

John R. Briggs School Parent Handbook 2018-2019



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Welcome to the Briggs' community. The John R. Briggs School is dedicated to developing lifelong learners. The mission of our school is to engage the whole community in the process of challenging all students to develop a strong knowledge base, a respect and understanding for diversity, an ability to relate to others, and a sense of empowerment as individual learners. At the John R. Briggs School we continually strive to build and foster a sense of community, a sense of belonging, and a sense of caring among all of our members. We seek your input and ask you to join with us in making your children's years at John R. Briggs productive and happy.

The John R. Briggs School Council has worked hard to create a comprehensive handbook that will assist all members of the community in understanding our school's day-to-day practices and procedures. This handbook articulates the existing policies, practices, and procedures that guide our elementary school program.

The John R. Briggs School is always looking to expand our dialogue with parents and the community of Ashburnham. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please make an appointment or feel free to drop in casually to discuss whatever may be of importance to you. The John R. Briggs School is a very special learning environment that will continue to become an even better place as we continue to work together to enhance our partnership with parents and community.

AWRSD Vision Statement

The AWRSD prepares all students to be contributing citizens of local and global societies in an ever-changing world.

AWRSD Mission Statement

At Ashburnham Westminster Regional School District, we focus on doing what is best for students to meet their academic and social-emotional needs to thrive in a global society through:

- academically challenging curriculum;
- community and civic engagement;
- continuous, responsible use of all resources and evolving technology;
- high quality, ongoing, focused professional development for staff;
- real world applications;
- reflection for continuous improvement;
- research based and data driven instructional practices;
- resilient, solution-based mindsets; and
- student input and ownership.

AWRSD Core Values

Equity: Student equity means that all students have equal access to quality staff, courses, activities, and services, and resources based on their individual needs.

Excellence: Student excellence is a balance of rigorous academic, social, and careerreadiness skills.

Community: Community engagement is proactive involvement of stakeholders in school district priorities and partnerships.

JRB Vision Statement

We grow and learn together.

School History and Profile

The John R. Briggs Elementary School is located in Ashburnham, Massachusetts. Ashburnham is a rural community of approximately 5500 people, located thirty-five miles north of Worcester, MA on the New Hampshire border. Ashburnham has limited industry and is dependent upon its personal property tax base for funding.

The original John R. Briggs School was built in 1968 and the new John R. Briggs School was opened in 2013. The building is named after a much loved and internationally recognized Boy Scout Leader who lived in Ashburnham. Mr. Briggs devoted his life to working with children and was responsible for designing and building the town pool.

The John R. Briggs Elementary services students in preschool through grade five. We strive to maintain workable class size with the support of the AWRSD School Committee. Special Education support is provided through certified Special Education teachers within and outside of the regular classroom. We provide counseling services to students through our school adjustment counselors.

JRB School Improvement Plan Goals

- Integrate STEAM initiatives into daily classroom instruction and grade level curriculum.
- To implement an instructional program for grades 4-5 to address social media safety and the ethical use of technology.
- Continued implementation of a Mindfulness 8-week Curriculum/Module for Students in Grades 2-5.

Volunteer Opportunities

Research shows that children do best in schools when parents are involved in their education. Each year we have many parents who volunteer to work in the classrooms. There are many jobs available such as tutoring, photocopying, taping books, field trips, class parties, etc. Every year at open house many teachers post parental involvement sign-up sheets that detail the volunteer opportunities available in their classroom. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact your child's teacher or school administration. All volunteers are required to submit a CORI form to the school office and each valid CORI will expire after three years.

P.T.A.

The PTA has many functions within the school. They coordinate fundraising events, provide "mini grants" to support enrichment activities and innovative initiatives, and help buy back-to-school supplies for students at all levels to lessen the list requested of families. They also organize and implement a series of extracurricular events throughout the school year. Some of the events that have been organized in previous years are Parents Night Out, Movie Night, Bunny Breakfast, Extreme Game Night, Bingo Night, and a Snowflake Dance Party. The goal is to develop events that are family based entertainment. Event planning and implementation is a dynamic process so events will change from year to year, as the school's needs change and based on the level of committed volunteers to help keep the organization going. The PTA is also responsible for the production of John R. Briggs' annual year book, which is a pictorial review of the year's activities.

School Council

Under Massachusetts Education Reform legislation, all schools have been required to have School Councils since September 19th, 1993. At John R. Briggs Elementary School, the School Council has been meeting regularly since February 1992. The Council is comprised of parents, community members, teachers, and administration. The School Council is committed to promoting the goals of our School Improvement Plan. Meetings are held on a monthly basis during the school year.

The JRB School Improvement Council wants to continue to hear from parents how we can help you. Parents may be asked to complete surveys annually to address how we can make the school better.

School Policies and Procedures

Enrollment Requirements

Student enrollment packets; including proof of residency are required during the enrollment process. Packets are available from school office and www.awrsd.org/jrb website.

- A parent/guardian registering a new student requires proof that the students lives in Ashburnham by providing some of the following items: copy of deed or record of most recent mortgage payment, copy of leases and copy of most recent rent payment, legal affidavit affirming tenancy and record of recent rent payment, Section 8 agreement, a copy utility bill or work order dated within 60 days (e.g. gas bill, oil bill, electric bill, home telephone bill, or cable bill), a copy of valid Massachusetts driver's license, copy of current vehicle registration, copy of valid Massachusetts photo ID, copy of a valid passport, W-2 form dated within the past year, or excise tax bill dated within the past year.
- If the student lives with someone other than the parent, the following conditions must be met:
 - A notarized statement indicating the student is living at a valid address within the school district with the name of the owner or renter of the property.

- A statement naming the adult who should be contacted for school business such as absences and emergencies.
- The parent and or guardian named in these statements must be present at the registration.
- The notarized statement must be completed and presented prior to registration.
- State law mandates that public schools must enroll students who live in their district, but the law clearly indicates that students not claim residency for the sole purpose of attending its schools. In cases where legal guardianship is involved, a copy of the court record of guardianship should be provided.
- All students must provide proof of immunizations and a release form must be signed to enable J. R. Briggs Elementary to receive prior school records. A copy of the student's birth certificate must be presented at the time of registration.
- An updated Emergency Information form is kept on file in the nurse's office. This information provides the school with emergency contact and medical history information.
- All new students must provide a completed Home Language Survey.

For admission to kindergarten, a child must be five (5) on or before August 31st. The staff, prior to placement will evaluate any child who completed kindergarten outside of the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District who is not age five (5) by August 31st. A family moving to Ashburnham with a child who does not meet the cutoff date, but who has attended kindergarten elsewhere for six (6) weeks may enroll the child in kindergarten. The child will be evaluated on an equal standing with his/her peers. A yearly orientation program is held ***in the spring prior to September*** for all students and their parents entering kindergarten.

Absences, Tardiness and Truancy

Regular attendance and on-time arrival are essential to sequential learning and necessary for satisfactory student progress. Students improve academic performance with improved attendance. It is important that students are punctual and attend school each day. When an absence is unavoidable due to illness, bereavement, medical appointments, religious reasons or other family emergencies, the parent is expected to inform the school by phone, the day of the absence.

Please **call the the school 978-827-5750, press 3, to call your child out absent**. Also, you **can email the JRB office if your child is absent at JRBOffice@awrsd.org**. The phone system is available to receive absent phone calls 24 hours a day. The office staff is available 7:30 am-3:30 pm; at 978-827-5750 press #1170 or #1171.

Definition of Excused Absence: absence due to illness with doctor's/nurse's verification, bereavement, medical, dental, or legal appointment, and religious observances.

Definition of Unexcused absence: absence without **doctor/nurse verification, vacation, tardy after 11:30AM or dismissal prior to 11:30AM**. A student is considered truant if the absence is unexcused.

If the school is not notified before the school day starts, the school nurse will attempt to reach parents/guardians or emergency contact to verify the student's absence. This is done as a safety check to ensure each student's well being. Also, the Ashburnham Police Department School Resource Officer along with school staff may make a well-child check to ensure the safety of the student if there is **no communication from a child/ren's parent/guardian** to the school regarding a student's absence.

If parents are unable to make phone contact, a written note from the parent/guardian must be brought to school on the first day of the student's return to school. It is the student's responsibility to make up all assignments, projects, and tests missed during the absence.

Any student who arrives at 8:30AM or later is considered tardy and must report to the office.

In cases of extended absences and/or serious medical problems, the school may provide home tutoring for students who are unable to attend school because of a long-term illness or injury. If a student is out of school for more than 20 consecutive days, s/he may qualify for tutorial services. A doctor's written request is required. Arrangements may be made through School Administration.

Extended absences for the sole purpose of extending a vacation period are discouraged. Students will be responsible for missed academic work upon their return to school. School work will not be provided for these students prior to their vacation.

Unexpected absences are those that do not conform to excused reasons. This includes any absence without a valid note. A student will be considered truant if the absence is unexcused.

The academic success of our students is directly related to their daily attendance. Parents will receive written notification throughout the school year if their child's absences, tardiness, or early dismissals may affect their progress in school, and will become part of the student record.

Dismissal from School

Early dismissals are discouraged. Parents are urged to schedule doctor, dentist, or other appointments outside the school hours, on school holidays or during vacation time. No student will be dismissed until the responsible school official is assured that the child is being released by request of a parent/guardian or other authorized adult for sufficient reasons.

On the day of dismissal, the parent/guardian must send a note to the school office indicating the time of dismissal and who will pick-up the child. No student will be dismissed to anyone except the parent/guardian or authorized adult. The parent/guardian must notify the school office of such authorization before the student can be dismissed.

The parent/guardian or authorized adult must report to the school office upon arrival to pick-up the student. No student will be released to meet a parent elsewhere on school grounds.

Withdrawal/Transfer Procedure

When a student transfers from John R. Briggs School to another school system, the office and the student's teacher need to be notified at least two days prior to the transfer. A "Records Request" form will be sent to our school once the student has been enrolled in the new school system.

No School Announcements and Delayed Openings

No School announcements and delayed openings due to hazardous weather conditions will be made as early as possible. Parents may access this information on the district website: www.awrsd.org or through local television and radio stations:

WCVB Channel 5 TV

FOX 25 TV

WBZ Channel 4 TV

WHDH Channel 7 TV

They will also be notified through **Rediker**, our automated telephone/email/text service. Parents/guardians are asked to notify the school's main office if they are not receiving messages from the automated telephone services.

Unexpected School Closings

In the event that school is to be dismissed early because of storm conditions or for reasons of an emergency nature, children will take their usual means of transportation home. Parents should discuss with their child an emergency plan in case no parent or guardian is home at the time of the dismissal.

