

QUALTERS MIDDLE SCHOOL



*Student Handbook*

2018-2019

All students regardless of national origin, limited orientation, gender identity, disability, or housing status, have equal access to all programs, including athletics and other extracurricular activities. race, color, sex, religion, English proficiency, sexual

**Principal**

David McGovern

***Assistant Principals***

Kevin Hoffman  
Michele Kitchen

[www.mansfieldschools.com](http://www.mansfieldschools.com)

To request a hard copy of this handbook, please contact the main office.

***The Mansfield Public Schools prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions, age, genetic information, ancestry, military status, or disability, or any other category protected by applicable State or Federal law.***

Please call the main office at the school if you would like this document translated into a language other than English.

Por favor, contate a secretaria central da escola caso deseje que este documento seja traduzido para o português.

Por favor, llame a la oficina central de la escuela si usted desea que este documento sea traducido al español.

الرجاء الإتصال بالمكتب الرئيسي في المدرسة إذا أردتم ترجمة هذه الوثيقة إلى اللغة العربية.

**MANSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM DIRECTORY**

www.mansfieldschools.com

**Qualters Middle School, 240 East Street, Mansfield, MA 02048, 508-261-7530**

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Detective Kenneth Wright (508) 261-7540

**Mansfield School Committee**

Kiera O'Neil, Chairperson

Lynn Cavicchi, Vice Chair

Linda Fernando

Jenn Walsh

Lauren Scher

## HANDBOOK FOR QUALTERS MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADES 6-8

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# - Denotes District Policy Code Identification.

It is the intent of the Mansfield School Committee that student handbooks will conform in all respects with School Committee Policy and federal and state laws and regulations.

The Mansfield Public Schools adheres to federal and state laws and regulations. The Mansfield School Committee reviews and updates its policies on a continual basis. Changes to district policy are sometimes made after the beginning of a school year and thus will not be reflected in this publication. Any School Committee policy referenced in this handbook may have an updated version on the district website that would supersede the handbook policy. For the most recent version of all district policies, please visit the School Committee page at [www.mansfieldschools.com](http://www.mansfieldschools.com).



## **BELIEFS AND EXPECTATIONS**

### **DISTRICT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

An education in the Mansfield Public Schools is the right of every resident in the Town of Mansfield. Students have the right to be treated fairly and humanely and in a manner that adheres to the spirit and intent of all rights granted in the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and in the Constitution of the United State of America.

All students are required to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect for themselves, their fellow students, and all other members of the school community, including but not limited to: aides, administrators, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodians, librarians, monitors, secretaries, substitutes, and teachers.

Students have a responsibility to observe the rules and regulations of the Mansfield Public Schools. The Principal makes these rules and regulations with the advice of the Principal's assistants, teachers, students and parents.

The Principal is responsible for maintaining discipline on the school premises adequate for the safety of all persons and property and the orderly conduct of instruction. Accordingly, the Principal has the authority to take all reasonable action to carry out this responsibility. The authority of the school extends to all school-sponsored functions and activities, all school property, and all school-sponsored travel.

The classroom teacher, with the assistance of the administration as needed, is responsible for maintaining discipline of the students in the classroom and in other areas when students are under their supervision. The teacher may take all reasonable action to carry out this responsibility.

### **HAROLD L. QUALTERS**

Our middle school was formed in 1969 and was known as the Mansfield Middle School. The name was changed in 1972 to the Harold L. Qualters Middle School in honor of Harold Qualters. Mr. Qualters contributed over 35 years of service to the Mansfield school system, starting back in 1934 when he taught Math and English. He became Junior High Principal in 1946, Principal of the Park Row School in 1954, and the High School Principal in 1957. In 1967, Mr. Qualters was appointed Assistant to the Superintendent, a position he held until his death on April 25, 1971.

### **OUR CORE VALUES**

The Qualters School community is committed to being a place where:

- Students develop positive self-esteem in a climate of high expectations.

- Students recognize that mutual respect is a cornerstone to a sense of belonging to the school community.
- Students develop a strong work ethic and leave QMS as confident, caring, responsible learners who are capable of tackling new challenges.

## **THE QUALTERS IDEAL**

The Qualters Ideal is not that we will all agree with each other,  
or even like each other, every minute of the day.  
It is rather that we will respect each other's rights,  
especially the right to be different, and that, at the end of the day,  
we will understand that we are one people, one school and one community.

## **STUDENT RIGHTS**

- To be treated with the same respect that all people should have.
- To do your work without being disturbed by others.
- To have your personal property rights respected for items that are normally accepted in school.
- To ask questions when you don't understand something.
- To get a good education and do your best work.
- To have and express your own opinion provided you do so in a respectful manner.
- To know how you are doing in your schoolwork.
- To be safe from someone hitting or harming you.
- To speak and listen to language that is appropriate for school.
- Not to be teased.
- Not to be harassed physically or verbally.

## **HANDBOOK POLICIES AND PROCEDURES #CHCA, CHCA-E**

The Qualters Middle School Handbook has been prepared to create a better understanding among students, parents, and teachers. These documents combine to serve as a reference on the basic policies governing the operation of Qualters Middle School.

No handbook can completely explain all the policies and practices of a school. This does not diminish its usefulness. It merely takes notice of the fact that the school is obligated to treat every student as an individual and assess every situation in the light of how it affects the education and development of the individual student. The administration reserves the right to alter any of the recommended policies or procedures prescribed within this student handbook. When applying the policies and regulations of the school, students will always be accorded their due process. Massachusetts General Law supersedes the provisions of this handbook, to the extent that any provision of this handbook is in conflict with the law.

## SCHOOL—HOME COMMUNICATION

### BULLETINS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS #KDD, EBCE

We will conduct opening exercises and pledge our allegiance to the flag during the homeroom period from 7:25-7:30. Some notices of club meetings, intramurals, social events, general information and specific instructions are read during this time. We expect students to be courteous, respectful, and attentive to the announcements each morning. Special notices may be announced over the intercom, but every effort will be made to keep these to a minimum. All morning announcements are posted in front of the main office and on the QMS website daily at [qms.mansfieldschools.com](http://qms.mansfieldschools.com).

### CONFERENCES (SCHOOL)

Parent-teacher conferences are typically scheduled at the start of Term 2. Evening and afternoon conference times are available. Conference meeting times are scheduled by the Team Liaison and are on a first-come, first-served basis. Information on scheduling conferences will be sent home with your child and will be available on the QMS website.

### CONFERENCES (PARENT)

Parent conferences can be scheduled as needed either by the teacher or by the parent. To schedule a conference, email the specific teacher you wish to speak with or the Team Liaison.

### COMMUNICATION

- **PHONE:** The phone number for Qualters Middle School is: 508-261-7530
- **MAIL:** The address for Qualters Middle School is: 240 East Street, Mansfield, MA 02048
- **EMAIL:** All teachers and administrators can be reached by e-mail. Use their first name dot last name, i.e. [john.doe@mansfieldschools.com](mailto:john.doe@mansfieldschools.com).

### CURRICULUM NIGHT

All parents/guardians are invited to attend Curriculum Night, which is held in September. At this time teachers give an overview of their classes, including curriculum descriptions, expectations, and routines. The evening is ended with an opportunity to ask questions of the classroom teacher in an informal manner.

### CUSTODY ISSUES

Official court orders regarding the custody and care of any student must be filed in the Qualters Middle School Guidance Office at the beginning of each school year or at any time during the school year, should the custody of a student change.

## GIFTS TO EMPLOYEES #GBEBC

The Mansfield Public Schools adheres to all Massachusetts General Law Chapter 268A and State Ethics Commission's rules and regulations.

While families often give gifts to teachers, coaches, and other staff at the holiday time or end-of-year/end-of-season as an expression of gratitude for their hard work, it is important that parents who choose to do so adhere to the requirements under state ethics and conflict of interest law in order to avoid placing teachers and staff in an awkward position. These guidelines are as follows:

- **Individual Gifts:** Under state law, public school teachers and other public employees are generally prohibited from accepting gifts valued at \$50 or more (aggregated) for the school year. Public employees are required to disclose gifts received from individual students and parents/guardians that are not class gifts.
- **Group Gifts:** An exemption exists for "class gifts", whereby a public school teacher is allowed to accept a personal gift or several gifts during the school year, from a class, club/activity or team, with a total value of up to \$150, if a group of students and/or parents wish to pool their contributions toward a group gift. Such a gift must be identified only as being from the class, and the identity of givers and amounts given are not identified to the recipient.
- **Gifts to the Classroom, Program or the School:** Families may also give gifts to the classroom, to academic, co-curricular and extracurricular programs, or to the school or District, in accordance with the rules of the Mansfield Public Schools.

## PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

### QMS Parent Advisory Council (QMS PAC)

The QMS Parent Advisory Council is the parent organization at the middle school; it works in partnership with the teachers and administrators at QMS. Every parent/guardian of a QMS student automatically is a member of QMS PAC. PAC monthly meetings with the QMS Principal are a way for parents to stay informed, make recommendations, and provide the QMS administration with important feedback and insight from the parent's perspective. The PAC also raises funds to support student learning at QMS and awards funds through a grant process. To learn more about QMS PAC, please visit their website at [qmspac.wordpress.com](http://qmspac.wordpress.com).

### Mansfield Special Education Parent Advisory Council (MSE PAC)

The Mansfield Special Education Parent Advisory Council (MSE PAC) offers membership to all parents of students found eligible for special education in the Mansfield district, as well as other interested parties. The MSE PAC is authorized by state law to provide advice to the district regarding special education programs and policies. Additionally, the MSE PAC is authorized to meet with designated school officials and to engage in activities that enable the MSE PAC to participate in the planning, development and evaluation of the district's special education programs. To learn more about this organization, contact the Mansfield Public Schools Special Education Department.

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### School Council #BDF A

The School Council is a representative, school-based committee composed of the Principal, parents/guardians, teachers, and community members. The School Council has an advisory role in shaping the policies and programs of QMS. The QMS PAC holds an election for parent representatives to serve on the QMS School Council at Curriculum Night each fall.

## **SCHOOL MESSENGER**

The Mansfield Public Schools use the School Messenger notification system to communicate important information to parents and guardians that needs to be distributed immediately. Information can be sent to personal email accounts and telephone numbers on file with the school.

## **SCHOOL STRUCTURE**

The Qualters Middle uses a team teaching system that is a foundational element of the middle school model. There are a total of nine teams, three per grade, at QMS. Each team is made up of six teachers (English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Special Education, and Literacy (grade 6) or Foreign Language (grades 7 and 8)). Each Team Liaison has a designated Team Liaison who manages most matters on team. Please contact your Team Liaison with any questions or concerns.

## **SCHOOL-RELATED PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS**

The following guidelines may be helpful for addressing concerns or problems.

1. Any concerns regarding a school-related matter should first be raised by the parent with the staff member most directly involved.
2. If the matter remains unresolved, the parent may wish to speak with the building Principal. Appointments can be scheduled by contacting the office.
3. If the matter is still unresolved, the parent may wish to speak with the Superintendent. For appointment, call the Superintendent's Office at 508-261-7500.
4. If the matter remains unresolved, the parent may wish to bring to the attention of the School Committee by writing a letter to the Mansfield School Committee at Mansfield Public Schools, 2 Park Row, Mansfield, MA 02048 or e-mailing the Committee at [school.committee@mansfieldschools.com](mailto:school.committee@mansfieldschools.com).

We urge parents to use the progressive steps outlined above as most problems can be addressed satisfactorily by the teacher or other staff member most directly involved. Starting "at the top" inevitably results in no decision and the matter will be remanded to the staff member most directly involved.

The following are examples (not an all-inclusive list) of issues that are most appropriately addressed at the levels indicated:

1. Teachers
  - a. Student homework assignments, quizzes, tests

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- b. Course content, instructional materials, academic progress, extra help
- c. Issues related to classroom discipline, relationships with students and staff
- 2. Team Liaisons
  - a. Academic Team-based issue/concern
  - b. Social issue/concern
  - c. Schedule team meetings/conferences
  - d. Volunteer questions
- 3. Guidance Counselors
  - a. Problems between home and school; teacher and student, student and other students
  - b. Personal matters relating to student development, behaviors, interactions with others
  - c. Course selection and student schedule
  - d. Private school and vocational school decisions/applications
- 4. Special Education Department
  - a. Request for special education testing
  - b. Questions about English Language Learner services or homeless student services
  - c. Individualized Education Plan (IEP) questions/concerns
- 5. Principals/Assistant Principals
  - a. Any issue arising out of a building when no other staff member can be identified
  - b. Student placement issues (instructional level, team placement, etc)
  - c. Instructional and extracurricular program issues
  - d. Issues related to the physical plant
  - e. Complaints, dissatisfaction or concerns regarding school personnel
  - f. Student records, school-wide discipline, bus conduct, school policies/procedures
- 6. Assistant Superintendent
  - a. Curriculum planning/development
  - b. Professional development
  - c. Compliance under Civil Rights law (including Title IX and Section 504) and regulations
- 7. Superintendent
  - a. Questions regarding application of School Committee policies or administrative procedures
  - b. School Committee meetings and agenda items
  - c. Any school system records or documents
  - d. Budgetary matters
  - e. Hiring and supervision of staff
  - f. Complaints, dissatisfaction, or concerns regarding school personnel which were not addressed at the Principal's level
  - g. Concerns or questions about the curriculum
  - h. Transportation matters
- 8. School Committee

- a. Matters pertaining to School Committee policy and procedures
- b. Concerns about specific courses to be added/deleted/changed
- c. Complaints/concerns about the Superintendent
- d. School Committee agenda items and minutes of meetings
- e. Budgetary matters
- f. Long-range planning (facilities, programs, etc.)

## **VISITORS #KI**

Student guests are not allowed during the school day. Parents and authorized visitors are welcome but are required to enter the building through the front lobby doors, sign in and out at the main office, and wear guest passes during their visits.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are welcome in Qualters Middle School. The principle areas of volunteer services include: photocopying, special projects and activities, and field trips. Volunteer information is distributed at the beginning of the school year by the Qualters Middle School Parent Advisory Council (PAC). A Volunteer Sign-In Book is located inside the school office. Volunteers are asked to sign in every time they enter the building and to wear a volunteer/visitor badge.

**To protect the safety and well-being of our students, a Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) form is required for all volunteers. The one-page CORI Form is available in the Office of the School Principal or online on the district website.**

## **ASPEN STUDENT PORTAL**

ASPEN is a data management system that is used by the Mansfield Public Schools. ASPEN is the main communication tool for parents to check on their student's academic standing. QMS teachers and staff upload items including but not limited to: homework, grades, projects, materials, and other important information. Each student receives an ASPEN username and password at the start of the school year. It is strongly recommended that parents/guardians keep a copy of the ASPEN username and password and check the student's account on a regular basis. If the username and/or password is lost or not working properly, please contact the QMS main office.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE #JH, JHB**

Valuable instructional time is missed each time your child is absent, and excessive absences may hinder your child's progress. We are committed to providing the best possible education for your child. Regrettably, this process is adversely affected by poor attendance. Please help us by making school attendance a priority. Remember, we are here to assist you and answer any questions. Students are considered chronically absent when they have missed ten percent of

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the scheduled school days; the Qualters Middle School is committed to reaching out to the families/ guardians of chronically absent students to help implement a plan to improve attendance. Students who are chronically absent are typically at a higher risk of dropping out of high school, retention, or summer school. These are all situations we strive to avoid.

We understand students may stay home from school when sick and not see a doctor. Students are not required to present a note from a parent when returning from an absence. However, in order for absences to be medically excused, documentation from a doctor is required. Parents are required to call (508) 261-7530 by 9:30 a.m. to notify the school when their child is absent. Parents will be notified through the automated school messenger system before noon if a child is marked absent and a parent did not call to report the absence.

### Absences As A Result Of Disciplinary Infractions

A student who is suspended externally receives an absence for each day, but may make up the work they missed while serving the suspension for full class credit.

After a student has been absent for two or more days, parents/guardians may request work for their children. Requests for work are to be made by calling the main office before 8:00 am and work will be available for pickup starting at 1:00pm.

