, who, in his/her professional capacity, shall have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years is suffering serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon him/her including sexual abuse, or from neglect, including malnutrition is required to report such instances to the appropriate staff of the Massachusetts Department of Social Services or to the Principal of the school. Also, any of the above persons who have reasonable cause to believe that a child has died as a result of abuse/neglect shall report the death to the Department of Social Services and to the District Attorney for Berkshire County and to the Medical Examiners. School personnel who fail to report any of the above conditions shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars. No person who is required to report instances of abuse/neglect shall be liable in any civil or criminal action by reason of such report.

Lenox Public Schools Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition

The Lenox Public School District is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the Lenox Public School District that:

- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades PK-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA).
- Qualified Food Service professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- Schools in our district will participate in the National School Lunch Program and will adhere to all federal and state requirements concerning the same.
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. Safety and Wellness District Task Force/Health Council

The school district will create, strengthen, or work within existing school health councils to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The councils also will serve as resources to the district for implementing those policies.

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold.

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program will:

- be served in clean and safe settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (as defined by USDA); and
- ensure that half of the served grains are whole grain.

Schools should engage students and parents, through taste-tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals. Schools will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals

Meal Times and Scheduling. Schools:

- will, to the extent possible, provide students with at least 20 minutes to eat after sitting down for lunch;
- will not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- will take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff. Qualified Food Services professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, we provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs include appropriate certification and/or training programs for Cafeteria Site Managers and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages. Schools will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some student's diets.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (*i.e.*, foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.) during the school day shall comply with the MA Competitive Foods Act of 2012.

Elementary Schools. The school food service lunch program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students in elementary schools. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools will be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually will be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables.

Middle and High School. In LMMHS all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs, including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, and student stores during the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:

Beverages

- **Allowed:** water or seltzer water without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain 100% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (as defined by USDA);
- **Not allowed:** soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 100% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain caffeine).

Foods

- A food item sold individually:
 - will have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
 - will have no more than 35% of its calories from added sugars;
 - will contain no more than 200mg of sodium per food item; and no more than 480mg of sodium per a-la-carte entre (main meal).
- A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines), as long as they meet the above foods standards.

Portion Sizes:

- Limit portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually to the USDA portion standards below:

Grades K-5		
Meal Patterns		
Lunch 2012-2013		
Food Groups	Daily	Weekly
Meat/MA*	1 oz.	8-10 oz
Grains*	1 oz.	8-9 oz
Fruit	1/2 cup	2-1/2 cups
Vegetable	3/4 cup	3-3/4 cups
Dk. Green		1/2 cup
Red/Orange		3/4 cup
Legumes		1/2 cup
Starchy		1/2 cup
Other		1/2 cup
Additional		1 cup
Milk	1 Cup	5 cups
Calories/day	550-650	

Grades 6-8		
Meal Patterns		
Lunch 2012-2013		
Food Groups	Daily	Weekly
Meat/MA*	1 oz.	9-10 oz

Grains*	1 oz.	8-10 oz
Fruit	1/2 cup	2-1/2 cups
Vegetable	3/4 cup	3-3/4 cups
Dk. Green		1/2 cup
Red/Orange		3/4 cup
Legumes		1/2 cup
Starchy		1/2 cup
Other		1/2 cup
Additional		1 cup
Milk	1 Cup	5 cups
Calories/day	600-700	

Grades 9-12		
Meal Patterns		
Lunch 2012-2013		
Food Groups	Daily	Weekly
Meat/MA*	2 oz.	10-12 oz
Grains*	2 oz.	10-12 oz
Fruit	1 cup	5 cups
Vegetable	1 cup	5 cups
Dk. Green		1/2 cup
Red/Orange		1 -1/4 cups
Legumes		1/2 cup
Starchy		1/2 cup
Other		3/4 cup
Additional		1-1/2 cup
Milk	1 Cup	5 cups
Calories/day	750-850	

* The USDA has currently issued waivers on portion sizes of proteins & grains.

Fundraising Activities. All fundraising groups of Lenox Public Schools, striving to enrich the curricular and extra-curricular activities for our students, will be encouraged to consider and support students' health and school nutrition-education efforts. It is suggested that fundraising sales include items that are not food related and will promote physical activity (see Exhibit A).

Snacks. Snacks served during the school day will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. The district will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to parents (see Exhibit A).

Rewards. Schools may use foods or beverages as rewards as long as the foods and/or beverages adhere to the new USDA specifications. Schools will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment (see Exhibit A).