Parents will be notified through **Rediker, our automated telephone service** of unexpected school closings. It is the parents/guardian to contact the school if they are not receiving messages from the automated telephone services.

In the event of an unexpected school closing, AWRSD Extended Day will close one-half hour after the emergency closing.

The following suggestions are provided so parents can develop a plan for their child if there is an emergency dismissal:

- Set up a phone chain among friends or classmates' parents.
- Develop a cooperative neighborhood plan.
- Keep a list of phone numbers and instructions conveniently near the telephone.
- Listen to the radio or television when there is a chance of severe weather
- **Do not call the schools, police, etc., as these lines need to be kept open for emergencies.**

Building Evacuation

In the event that we must evacuate the school during school hours the following procedure will be activated:

- Principal/Asst. Principal or Designee will oversee the safe evacuation of their school
- The following will be the evacuation points for the J. R. Briggs Elementary School:
Primary: Briggs to Oakmont
Secondary: Briggs to Cushing Academy

Every effort will be made to dismiss the students from these locations at the regularly scheduled time via bus transportation. Parents will be notified if students must be dismissed in any other format.

Building Security

We make every effort to ensure our students have a safe and secure environment in which to learn. To this end, all exterior doors to the building are locked while school is in session. Visitors must be “buzzed in” through our main entrance and report directly to the office area. If seeking entrance to the school after school hours, visitors must check in at Extended Day; this includes chorus, music lessons, tutoring, play rehearsal, etc. Parents **ARE NOT ALLOWED** to admit anyone through the front door after school hours; it is imperative that all visitors enter through the front door of the school so we know who is in the building from 6:30AM-6:00PM. During school hours, ALL visitors and volunteers must report to the office to sign in and obtain a visitor badge. Visitors must sign out and badges be returned before leaving the school building.

The preschool doors will be opened and monitored by a JRB staff member from 8:40AM-8:50AM and from 11:10AM-11:20AM. If you arrive after these times to drop-off or pick-up of your preschool student, you will need to use the main entrance of the building and sign-in with the front office staff. Your child will be escorted by a JRB staff member to his/her classroom and/or could go down to the classroom by him/herself.

School Visitors

All visitors are welcome. Please confirm your visit with your child’s teacher and the secretaries or administration at the front desk for the safety of the students. This policy is not to discourage parental involvement in the school but to ensure the safety of all children on school grounds.

Sign-In Policy for Visitors – Notice of Confidentiality

All visitors are required to “sign in” at the office when visiting our school for any purpose. “In the event that while visiting the school, a visitor obtains personally identifiable or confidential information. The visitor will not disclose it, except when it is the information of the student being evaluated, in which case it will be used consistent with the parent’s authority and direction.” All visitors must wear a visitor’s badge and will be required return main office if one is not visible.

Early Release Days – 11:50AM Dismissal Scheduled Half Days for 2018-2019 School Year: September 27th, October 9th, October 11th, October 18th, November 21st, January 28th, February 7th, February 14th, March 6th, June 7th, and the last day of school (June 12th if no school cancellations).

There are several days identified during the school year as early release days. Parents will be notified of these days by the school calendar, the weekly parent email and JRB & AWRSD webpages. Students will take their usual means of transportation home unless the school is notified of a change by the parent or guardian. No medications will be given after dismissal and lunches are not served on these days.

Notices (Handouts)

School to home communication is conducted mainly through email and some handouts delivered by your child. Notices are sent home periodically and may require a parent/guardian signature, so please check with your child daily for handouts. The Briggs Main Office utilizes electronic handouts/school communication via parents’ email unless a parent indicates they would like paper copies. Classroom teachers will continue to send home some information via paper copies but also utilize parents’ email addresses. Also, we will make every attempt to put all handouts on the school’s webpage. It is the parents’ responsibility to update their contact information with the office. **Typically, there is a parent email and informational flyers sent home to parents 2 to 3 times a month. If you do not receive any communication from the school please confirm with the office that your contact information is correct.**

Phone Calls

The office staff will be pleased to help with problems or answer questions concerning school. You may call the office at any time between **7:30AM** and **3:30PM** Monday through Friday for assistance. The main office number is 978-827-5750, ext. #1170 or #1171.

Parents wishing to speak with a teacher should call the school at 978-827-5750 to access the staff directory for the teacher's extension. Please follow the directions below.

- Dial the school at 978-827-5750
- As the prompt begins press 4
- Then enter first three letters of the teacher's and/or staff member's last name
- You will be given the teacher and/or staff member's voice mailbox number to enter
- You will be sent to the teachers' and/or staff member's voice mail to leave a message or he/she may answer the phone directly*

*If you are calling outside of teaching hours (8:15AM-3:20PM), the staff member may answer directly. However, if you are calling within teaching hours you will only receive voicemail. If it is imperative that you speak with someone immediately, call the main office.

Email

Parents wishing to communicate with our staff are invited to utilize our email system. (i.e. firstname.lastname@awrsd.org – amcgrath@awrsd.org)

Notes from Parents

Written notes are required from parents in the following situations:

- If phone contact has not been made with the office when your child has been absent or is late for school.
- When your child is to be dismissed prior to end of the school day, or
- When your child will be picked up after school by someone else other than their usual transportation.
- Any emergency request to ride a bus, or a different bus, must be requested in writing by the parent or guardian and submitted to the school office.
- **PLEASE NOTE THAT DISMISSAL AT THE END OF THE DAY IS VERY BUSY. THE OFFICE STAFF MAY BE UNABLE TO ANSWER ALL PHONE CALLS AFTER 2:30PM. PLEASE NOTIFY THE SCHOOL IN WRITING OR BY PHONE CALL IN THE MORNING OR PRIOR TO 2:30PM OF ANY CHANGES IN YOUR CHILD'S TYPICAL DISMISSAL METHOD. IT IS OUR PRIMARY GOAL TO DISMISS YOUR CHILD SAFELY AT THE END OF THE DAY AND WE NEED YOUR HELP SO PLEASE FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES STATED ABOVE.**

Birthday Invitations

It has been the school's policy to prohibit the practice of the distribution of birthday or party invitations. There are several reasons for this posture, many of which are legal in nature. The overriding issue is that too many children experience significant hurt when they are not invited to parties. School is definitely not a place where children should have to be subjected to such embarrassment and/or discomfort in front of peers. Invitations should be handled outside of school.

Birthdays at School

Each class or grade level honors/celebrates birthdays differently. The classroom teacher will be able to answer any questions about how birthdays are honored in your child's class. Sending in food items for birthdays is not encouraged as there are a wide variety of health issues that affect what it is safe for students to eat. Your teacher may have other suggestions for celebrating such as bringing in a favorite book to be read or bringing in stickers or pencils to share.

Class Celebrations Involving Food

In the event that a class is celebrating an event with food, please be mindful of food allergies that may exist in your child's classroom and our school policy of encouraging healthy choices, which correlates with federal government guidelines. Please make sure your classroom teacher knows what food is coming in prior to bringing it. When sending in a food item (with the exception of fruit and vegetables), ALL food must be provided in labeled packaged containers, prepackaged by the

company that manufactures them. If homemade foods are provided, they must be accompanied by a list of ingredients and confirmation that no contact with other foods during the making process occurred (i.e. cross contamination. Nut product on spoon; that spoon then used to mix batter. Risk of nut contamination now in the batter). If these guidelines are not followed, the food will then be returned.

Valuable Items

Students tend to bring items to school that are not appropriate to the school setting. They not only interfere with the academic climate, but cause disruptions to the school day, and may be lost or stolen. The following is a list of suggested items not allowed at school: bakagons, **electronic devices, (i.e., iPods, cell phones, digital cameras, tablets, iPads)**, trading cards, and other objects of value. **Dolls, stuffed animals, and other toys are discouraged but permitted with prior teacher permission (Show & Tell, Sharing, etc.).** We recognize that some students may need a cell phone due to parental custody agreements. Also, a child may bring in an iPod for a school assignment. If a child brings a cell phone or any electronic device to school it MUST be stored at the front office and a student may pick it up at the end of the day.

Parent Complaint Resolution Procedure Policy

Whenever there is difference of opinion or complaint, the philosophy of the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School is to resolve all problems at the point closest to that issue. Please refer first to the staff person with whom the problem exists. The professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to the involvement of higher levels of administration or the AWRSD School Committee.

All complaints will be respectfully acknowledged at each level of discussion, including a summary of resolution or next steps.

The proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline or learning materials will be as follows:

1. Staff Member
2. School building administrator (Principal, Vice Principal)
3. Superintendent
4. School Committee

Please see Appendix K, PUBLIC COMPLAINT POLICY, in this handbook to view the district's entire policy connected to Public Complaints that specifically identifies the steps to be followed by all parties involved.

Lost and Found

Most lost and found items are located in the lobby area. Several times per year items are put on display in the lobby area near the main entrance. Periodically throughout the school year all unclaimed items are donated to charity. Please label your child's items.

School Hours:

Kindergarten: – Grade 5 8:30AM - 2:50PM

Preschool: 8:45AM-11:10AM and 12:00PM-2:30PM

Half Day Hours: for kindergarten-Grade 5: 8:30AM-12:00PM; dismissal beginning at 11:50AM.

Students should not arrive before 8:20AM unless they are enrolled in the Extended Day Program. There is no supervision before this time. Upon entering the building, at 8:20AM students should go directly to their classroom.

Any student arriving after 8:30AM must check in with the office staff, and will be recorded as tardy.

Library

All students are allowed to take books out of the school library. Students in grades kindergarten through five may take out two books for at least two weeks and may take them home. These students may also take out additional books for special and research projects, with the permission of the librarian. Fines are not collected for overdue books but all library books must be returned in a timely fashion. All library books have to be returned by the end of the school year or the student who has signed the book out will be responsible to pay for the book's replacement. Should the book be returned at a later date, the librarian will refund the student's money.

Outdoor Recess

Outdoor recess is a vital part of a school's program and all able children **must** participate. If your child is not well enough to go outside at recess, your child should not attend school. If special conditions exist, preventing participation in the activities at outdoor recess, a physician's note is required for the child to attend school and remain inside. For the safety of all students, certain items are prohibited from playground use, i.e. wooden bats, lacrosse sticks, hockey sticks, hardballs, etc.

Clothing Guidelines

Students are expected to be neat, clean, and respectful in their appearance. Clothing should be appropriate for the type of weather. All outerwear and any clothing that may be taken off (coats, sweaters, etc.) should be labeled with an identifying mark. During winter months, students must wear boots and snow pants to play in the snow. An extra pair of shoes should be provided so the children can take off their boots after recess. In addition, please consider providing an extra pair of socks for your child.