### Excusable Absences/Tardy

When an absence is excused it will be recorded as an excused absence on the students' attendance history. Excused absences are still absences and are considered when identifying students who are chronically absent; however, excused absences cannot be considered truancy. In order for an absence to be excused, the student must provide the proper written documentation for the following reasons:

- Documented school visitation (no more than five in an academic school year)
- Documented court appearance
- Authorized school field trip (signed permission slip provided to teacher)
- Religious observances
- Bereavement with parental letter
- Family emergency (submit written explanation to building administration for approval)
- Documented hospitalization (Medically exempt)
- Medical (documentation from a health care provider/doctor). **Dismissal from school by the School Nurse is not considered an excused medical absence.**

### Home And Hospital Tutoring

Our policy is in compliance with the state's regulations that govern the school's responsibility to provide home-based tutoring. The Mansfield Public Schools support educational services for students upon receipt of a physician's written order that the student must remain at home or in a hospital setting for medical reasons for a period of not less than 14 school days in a year. The tutoring services are of sufficient frequency to allow the student to continue their educational programs as long as the sessions do not interfere with the student's medical needs. Educational



tutoring plans are created on an individual basis. The tutoring form must be renewed every 60 days.

### Incomplete (I)

Students who receive an “I” on their report card will have 2 weeks following the distribution of grades (report cards) in order to make-up all missing assignments. If the work is not completed on time, the teacher will submit a grade to Guidance based on the work that was completed.

### Medically Exempt (M) Absences

Students with documented medical issues are able to obtain a recorded medical exemption (M) for purposes of attendance and grade record. Students with a medical exemption will not receive a numerical grade for the class in which the “M” was given.

## ARRIVALS

School officially begins at 7:25 a.m. The school is open at 7:00 a.m. Students may not arrive before that time. If students arrive between 7:00 a.m. and 7:15 a.m. they must report to the Cafeteria (Grade 6), the Gymnasium (Grade 7), or the Auditorium (Grade 8) and must remain there until they are dismissed. If students arrive at school between 7:15 a.m. and 7:25 a.m., they should go to their locker and then to first period. If students arrive after 7:25 a.m. they are late and must go to the attendance desk for a late pass.

## EARLY DISMISSALS

If a student needs to be dismissed from school early, the student needs to bring a note in the morning to the attendance desk. The note should include the following: name of student, date, time of dismissal, parent/guardian’s name who will be picking up the student and their signature. The parent/guardian must come into the school office to sign out the student for the day. If the student returns, they must report to the office first before going to classes.

## RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS/OBSERVANCES

In recognition that the community continues to become more diverse, the Mansfield Public Schools recognize that a number of religious and holy days occur during the school year. The Mansfield Public Schools adhere to the following practices:

- All students will be allowed to observe and participate in their religious activities, without penalty. These students will receive an excused absence. Students will be allowed to make up class work, homework and/or any assignments during their religious absence.
- Long-term reports or special projects which are due on one of the major religious days, will be submitted to the teacher on a mutually-agreed-upon date, prior to or following the student’s return to school, with no late penalty.
- Teachers are expected to exercise sound judgment in carrying out work when some students may be absent because of a religious holiday or holy day. Provisions should be made for students who expect to be absent. Please notify the teacher in order to obtain assignments that may be necessary ahead of time. In no situation will a student be

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made to feel uncomfortable because they chooses to exercise their religious convictions. Mansfield Public Schools appreciates and understands that religious observances often involve family activities. Students should not be expected to complete homework, study for tests, or complete other school work during their absence. Students will be given the opportunity to make up this work within an appropriate amount of time determined by the teacher.

## **STUDENT ABSENCE NOTIFICATION PROGRAM**

Each Principal will notify a student's parent/guardian within 3 days of the student's absence in the event the parent/guardian has not informed the school of the absence.

Each Principal or designee will meet with any student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has missed five (5) or more unexcused school days (a school day will be equal to two (2) or more class periods in the same day) in a school year. The meeting will be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and will be developed jointly by the Principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies.

## **TRUANCY**

Truancy (skipping school) is a very serious violation of the State's attendance laws. If students are reported truant, they will be referred to the school's attendance officer and may face court action.

## **TARDINESS**

If students are not in their homeroom by **7:25 AM**, they are tardy. A parent must telephone the school or excuse them for the tardiness in writing. If the excuse is written, it must include the date and the estimated time of the student's arrival at school, must be written and signed by the parent or guardian. After the 5<sup>th</sup> tardy, a letter will be sent home reviewing district attendance policies and possible consequences for continued tardiness. Students who are habitually tardy, even with written excuses, may be subject to disciplinary action including involvement with administration and the attendance officer.

## **VACATIONING STUDENTS**

The most important aspect of learning is the interchange of thoughts, ideas and facts among teacher, student and peers. No amount of reading or writing assignments can replace this process. When parents find it necessary to take their child on vacation during the school year the following practice will be adhered to:

- Teachers plan the next day's instruction based on previous classes. Teachers will not be expected to provide work prior to a planned vacation. Upon the student's return to school, the teacher will provide the work that needs to be made up and the student will have two days for every day missed to make up their work.

- Students who are out of school at the end of the marking term may receive an incomplete on their report card. If the work is made up in the appropriate amount of time the grade will be changed but will not be officially reflected until the next report card.

## CURRICULUM AND PROGRAMS

### ACADEMIC LEARNING CENTER

The Academic Learning Center (ALC) is a separate classroom, coordinated by a licensed educator, where a variety of academic supports are provided to students in need. Students are referred to the ALC through a cooperative effort of their teachers, administrators, Guidance Counselors, and School Nurses.

### AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES/ENRICHMENT

After-school activities are a wonderful way for students to expand their knowledge in different subject areas. If a student is staying after school the following rules are expected to be followed:

1. Once you leave the building for the day, you are not allowed back into the school
2. No wandering in the halls.
3. Students staying after must be accounted for by the teacher.
4. All students must have a pass upon leaving the teacher.
5. The late bus is available only to those students who stayed after school and were engaged in extra help or extracurricular activities.

Eligibility for all extracurricular activities is **dependent upon student attendance**. A student absent on the day of a school activity will be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities on that day. Final eligibility ruling for a student to participate will be determined by the administration. Saturday participation will be determined by Friday's attendance. At least three hours constitutes attendance for participation in extracurricular activities.

The school also has a variety of after-school activities which we encourage all students to get involved with. Information on enrichment opportunities can be found on the QMS website at: [qms.mansfieldschools.com](http://qms.mansfieldschools.com) and in the QMS main office.

### BAND AND ORCHESTRA

The QMS Band, Chorus and Orchestra programs are open to all students from grades 6-8.

Each student may participate in one of the three programs. Students range in skill from fourth and fifth year players/singers to brand new student musicians. All students in Band and Orchestra participate in lessons and full ensemble rehearsals. Students in chorus participate in full ensemble rehearsals. There are numerous concerts and performance opportunities during the school year. Information about participating in the band and orchestra programs will be distributed to students at the start of the year. For more information, visit the QMS Band, Orchestra and Chorus pages using the links on our school's homepage.

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## **EXTRA HELP**

Students may take advantage of special help sessions, which occur Monday through Thursday from 1:49 to 2:20 p.m. If a student is not doing well academically, or is having trouble understanding something in one of their classes, has something to make up due to an absence, or would like assistance from a teacher for a particular assignment or special project, students should stay for extra help. It is the student's responsibility to make arrangements with their teacher ahead of time if they would like to stay after. Bus students may take the late bus home after extra help sessions, but must get a pass from the teacher and bring it to the cafeteria where they will receive a bus pass. If the student is not a bus student but wishes to take the late bus frequently a late bus pass may be purchased. Information is available in the school office.

## **FIELD TRIPS #IJOA**

Field trips offered through the Mansfield Public Schools are intended to allow students to have experiences that provide them with insight, information, or knowledge that might not be learned within the classroom, bringing real-world context to the classroom curriculum.

All field trips are considered an extension of the school program, and all rules of conduct and regulations as specified in the Mansfield Public Schools Student Handbooks are in effect throughout any school trip. Any student who violates the rules of conduct may be sent home. In this case, the student's parent/guardian will either pick up the student from the field trip location or be responsible for any expense incurred in sending the student home. Further disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with student conduct policies outlined in the school's Student Handbook.

Field trips are open only to students in the Mansfield Public Schools at the grade level(s) participating in the field trip. A permission slip must be completed, signed by student and parent/guardian, and returned to the sponsoring staff member before a student will be allowed to attend any field trip; such form will include appropriate authorization for emergency medical care and administration of medication. All required proof of medical insurance and other insurance and acknowledgement of expected conduct must be secured at least two weeks prior to the trip.