Celebrations. Schools will limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month. Each party will include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above).

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion. The Lenox Public School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should endeavor to provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is part of not only health education classes, but, to the extent possible, also classroom instruction in all subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting. Students will receive a regular amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.*, at least 30 minutes per day of structured or non-structured time) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

- classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;

- opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Communications with Parents. The district/school will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. To the extent possible, the district/school will offer healthy eating seminars for parents, send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. Schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. Additionally, the district/school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community, to the extent feasible.

The district/school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports, to the extent feasible, will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework (see Exhibit A).

Food Marketing in Schools. School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. To the extent possible, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above). School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

Staff Wellness. The Lenox Public School District highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The district Safety and Wellness Task Force should participate in developing, promoting, and overseeing a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan should be based on input solicited from school staff and should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Physical Education (P.E.) K-12. All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive physical education (a minimum of 90 minutes/week for elementary school students and 100-120 minutes/week for middle and high school students) for the entire school year. All physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students should spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess. All elementary school students will have at least 30 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment. Schools will discourage extended periods (*i.e.*, periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools will give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School. All schools will encourage, to the extent possible, extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. LMMHS, as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs. Schools will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

After-school enrichment programs, to the extent feasible, will provide and encourage – verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities – daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

Physical Activity and Punishment. Teachers and other school personnel will not use physical activity (*e.g.*, running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (*e.g.*, recess, physical education) as punishment.

Safe Routes to School. The school district will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, promote needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the district will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The school district will encourage students to use public transportation when available and appropriate for travel to school, and will work with the local transit agency to provide transit passes for students.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours. To the extent possible, school spaces and facilities will be available to students, staff, and community members before and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. To the extent possible, these spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and community organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times (reference School Facilities Policy).

V. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring. The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies.

School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent. In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes.

The superintendent or designee will develop a summary report every few years on district-wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from schools within the district, and will make the summary available to the public.

Policy Review. To help with the initial development of the district's wellness policies, each school in the district will conduct a baseline assessment of the school's existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the district level to identify and prioritize needs.

Assessments will be repeated periodically to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school district will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The district, and individual schools within the district, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

Recommended to the Lenox School Committee by a unanimous vote of the Lenox Safety & Wellness Task Force, March 13, 2013.

Approved by the Lenox School Committee, April 22, 2013.

Exhibit A

Foods and Beverages Recommended by the Institute of Medicine's

Nutrition Standards
for Foods in Schools

For All Students at All Times of Day (Tier 1)	Examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, combination products, fat-free and low-fat milk and milk products, lactose-free and soy beverages, per portion as packaged: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » ≤200 calories; » ≤35% of total calories from fat; » <10% of calories from saturated fats; » Zero trans fat (≤ 0.5 g per serving); » ≤35% of calories from total sugars; and » ≤200 mg sodium. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual fruits—apples, pears, oranges. • Fruit cups packed in juice or water. • Vegetables—baby carrots, broccoli, edamame. • Dried or dehydrated fruits—raisins, apricots, cherries. • 100% fruit juice or low-sodium 100% vegetable juice. • Low-fat, low-salt, whole-grain crackers or chips. • Whole-grain, low-sugar cereals. • 100% whole-grain mini bagels. • 8-oz servings of low-fat, fruit-flavored yogurt with ≤30 g of total sugars. • 8-oz servings of low-fat or nonfat chocolate or strawberry milk with ≤22 g of total sugars. • Low-sodium, whole-grain bars containing sunflower seeds, almonds, or walnuts.
For High School Students, After School Only (Tier 2)	Examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any foods or beverages from Tier 1. • Snack foods that are ≤200 calories per portion as packaged, and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » ≤35% of total calories from fat; » <10% of calories from saturated fats; » Zero trans fat (≤ 0.5 g per serving); » ≤35% of calories from total sugars; and » ≤200 mg sodium. • Sugar-free, caffeine-free beverages with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Nonnutritive sweeteners; » Not vitamin- or nutrient-fortified; and » <5 calories per portion as packaged. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-salt baked potato chips (≤200 mg of sodium), crackers, and pretzels. • Animal crackers with ≤35% of calories from sugars. • Graham crackers with ≤35% of calories from sugars. • Ice cream bars low in sugar and fat. • Caffeine-free, calorie-free, nonfortified soft drinks.
Examples of Items that Do Not Meet the Standards	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potato chips or pretzels that have too much sugar or salt (i.e., exceeding the values listed above). • Cheese crackers that have too much fat or sodium. • Breakfast or granola bars that have too much fat or sugar. • Ice cream products that have too much fat or sugar. • Cake, cupcakes, or cookies with too much sugar or salt. • Fortified sports drinks or fortified water. • Gum, licorice, or candy. • Fruit smoothies with added sugar. • Regular colas or sodas with sugar or caffeine. 	
Additional Standards for Foods and Beverages	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make plain, drinkable water available throughout the school day at no cost to students. • Offer sports drinks only to student athletes engaged in school sport programs involving vigorous activity for more than 1 hour. • Foods and beverages should not be used as rewards or discipline for academic performance or behavior. • Reduce marketing of Tier 2 foods and beverages in high schools. • Encourage the use of Tier 1 foods and beverages for fundraising activities both during and after school at elementary and middle schools. Allow Tier 1 and 2 foods and beverages for fundraising activities at high schools. • Allow both Tier 1 and 2 foods and beverages for evening and community school activities involving adults. 	