Sandals and "flip-flops" are not appropriate footwear for recess or physical education classes, therefore it is suggested all students have access to sneaker type footwear for ALL activities.

Outside coats or jackets are not to be worn in class unless building conditions necessitate additional clothing. Caps, kerchiefs, and bandanas are prohibited from wearing in school. Please keep these items for outside use. Appropriate clothing choices are appreciated and students are highly discouraged from wearing "short shorts", tube tops, halter-tops or any clothing items that expose the midriff. Clothing that advertises alcoholic beverages, drugs, or tobacco, or with offensive or questionable slogans or messages is not allowed. Please refrain from sending your child to school with extra accessories such as chains, as they pose a safety issue on the playground.

Any student who does not dress appropriately as decided by the Principal or designee, will be sent to the nurse or home to change or parents will be called to bring a change of clothes to the school.

Integrated Preschool

The Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District has an integrated public preschool servicing 3 and 4 year-old special needs children throughout the school district. "Typically developing peers" attend the program for a fee. Our curriculum is developmentally appropriate and aligned with the Massachusetts Guidelines for Preschool Learning Standards. The preschool is currently staffed by special education teachers and teaching assistants.

Children with special needs are referred to the program through Early Intervention, physicians, or parents who are concerned about their child's development. For more information about the preschool, please call the Community Partnership at [978-874-7312](tel:978-874-7312). Role model peers participate in a screening process each spring. When needed, a lottery is held each March.

Students attending the preschool will have several choices, based upon their age and availability, some of which include:

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday:	8:45-11:10 a.m.
Tuesday, Thursday:	8:45-11:10 a.m.
Afternoon classes four or five days a week:	12:00-2:30 p.m.

Kindergarten Information

Typical Kindergarten Day – Students have the following activities during the day:

Meeting Time with group – includes greeting, conversation, game, calendar activities, math questions, story time, and language activities.

Table Time – reading, language, math, science, and social studies activities.

Snack – child should bring one snack and drink from home. Packaging should be easy for child to open.

Lunch in the cafeteria – students can purchase or bring their own lunch.

Recess Time – inside or outside (depending on weather) Dress appropriately for weather

Rest/Quiet Time – opportunity for quiet story or rest time

Choice Time – students choose from our centers in the room, this is also a time for individual and/or small group work.

Special Subjects – students will participate in art, music, gym, and library/tech.

Useful Information:

Kindergarten entrance age: Five years of age by August 31st.

Kindergarten Screening occurs during the first week of the school year.

Kindergarten classes begin the second week of school.

Kindergarten Orientation: May prior to enrollment; morning event for incoming potential kindergarten students and parents.

School Hours: **8:30AM– 2:50PM**

Parent Drop off: **8:20AM-8:30AM at entrance behind the school and parents remain in their cars and drop off their child**

Parent Pick up: **2:50PM at entrance behind the school and parents remain in their car and their child will**

Early Dismissal: **11:50AM**

Lunch: \$2.75 per day. (Subject to change)

We cannot stress strongly enough the need to **pre-pay** your kindergarten student's lunch money if your child will be purchasing a school provided daily lunch. An on-line payment and monitoring system is also available through the AWRSD website (www.awrsd.org). You select the number of pre-pay lunches and make checks payable to: J. R. Briggs Elementary – Café. Our cafeteria manager will keep you informed when your child's funds are running low. Kindergarten has its own designated lunch and recess period with adult supervision.

First Weeks of Kindergarten -

During the first week of school you are welcome to walk your child to their classroom. By the second week, we encourage parting in the lobby or the library. There after we hope everyone will be comfortable coming into the school on his or her own. We have a number of adults available in the lobby and office area to assist with this transition.

Rest/Quiet Time

As part of the Kindergarten day, your child will be having a rest/quiet time each afternoon. He/she will need their own beach towel to rest on and a separate carrying bag for the towel with their name on both.

Lost and Found

Please label your child's belongings. Lunch boxes, sweatshirts, mittens, and sometimes jackets all look the same to young children. If your child's name is on the item, we will do our best to return lost items.

Homework

Please see Appendix L for district policy regarding homework. The JRB homework policies reflect the core components of the district's policy.

Homework refers to work assigned by a teacher to be completed by the student outside of class time. Homework is intended to provide an opportunity for integrating home and school experiences.

The goals of our homework program are:

- * to encourage shared responsibility of parents, students and teachers
- * to reinforce skills through appropriate assignments
- * to create a positive home-school connection
- * to extend literacy into the home

Responsibilities of Parents

Promote a positive attitude toward homework and reinforce its value by:

Establishing a consistent homework routine that includes a quiet work environment with appropriate supplies and materials

- * Clarifying directions

- * Fostering pride in the completed task
- * Communicating with teachers regarding questions and difficulties of the assignment

Responsibilities of Students

- * Receive assignments
- * Ask teacher for clarification and/or help if assignment is not understood
- * Show effort and do best work
- * Return completed or partial assignments on time
- * Inform teacher of any difficulty regarding the assignment and return it partially completed

Responsibilities of Teacher

- * Communicate homework expectations to parents and students
- * Ensure that assignments are connected to the curriculum and appropriate for students
- * Create an environment where students are able to ask for clarification of assignments
- * Provide feedback of homework in a timely manner
- * Respond to parent concerns and keep parents apprised of homework issues

Parent Drop-off and Parent Pick-up

PLEASE NOTE THAT DISMISSAL AT THE END OF THE DAY IS VERY BUSY. THE OFFICE STAFF MAY BE UNABLE TO ANSWER ALL PHONE CALLS AFTER 2:30PM. PLEASE NOTIFY THE SCHOOL IN WRITING OR BY PHONE CALL IN THE MORNING OR PRIOR TO 2:30PM OF ANY CHANGES IN YOUR CHILD'S TYPICAL DISMISSAL METHOD. IT IS OUR PRIMARY GOAL TO DISMISS YOUR CHILD SAFELY AT THE END OF THE DAY AND WE NEED YOUR HELP SO PLEASE FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES STATED ABOVE.

If you drive or pick-up your child at school please follow the guidelines below. This policy was created to ensure the safe drop-off and pick-up all the students.

AM Drop-off

- Please use the driveway closest to the preschool building and drive around the back of the school
- Once in the rotary please pull up to the top of the circle, wait until JRB staff is available to supervise student drop-off then have your child get out of the car on the passenger side so he/she can walk into the school lobby on his/her own and do not pull out of the rotary until the cars in front of you have pulled away
- Please pull out as quickly as possible so another group of parents can park in the rotary. Do not pass the car in front of you and exit the rotary in the order you entered
- Please teach your child how to get out of his/her car seat independently, zip his/her bags and give your final hugs and kisses at home
- Students can start to be dropped off at 8:20AM and continue to 8:30AM; any child that arrives to school after 8:30AM will be marked tardy. We are asking parents to drop-off their child at the door and not wait with them in the lobby. Students dropped off prior to 8:20AM must go to Extended Day.

PM Pick-Up

- Dismissal for parent pick-up should begin at 2:50PM but please know this schedule will vary in the beginning of the school year as the students and staff adjust to the new dismissal procedure
- Please use the driveway closest to the preschool building and drive around the back of the school
- Parents will be provided with a sign that must be posted in the front passenger side visor with your child's last name on it
- Pull into the rotary, park alongside the sidewalk and remain in your car. The first car should stop at the sign at the top of the circle.
- Your child will walk out to your vehicle so please do not get out of your car and it is helpful if your child can independently get into his/her car seat
- Do not pull out of the rotary with your child/ren until a JRB staff has indicated it is safe to proceed
- If you are waiting to pull into the rotary please remain in your car on the side of the road and be prepared to pull into the rotary when the other cars have pulled away
- Do not pass any cars in the line or pull ahead of anyone who is waiting to pick up their child/ren

Guidelines for Building Community and Fostering Self Discipline and Respect

Creating a safe, caring and productive school community is essential for all students to reach their full potential. As members of the Briggs school community students have a responsibility to help create an environment where everyone feels, safe, valued, and ready to learn. To help foster this respect for one's self and others, rules and guidelines are created to set standards of behavior and to help settle conflicts. When someone breaks a rule there are consequences to one's actions. Consequences are effective in changing behavior when they are logical and help students build self-discipline. Consequences that are seen only as punishment often end up teaching students only to feel bad about getting caught.

General Rules

These rules shall be followed in each classroom, as well as hallways, restrooms and throughout the school.

Treat others, as you would like to be treated

Show respect

Value rights

Be responsible

When appropriate, children are provided with an opportunity to make amends or reparation. An apology by way of action may be a consequence in some situations.

Classroom Rules

During the first few days of each school year, teachers and students together discuss what are their goals, hopes and dreams for the year. Special attention is given to discussing what type of classroom community is needed so that everyone can realize their hopes for the year. Students and teachers work together to design rules that will protect and serve the classroom.

The rules designed by the class should number no more than four or five and be applicable to a wide range of situations. The rules should be positive in nature, reminding students what behavior is expected rather than a list of No's and Do Not's.

Once the rules are established, teachers will post them in the class and refer frequently to the rules that were established by everyone. The teacher may also use role-playing and modeling to reinforce the rules and in discussing the consequences of not following them.

Consequences

The three major approaches to increase responsibility and self discipline of students at John R. Briggs School can be broken down into the following: "You break it - you fix it", Loss of Privilege and Quiet Time. For consequences to be effective it is important that they be logical, realistic and relevant.

An example of "You break it- you fix it" is a student may be asked to stay in at recess to clean up a mess they made at lunch or during class. A student who breaks school property due to misuse may be asked to fix it or replace it.

In Loss of Privilege, a student who breaks recess rules may lose the privilege of participating in recess.

In Quiet Time, students who are causing a disturbance/distraction to others may be asked to move themselves to a predetermined place in the classroom. The students can rejoin the class when they feel capable of following class expectations.

Any student who makes a credible threat toward a staff member will receive a minimum of a ten (10) day suspension on the first offense and parents and the police will be contacted. Subsequent offenses will result in more serious consequences that may result in exclusion or expulsion. A credible threat is defined as a statement in verbal, written, or electronic form that expresses the intent to harm another person and causes the recipient to fear for his or her safety. It is important to note that it is the victim's perception of harm that defines the threat, not the intent of the person making the threat.