Attendance on school-sponsored trips that are not part of required class activities is a privilege, which may be withheld; no student may attend such a trip if, in the determination of the principal or his/her designee, the student's behavior has been so inappropriate as to be deemed disruptive to the planned trip.

Students who attend field trips must be given a reasonable and adequate opportunity to complete assignments for other classes.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

All students in Grades 6 to 8 participate in physical education and Health. It is important that each child be dressed properly for PE class. Children should wear elastic waist pants/shorts/skorts and sneakers. Hiking boots, indoor soccer or football cleats are not allowed. Children should not wear long earrings, and/or large hand or wrist jewelry. Necklaces should be removed or tucked inside clothing. Hats are not to be worn in gym. In order to be excused from PE class, a note from a doctor or healthcare provider must be provided.

## RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION (RTI)

*Response to Intervention* is a federally-mandated initiative that addresses the needs of struggling students. It follows a three-tiered model of instruction. The Qualters Middle School has established teams to provide support for teachers, who request assistance to develop, expand and implement strategies in the regular classroom to help meet the diverse needs of students.

The RTI team will:

- Use universal screening tools and other forms of data to identify students at risk for academic, behavioral or social/emotional issues.
- Design intervention plans to meet their needs.
- Monitor the progress of the student over time to ensure that they are closing the gap with their peers.
- Discontinue the intervention(s) once the student has closed the gap relative to their peers.
- Increase or modify the intervention(s) if the student is not making progress.

### Glossary of Response to Intervention Terminology

*Universal Screening:* Class-wide assessments such as benchmark or baseline assessments are administered to identify students who are potentially struggling.

*TIER 1/Core Instructional Interventions:* All students receive instruction in the regular education classroom. Frequent progress monitoring using curriculum-based measurements (CBM) is conducted to assess struggling students' performance levels and rates of improvement.

*TIER 2/Targeted Group/Individual Interventions:* Students whose progress in Tier 1 is not adequate receive additional support. A team consisting of the classroom teacher, special educators and other necessary staff makes instructional decisions based on an individual student's performance. The team identifies the academic problem; determines its cause; and then develops, implements, and evaluates a plan to address the problem. At QMS, this measure is addressed through the general education teachers, small group support, and progress monitoring. The interventions are flexible and individualized to meet the student's unique needs.

*TIER 3/Intensive Individual Interventions:* Students whose progress is still insufficient in Tier 2 may receive even more intensive intervention support. In Mansfield, Tier 3 may involve a full psychological and academic evaluation for the identification of a learning disability.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION #IHB**

All eligible students in the Mansfield Public Schools are provided with a free and appropriate education in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Act, and Section 28 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulations. Under the law, parent notification regarding the special education process is always the first step. In each school building, the Massachusetts Special Education Regulations are available for review.

### Individualized Educational Program (IEP)

At no cost to families, evaluations to identify special education needs are provided for students from age three (3) through twenty-one (21) who have a disabling condition. An Individualized Educational Program (IEP) is developed by an Evaluation Team and implemented for students with an identified disabling condition that interferes with effective progress in regular education. Special education students are expected to comply with all the rules of behavior and discipline unless modifications to these rules are indicated in the student's Individualized Educational Program.

Parents/guardians have the right to initiate, monitor or terminate special education for students under the age of eighteen (18). A student has the following rights regardless of their age:

1. A student has the right to stay in their program until an evaluation, the writing of the Individual Educational Program and any appeals of the Individual Educational Program have been completed.
2. A student is entitled to an equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of the school program, both academic and extracurricular, and may not be discriminated against on the basis of their ability.

At the Qualters Middle School, the following services are offered: screening to detect possible learning difficulties, formal assessments of student's learning abilities for TEAM Evaluations, development of Individualized Educational Programs, and consultation with parents/guardians, school staff and outside agencies.

As required by regulation, the Mansfield Public Schools provides a continuum of special education services to eligible students in the least restrictive environment.

The student referral process includes the following steps:

1. Phase One: Classroom teacher makes appropriate accommodations in the classroom and has conference with parents
2. Phase Two: Consultation with Student Support Team (SST).

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3. Phase Three: Interventions and progress monitoring
4. Phase Four: Special Education evaluation if recommended by the SST.

### Occupational/Physical Therapists (OT/PT)

The OT/PT staff provides school-based occupational therapy (OT) and physical therapy (PT) and related services as defined under § 300.34 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and are provided to students who meet criteria for special education services under Special Education. The OT/PT staff provides support and assists the student in achieving the IEP goals.

### Speech and Language

The Speech and Language Specialists provide direct individualized and small group services to modify the communication behavior of students presenting articulation, voice, and language and/or fluency problems. Assessments to determine each child's individual needs are completed by the speech and language specialists. Speech and language services are provided in the classroom or in a separate setting depending on the type of service and the needs of the student.

### Section 504

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. One purpose of the Act is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have educational opportunities and benefits equal to those provided to nondisabled students.

An eligible student under Section 504 is a student who (a) currently has, or (b) has a record of having, or (c) is regarded as having a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits a major life activity such as learning, self-care, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working or performing manual tasks.

If you have questions about section 504 or your child's 504 plan, please contact our building 504 Coordinator:

*Michele Kitchen - Assistant Principal  
508-261-7530 X 23102  
Michele.Kitchen@mansfieldschools.com*

## **STUDENT OF THE MONTH**

The purpose of this program is to recognize the efforts of students on each team who "stand above the crowd." Each team teacher puts forward the names of two students on a monthly basis. The team selects these students by consensus. These students demonstrate the following characteristics:

- Good effort
- Leadership

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- Perseverance
- Consideration
- Participation in acts of kindness
- Well-roundedness
- Other considerations that the team may find appropriate

## ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

### GRADING

All subjects will be graded as follows:

Work of outstanding quality	90-100
Work of very good quality	80-89
Work of acceptable quality	70-79
Poor work, but passing	60-69
Poor work, <b>not passing</b>	Below 60

I = Incomplete work due to absences

P = Pass

F = Fail

N = Narrative Attached

M = Medically Excused

### HOMEWORK

Homework is an extension of learning at school. Homework provides practice and drills that reinforce classroom learning, as well as opportunities for independent study, research, and creative thinking. Parents can help their children by seeing that assignments are completed.

At the middle school level, research supports that homework can positively impact learning. The more effort students put into their learning, the greater academic gains they make. Middle level students are experiencing an in-between stage as they transition from a more self-contained setting at the Elementary level to a departmentalized environment in High School. Middle School teaming facilitates this transition. Teachers use common planning time to ensure the workload of homework assignments and assessments is balanced and developmentally appropriate to best support individual learning needs.

Please note, the homework times that follow are not meant to be a literal interpretation. The time notation is a reasonable guideline of the homework expectations during the middle school years.

- Homework should not be assigned over the following school vacations: Thanksgiving, December, February, and April.
- Routine homework may account for 10-15% of the total weighted average for a course, but will not exceed 15%.



- Homework, including studying, if assigned, should not exceed 1.5 hours per night total for all courses. Teams and teachers should collaborate to ensure that homework and studying should not exceed 1.5 hours per night.
- Consideration will be given to students with disabilities when assigning homework. General education teachers should coordinate with the special education liaison to ensure the amount and type of homework assigned is appropriate based on individual student needs and Individual Education Plans. Students on Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Section 504 Plans, or Response-to-Intervention (RTI) Protocols may also have the amount or type of homework adjusted based on their individual plans and in accordance with the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP).
- A student will have two days for every day missed to make up the missed work. Teachers are not required to give out homework assignments prior to a family vacation.
- If summer assignments are given, they should be accompanied by instructions indicating how a student with questions would seek guidance/assistance during the summer.

## HONOR ROLL (QMS)

In order for students to receive recognition as an honor student, students will have to meet the following criterion:

- **High Honors** – All grades must be **90 and above** in all subjects
- **Honors** – All grades must be **80 and above** in all subjects

## PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

Progress reports, parent conferences, and portfolios help to provide an overall picture of a child's progress. However, regular and open conversation between parent and teacher is the most important part of understanding a child's development. Progress reports are issued four times a year for Grades 6 through 8. Progress reports are sent home with students in October, December, March, and May.