STUDENT GIFTS AND SOLICITATIONS

Because of the embarrassment that might result among children, students will be discouraged from giving gifts to classroom teachers and other school personnel. For the same reason, there will be no formal exchange of gifts between students in the classroom.

Solicitation of funds for charitable purposes from students of the school system will be made only as approved by the School Committee.

Any organization desiring to distribute flyers or other materials to students in connection with fund drives may do so only with the approval of the Superintendent.

CROSS REFS.: GBEBC, Staff Gifts and Solicitations
 JJE, Student Fund-Raising Activities
 KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools
 KHB, Advertising in the Schools

STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND CHARGES

The School Committee recognizes the need for student fees to fund certain school activities. It also recognizes that some students may not be able to pay these fees. No student will be denied access into any program because of inability to pay these supplementary charges.

A school may exact a fee or charge only upon School Committee approval. The schools, however, may:

- Charge students enrolled in certain courses for the cost of materials used in projects that will become the property of the student.
- Charge for lost and damaged books, materials, supplies, and equipment.

Students who meet the eligibility requirements for free or reduced lunches are exempt from paying fees. However, such students are not exempt from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, and equipment.

All student fees and charges, both optional and required, will be listed and described annually in each school's student handbook or in some other written form and distributed to each student. The notice will advise students that fees are to be paid and of the penalties for their failure to pay them. Permissible penalties include the withholding of report cards until payment is made or denial of participation in extra class activities while the student is enrolled in this District.

Any fee or charge due to any school in the District and not paid at the end of the school year will be carried forward to the next succeeding school year, as such debts are considered to be debts of the student to the District and not to a particular school.

STUDENT RECORDS

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school system to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student's parents or legal guardian and/or the student in accordance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information.

The Superintendent will provide for the proper administration of student records in keeping with state and federal requirements, and shall obtain a copy of the state student records regulations (603 CMR 23.00). The temporary record of each student enrolled on or after June 2002 will be destroyed no earlier than seven years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the School District. Written notice to the eligible student and his/her parent of the approximate date of destruction of the temporary record and their right to receive the information in whole or in part, shall be made at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal. The student's transcript may only be destroyed 60 years following his/her graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school system.

The Committee wishes to make clear that all individual student records of the school system are confidential. This extends to giving out individual addresses and telephone numbers.

- LEGAL REFS:** **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974**
 P.L. 93-380, Amended
 P.L. 103-382, 1994
 M.G.L. 66:10 71:34A, B, D, E, H
 Board of Education Student Record Regulations adopted 2/10/77, June 1995 as
 amended June 2002.
 603 CMR: Dept. Of Education 23.00 through 23:12 also
 Mass Dept. Of Education publication Student Records; Questions, Answers and
 Guidelines, Sept. 1995
- CROSS REF:** JRAA/KBBA, Non-custodial Parents' Rights
 KDB, Public's Right to Know

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' RIGHTS
(General Laws Chapter 71, Section 34H)

As required by G.L. Ch. 71, Sec. 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Department of Education Regulations. The School District will follow the law and the attachments recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Education to standardize the process by which public schools provide student records to parents who do not have physical custody of their children ("non-custodial parents"). The implementation of this policy will hopefully encourage parents to be involved in and informed about the education of their children, while protecting the rights and safety of all parties.