Social Play and Language

The JRB school community recognizes the importance of social development and its impact on communication, coping skills, and the ability to connect with others. High expectations regarding pro-social behavior are consistently communicated to all students as individuals strive to create a school and classroom climate, which emulates mutual respect, and promotes communication and positive social interaction. This includes, but is not limited to utilizing social language, promoting cooperative learning and play, and providing consistent patterns of socialization that encourage connections and help positively influence social behavior across the curriculum.

Playground

Proper play is expected of all students at all times. If students are having a problem with any other student, they are to inform the teacher or supervisor on duty. When out on the playground, students need to:

- Treat others, as you would like to be treated.
- Use all playground equipment in a proper manner; one that is respectful to others and provides safe conditions for all.
- Before leaving the playground area ask permission from a teacher or playground supervisor.
- During the winter months, students must wear boots and snow pants to play in the snow.
- When the whistle blows, enter the building quietly in a single file.

Cafeteria

Proper respect and manners are expected of students at all times. If students are having a problem with any other student, they are to inform the teacher or supervisor on duty. When in the cafeteria, students need to:

- Talk quietly at their table
- Raise their hand to ask for permission or help
- Be responsible for their own trash in their immediate area (table and floor).

Mighty Moose Pledge

I pledge to be a person of character
I promise to be prepared for each day
I will respect myself and others
While working or at play

I pledge to be a person of character
I promise to always show that I care
In classrooms, at lunch, and recess
I will consistently be fair

I pledge to be a person of character
Expected behavior is a must
I will listen, complete my work,
And be worthy of trust

I pledge to be a person of character
Demonstrating respect and responsibility
Because we grow and learn together
Here at JRB!

-Written by JRB Fifth Grade Student Council Spring 2016

Medical and Health Information

Wellness Policy

Please be sure to read the complete AWRSD Wellness Policy on the district website: www.awrsd.org. We have included a portion of the policy in reference to nutritious foods served in our school. "We continue to promote the availability of nutritious selections and discourage the sale and consumption of beverages and foods of low nutritional value during regular school hours." Our policy does not set specific food restrictions, but we are recommending that you make "healthy choices" when sending in food with your child whether it be for lunch, snack, or classroom celebrations. Please reference this website for an extensive list of acceptable foods/snacks that are healthy: www.johnstalkerinstitute.org. Please support the AWRSD Wellness Policy by encouraging healthy eating habits.

Food Allergies

Due to the increased prevalence of food allergies among school-aged children, please check with your child's teacher when sending snacks into the classroom for special celebrations. If your child has a food allergy of any type, please inform us immediately. If there is a specific food allergy in your child's classroom, a detailed letter will go home the first days of school in the fall. We are a peanut/tree nut aware building. Our cafeteria has a table set aside for students with food allergies. We thank you for your continued cooperation to help keep all of our food allergic students safe.

Immunizations

Massachusetts General Law requires all students enrolled in school to have an up-to-date Certificate of Immunization before they attend classes. This form can be obtained from the school nurse but must be completed by the student's personal physician. Check with the school nurse for the current list of mandatory immunizations. If immunizations are NOT up to date, then your child will be EXCLUDED from school until the appropriate immunizations are acquired. If there is a medical reason your child is not immunized, please submit a letter **annually** from your child's physician stating the medical reason. If your child is not properly immunized for religious reasons, please submit a formal letter to the school stating so.

Medication Policy

The AWRSD has a policy to ensure the health and safety of students needing medication during the school day. Our school district requires a doctor's/licensed prescriber's order on all medications (prescription and over-the-counter) before they can be administered at school and the written consent of the parent/guardian. A responsible adult must bring all medications to the health office. The prescription medication must be in the original container, which is clearly labeled with the following:

- Name of student
- Medication name
- Name of prescribing physician
- Dosage, route, frequency of administration of medication
- Date prescribed

All medication orders must be renewed at the beginning of each school year. For short-term medications, such as antibiotics, the prescription label may be used as the doctor's order. A signed parent permission form is also required to administer these medications. The school medication policy also applies during field trips. The nurse may delegate other personnel to give medication in the event of field trips with parent/guardian permission. Our school physician has written standing orders for the administration of Acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, and Tums. Please make sure you (parent/guardian) complete the back of the emergency form and sign the part of the form to allow the nurse to administer those medications. Please contact the school nurse for more information regarding medication administration if you have specific questions.

Policy for Exclusion of Contagious Conditions

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has established guidelines concerning a student's return to school after experiencing a contagious illness: strep throat, scarlet fever, head lice, chicken pox, impetigo, conjunctivitis, scabies, etc. If your student is diagnosed with any of these illnesses or conditions, please contact the school nurse immediately to discuss guidelines for returning to school.

Head Lice/Nits: Head lice are most often seen in school-age children, but can occur in all social, economic, and age groups. We conduct pediculosis (head lice) screenings as needed throughout the school year. Students with head lice/nits may not return to school until hair has been treated and all nits have been removed.

The student and parent/guardian must report to the school nurse and be rescreened after treatment and nit removal. At that time the nurse will determine whether the student is able to return to class. Please remind your child not to share combs, brushes, hats, scarves, hair clips, headbands, headsets, helmets, etc.

Fever/Vomiting/Diarrhea: It is strongly recommended that a child with a fever of 100.1 or greater remain out of school for 24 hours fever-free without the aid of medication. It is strongly recommended that a child be kept at home with vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours until symptoms have subsided.

Health Programs

Vision and Hearing Test

Vision screenings are done on all students in grades K-5; stereopsis is an additional vision screening done with students in grades K-3. Hearing screenings are done on students in grades K-3. The school nurse for follow-up sends notices of any failures to the parent. The school nurse should be contacted if there are any questions. Results of the follow-up are to be returned to the school nurse.

Physical Exams

Massachusetts State law recommends periodic physical exams. The AWRSD requires all new students as well as incoming students in kindergarten and third grade to have current physical. Ideally, this is done by a family physician that knows the child. Please forward a completed physical examination form to the school nurse where it will become part of the student's health record.

Dental Exam

The Nashoba Board of Health provides our school with a visit from a dental hygienist. Students in Kindergarten are eligible for a dental exam. Students in Grade 2 and 4 are also eligible for dental exams as well as cleanings and fluoride applications. Also, Polished, Inc. comes to the school and is available to all students. Both programs are free of charge but require written parental permission.

BMI – Body Mass Index

Students in grades 1 and 4 will have BMI (body mass index) screenings (height/weight) done.

Scoliosis/Postural Check: All 5th grade students will be checked for scoliosis. Parents are notified if additional evaluation is needed by child's primary care physician.

Serious Injury or Illness

Following an injury or serious illness, a doctor's note indicating restrictions and/or activity should be presented to the nurse.

School Accident Insurance: In the beginning of each school year, an application for school accident insurance is sent out. If you have any questions, contact the school nurse.

Comprehensive Health Insurance

If you or your family is in need of health insurance, please visit mahealthconnector.org for information and application.

Cafeteria – Food Service

The Food Service Department provides lunch for a cost of **\$2.75** per meal. (Subject to AWRSD School Committee change). We cannot stress strongly enough the need to **pre-pay** your child's lunch if your child will be purchasing a school provided daily lunch. An on-line payment and monitoring system is also available through the AWRSD website (www.awrsd.org). You select the number of pre-pay lunches and make checks payable to: J. R. Briggs Elementary – Café. Our cafeteria manager will keep you informed when your child's funds are running low. Parents are encouraged to pre-pay lunch by sending in the pre-payment amount on Mondays

for the total cost of the number of lunches that they desire to pay. A record is kept of each child's balance and purchases. Lunches not purchased due to absence or lunches brought by the child will be credited on the next day. You will be informed when your child's pre-payments have been exhausted.

By using the pre-payment system, time collecting money is reduced, therefore allowing more eating time for your child. Should you prefer to pay on a daily basis, please try to limit small change, as small children are apt to lose it. Less change will also speed up the cashier, allowing more time to complete the child's lunch.

Free/Reduced Lunch Forms are available through the school office and on the district's website. If your financial status changes during the school year, be sure to contact the Food Service Department to help determine eligibility for Free or Reduced Lunch.

Extended Day Program

The John R. Briggs Ashburnham Westminster Regional School District Extended Day Program provides safe and convenient childcare from the hours of 6:30AM to 6:00PM, before and after school, most professional development days and February and April vacation weeks and is open to all students from JRB. Supervised activities, games, crafts, indoor and outdoor play are offered each day, weather permitting. All students are also provided the opportunity to do their homework. The program is housed in the Briggs cafeteria, making it a convenient place for students to also take advantage of other before and after school-based activities; such as Scouting, music lessons, etc. We also have use of the gym, library and tech lab throughout the week. Scheduling is very flexible and can meet most families' needs.

The program is financially self-sustaining through the collection of parent fees. Cost is determined by each child's schedule - an hourly fee is charged for all time reserved and is payable either weekly or monthly. A yearly registration fee is required with discounts available for families with more than two children. Periodic enrichment courses are also offered through Extended Day. All students must be pre-registered in the program before attending.

A separate program is offered each summer, offering weekly themes, swimming, and exciting field trips. Students do not have to attend the school year program in order to take part in the summer program. Please contact Ext. Day directly at 978-827-4701 for further information.

Safety and Transportation

The following general safety guidelines are issues that every parent should discuss with their child.

- Be sure that your child knows their full name, address, telephone number, and parents' place of work. They should also know the name and phone number of a grandparent, relative, or friend in case their parent or guardian cannot be reached.
- Warn against speaking to strangers or accepting rides, candy, money or anything else from them.
- Stress the importance of going directly home after school and coming straight to school in the morning.
- Stress safeguards such as policemen, traffic lights, white lines and the like.
- Show your child the most direct and safest route to school or the bus stop. Take them over the route several times before the first day of school. Point out landmarks and potential hazards.
- Discuss a plan with your child in the event they come home and no one is there.

Walker Safety

Students walking home from school are dismissed after the buses leave. If your child is a "walker", please periodically review the following safety rules throughout the school year.

- Do not accept rides from strangers.
- Know the quickest and safest route from home to school.
- Walk directly home. Do not stop along the way at playgrounds or a friend's house.
- Walk in a single file on the shoulder of the road facing traffic if there are no sidewalks. Do not walk in the road.
- Use extra care when crossing the streets.
- Be constantly alert when crossing driveways and look in all directions for approaching vehicles.
- Dress appropriately for the weather and wear light reflective colors when darkness is approaching.

- Respect private property.
- Allow time to walk to and from school safely and on time.

Bike Safety

Students biking home from school are dismissed after the buses leave. If your child rides their bike to school, please periodically review the following safety rules throughout the school year.