In addition to mid-term progress reports, students/parents/guardians will receive computerized quarterly report cards listing the grade for each subject taken during a designated term. This will include the academic subjects. Students also will receive a grade for the specialist classes. Students who participate in band or orchestra will also be graded.

Students must bring progress reports and report cards home to be signed by parents/guardians and must promptly return them to their homeroom teacher. Students who continue to forget to return these will be assigned detention.

The exact dates of marking terms, progress reports, and report cards will be posted on the QMS website.

## PROMOTION POLICY (QMS)

Students who fail any of the four major academics (ELA, Math, History/SS, and Science) for the school year (average of all 4 terms), and/or whose attendance does not meet state guidelines may be considered for retention.

Students who fail up to two academic courses for the year will be allowed to attend summer school to meet the promotion criterion. Students failing more than two academic courses will be ineligible for summer school and will be retained.

## BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS/STUDENT CONDUCT

### ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Cheating and plagiarism are a serious academic offense that impedes learning and diminishes personal growth.

#### Cheating

Cheating includes but is not limited to cheating on tests, quizzes, homework, or any other assignment regardless of point value. If a teacher determines that a student has cheated, the teacher will notify parents and administrators, and the consequences may be as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: automatic zero on the assignment or exam
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: 1 day internal suspension, 1 day **external** suspension, or evening or Saturday detention, and a zero on the assignment or exam
- Any subsequent offenses may result in more severe disciplinary action.

#### Plagiarism

According to Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 10<sup>th</sup> ed., to plagiarize is "to steal and pass off the ideas or words of another as one's own... to commit literary theft." Plagiarism may include any of the following acts: downloading an entire document from the Internet; cutting and pasting portions of a source from the Internet; copying or paraphrasing from the work of another student; copying or paraphrasing from published sources, such as Cliff's Notes, Spark Notes, books, magazines, newspapers, etc., without proper documentation.

If a teacher determines that a student has intentionally plagiarized, the teacher will notify parents and administrators, and the consequences may be as follows:

- 1<sup>st</sup> offense: the opportunity to redo the assignment for an automatic credit reduction of 25-30%
- 2<sup>nd</sup> offense: a zero on the assignment and possible further consequences may follow.
- Any subsequent offenses may result in more serious disciplinary action.

### DRESS

Students in the Mansfield Public Schools are expected to dress in an appropriate manner

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conducive to a learning environment. Hence, students shall:

1. Students will dress in a manner that is respectful and appropriate for the school community.
2. Students shall dress in a way that meets reasonable standards for health, safety, and cleanliness.
3. Clothing must be worn to appropriately cover the torso, shoulders, and pectoral area; undergarments must not be visible.
4. No head coverings or sunglasses may be worn unless for religious or documented medical reasons.
  - *If a student does not follow these guidelines, their hat may be confiscated by a teacher or other staff member. On the first occasion, the hat may be taken until the end of the school day. On the second occasion, the hat will be confiscated and returned to a parent/guardian who must come to MHS to retrieve the hat. On subsequent occasions, the issue may be referred to an administrator for further consequences.*
5. Shoes must be worn at all times.
6. The same limits on freedom of speech at school also apply to messages and symbols on clothing.

Teachers who believe a student is dressed in a manner that is not inline with the school's expectations should discretely notify an administrator or that student's counselor.

Administration and the counseling staff will partner with students and families to address situations where these expectations are not being met.

## **BACKPACKS/HANDBAGS/SHOULDER BAGS**

Students are welcome to use backpacks and bags to carry materials to and from school, but backpacks, handbags and shoulder bags or any other carrying devices are to be stored in lockers during the day. Students may only carry personal items in a small pocketbook that is not large enough to put a book in.

## **BEVERAGES AND FOOD**

Students are not permitted to bring open beverages into school, including but not limited to open containers of juice, soda, coffee, tea and/or any type of "take-out" beverage. Once a container is opened it may not be brought into a hallway, cafeteria, or any other area of instruction. Students may bring only bottled water to class.

In addition,

- Students should not consume food in the hallways or the classroom.
- Students may not chew gum in school.
- Students with diagnosed medical conditions warranting beverage availability should bring a note from their Primary Care Physician to the School Nurse, who will authorize permission for the student to have access to beverages. Also students who require such accommodations through their IEP or 504 plans are permitted to have access to food and beverages.

## CAFETERIA

The school cafeteria is maintained as a vital part of the health program of the school. To encourage good nutrition, a well-balanced lunch is offered at a reasonable price. The lunchroom management and the students appreciate the cooperation of everyone in:

1. Depositing all lunch litter in wastebaskets
2. Placing disposable lunch trays and utensils in the wastebaskets
3. Leaving the table and the floor clean for others

Throwing food or any other object in the cafeteria, or stealing food is prohibited and offenders will receive disciplinary action from an administrator. Inappropriate and disruptive behavior may result in exclusion from the cafeteria and/or Level II discipline. Students are not permitted to leave school during lunchtime. Neither food nor drink may be taken from the cafeteria.

## MEAL CHARGES

The Mansfield Public School District expects each school to notify students and parents of the district student meal charge policy annually. The information contained below is a summary of some of the major points in the policy. For a link to the full version of the district meal charge policy and other information related to Food Services please use the following link -

[http://www.mansfieldschools.com/department/food\\_services](http://www.mansfieldschools.com/department/food_services)

The goal of the Mansfield Food Services is to provide students access to nutritious meals each school day. However, unpaid meal charges place a large financial burden on our district. The intent of the district meal charge policy is to establish a process and procedure to handle situations when children eligible for reduced-price or full price meal benefits do not have enough money to pay for school meals and to communicate the process for the collection of unpaid meal charges and delinquent account debt.

The Mansfield School District Unpaid Meal Charge Policy states:

- All students will be able to purchase breakfast and lunch daily.
- Students who have not qualified for a free meal and who do not have enough money to pay for their meal will have a charge added to their meal account for the meal they were provided. Students will not be allowed to charge a la carte items.
- All communication regarding unpaid meal debt will be directed at parents/guardians. When a student's meal account balance reaches a negative \$5 or more, the Director of Food Services will contact the household to inform them of the amount, how to apply for free or reduced price meals, and offer to answer questions and provide assistance.
- When a student reaches the negative account limit, they will be offered a designated menu lunch alternative in a manner that does not cause embarrassment or stigma in the cafeteria. The designated meal alternative will contain all of the components for a complete meal, including milk, fruit, vegetables, whole grain, and meat/meat alternative. Students in K-2 will be exempted from receiving an alternative meal.

- For meal debt that has remained in the negative balance for a prolonged time period, the school principal will contact the parent/guardian to investigate the situation more closely.
- Hand stamps, stickers, or any other means of overt identification of children with unpaid meal debt in the cafeteria or the classroom are prohibited.
- Free and reduced meal application forms are available at each school or online on the District website under Food Services. Families may apply for free and reduced meal assistance at any time during the school year.
- All families are encouraged to prepay for school meals to avoid unpaid meal charges (payment can be made by cash or check at the cafeteria register or online at MySchoolBucks.com. Low-balance email reminders and account tracking are available on MySchoolBucks.com free of charge. A parent/guardian may call the Food Service Director to place a block on their child's account to prohibit the purchase of a la carte items or to set a dollar cap. Any remaining funds for an individual student at the end of the school year will be carried over to the next school year.

### **Block On Accounts**

A parent may call the Food Service Director to place a block on their child's account to prohibit the purchase of a la carte items or set dollar cap.

### **Refunds and Unclaimed Funds**

- a. Withdrawn or graduating students may request a refund by writing or emailing Dawn Langtry, Food Service Director, 250 East Street, Mansfield, MA 02048, dawn.langtry@mansfieldschools.com for a refund of any money remaining in their account.
- b. Students who are graduating at the end of the year will be given the option to transfer remaining funds to a sibling's account with a written request.
- c. All refunds must be requested within 180 days of the student leaving the district. Any unclaimed funds after 180 days will become the property of the Mansfield Public Schools Food Service Program.

### **Preventing Meal Charges**

Low-balance email reminders and account tracking is available on MySchoolBucks.com and is free of charge to help ensure households are aware of the potential to accrue meal debt. The Food Services Department will call or email households on a bi-weekly basis or as needed to inform parents/guardians of a negative balance owed by the student.