Suggested Checklist for Schools Implementing General Laws Chapter 71, Section 34H
(Distribution of Student Records to Eligible Non-Custodial Parents)

Name of Student: _____

Name of Custodial Parent: _____

Name of Requesting Parent: _____

Name of School Staff Member Verifying Information: _____

_____ The requesting parent submitted a written request for the records to the school principal within the past twelve months. Date of request: _____

_____ The initial request included a certified copy of a court order, which met the requirements of Section 34H (b).

_____ The initial request included an affidavit from the requesting parent, which met the requirements of Section 34H(b).

_____ Each school year since the initial request the requesting parent has submitted a request indicating that the parent continues to be:

- a) Entitled to unsupervised visitation with the child; and
- b) Eligible to receive student record information pursuant to Section 34H. Date(s) of annual request(s):

When the school received the records request from the non-custodial parent:

- The school immediately notified the custodial parent of the request by certified mail and by first class mail, in both the primary language of the custodial parent and in English. The notice informed the custodial parent that information requested pursuant to Section 34H is to be provided to the requesting parent after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation of an applicable court order. Date of notice: _____
- The school is aware that it may seek reimbursement for the cost of postage from the requesting parent.
- The eligible parent has the right of access to the entire student record.

Or

- The otherwise eligible parent's right of access to the entire student record has been specifically limited by court order.

Note limitations, if any:_____

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:34H
603 CMR 23.07 (5) Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents

CROSS REF.: JRA, Student Records

STUDENT RECORDS – DISSEMINATION OF TRANSCRIPTS

When authorized by the student or parent/guardian(s), copies of the student's transcript shall be sent to other schools, agencies and institutions. These copies shall have the school seal affixed and shall be signed by a designated school official.

Students and parent/guardian(s) may also request copies of the transcript for their own use and shall be entitled to receive a signed and sealed copy if they so request. Access to records is defined by state regulations. The persons who may exercise rights under the regulations are as follows:

- (a) If the student is under the age of 14 and has not yet entered the ninth grade, the student's parent/guardian(s) may exercise these rights.
- (b) If the student is from 14 through 17 years of age or has entered the ninth grade, the student and/or the student's parent/guardian(s) may exercise these rights.
- (c) If the student is 18 years of age or over, the student alone may exercise these rights.

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS

Individual schools may arrange, in cooperation with the school's parent organization, student council, designated student committee, or a staff committee, to take individual student and/or class group pictures. Awarding of the photographic services shall be conducted through bidding procedures.

Individual and/or class group pictures may be taken at the school facility and during the regular school day hours. The pictures shall be made available for purchase by students and/or parents on a voluntary basis. The building Principal or his/her designee shall have final authority in authorizing the picture-taking program and will be responsible for overseeing the process.

Students may be required to have an individual picture taken for the cumulative file or identification purposes; however, no student shall be pressured or required to purchase photographs.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Enhance the safety of students through visual identification in an emergency situation.
- Facilitate the social, educational, and administrative activities conducted in the school.
- Provide a service to parents and students.
- Allow the profits gained from the picture-taking program to be used by the sponsoring group and authorized by the building Principal.

SCHOOL/PARENT RELATIONS GOALS

It is the general goal of the District to foster relationships with parents/guardians who encourage cooperation between the home and school in establishing and achieving common educational goals for students.

While parents are individually responsible for their children, the District provides direct services of education and indirect services of child care for students during the time when they are within the supervision of school personnel. Consistent with these shared responsibilities and as appropriate to the maturity of the student, members of the school staff will consult with parents regarding student progress and achievement, methods to enhance student development, and matters of correction.

Additionally, parental involvement in the schools is encouraged through regular communication with the school Principal and staff, the parent/teacher organizations, the school volunteer program, and other opportunities for participation in school activities and District programs.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' RIGHTS
(General Laws Chapter 71, Section 34H)

As required by G.L. Ch. 71, Sec. 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Department of Education Regulations. The School District will follow the law and the attachments recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Education to standardize the process by which public schools provide student records to parents who do not have physical custody of their children ("non-custodial parents"). The implementation of this policy will hopefully encourage parents to be involved in and informed about the education of their children, while protecting the rights and safety of all parties.

Suggested Checklist for Schools Implementing General Laws Chapter 71, Section 34H
(Distribution of Student Records to Eligible Non-Custodial Parents)

Name of Student: _____

Name of Custodial Parent: _____

Name of Requesting Parent: _____

Name of School Staff Member Verifying Information: _____

_____ The requesting parent submitted a written request for the records to the school Principal within the past twelve months. Date of request: _____

_____ The initial request included a certified copy of a court order, which met the requirements of Section 34H (b).

_____ The initial request included an affidavit from the requesting parent, which met the requirements of Section 34H(b).