- Students who ride their bikes to school must wear helmets. It's the LAW.
- Bike riders must have written permission from their parent/guardian. (one note per year is sufficient)
- Teach your child to ride on the right side of the road with traffic obeying all traffic signals and signs.
- Each child should walk their bike across busy streets and intersections.
- Park your bike at the bike rack and have a lock or chain to secure it.
- Bikers must sign in at the school office each morning and sign out when leaving.

Bus Safety

Parents are urged to periodically review school bus safety issues with their children. The following can be used as a basis for discussion.

- Wait for the bus in an orderly manner and stay out of the street.
- Approach the bus only when it has come to a complete stop.
- If you need to cross the road, wait until the "stop arm" is fully extended and the driver signals to cross.
- Be courteous to other students and the bus driver.
- Know what to do in the event the bus does not show or your child misses the bus.

Bus Rules

Riding a school bus is a privilege enjoyed by passengers who are safe and courteous. Students need to be well behaved, courteous, and responsible. Bus rules and regulations are as follows:

- Students are to ride the bus to which they are assigned.
- Any emergency request to ride a bus, or a different bus, must be requested in writing by the parent or guardian and submitted to the school office.
- Upon entering the bus, students will immediately sit in a seat facing forward with feet on the floor.
- Students should remain seated until they arrive at their designated stop.
- Keep aisles clear at all times.
- Students riding the bus will comply with requests and directives of the bus driver.
- Students may open windows upon request. Once permission is granted by the bus driver and windows are open, students need to keep hands, arms, and head away from open windows.
- Students should respect those sharing the bus with them. Talk in quiet voices. Keep hands, feet, and other objects to oneself.
- No eating, drinking, or gum chewing.
- Toys are discouraged; they easily become lost.

It is the driver's responsibility to maintain safe conditions during transit. Students who do not follow the rules and regulations may lose their school bus privilege. The following actions will follow:

First Offense: Warning and the parents will be advised of the misbehavior.

Second Offense: The Principal or designee will have a conference with the parents before the student is allowed back on the bus.

Third Offense: Bus transportation privileges may be revoked for a period determined by the Principal or designee.

***School administrators reserve the right to suspend bus privileges as consequence for inappropriate behavior.**

School Bus Company: First Student 978-827-5273

Bus Expected Behavior (Authored by JRB Students in Fall 2016)

- Be kind, respectful, and safe.
- Follow the driver's directions.
- Sit in your grade level or assigned seat.
- Stay in the same seat for the whole ride, facing forward.
- Use a quiet, indoor voice.
- Keep your body and belongings to yourself.
- If you have food, drinks, or gum keep them in your backpack.

Academic Performance and Programs

Reporting Progress

In an ongoing effort to improve the quality of education at John R. Briggs the professional staff conducts trimester report cards, December, March and June.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Formal Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled two times per year (October and February) to discuss academic and social progress/goals and any related issues and or concerns. Parents are encouraged to request additional conferences whenever the need arises. During the 2017-2018 school year, Parent-Teacher Conferences will occur Thursday, October 11th and Thursday, October 18th as well as Thursday, February 7th and Thursday, February 14th.

Getting to Know School

Curriculum Night – On September 13, 2018, Curriculum Night is scheduled for parents/guardians with students in preK-5 from 6:30PM-8:00PM. The John R. Briggs professional staff will be meeting with parents/guardians in their classrooms to discuss their academic expectations for the year and how parents/guardians can support the learning occurring in the classrooms.

Sneak Peek will occur Thursday, August 23th from 2:00PM-5:00PM and Friday, August 24th, 9:00AM-12:00PM. It will allow the students to tour their classrooms and school with their parents/guardians to help transition to the start of a new school year. Teachers are not required to attend Sneak Peek but many of them will be in their rooms preparing for the new school year.

State-Wide Testing/Assessment

The Massachusetts Department of Secondary and Elementary Education standardized tests, MCAS 2.0, will occur in April-May 2018 for students in third through fifth grades. The school-wide testing schedule will be sent home in the principal's newsletter and posted on the JRB webpage as soon as it is available (usually January). ACCESS testing for all students participating in or opting-out of the English Language Learner program will take place in January-February. Families will be notified by the EL teacher of their child's testing schedule.

Kindergarten Screening

Kindergarten screening is a function of the Special Education Department **and is conducted the first week of school**. Each community is required by Chapter 766 to screen all children entering kindergarten. The purpose is to identify any problems, which might interfere with academic progress. The screening includes: a developmental history form completed by the child's parents/guardians, a speech/language screening, a readiness evaluation, and a comprehensive health assessment by your child's doctor.

Make-up Work

Homework assignments will be provided for students absent for two or more days. We ask that families limit the number of absences due to extended vacations. Therefore, homework will not ordinarily be prepared in advance for students who do not attend school because of family vacations. We ask that students be responsible for missed work upon their return to school.

Placement

Placement is a lengthy process that involves all teachers, specialists, support personnel, guidance and the principal. We use a wide range of criteria (i.e. achievement, special needs, learning styles, etc.) to assist us in developing class lists. Parents may provide in writing educational reasons that may be helpful in their child's placement. For example, a child may do better if they have a teacher with a certain type of teaching style. It is important to note that requests for specific teachers cannot be accepted. After consultation with the placement process team, the final decision rests with the principal. Input should be submitted to the principal on or before **the END of APRIL 2018**.

Student Record Regulations, Inspection, Confidentiality, and Amendment

The student record is comprised of two sections: Transcript and Temporary Record. Transcript includes only minimal information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress, such as name, address, course titles, grades, credits, and grade level completed. It is kept for at least 60 years after the student leaves the system. Temporary record contains the majority of the information maintained by the school about the student and may include such information as standardized test results, participation in school-sponsored extra-curricular activities, evaluations, and comments by teachers, counselors, and others.

At the end of Grade 5, only the transcript and standardized test scores are sent to Overlook Middle School. Parents/guardians may send a note stating their desire to pick up, and sign for, the temporary record. All records not picked up by July 31 will be destroyed.

Parents/guardians have the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The school is required to make the record available to you no later than two days after receiving your request, unless you consent to a delay.

You also have the right to receive copies of any part of the record, although a reasonable fee may be charged for the cost of duplicating the materials.

You may request to have parts of the record interpreted by a qualified school professional, or you may invite anyone else you choose to inspect or interpret the record with you.

Record Confidentiality: With a few exceptions, only parents/guardians, the student (age 14 and over), and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent/guardian.

Records are stored in a locked cabinet, centrally located in the school and parents/guardians removing the record will sign them in and out.

Record Amendment: Parents/guardians have the right to add relevant comments, information, or written materials to the student record. Additionally, parents/guardians have the right to know that information in the record can be amended or deleted. Parents have the right to a conference with the school principal to make any objections known. Within one week after the conference, the Principal must render a written decision. If you are not satisfied with that decision, you have the right to appeal it to the Superintendent.

Environmental Camp – Nature's Classroom - 5th Gr. Program

Each spring, the 5th graders at J. R. Briggs are offered the opportunity to attend a school endorsed and parent-funded weeklong educational experience, "Nature's Classroom". J. R. Briggs students attend Nature's Classroom with the 5th grade students from Westminster Elementary School. This is believed to be an excellent opportunity for students from both schools. Attempts will be made yearly to continue this joint venture.

Students are accompanied by teachers and staff from J. R. Briggs and by parent chaperones. Students are given the opportunity to participate in a fundraiser to raise some or all of their tuition. Our Nature's Classroom Coordinator organizes this fundraiser, and details are sent home with each 5th grade student. A parent information meeting is offered during the school year, as well as an overview of the program for the students. Partial student scholarships are available through our Enrichment Fund for those students qualifying for Free or Reduced Lunch, or other extenuating circumstances.

School Choice

School Choice slots are determined during the spring and are based upon the number of student openings that may occur for the upcoming school year. School Choice openings are voted on by the AWRSD School Committee. Parents interested in applying for School Choice should contact the Superintendent's Office for the application and will be notified by the Superintendent's Office in the spring if their child has been accepted via School Choice.

Support Services

Special Education

The John R. Briggs School offers a variety of special programs to help all children reach their potential. Special education services include a variety of academic support personnel: teachers, speech and occupational therapists, and school adjustment/behavior counselors.

Children are screened for special education services through the child study team. The team includes administrators, specialists, and both special education and classroom teachers. The child study team meets regularly to help identify and solve learning difficulties within the classroom. Referrals to the child study team can be made by both parents and/or teachers. If the child's difficulties cannot be resolved by the child study team, a referral for special education testing will be made.

According to state and federal laws, a child needing special services due to learning, physical or behavioral disability has the right to be educated in the least restrictive environment. This policy, known as *inclusion* means, whenever possible, special education services must be provided in the regular classroom setting by a certified specialist at each grade level. Separate programs or classes can only be used when the severity of the special need prevents the student from receiving a satisfactory education.

Guidance & Counseling

A fulltime school adjustment counselor is available to assist students and parents with everyday problems as well as make referrals to outside agencies as necessary. The school adjustment counselor also works with teachers and students within the classroom on developmental issues.

Counseling Materials

To ensure that counseling and counseling materials are free from bias and stereotypes on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, and homelessness, all counselors:

- encourage students to consider programs of study, courses, extracurricular activities, and occupational opportunities on the basis of individual interests, abilities, and skills;
- examine testing materials for bias and counteract any found bias when administering tests and interpreting test results;
- communicate effectively with limited-English-proficient and disabled students and facilitate their access to all programs and services offered by the district;
- provide limited-English-proficient students with the opportunity to receive guidance and counseling in a language they understand; support students in educational and occupational pursuits that are nontraditional for their gender.

Title I Program

Title I is a federally funded program to assist our students who are working below grade level standards with mathematics and reading skills. Once a student is identified, the Title I Teacher will provide math and/or reading support services to the student. Students do not need to have a special education evaluation to receive services.

Scholarships, Prizes and Awards

Scholarships, prizes and awards sponsored or administered by the district are free of restrictions based upon race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability.

Curriculum and Instruction

Extracurricular activities sponsored by the district are nondiscriminatory in that: the school provides equal opportunity for all students to participate in intramural and interscholastic sports; extracurricular activities or clubs sponsored by the school do not exclude students on the basis of race, sex, color, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability and homelessness.

504 Accommodation Plans

The Section 504 Plan is part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities. A Section 504 Plan “levels the playing field” for students with medical, physical, and emotional disabilities by eliminating barriers in the academic setting. This is accomplished by creating a plan of accommodations that will benefit the student’s academic needs. Disabled students, that also have learning difficulties, are serviced through Special Education.