Students may be discreetly reminded at the time of purchase if they need to bring in money for meal purchases. When a student is close to the allowable limit for meal charges, they will be told if payment is not received, they may only be offered an alternative meal.

Food Services will notify the building administration and the parent/guardian before a student is offered an alternative meal. If a student is without meal money on a consistent basis, the administration will investigate the situation more closely and take further action as needed. If financial hardship exists, parents and families will be encouraged to apply for free or reduced price lunches for their child if applicable.

### **Applying for Free and Reduced Price Meals**

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Free and Reduced Price Meal Applications may be submitted at any time during the school year. The determination of free or reduced price meals based on the application is valid for the entire school year. A new application can be completed if your financial situation changes during the school year.

Applications and directions are available as part of the opening day packet from your child's school. The applications and directions are also posted on the Mansfield Public School website under the Food Service tab. If you need assistance with completing an application, please contact Dawn Langtry, Food Service Director, 508-261-7400 x33124 or [dawn.langtry@mansfieldschools.com](mailto:dawn.langtry@mansfieldschools.com).

Parents/guardians are expected to submit the Free and Reduced Lunch Application as soon as possible each school year or as their financial situation changes, unless they have received a letter of Direct Certification from the Food Service Department. Direct Certification determinations (electronic match process) through the Massachusetts Department of Health and Human Services will be made at a minimum of three times per year and when a student transfers into the district.

#### **Unpaid Charges, Delinquent Debt, and Bad Debt**

All communication regarding unpaid meal debt will be directed at parents/guardians. Unpaid meal charges are considered "delinquent debt" and are identified as a financial obligation of the parents/guardians. Mansfield Food Services is required by federal regulation to continue to collect meal charges defined as delinquent

Student meal account balances may be checked at any time by logging into [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com) or by emailing the Food Services Director. Payment for negative account balances may be made online at anytime via the MySchoolBucks.com account portal. Students may bring cash or check payments (payable to Mansfield Food Services) to the cashier in their school cafeteria. Payment also may be made by check and mailing it or dropping it off at the Food Service Director's Office, Mansfield High School, 250 East Street, Mansfield, MA 02048.

Checks Returned for Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) will result in a penalty fee (currently \$25). When a check is returned to the Town Treasurer's Office for "NSF," a letter will be mailed by the Food Services Director to inform the parent/guardian. Payment along with any applicable fees must be received within ten (10) business days of the date of the letter. When the NSF notice is received, the Food Services Director will deduct the check amount from the student's account.

All accounts must be paid by the end of the school year or at the time a student withdraws from the district. Any balance owed to the Food Service program will be carried over into subsequent years in an attempt to collect the debt. Repayment plans may be developed on an individual basis in order to clear the balance owed. The consequences of non-payment will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the building principal.

## **CARE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY #ECAC**

Students may not mark school furniture, walls, ceilings, floors, or equipment with pen, pencil or any other instrument or cause damage to the infrastructure within the indoor or outdoor facilities of the school district. Students may not tamper with the fire alarms, fire extinguishers, or any electrical systems, including the computer network. Anyone who willfully or negligently destroys school property through vandalism, arson, or larceny, or who creates a hazard to the safety of other students, may face punitive measures as defined by Massachusetts General Law and make restitution for damaged property. Staff members should obtain and report to the administration the names of students who violate the terms of this paragraph.

Each student must promptly return all classroom and library books, athletic clothing, supplies and equipment, cameras, musical instruments, and other school equipment and property entrusted or loaned to them. A student will be responsible for returning such materials in the same condition in which they were entrusted or loaned to the student and will bear the cost of repairing or replacing the damaged, lost or stolen materials. Failure to return such materials upon request will subject the student to disciplinary consequences and the potential loss of privileges. Neither food nor drink should be brought into either the auditorium or the gymnasium.

## **COMPUTERS & INTERNET RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY #IJNDB**

### **Purpose**

The Mansfield Public Schools provides computing resources and Internet access to support the District's educational, instructional, administrative and operational activities. The use of these resources is a privilege that is extended to students. As a user of these services and facilities, students have access to valuable district resources and to internal and external networks. We expect students to use the resources responsibly, ethically, productively, and legally.

### **Consequences**

If a student violates this policy, appropriate action will be taken which may include restriction and loss of network privileges, payments for damages or repairs, and discipline under appropriate District policies up to and including suspension or expulsion, and referral to legal authorities. Users may also be held personally liable under applicable state and federal civil or criminal laws.

### **Responsible Use – General Principles**

We expect students to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws and not to do anything that is illegal, dishonest, or unethical. By using Mansfield Public Schools Internet systems and devices, the student agrees to follow all District policies, regulations, and guidelines and state and federal law. Students are expected to report misuse or breach of protocols to appropriate district personnel.

- We expect users to exercise good judgment in the use of these resources and to have the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity. Users are responsible for

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knowing and complying with the regulations and policies and laws that apply to the appropriate use of District technology and resources. If you use good judgment and follow high ethical principles, you will make the right decisions. If you are not sure if an action is legal, ethical, or proper, you should discuss the matter openly with your teacher.

- All federal, state, and local laws and District policies and behavior guidelines that cover student conduct on school premises and at school-related activities similarly apply to the online environment in those same venues.
- Any use of the District's computing resources in ways that disrupt the school environment, contribute to creating a harassing environment, or create a legal risk to the District is prohibited.
- Using computing resources to create or disseminate content that could be considered discriminatory, obscene, threatening, harassing, libelous, retaliatory, or intimidating to any other person is not allowed and could lead to disciplinary action by the District as well as legal action by those who are the recipient of these actions.
- District computing resources may not be used to post or send items with sexually obscene content, or images exhibiting or advocating the illegal use of drugs or alcohol.
- Students are expected to conserve and fairly share District resources through the proper and considerate use of printers, server space, video or audio streaming, and network bandwidth.
- All Internet data that is composed, transmitted, or received via our devices and network is considered the property of the Mansfield Public Schools and part of our records and may be subject to disclosure to law enforcement or other third parties.

### Student and Staff Records Privacy

The District has a legal and moral obligation to protect the personal data of students and families. Information for students/families will be stored and transmitted using approved practices and systems.

The Mansfield Public Schools complies with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as well as state law and regulations concerning the security and confidentiality of employee information and to protect against unauthorized access to or use of such information.

### Social Networking, Electronic Messaging, and Phone Usage

The Mansfield Public Schools encourages the appropriate use of online communication, including social media, to increase student learning, parent and community engagement, and operational efficiency.

- School staff members will model and actively practice positive digital citizenship and help students use new technologies in a meaningful, safe, and responsible way. Teachers utilizing social media with students will educate students about digital citizenship, which includes appropriate and safe online behavior, interacting with individuals on social networking websites, and cyber-bullying awareness.



- Students in grades 3 – 12 are provided with district email accounts and online tools to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of communication, both within the organization and with the broader community.
- School staff members are prohibited from exchanging personal telephone contact information with current students of any age without explicit written permission of the Principal. The Principal may authorize such exchanges in situations where student safety or operational efficiency would be improved by communication by telephone.
- Coaches or club/activity advisors are prohibited from exchanging personal telephone or email contact information with student team or club/activity members without prior approval of the Principal or their designee. All electronic or telephone contact by coaches and club/activity advisors with students will be sent to two or more team members, except for messages that would compromise confidential information, such as medical or academic privacy matters. Messages from coaches and club/activity advisors sent to individual students will be copied to the Principal or designee.

### System Security

Students should not share their password or use another person's password, another user account, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication without authorization from the building Principal or Central Office.

Hacking or attempting to access computer systems without authorization, vandalism (including the uploading or creation of computer viruses, worms, or malware), fraud, phishing, spamming, and/or unauthorized tampering with computer systems is prohibited and may result in district disciplinary action as well as legal action.

### Monitoring

All computer equipment, services, or technology that we furnish are the property of the Mansfield Public Schools, and students should have no expectation of privacy. We reserve the right to monitor local network and Internet traffic, including information sent or received through our online connections or stored on our computer systems for any reason, including but not limited to ensuring quality control and investigating system problems, ensuring student safety and district security, or as may be necessary, ensuring that the District is not subject to claims of misconduct.