_____ Each school year since the initial request the requesting parent has submitted a request indicating that the parent continues to be:

- a) Entitled to unsupervised visitation with the child; and
- b) Eligible to receive student record information pursuant to Section 34H. Date(s) of annual request(s):

When the school received the records request from the non-custodial parent:

- The school immediately notified the custodial parent of the request by certified mail and by first class mail, in both the primary language of the custodial parent and in English. The notice informed the custodial parent that information requested pursuant to Section 34H is to be provided to the requesting parent after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the Principal with documentation of an applicable court order. Date of notice: _____
- The school is aware that it may seek reimbursement for the cost of postage from the requesting parent.
- The eligible parent has the right of access to the entire student record.

Or

- The otherwise eligible parent's right of access to the entire student record has been specifically limited by court order.

Note limitations, if any:_____

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:34H
603 CMR 23.07 (5) Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents

CROSS REF.: JRA, Student Records

RELATIONS WITH PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

To foster relationships with parents that encourage the home and school to work together to establish and achieve common educational goals for students, the Superintendent and the professional staff will:

1. Consult with and encourage parents to share in school planning and in setting objectives and evaluating programs.
2. Help parents understand the educational process and their role in promoting it.
3. Provide for parent understanding of school operations.
4. Provide opportunities for parents to be informed of their child's development and the criteria for its measurement.

To accomplish the above and to enhance communications between parents and school officials, the Committee encourages the maintenance of formal parent organizations at each school building.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

The School Committee endorses the concept that community participation in the affairs of the schools is essential if the school system and the community are to maintain mutual confidence and respect and work together to improve the quality of education for students. It therefore intends to exert every effort to identify the desires of the community and to be responsive, through its actions, to those desires.

All citizens will be encouraged to express ideas, concerns, and/or suggestions about the schools to the school administration, to any appointed advisory bodies, and to the Committee.

CROSS REF.: BDF, Advisory Committees to the School Committee

PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS

After consulting with the School Committee, the Superintendent will have authority to accept gifts and offers of equipment for the schools in the name of the Committee when the gift is of educational value. In the case of gifts from industry, business, or special interest groups, no extensive advertising or promotion may be involved in any donation to the schools.

Gifts that would involve changes in school plants or sites will be subject to School Committee approval.

Gifts will automatically become the property of the school system. Any gift of cash, whether or not intended by the donor for a specific purpose, will be handled as a separate account and expended at the discretion of the Committee, as provided by law.

The Committee directs the Superintendent to assure that an appropriate expression of thanks is given all donors.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37A

PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

The School Committee is a public servant, and its meetings and records will be a matter of public information except as such meetings and records pertain to individual personnel and other classified matters.

The School Committee supports the right of the people to know about the programs and services of their schools and will make every effort to disseminate information. All requests for information will be acted on fairly, completely and expeditiously.

The official minutes of the Committee, its written policies and regulations, and its financial records will be open for inspection at the office of the Superintendent by any citizen desiring to examine them during hours when the office is open. No records pertaining to individual students or staff members will be released for inspection by the public or any unauthorized persons by the Superintendent or other persons responsible for the custody of confidential files. The exception to this will be information about an individual employee (or student) that has been authorized in writing for release by the employee (or student, or student's parent).

Each building administrator is authorized to use all means available to keep parents and others in the particular school's community informed about the school's program and activities.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 4:7; 66:10; 39:23B

CROSS REFS.: BEDG, Minutes
GBJ, Personnel Records
JRA, Student Records

NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES

Every effort will be made to assist the press and other communications media to obtain complete and adequate coverage of the programs, problems, planning, and activities of the school system.

All representatives of the media will be given equal access to information about the schools. There will be no exclusive releases except as media representatives request information on particular programs, plans or problems.

In order that school system publicity is given wide coverage and is coordinated into a common effort and purpose, the following procedures will be followed in giving official information to the news media:

1. The School Committee Chair will be the official spokesman for the Committee, except as this duty is delegated to the Superintendent.
2. News releases that are of a system-wide or a sensitive nature or pertain to established Committee policy are the responsibility of the Superintendent.
3. News releases that are of concern to only one school, or to an organization of one school, are the responsibility of the Principal of that particular school. All statements made to the press by other staff members of the particular school must be cleared with the Principal.