List of Community Resources

North Central Human Services (NCHS)

NCHS is a licensed community mental health center serving the Ashburnham area. NCHS provides a wide range of psychiatric services, including outpatient counseling, emergency assistance, and substance abuse counseling. 978-632-9400

The Lipton Center

The Lipton Center is a comprehensive licensed mental health agency. The center provides a variety of psychiatric services, including child, couple, and family therapy. 800-977-5555 or 800-534-6116

Family Continuity Programs (FCP)

FCP is a licensed non-profit mental health center that specializes in home-based family counseling and crisis intervention. 800-469-9888 or 800-345-9500

Mount Wachusett Community College

The college offers a variety of free basic skills and GED preparation classes to the community. 978-632-6600

Hotline Numbers

Parents Anonymous	1-800-882-1250
Alcohol and Drug Abuse Information	1-800-327-5050
Smoking Cessation Information	1-800-422-6237

Appendix A

Detention, Suspension and Expulsion Policy

The following policy is enacted through the 1993 Massachusetts Education Reform Act. A copy of these laws is available through the Principal, Superintendent, and the Massachusetts Department of Education.

In-School Suspension

As an alternative to being sent home for behavioral problems, students may be placed in another classroom to work for a day. During that time, the student cannot participate in recess and is not allowed to eat lunch with his/her peers. The student is expected to work quietly on assignments, and not talk to other students.

Out of School Suspension

- Every member of the school community has the right to a safe and constructive environment. Each student is expected to behave in a way that does not disrupt or interfere with the educational process of others. Therefore, the Principal may decide to suspend any student who has repeatedly failed to follow the school's expectations and rules for student behavior.
- Students will be subject to suspension when involved in incidents of severe misbehavior, such as, but not limited to:
 - Threatening, creating, or carrying out any action that is potentially harmful to others or themselves.
 - Leaving the classroom, building or school grounds without permission.
 - Using obscene, abusive or improper language.
 - Defacing or vandalizing school property.
 - Taking school or personal property without permission.
- Suspensions may be issued by the Principal for a period of one to ten days and are considered a "last resort" to develop appropriate behavior. The purpose of suspending a student is to remove that student from the situation where the misbehavior has occurred. Depending on the circumstances, suspended students may be given "in-school" or "at-home" suspension. Students who receive "in-school" suspension remain in school but are separated from their classmates for the duration of their suspension. Students who receive "at-home" suspension may not visit the school at any time during the period of their suspension.
- Suspended students may not participate in any school activities, attend any evening functions at the school, or take part in any school-sponsored event held on or off school premises. Because of the seriousness of suspension, we also feel that suspended students should not be allowed to participate in any sports related activities. All academic work missed during a school suspension must be made up according to the schedule established by the classroom teacher.

Due Process

- A student is entitled to a meeting with the Principal prior to the suspension period. This meeting will include:
- A verbal notification for the reason of the suspension.
- An opportunity to present their side of the story.
- An explanation of the evidence and basis for the suspension.
- Every effort will be made to notify the parents by phone of the suspension and their responsibility to pick their child up from school. In addition, parents will receive a letter outlining the reason for suspension and any related conditions.
- If a student leaves school grounds, is destroying school property, or presents an immediate danger to himself/herself or others, a parent or guardian must pick their child up from school immediately. If a parent or guardian cannot or will not pick up their child, the police will be called to remove the child from school. A meeting with the Principal or designee will be held as soon as possible after the suspension has begun.
- A student will not be re-admitted to school without a meeting with the Principal or designee, student and parents, to determine if the student is ready to follow the behavioral guidelines of the school.

Expulsion

- In certain circumstances such as those listed below, a student may be subject to a school committee hearing with a recommendation for permanent removal from the school and school district.
- Any student who is found on school premises or at school sponsored or school related events in possession of a dangerous weapon

- Any student who is found on school premises or at school sponsored or school related events in possession of a controlled substance
- Any student who assaults school personnel on school premises or at school sponsored or school related events

Due Process

- A student subject to expulsion will be given a hearing with the school committee that contains the following procedural rights:
- Written notice of the charges in the student's primary language.
- The right to be represented by an attorney or advocate at the student's expense.
- Adequate time to prepare for the hearing.
- Access to documented evidence prior to the hearing.
- The right to request that witnesses attend the hearing and to question them.
- A reasonably prompt written decision including specific grounds for the decision.
- The student will have the right to appeal to the Superintendent of Schools within 10 days of the written decision. However, the student does not have the right to attend school during the appeal process.

Discipline of Students with Special Needs

The disciplining of special needs students is governed by federal and state special education law and the regulations promulgated there under. These laws include the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. Section 1400, et seq., 34 C.F.R. section 300.519, et seq., and Massachusetts General Laws c.71B.

If a special needs student has violated school rules, the school may suspend the student from his or her educational placement for up to ten school days without consideration of manifestation rights. If a student on an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) is suspended for more than ten days in a school year, the team must conduct a manifestation determination.

During a manifestation determination meeting, if the team answers yes to either of the following questions, the student's conduct is considered to be a manifestation:

1. Was the conduct in question caused by or did the conduct have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability; or
2. Was the conduct in question the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP?

When the conduct in question is deemed to be a manifestation of a student's disability, the team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavior intervention plan. Regardless of whether a behavior is deemed to be a manifestation or not, the district is obligated to provide services that will enable the student to continue to receive a free appropriate public education.

School personnel may order a change in the placement of a student with a disability to an interim alternative educational setting for up to forty-five (45) days if a student

1. carries a weapon to school or to a school function; or
2. knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or at a school function.

Under the described circumstances in this section, or if the removal of a student will constitute a change in the student's placement, a student's IEP team may convene to review the student's educational program and the misconduct.

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. However, students with special needs demand a greater degree of flexibility and understanding when applying the rules and considering the consequences. In fact, Chapter 766 of the Massachusetts general laws requires that additional provisions be made for students who have been found to have special needs by an evaluation team and whose program is under an individualized education plan (IEP). The following policy is enacted through these laws.

- The IEP for every special needs student will indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the school's discipline code. If the student's needs prevent him from meeting the code, a modified program will be described in the IEP.
- Every teacher and staff member in regular contact with the student will be informed of the modified program described in the IEP.
- A student whose misbehavior is not a result of his special needs as defined in his IEP, is subject to all the consequences of misconduct including suspension from school. A student whose misbehavior is a manifestation of his special needs is exempt from suspension except in an emergency situation.

- If a special needs student is suspended, the Principal will notify the special education office of the length and reason for the suspension. A record of such notices will also be kept at the school.
- In the event the suspension(s) of a special needs student exceeds ten days (cumulative) in one school year or the student's misconduct is serious enough to warrant expulsion, an emergency team meeting will be held to review and determine the appropriateness of the student's placement and IEP.

Appendix B

Hazing Regulations

Hazing as described by Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 2690, Section 17 is prohibited. Participants will be suspended from school for five (5) days. Organizers of the incident will be suspended for ten (10) school days. All such incidents will be reported to law enforcement authorities for further action.
An Act Prohibiting the Practice of Hazing

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

Chapter 269 of the General Laws is hereby adding the following three sections: Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

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

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

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

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

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

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

secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

Appendix C

An Act Providing For Drug Free Schools

Effective July 1, 1989, anyone convicted of dealing drugs within 1000 feet of an elementary, vocational or secondary school will face a two-year mandatory prison sentence. It will not matter whether the dealer knew he/she was near a school, whether it is a public or private school, or in session at the time of the offense. The law will pertain to drug distributors, manufacturers or persons possessing a controlled substance with intent to distribute it. A fine of up to \$10,000.00 may also be imposed but not in lieu of the two-year term of imprisonment.

Appendix D

AWRSD WEBPAGE PUBLISHING POLICY

Our district has chosen to adopt the following regulations with respect to all of our school webpages.

Supervision of Webpages

Responsibility for the content of a school's website will rest solely with the building principal. The principal, at his or her discretion, may select a person, or persons (hereafter referred to as the webmaster) to maintain the school website in a fashion that is consistent with the regulations set forth in this policy.

Quality of Content

Each school webpage will be designed and maintained in such a way as to meet the following criteria:

1. anything that appears on the school webpage will be grammatically correct and free of spelling mistakes
2. the webpage should be well organized, professional in appearance, and offer ease of use for those who visit the site
3. the only links (quick connections to other sites on the World Wide Web) which will be posted on the webpage are those which have been thoroughly checked out by the webmaster and deemed to be of educational value
4. the webpage will not contain ANY links to staff or student homepages

It must be clearly understood that any material submitted for publication (by either a student, staff member, or community member) may be accepted or rejected by the building principal based on its educational merits and the needs of the school at that point in time.

Publication of Student and Staff Information

Publication of student information will be implemented in a tiered approach.

At the high school level: the following information, in any combination, may appear on the school webpages: individual and/or group photographs, student work, and a student's full name.

At the middle school level: group photographs and side profiles may appear on the school webpages. However, no names shall ever be linked to a photograph. Student work shall be identified by first name and last initial only.

At the elementary school level: NO student photographs, either group or individual, shall appear on any school webpages. Student work shall be identified by first name and grade level only.

For purposes of this policy, student work shall be understood to be (though not limited to) writings, artwork, and musical pieces. Additionally, information at any level may only be published with the expressed, written permission of the student's parent or guardian (see Permission Form).

Permission Form

At the beginning of each school year, the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District Webpage Publishing Permission Form will be sent home with each student in the district. Parents/guardians must indicate on the form if they grant or deny permission for their child's name and/or picture to appear on a school webpage. If a parent/guardian fails to complete the form, the district will treat that act as a DENIAL of consent, until otherwise notified in writing by the parent/guardian. This permission form will then be kept on file at the student's respective school. If the student is eighteen, s/he may sign the permission form for her/himself. Student telephone numbers and/or home addresses will not be posted on any school webpage.

A staff member's full name, picture, and school e-mail address can be published on a school webpage provided that the staff member has signed a release form authorizing the publication of such information. Staff home telephone numbers and/or home addresses will not be posted on any school webpage.

Copyright Issues

When student or staff work is published on any school webpage, the webmaster will post a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of this work without written consent.

If a webmaster chooses to incorporate material (text files, graphics, audio files) from another source on the school webpage, s/he must first obtain permission from the copyright owner. The district will furnish each webmaster with a Copyright Permission Form that can be used to garner said permission. Once permission is granted and the material is used, a notice must be placed at the bottom of the school webpage crediting the original producer.

Policy Review

The School Committee will periodically assess the appropriateness of the language contained herein and make any necessary changes to stay current with technological advances.