The Superintendent or designee will approve access to files on District-owned equipment or information only when there is a valid reason to access those files. Authority to access user files can only come from the Director of Technology in conjunction with requests and/or approvals from the Superintendent or designee. External law enforcement agencies may request access to files through valid subpoenas and other legally-binding requests. The District's legal counsel must review all such requests. Information obtained in this manner can be admissible in legal proceedings or in a District discipline hearing.

## **CORRIDOR TRAFFIC**

With approximately 1000 students and staff in our building it is necessary to have some simple

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rules to follow in the hallways. These will help us to avoid confusion, injury and tardiness to class. Students should do the following in the corridors:

- Stay to the right.
- Keep moving to their scheduled class or activity. They should not hang around, talk too loudly, run, shove, or push anyone. Passing time is limited.
- Carry all necessary books when they have several classes that are near each other. Due to the number of students in the school, backpacks and tote bags are not allowed. Girls may carry small pocketbooks for personal belongings.
- Do not go back to their locker between each class.
- Be alert to the traffic around them and follow all directions given by teachers/staff during passing time.
- Pass to classes in a safe and responsible way.

### **DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY #JICH, JICH-A, ADB**

The Mansfield School Committee prohibits students' use, possession, distribution, or selling of controlled substances, tobacco products (including but not limited to chewing tobacco, cigars, cigarettes, pipes, electronic, 'vapor', or other substitute forms of cigarettes and nicotine products), alcoholic beverages, or non-prescribed mind altering substances, as well as prescription medication misuse in school, on school grounds, in transportation vehicles used for school-sponsored events, or at any school functions or activities, even though this use does not take place on school grounds. Students found in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate action by school officials and may be referred to legal authorities. Penalties for violating this policy, as they affect athletic participation as mandated by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), may be lengthier than penalties imposed by the school.

The school district will utilize, in accordance with law, a verbal screening tool approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to screen students for substance abuse disorders. Trained staff will administer the screening tool on an annual basis to two different grade levels as recommended by DESE and the Department of Public Health.

Parents/guardians will be notified prior to the opening of school each year. Parents/guardians or will have the right to opt out of the screening by written notice prior to or during the screening. Student participation will be voluntary at the time of screening; students may choose not to answer any or all of the screening questions.

All statements made by a student during a screening are confidential and will not be disclosed unless there is risk of harm to the student and others or in accordance with the law. De-identified results will be reported to the Department of Public Health within 90 days of completion of the screening process of eligible grades.

Procedures for implementing this policy are contained in the appropriate student handbooks and will be enforced by the school principal and their designee. School personnel who suspect a student is in possession of or using controlled substances, alcohol, or tobacco products in

violation of this policy must immediately notify the school administration.

1. In accordance with state and federal law, the Mansfield Public Schools will provide age and developmentally-appropriate, evidence-based alcohol, drug, and tobacco education and prevention programs.
2. Any student identified as selling or distributing any non-controlled substance, such as, but not limited to, cold medications, caffeine pills, vitamins, or any other over the counter medicines, on school grounds or at a school sponsored function may be subject to suspension or expulsion.
3. Any student found with drug paraphernalia in their possession on school grounds or at a school-sponsored function may be subject to suspension or expulsion.
4. Any student identified as being under the influence of alcohol or any illegal drug while on school property or at a school sponsored function may be placed on a ten day external suspension and will be ineligible to participate in any co-curricular activity for thirty (30) calendar days. For first offenses only, a student suspended under this paragraph may voluntarily agree to attend two substance abuse meetings. If the student attends the first substance abuse meeting during the initial five days of external suspension, the ten-day external suspension shall be commuted to five days external suspension followed by five days internal suspension (QMS) or three Saturday detentions (MHS). Attendance at a second substance abuse meeting shall occur during the five days of internal suspension (QMS) or during the next five school days (MHS). Proof of attendance shall be written summaries of the meetings provided to the assistant principal, and these summaries shall indicate the place and time the meetings convened, and the name of the individual who convened the session.
5. Any student suspended as a result of an incident defined in paragraph three (3) above may not be readmitted to school until they have had both a physical and a psychological examination. The purpose of these examinations is to document that the student is physically and psychologically able to re-enter school and re-commence their studies. If desired, the school psychologist shall provide the psychological examination free of charge. The physical examination shall be done at the parent's expense. Either or both of these specialists may refer the student to other agencies according to the needs of the student. If the student is unable to obtain clearance, the principal shall take all necessary steps to ensure that treatment has begun. If the student is unable to obtain clearance after a reasonable period of treatment, the principal shall forward a recommendation to the School Committee, through the Superintendent of Schools, that the student not be allowed to return to the Mansfield Public Schools.
6. Any student found in possession of alcohol (regardless of quantity) while on school property or at a school sponsored function may be placed on a ten (10) day external suspension, and will be ineligible to participate in any co-curricular activity for thirty (30) calendar days. A student suspended under this paragraph may voluntarily agree to attend two substance abuse meetings. If the student attends the first substance abuse meeting during the initial five days of external suspension, the ten-day external suspension shall be commuted to five days external suspension followed by five days internal suspension (QMS) or three Saturday detentions (MHS). Attendance at a second substance abuse meeting shall occur during the five days of internal suspension (QMS)

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or during the next five school days (MHS). Proof of attendance shall be written summaries of the meetings provided to the assistant principal, and these summaries shall indicate the place and time the meetings convened, and the name of the individual who convened the session.

7. Any student found in possession of any controlled substance while on school property or at a school-sponsored function is subject to discipline pursuant to the requirements of the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 37H and will be ineligible to participate in any co-curricular activity for thirty (30) calendar days. All illegal substances will be turned over to the Mansfield Police Department along with the name of the student offenders. The police department will determine whether the offense warrants legal prosecution.
8. Any student identified as selling or distributing alcohol, illegal drugs, and/or controlled substances, such as, but not limited to Valium, Prozac, Percocet, Ritalin, or any other medication prescribed by a physician on school property or at a school sponsored function, may be subject to expulsion from Mansfield Public Schools.

### **ELECTRONIC MEDIA & COMMUNICATION DEVICES #IJNDB**

The use of electronic media devices (CD players, MP3 players, radios, video game players, and any other electronic media devices) and electronic communication devices (cellular phones and other communication devices) are prohibited in the Mansfield Public Schools during the school day and during detentions. Electronic media devices should be secured and turned off upon entering the building, before the start of classes until exiting the building at the end of the day. If a student is using electronic media devices or electronic communication devices during the school day, the equipment may be confiscated, secured in the main office, and returned to the student or their parent/guardian. Repeated violations may result in disciplinary action, including detention and/or suspension.

In the event that a parent deems it necessary for their child to use an electronic communication device in school, the parent must request, in writing, permission from the Principal. This request must include the reason and the length of time for which the device is needed. All requests are subject to approval at the discretion of the Principal. Mansfield Public Schools will not be held financially responsible if a device is lost or stolen.

### **ELECTRONIC VIDEO & STILL-IMAGE DEVICES #IJNDB**

The unauthorized use of electronic video devices (handheld video camcorders, video cellular phones, and other electronic video or electronic still image devices) is prohibited at all times in the Mansfield Public Schools. If an unauthorized student uses an electronic video or still-image device, the equipment may be confiscated, secured in the main office, and returned to their parent/guardian. Any unauthorized capture or distribution of electronic video or still images may result in a suspension and/or possible prosecution by the Mansfield Police Department.

The Mansfield Public Schools recognize and support student efforts to capture images that serve as nostalgic reminders of their middle school years. Yearbook staff holds the formal responsibility for this creative endeavor, but students often want a more personal record. If

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students wish to use electronic video or still-image devices while on school property, they must request permission from the Principal.

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR STUDENT ACTIVITIES #JJA**

Eligibility for all extracurricular activities is dependent upon student attendance. A student absent on the day of a school activity will be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities on that day. Final eligibility ruling for a student to participate will be determined by the administration.

Saturday participation will be determined by Friday's attendance. At least three hours constitutes attendance for participation in extracurricular activities.

### **FINANCIAL OBLIGATION**

Students occasionally incur financial obligations as a result of circumstance or willful misbehavior. Lost books, lost locks, misplaced and or damaged school supplies and equipment, or punitive assessments as the result of vandalism or negligence can result in such financial obligations.