While it is impossible to know how news releases will be treated by the press, every possible effort should be made to obtain coverage of school activities that will create and maintain a dignified and professionally responsible image for the school system.

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Although no member of the community will be denied the right to bring their complaints to the Committee, they will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the Committee. Exceptions will be made when the complaints concern Committee actions or Committee operations only.

The Committee believes that complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the Committee. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline or learning materials will be as follows:

1. Teacher
2. School building administrator
3. Superintendent
4. School Committee

If a complaint, which was presented to the Committee and referred back through the proper channels, is adjusted before it comes back to the School Committee, a report of the disposition of the matter will be made to the Committee and then placed in the official files.

Matters referred to the Superintendent and/or School Committee must be in writing and should be specific in terms of the action desired.

The Committee expects the professional staff to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complainant.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:09 and 26.10

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Complaints about school personnel will be investigated fully and fairly. However, before any such complaint is investigated, the complainant must submit his/her complaint in writing. Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

Whenever a complaint is made directly to the School Committee as a whole or to a Committee member as an individual, it will be referred to the school administration for study and possible solution.

The Superintendent will develop, for approval by the Committee, procedures that assure prompt and fair attention to complaints against school personnel. The procedures will require that an employee who is the object of a complaint be informed promptly and be afforded the opportunity to present the facts as he/she sees them.

If it appears necessary, the administration, the person who made the complaint, or the employee involved may request an executive session of the Committee for a formal hearing and decision. Statutory restrictions on executive sessions will be observed.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26.09 and 26.10

CROSS REF.: BEC, Executive Sessions

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM OR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The School Committee, though it is ultimately responsible for all curriculum and instructional materials (including library books), recognizes the need and right of students to free access to many different types of books and materials. It also recognizes the right of the professional staff to select books and other materials supportive of the school system's educational philosophy and goals.

Criticism of a book or other materials used in the schools may be expected from time to time. In such instances:

1. If a parent requests that his/her own child not read a given book, the teacher and/or school administrator should resolve the situation, perhaps by arranging for use of alternative material meeting essentially the same instructional purpose. This does not apply however, to basic program texts and materials that the Committee has adopted.
2. The Committee will not permit any individual or group to exercise censorship over instructional materials and library collections, but recognizes that at times a reevaluation of certain material may be desirable. Should an individual or group ask to have any book or other material withdrawn from school use:
 - a. The person who objects to the book or other material will be asked to sign a complaint on a standard form on which he/she will document his/her criticism.
 - b. Following receipt of the formal complaint, the Superintendent will provide for a reevaluation of the material in question. He/she will arrange for the appointment of a review committee from among the faculty to consider the complaint.
 - c. The Superintendent will review the complaint and the committee's reevaluation and will render a decision in the matter. Should the decision be unsatisfactory to the complainant, he/she may appeal it to the Committee.

In summary, the Committee assumes final responsibility for all books and instructional materials it makes available to students; it holds its professional staff accountable for their proper selection. It recognizes rights of individual parents with respect to controversial materials used by their own children; it will provide for the reevaluation of materials in library collections upon formal request. On the other hand, students' right to learn and the freedom of teachers to teach will be respected.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26.09 and 26.10

CROSS REFS.: IJ, Instructional Materials
IJJ, Selection and Adoption of Textbooks
IJL, Selection and Adoption of Library Materials

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

It is the School Committee's desire that maximum use of school property be enjoyed by the townspeople. It is the Committee's intent that such use will maintain safe conditions and preserve the property for school program use.

Use of school buildings and other facilities by organizations will be permitted when a worthy educational, civic, or charitable purpose will be served, a substantial group of citizens from the community will be benefited, or a commercial or for-profit group is approved.

School facilities will be used according to the regulations and rental fee schedules recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committee.

Permission for the use of facilities must be obtained through the office of the Superintendent of Schools, where applications are available for this purpose.

Eligibility

School facilities will be available for the following:

1. Public school activities.
2. Parent-teacher activities.
3. Official town public hearings and political activities.
4. Meetings and activities sponsored by the School Committee and school personnel.
5. Parks and playgrounds activities.
6. Local nonprofit and noncommercial organization activities.
7. Metropolitan civic, educational, social, and religious organization activities if a substantial portion of the members are residents of the town.
8. The activities of other organizations when approved by the School Committee.