Adopted: 3/28/00

Appendix E

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Reponse Act (AHERA) Management Plan Notification

In accordance with the AHERA regulations 40 CFR 463, the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District must notify, in writing, to the general public that the AHERA Management Plans of each school will be available for review in the office of the Head Custodian of each school between the hours of 8:00 am and 2:00 pm, Monday through Friday or by appointment.

Appendix F

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY OF ASHBURNHAM-WESTMINSTER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

I. Introduction

It is the goal of the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District to promote a workplace that is free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment of employees occurring in the workplace or in other settings in which employees may find themselves in connection with their employment 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. To achieve our goal of providing a workplace 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.

Because Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond 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 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 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 sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- (a) submission to or rejection of such advance, requests or conduct is made either or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions;
- (b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment.

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

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad 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 workplace environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to male or female workers may also constitute sexual harassment.

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

- 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;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquires into one’s sexual experiences; and,
- Discussion of one’s sexual activities

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

III. Complaints of Sexual Harassment

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

If you would like to file a complaint you may do so by contacting the District's Compliance Officers. Their names and address are posted in the main office of each building. These people are also available to discuss any concerns you may have and to provide information to you about our policy on sexual harassment and our complaint process.

IV. Sexual Harassment Investigation

When we receive the complaint we will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. Our investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. We will also interview the person alleged to have committed sexual harassment. When we have completed our investigation we will, to the extent appropriate inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct, and where it is appropriate we will also impose disciplinary action.

V. Disciplinary Action

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by one of our employees, we will take such action as is appropriate under the circumstances. Such action may range from counseling to termination from employment, and may include such other forms of disciplinary action as we deem appropriate under the circumstances.

State and Federal Remedies

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

1. The United State Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC")
Congress Street – 10th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
617.565.3200
2. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination ("MCAD")
Boston Office: Springfield Office:
One Ashburton Place–Rm. 601 424 Dwight Street-Rm. 220
Boston, MA 02108 Springfield, MA 01103
617.727.3990.1 413.739.2145

First Reading: 11/26/96

Approved: 12/10/96

Appendix G

AWRSD Physical Restraint Policy

In accordance with 603 CMR 46.00 and MGL CH 69, Section 1B and CH 71 Section 37G, the following policy for physical restraint is hereby established by the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District.

This policy governs the use of physical restraint on students in publicly funded elementary and secondary education programs offered by the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District.

The purpose of this policy is designed to ensure that students participating in the AWRSD public education program are free from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations, after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:

To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or member of the school community from imminent, serious physical harm; AND
To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

This policy does not limit the protection afforded publicly funded students under other state or federal laws, including those laws that provide for the rights of students who have been found eligible to receive special education services. Nothing in this policy precludes any teacher, employee or agent of a public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons, or themselves from assault or imminent, serious physical harm.

Physical Restraint Regulations For the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District

Definitions:

The following terms shall have the following meanings as regards this policy:

Extended restraint: A physical restraint the duration of which is more than twenty (20) minutes. Extended restraints increase the risk of injury and, therefore, require additional written documentation as described in 603 CMR 46.06.

Physical escort: Touching or holding a student without the use of force for the purpose of directing the student.

Physical restraint: The use of bodily force to limit a student's freedom of movement.

Public education programs: Public schools, including charter schools, collaborative education programs, special education schools approved under 603 CMR 28.09, except as provided in 603 CMR 18.05(5)(h), and school events and activities sponsored by such programs.

Restraint – Other: Limiting the physical freedom of an individual student by mechanical means or seclusion in a limited space or location, or temporarily controlling the behavior of a student by chemical means.

Mechanical Restraint: The use of a physical device to restrict the movement of a student or the movement or normal function of a portion of his or her body. A protective or stabilizing device ordered by a physician shall not be considered mechanical restraint.

Seclusion Restraint: Physically confining a student alone in a room or limited space without access to school staff. The use of "time out" procedures during which a staff member remains accessible to the student shall not be considered "seclusion restraint."

Chemical Restraint: The administration of medication for the purpose of restraint.

Prone Restraint: Placing a student in a horizontal position face down

Side-lying Restraint: Placing a student in a horizontal position on their side

Supine Restraint: Placing a student in a horizontal position, on their back, face upward

The use of chemical or mechanical restraint is prohibited unless explicitly authorized by a physician and approved in writing by the parent or guardian. The use of seclusion, prone, side-lying, and supine restraints is prohibited in the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District.

School Working Day: Any day or partial day that students are in attendance at the public education program for instructional purposes.

Procedures and Training:

This policy outlines appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention. These procedures shall be reviewed annually and made available to school staff and parents of enrolled students.

Each building Principal shall be responsible for arranging for the provision of training, as approved by the Massachusetts Department of Education, regarding the school district's restraint policy. This training will occur within the first month of school or, for new hires, within one month of employment. The components of the general staff training shall be:

Physical Restraint policy;

De-escalation techniques;

Types of restraints and related safety considerations; and

Administering physical restraint in accordance with known medical or psychological limitations and/or behavioral intervention plans applicable to an individual student

At the beginning of each school year, each building Principal shall also be responsible for identifying staff who have received in-depth training in the use of physical restraint. This in-depth training will be at least sixteen (16) hours in length and shall include, but not be limited to:

- Appropriate procedures for avoiding the need of physical restraint;
- A description and identification of dangerous behaviors on the part of students which may require physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm;
- Simulated experiences in the administration and reception of physical restraint;
- The effects of physical restraint including monitoring physical signs of distress and assessing the need for medical assistance;
- Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injury and complaints;
- Demonstration of proficiency in administering physical restraint

Determining When Physical Restraint May Be Used:

Physical restraint may be used only in the following circumstances:

- Non-physical interventions have failed or been deemed inappropriate; and
- The student’s behavior poses a threat of imminent serious harm to self or others.

Physical restraint is prohibited:

As a means of punishment or as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student’s refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent serious physical harm.

Nothing in this policy prohibits:

- The right of any individual to report to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or other individual;
- Law enforcement, judicial authorities or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including the physical detainment of a student or other person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk; or
- The exercise of an individual’s responsibilities as a mandated reporter pursuant to MGL CH 119 section 51A. These regulations shall not be used to deter any individual from reporting neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency.

Proper Administration of Physical Restraint:

Only school personnel who have received training pursuant to 603 CMR 46.03(2) or 603 CMR 46.03(3) shall administer physical restraint on students. Whenever possible, the administration of a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint. The training requirements contained in 603 CMR 46.00 shall not preclude a teacher, employee, or agent of a public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons, or themselves from assault of imminent serious physical harm.

- A person administering physical restraint shall use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm.
- A person administering physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation subject to the safety requirements set forth in 603 CMR 46.03(5).1 Floor restraints, other than those prohibited by this policy (prone, side-lying, and supine), are prohibited unless the staff member administering the restraint has received in-depth training according to the requirements of 603 CMR 46.03(3).

A person administering physical restraint shall discontinue such restraint as soon as possible. If, due to unusual circumstances, a restraint continues for more than twenty (20) minutes, it shall be considered an “extended restraint” for purposes of the reporting requirements in 603 CMR 46.06.

Additional requirements for the use of physical restraint are as follows:

No restraint shall be administered in such a way that the student is prevented from breathing or speaking. During the administration of a restraint, a staff member shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin color and respiration. A restraint shall be discontinued immediately upon a determination by the staff member administering the restraint or another witnessing the restraint that the student is no longer at risk of causing imminent harm to him or herself or to others.

Restraint shall be administered in such a way so as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during a physical restraint, the student demonstrates signs of significant physical distress, such as changes in respiration or skin color, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.

Program staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations and/or behavioral intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student.

Following the release of a student from a restraint, the program shall implement follow-up procedures. These procedures shall include reviewing the incident with the student and his/her parents/guardians to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint, reviewing the incident with the staff person(s) who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed, and consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.

Reporting Requirements:

School staff shall report the use of all physical restraints.

The school staff member who administered the restraint shall verbally inform the Building Principal or his/her designee of the immediately, or as soon as possible, upon the conclusion of the restraint and the safe transfer of the student's supervision to another staff member. In addition, he/she shall provide a written report no later than the next school working day. The written report shall be provided to the Building Principal or his/her designee, except when the Building Principal or his/her designee has administered the restraint. In such an instance, the written report shall be provided to the Superintendent. The principal or his/her designee shall maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint, which shall be made available for review by the Department of Education upon request.

The Building Principal or his/her designee shall attempt to verbally inform the student's parents or guardians of the use of physical restraint immediately, or as soon as possible, following his/her notification by the school staff member who administered the restraint. If repeated attempts to reach the student's parents or guardians are unsuccessful by the time for student dismissal, the Emergency Contact Sheet will be used to inform emergency contacts. Failure to reach the parent/guardian or an emergency contact will prompt notification to the police.

The Building Principal or his/her designee shall provide a written report postmarked no later than three school working days following the use of restraint, except when the restraint occurs within three school days of a vacation. In this event, the Building Principal or his/her designee shall provide a written report to the student's parents within one calendar week. If the school customarily provides a parent or guardian of a student with report cards and other necessary school-related information in a language other than English, the written report shall be provided to the parent or guardian in that language.

The written report will follow the requirements of 603 CMR 46.06(2) and 603 CMR 46.06(3) and shall include:

The names and job titles of the staff who administered the restraint, and observers, if any; the date of the restraint; the time the restraint began and ended; and the name of the administrator who was verbally informed following the restraint.

A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff in the same room or vicinity were engaged immediately preceding the use of physical restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to de-escalate the situation; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint.

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 during the restraint and any medical care provided.

For extended restraints, the written report shall describe the alternatives to extended restraint that were attempted, the outcome of those efforts and the justification for administering the extended restraint.

Information regarding any further action(s) that the school has taken or may take, including any disciplinary sanctions that may be imposed on the student.

Information regarding opportunities for the student's parents or guardians to discuss with school officials the administration of the restraint, any disciplinary sanctions that may be imposed on the student and/or any other related matter.

When a restraint has resulted in a serious injury to a student or staff member or when an extended restraint has been administered, the school shall provide a copy of the written report required by 603 CMR 46.06(4) to the Department of Education within five school working days of the administration of the restraint. The school shall also provide the Department with a copy of the record of physical restraints maintained by the Superintendent or his/her designee pursuant to 603 CMR 46.06(2) for the thirty (30) day period prior to the date of the reported restraint. The Department shall determine if additional action on the part of the AWRSD is warranted and, if so, shall notify the AWRSD of any required actions within thirty (30) calendar days of receipt of the required written report(s).

Special Circumstances:

Restraint administered to a student with a disability pursuant to an Individualized Education Plan ("IEP") or other written plan developed in accordance with state and federal law to which the AWRSD and the student's parent/guardian have agreed shall be deemed to meet the requirements of 603 CMR 46.00, except that the limitations on mechanical and seclusion restraint set forth in 603 CMR 46.02(5), the training requirements set forth in 603 CMR 46.03, and the reporting requirements set forth in 603 CMR 46.06 shall apply.

The school may seek a parent's or guardian's consent to waive the reporting requirements of 603 CMR 46.06 for restraints administered to an individual student that do not result in serious injury to the student or staff member and do not constitute extended restraint. Extended restraints and restraints that result in serious injury to a student or staff member will be reported in accordance with the requirements of 603 CMR 46.06 regardless of any individual waiver to which the parent or guardian may have consented. Individual waivers will be sought only for students who present a high risk of frequent, dangerous behavior that may require the frequent use of restraint. The following limitations apply to individual waivers:

The school may not require a parent's or guardian's consent to such a waiver as a condition of admission or provision of services. A parent or guardian may withdraw consent to such a waiver at any time without penalty.

The school will maintain the following documentation on site in the student's file and shall make such documentation available for inspection by the Department of Education at its request at any time:

The informed written consent of the parent or guardian to the waiver which shall specify those reporting requirement(s) in 603 CMR 46.06(1-4) that the parent or guardian agrees to waive; and
Specific information regarding when and how the parent or guardian will be informed regarding the administration of all restraints to the individual student.

Nothing herein shall be construed to allow the AWRSD to receive an exemption or waiver from any of the requirements of 603 CMR 46.00 on behalf of all students enrolled in the classrooms of the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District.

Grievance Procedure:

The Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District has established an internal procedure in order to provide for prompt and equitable resolutions of complaints regarding the administration of physical restraints.

Definitions:

A "Grievance" is a complaint made pursuant to, and arising out of, the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District obligations to comply with state regulations regarding the use of physical restraints.

An "Aggrieved Party" is a person or persons making the complaint.

Purpose:

The purpose of this grievance procedure is to secure prompt and equitable solutions to grievances which may, from time to time, arise pursuant to 603 CMR 46.00.

General:

No aggrieved party will be subject to coercion, intimidation, interference or discrimination for registering a complaint or for assisting in the investigation of any alleged complaint within the context of this grievance procedure.

All documents, communications, and records dealing with the filing of a grievance will be kept confidential to the full extent provided by law.

Forms for filing grievances will be provided upon request by building principals or the Superintendent of Schools, Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District, 2 Narrows Road, Suite 101, Westminster, MA 01473-1619.

Procedure:

1. The aggrieved party should complete the Grievance Form and return it to the building principal or his/her designee at the school building in which the alleged grievance occurred. The complaint should be filed within fifteen (15) days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation. Assistance will be provided, upon request, to enable an individual to complete the Grievance Form and pursue the grievance process.
2. Within ten (10) school days after receiving the grievance, the building principal or his/her designee shall meet with the aggrieved party in an effort to resolve the grievance. This investigation into the complaint is contemplated to be thorough, but informal, in nature. All interested persons and their representatives, if any, shall be afforded an opportunity to be heard and to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. If the grievance is not resolved, it will be forwarded to the Health Coordinator.
3. Within thirty (30) school days of receipt of an unresolved grievance, the Health Coordinator will conduct a hearing to determine what, if any, action shall be taken in response to the grievance. The hearing shall be held at a time and place mutually convenient to all parties. The hearing procedure will follow appropriate due process procedures, including:
 - a. the opportunity for the aggrieved party to present the grievance in any suitable manner;
 - b. the right of the aggrieved party to an impartial hearing officer;
 - c. the right of the aggrieved party to be represented by counsel or an advocate at the aggrieved party's expense;
 - d. the right of the aggrieved party to a prompt decision.

Parents/legal guardians should provide advance notice to the Health Coordinator that they will be represented by counsel or an advocate at the grievance hearing. Failure to provide such notice will likely result in a postponement of the hearing.

4. A written determination of the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, shall be issued by the Health Coordinator and forwarded to the complainant no later than fifteen (15) working days after the hearing. The determination of the validity of the complaint and the description of the resolution will be provided in an alternate format, upon request, if needed for effective communication.
5. The complainant can request a reconsideration of the case in instances where he or she is dissatisfied with the resolution. The request for reconsideration should be made within fifteen (15) working days following receipt of the written determination to the Superintendent of the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District.
6. The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution for the complaint file hereunder shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of an ADA, Section 504 or other complaint with the responsible federal department or agency. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.
7. These rules shall be construed to protect the substantive rights of the interested persons to meet appropriate due process standards and to assure that the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District comply with 603 CMR 46.00.

Copies of all resolutions and findings made under this procedure shall be filed with the Superintendent's Office of the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District.

Adopted: February 12, 2002

Appendix H

REQUIRED APPLICABLE STATE OR FEDERAL LAW

School Reform Law (Section 37H)

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

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

MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAW—CHAPTER 71, SECTION 37H1/2

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

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

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

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

MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAW-Chapter 71, Section 37 3/4

Section 37 H3/4.

- (a) This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H1/2.
- (b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.
- (c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or headmaster, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal or headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.
- (d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or a designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.
- (e) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.
- (f) No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAW—CHAPTER 76, SECTION 5

Place of Attendance: Discrimination

Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where he actually resides, subject to the following section. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

Appendix I

ASHBURNHAM-WESTMINSTER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

ANTI- BULLYING POLICY

The Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District will create an Anti Bullying Policy as well as Bullying Prevention and Intervention Regulations as required under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, in consultation with state agencies, school personnel, local law enforcement, advocacy organizations, parents, and other interested parties. The Plan's format will parallel the states Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

I. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

- (i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether 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; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and
- (ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

II. Priority Statement

The Ashburnham Westminster Regional School District expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

The school or district is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

We understand that members of certain student groups, such as students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, and homeless students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing. The school or district will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

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

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and the school or district is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. The principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

First Reading: 12/07/10 & Second Reading: 12/21/10

Adoption: 12/21/10

Appendix J

Anti-Discrimination Statement

Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District's Policy of non-discrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public and individuals with whom it does business; and will apply to race, color, national background, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, economic status, political party, age, handicap, sexual orientation, homelessness and other human differences.

Appendix K

PUBLIC COMPLAINT POLICY

The Committee believes that complaints are best handled informally 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 higher levels of administration or the Committee.

Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

Complaints should go first to the person most directly involved with the substance of the complaint. He/she will listen courteously and will try to resolve the difficulty by explaining the background and/or educational purpose involved. If the complainant remains unsatisfied, the employee will refer the complainant to the building Principal or other immediate supervisor to have his/her views considered further. Whether the complaint terminates with the individual staff member involved or seems likely to go further, the staff member will immediately inform his/her supervisor of the complaint.

Complaints referred directly to the Superintendent and/or School Committee must be in writing and should be specific in terms of the action desired. Such complaints will be referred through proper administrative channels for resolution before investigation or action by the Superintendent and/or Committee. Exceptions will be made when the complaint concerns Superintendent or Committee actions or operations.

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.

The Committee expects all complaints to be respectfully acknowledged at each level of discussion, including a summary of resolution or next steps. Deliberations rising to the level of Superintendent and/or School Committee require that a report of the final disposition be made to the Committee and then be placed in official files.

The proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline or learning materials will be as follows:

1. Staff Member
2. School building administrator (Principal, Vice Principal)
3. Superintendent
4. School Committee

Complaints about school personnel will be investigated fully and fairly. The following procedures are established if the complaint is a criticism of a particular school employee that includes, or implies, a demand for action by school authorities.

1. If a complaint comes first to the Principal or other supervisor of the person criticized, he/she should listen courteously or acknowledge a letter/e-mail promptly and politely, but should make no commitments, admissions of guilt, or threats. When complaints involve a particular employee, the supervisor will schedule a conference between the complainant and the person criticized and should inform that employee immediately of the complaint. If the complainant has already met with the person criticized and remains unsatisfied, the supervisor should invite the complainant to file his/her complaint in writing and offer to send him/her the appropriate form regarding a school employee's behavior, character or qualifications.

The Principal will document all complaints and report them periodically to the Superintendent.

2. If a complaint comes first to any other school employee, that employee will refer the complainant to the person criticized or his immediate supervisor and immediately inform both.
3. If no written complaint has been filed the complainant may be requested to submit the complaint in writing pending further action.
4. The Principal or other supervisor will schedule a conference with himself/herself, the complainant, the person criticized, and if advisable, the department chairman or other personnel that either the supervisor or the person criticized feels could contribute resolution of the problem.

5. If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the conference above, he/she should then be referred to the Superintendent, who may handle the complaint personally or refer it to other personnel, as he/she may see fit. Note: at this level the complaint must be formally documented.
6. Should dissatisfaction remain after the above steps have been taken, the matter will be placed on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled Committee meeting. The decision of the Committee will be communicated in writing to all interested persons.

The School Committee may consider the matter in Executive Session subject to Open Meeting and Meeting Posting law requirements.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REFS.: MG.L. 76:5
603 CMR 26.00

First Reading: 5/27/14
Second Reading: 6/10/14
ADOPTED: 6/24/14

APPENDIX L

AWRSD Homework Policy

The Committee feels that homework is intended to compliment classroom instruction and stimulate student interest. Teachers should post assignments and their due dates so that parents and students can access the schedule of assignments and ensure that they are completed in a timely fashion. Homework, like the daily curriculum, should be grade and class appropriate. This means that homework in any given class or subject may vary in level of difficulty and/or quantity based on individual student differences. Generally homework should be able to be completed independently and promote individual responsibility while being structured so that motivated students can successfully achieve high rates of completion in a timely manner. Homework that requires references and/or resources that are not readily available should never be given.

Homework should also take into account that students need both family and play (free) time for their social and physical development. School projects or homework may be given over a weekend or school vacation and should be assigned so that adequate time is given beforehand so that long term assignments/projects can be completed before the vacation. Long term assignments should not be due on the first day back from vacation. Homework assignments of reasonable length may be given over weekends.

Homework that is incomplete shall be graded so that either partial credit is given or the student is given an opportunity to redo the assignment within a reasonable period of time, with the understanding that full credit will not be given after the assignment due date. In no case shall a student receive a zero on an assignment that contains one or more questions that are completed correctly. Lastly, homework should never be given for disciplinary reasons as this would be counterproductive.

Each grade level school (elementary, middle and high school) should develop their own homework procedures that reflect this policy.

First Reading: 5/27/14
Second Reading: 6/10/14
ADOPTED: 6/24/14