School and Town Preference

The priority given requests for use of school facilities will be as follows:

1. School activities.
2. Town meetings and elections over other community activities.
3. Parks and playgrounds.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:71; 71:71B; 272:40A

PUBLIC SOLICITATIONS IN THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee will place limits on commercial activities and fund-raising activities in the schools for the following reasons:

1. The school system should provide students, parents, and employees some measure of protection from exploitation by commercial and charitable fund-raising organizations.
2. The school system should not give the public the impression of generally endorsing or sanctioning commercial and fund-raising activities.
3. Commercial and fund-raising activities may disrupt school routine and cause loss of instructional time.

Following these guiding statements, the Superintendent and Principals may permit occasional commercial or fund-raising activities related to the objectives of the schools with the following exceptions:

1. No direct solicitation of students or employees may take place without School Committee permission.
2. No general or class distribution of commercial or fund-raising literature may take place without School Committee permission.

For the purposes of this policy, local PTA and PTO groups and groups representing school system employees will be considered "school groups" and will be governed by the Committee's policy on staff solicitations.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 44:53A

CROSS REFS.: GBEC, Staff Gifts and Solicitations
JJE, Student Fund-Raising Activities
JP, Student Gifts and Solicitations
KHB, Advertising in the Schools

ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS

No advertising of commercial products or services will be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds or properties without approval from the School Committee. Publications of the school system will not contain any advertising. However, this will not prevent advertising in student publications that are published by student organizations, subject to administration controls, or the use of commercially-sponsored, free teaching aids if the content is approved by the administration.

The use of the automatic phone dialing system will not be used by outside commercial agencies or businesses. Only Lenox Public Schools' information, or information for Lenox Public Schools' students, shall be transmitted on the automatic phone dialing system

Solicitation of sales or use of the name of the school system to promote any product will not be permitted by the Committee.

CROSS REF.: JP, Student Gifts and Solicitations
 KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools

Revised: January 10, 2011

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee encourages parents and guests to visit classrooms to observe and learn about the instructional programs taking place in our schools. Such visits can prove most beneficial in promotion of greater school-home cooperation and community understanding of how we carry out the school system's mission and goals.

Visits by parents to several classrooms in a given grade for the purposes of comparing teaching styles to provide a basis for a request for student assignment to a particular teacher are strongly discouraged because the school district's policy of assigning a student to a particular class is the sole responsibility of the building Principal in consultation with the staff of that school.

The following guidelines to classroom and school visits should be followed:

1. Parental requests for classroom visitations will be welcomed as long as the educational process is not disrupted. To this end we request that such requests be made at least forty-eight hours in advance to allow for proper arrangements to be made.
2. The building Principal has the authority to determine the number, times, and dates of observations by visitors. This will be done in consultation with staff members so as to give adequate notice to the staff members of the impending visits.
3. For security purposes it is requested that all visitors report to the Principal's office upon entering and leaving the building and sign a quest log showing arrival and departure times. Teachers are encouraged to ask visitors if they have registered in the Principal's office.
4. Under ordinary circumstances classroom observations will be strongly discouraged during the first three weeks of school in September and during the month of June.
5. Any student who wishes to have a guest in school **MUST** ask permission of one of the administrative staff **24 HOURS** in advance of the proposed visit. If permission is granted, the guest is expected to follow the standards of behavior expected of all students. Upon arrival the guest must register in the office. Any guest who fails to comply with student regulations will be asked to leave the school building and grounds immediately.

RELATIONS WITH BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

The School Committee recognizes that the endeavors and objectives of booster organizations and similar groups can be a valuable means of stimulating interest in and endorsement of the aims and achievements of our public school system.

Generally, actions initiated by boosters provide the atmosphere and climate to foster and encourage community-school relationships.

Booster-proposed plans, projects, or activities must be evaluated and promoted in light of their stated contribution to the academic as well as the athletic and fine arts programs of the schools. Care must be taken to avoid compromising or diluting the responsibilities and authorities of the School Committee.

RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES

Cooperation with law enforcement agencies is essential for the protection of students, for maintaining a safe environment in the District schools, and for safeguarding all school property.

Relationships between the schools and officials of law enforcement agencies in investigative matters concerning pupils will take into consideration the respective roles of the schools and law enforcement agencies in assisting and protecting the interests of the community, and ensuring the rights of all concerned.

The School Committee also recognizes the potential enrichment that law enforcement agencies can make in the educational program.

Efforts should be made to develop and maintain a healthy attitude toward law enforcement agencies and personnel to promote better understanding and communication.

RELATIONS WITH PLANNING AUTHORITIES

The School Committee will participate in local and state planning functions that could directly affect District schools and their immediate environment.

The Superintendent or designee will keep the School Committee informed of planning matters bearing directly on the operation of District schools or school-sponsored programs, and will undertake action on behalf of the School Committee to influence matters in the best interests of the students, the schools and the District.

RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES

The School Committee and its administrative officers welcome all who seek to serve the residents of the community and will participate with them in the planning and execution of such projects as will be mutually beneficial for students.

It is School Committee policy that administration inform elected and appointed officials of the local and county government of the desire to work cooperatively for improved services.

EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS GOALS

The school committee appreciates the place and importance of an educational system in its greater environment, which includes other organizations and institutions dedicated to education. It believes that much is gained through cooperative endeavors with other agencies.

In order to make a maximum contribution to education, within the school system and to other educational agencies, the committee establishes these broad goals:

1. To encourage liaison with other educational agencies.
2. To supply educational services to and/or share with other educational agencies.

Adoption date: January 1996

SOURCE: MASC Policy

RELATIONS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The school committee will cooperate with other schools and with local, state, and regional agencies and organizations to:

1. Seek solutions of educational problems of common concern.
2. Offer support services of high quality to our children.
3. Equalize educational opportunities for all children.
4. Acquire federal and state grants.
5. Promote local school system involvement in state and federal decision making.

This cooperation may extend to research, providing transportation for children to special schools and hospitals, coordination of curriculum, exchange of information and data, construction of facilities that may be efficiently used on a cooperative basis, and the coordination of school calendars and activities.

Before joining any cooperative programs, education collaborative, or participating in any joint educational services with other school systems, the school committee wants to be sure that in all instances the best interests of our school children will be served. In carrying out this policy the superintendent will include in reports to the committee an evaluation of the desirability and feasibility of cooperation with other schools and agencies on matters of mutual interest.

Private Schools

In accordance with state law, the school committee will approve a private school when it is satisfied that the instructional program of the school equals that of the town's public schools in thoroughness, efficiency, and progress made.

The committee recognizes that many worthwhile contributions are made to this community by parochial and other private schools. Therefore, it will cooperate with these schools in matters of mutual benefit when this cooperation is not expressly prohibited by law.

Adoption date: January 1996

SOURCE: MASC Policy

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:4E; 71:48; 71:71D; 71B:4; 74:4 through 74:7A; 76:1

NOTE: Policies under this category and its subcategories are usually specific in naming the cooperatives, collaborative, and special agencies with which the school system is associated to provide special services and programs.

RELATIONS WITH NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS

Private Schools

In accordance with state law, the School Committee will approve a private school when it is satisfied that the instructional program of the school equals that of the town's public schools in thoroughness, efficiency, and progress made.

The Committee recognizes that many worthwhile contributions are made to this community by parochial and other private schools. Therefore, it will cooperate with these schools in matters of mutual benefit when law does not expressly prohibit this cooperation.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:4E; 71:48; 71:71D; 71B:4; 74:4 through 74:7A; 76:1

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH
(External Agencies)

It is the policy of these boards to cooperate with colleges and other appropriate agencies in undertaking potentially useful research in the schools of these school districts.

However, each research project must have the approval of the principal before being initiated.

Approval shall be based upon, but not limited to, the following criteria:

- a. The project should be so designed that it can be expected to produce valid and reliable results.
- b. It should be expected to contribute something useful and of value for the improvement of education.
- c. Questionnaires and interview questions must be submitted in advance to the principal and must not include items which invade the area of personal rights or which raise questions of a personal nature.
- d. Outlines must be submitted and should be of sufficient scope and depth to justify the time and effort to be consumed.
- e. In general, it is our policy not to interrupt the work of pupils or teachers unless there seems to be real potential in the study.
- f. In the case of student projects, prior written approval by a faculty member of the institution attended will be required. This faculty member shall have some responsibility related to the student's project.
- g. A copy of the final results must be presented to the principal.

STUDENT TEACHING AND INTERNSHIPS

The committee encourages the administration to cooperate with teacher-training institutions in the placement of student teachers in the school system. All initial arrangements with the colleges and universities will be subject to committee approval.

The committee authorizes the administration to honor the reasonable rules and training guidelines of the sending institution.

In all arrangements made with colleges and universities, the school system will be given the privilege of interviewing and accepting or rejecting individual candidates for student teaching and internships.

The school administration will devise procedures for evaluating the performance of student teachers that meet requirements of the sending institution and fit with the committee's policies.