### **FIREARMS**

In accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 10, Chapter 150, the following regulations relative to firearms are enforced in the Mansfield Public Schools.

Whoever not being a law enforcement officer, and notwithstanding any license obtained by him or her under the provisions of Chapter 140, carries on his person a firearm as hereinafter defined, loaded or unloaded, in any building or on the grounds of any secondary school, college or university without the written authorization of the board or officer in charge of such secondary school, college or university will be punishable by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both. For the purpose of this paragraph, "firearm" will mean any pistol, revolver, rifle, or smoothbore arm from which a shot, bullet or pellet can be discharged by whatever means.

Replicas and/or toy firearms are not permitted in school. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action as outlined in Level III of the Discipline Policy.

### **HAZING #JICFA-E**

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Ch. 269, Sec. 17, hazing is not permitted. It is a crime to participate in or to organize hazing, or for a person at the scene of such a crime to fail to report the incident. Any student involvement in an act of hazing may face a suspension of up to ten days, including possible expulsion from school, and may be subject to legal prosecution.

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Ch. 269, Sec.17, whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, will be punished by a fine of

not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, will 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 will 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 will not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

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

In accordance with Section Nineteen (19), each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education will 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 will not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams and organizations.

Each such group, team or organization will distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It will be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgment 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 will file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and

eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of regents and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education will promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and will forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution that fails to make such report.

### **LOCKER POLICY #JIHA**

As a condition of usage of a school locker, students are advised that the school administration reserves the right to inspect a student's locker if necessary to maintain the integrity of the school environment, to protect other students, or to enforce safety regulations. As such, there should be no expectation of privacy in any locker, desk, or other property belonging to the Mansfield Public Schools. Every student will be issued a school-assigned locker and a school-assigned lock on the first day of school. Students are not permitted to access any locker other than their school-issued locker, and cannot replace the school-issued lock with their own lock. It is expected that a student will keep their locker locked. (See "Search and Seizure" section).

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Students who find lost articles are asked to take them to the main office, where the owner can claim them. Any unclaimed items may be distributed to local charities at the end of each month.

### **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS and SUPPORTS (PBIS)**

Qualters Middle School has implemented Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is a framework, or approach, for assisting school personnel in adopting and organizing evidence-based behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that enhances academic and social behavior outcomes for all students. The school has a PBIS team of staff members that lead the school's initiative by collaborating to design and implement systems for teaching school-wide expectations, recognizing positive behavior and promoting a positive school culture. It includes:

- Three universal behavioral expectations for the school (respect, responsibility and kindness) that are stated in positive language and center around the school's core values. Direct instruction of the expectations in context, with opportunities for modeling, practice, feedback, and correction.
- High rates of positive feedback (Buzz Bucks) aimed at strengthening desired behaviors.
- Predictable redirection and consequences delivered fairly across the school.
- Data based decision making that drives interventions aimed at (a) restructuring setting and scenarios likely to produce problem behavior, and (b) developing and targeting interventions for students who require additional behavioral supports.

## SCHOOL BUS BEHAVIOR #JICC, EEAEC

All school rules apply when students ride the buses. Misconduct of any kind on buses may result in suspension and/or exclusion from the bus.

Remember, it is a privilege to ride the school bus. If a student is not well-behaved and courteous, or if they endanger the health or safety of other pupils, this privilege may be revoked. The bus driver has complete authority over students during the time it is the driver's responsibility to deliver them safely to and from school.

These rules of behavior must be obeyed:

- There will be no eating or drinking on the bus. Eating on the bus poses a risk of choking and potentially endangers students with food allergies.
- Students should be at their assigned stops in advance of the posted time for the bus arrival.
- Students are to remain well back from the roadway while awaiting the arrival of the bus. The bus will start loading only at the direction of the driver.
- Students waiting for buses will not go on private property or cause any damage to such property as this might lead to a civil action by the owner of that property against the student or students.
- For safety reasons there will be no standing on the bus. Students will enter the bus in an orderly fashion and go directly to their assigned seat and remain seated until their destination is reached and the bus is stopped.
- Students will cooperate with and be courteous to the driver and fellow students.
- There will be no littering or defacing of the buses or the property of other students.
- There will be no disturbing the driver by any means. There will be no eating, drinking, shouting, vulgar language, roughhousing, or throwing things on the bus.
- Students will keep their hands, arms, and heads inside the bus.
- For safety reasons, any carry-on items other than backpacks and lunch boxes are not allowed on the bus unless the object is small enough to be placed under the seat in front of the student (less than one yard long, one foot wide and ten inches high), or on the student's lap.
- The emergency door is to be used for **emergency only**. Students must not touch safety equipment on the bus.
- Students will be picked up and unloaded only at their regularly-scheduled stops.

Any students disregarding the above regulations will be reported by the bus driver to the school Principal who will take the necessary action to see that such a disregard does not occur again. Such action may mean that the violator forfeits their privilege to ride the bus for a period of time in accordance with school policy.

If a student chooses to break a rule, the following consequences may be applied:

1. After two warnings by the bus driver, a bus conduct report will be written and the student will be sent to the Principal.

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2. After the second incident, the student's parents or guardians will be called following the student's conference with the Principal.
3. After the third incident the student's riding privilege may be rescinded for three days. These students may not be able return to bus ridership without a conference with parents and Principal (and possibly bus driver).
4. Subsequent incidents may result in an extended loss of ridership privileges for the student.

## **SOCIAL EVENT REGULATIONS**

When students attend an after-school party or a dance, they are participating in a social event. We hope they do attend social events. If they do, we expect them to follow these rules:

- Only QMS students may attend school social events. No outside guests are allowed.
- Students must follow all rules that would apply during a normal school day at all school functions.
- Students must behave in a courteous, responsible, and respectful manner.
- Students may not leave a social event before it is over unless an appropriate adult picks them up.
- Students' parents must provide transportation at the immediate close of the social event.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

When students are issued a textbook, they must cover it to prevent it from being damaged. We ask students to take good care of all books and treat them as if they were their own. If students lose any books or equipment, or if it is damaged while signed out to them, they will have to pay to replace them. The student won't be given a new book until they have paid for the lost or damaged one. If at a later time the book is found, the student will be refunded the money paid.

## **USE OF TOBACCO AND TOBACCO FREE PRODUCTS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY #JICG**

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act prohibits smoking in school and on school property. Students are not permitted to smoke or use tobacco products at anytime in the building and on the school grounds or in transportation vehicles used for school-sponsored events and activities. In addition, use of any tobacco product or smoking is banned at all school-sponsored events, even though this use does not take place on school grounds. Because it is illegal for anyone under 18 years of age in Massachusetts to purchase tobacco products, possession of all tobacco products on school grounds is prohibited.

Students who violate this rule will be subject to a Level II consequence. For purpose of this policy, "smoking" will mean all uses of tobacco or tobacco-free products and devices (including but not limited to chewing tobacco, cigars, cigarettes, and pipes) and the use of electronic, 'vapor,' or other substitute forms of cigarettes and nicotine.

## **DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES AND DUE PROCESS**

### **DISCIPLINE (Unless otherwise defined by Massachusetts General Law) #JIC**

The Mansfield Public Schools act in accordance with the implementation of Chapter 222 of the Acts of 2012 as stated in Massachusetts General Law 71, 37H, 37H ½, 37H ¾.

#### **Problem Resolution**

The staff of the Mansfield Public Schools is committed to resolving problems informally whenever possible. Parent/guardians are encouraged to call the teacher's), Counselor, department chairperson or school administrator(s) to initiate conferences, to receive updates on their child's progress, or to voice a concern. Students are reminded that they may access the Guidance Office for assistance to help mediate student-student conflicts.

When there is a concern about an educational or disciplinary problem, the parent/ guardian should first consult the teacher directly involved with the situation, and an attempt should be made to resolve the problem at that level. A conference may be requested, and the student may participate in that conference when appropriate.

When an issue has not been resolved at the level of the teacher, an additional meeting can be arranged between the parent/guardian, the teacher, department chairperson and a school administrator.

#### **Goals**

The goal of the discipline policy of the Mansfield Public Schools is to create an orderly and productive environment essential for the effective, efficient, and safe operation of the schools. The intention of this policy is to provide the students with notice of the school standards and expectations regarding student behavior and the consequences for violations of the rules and regulations.

All members of the school community have the responsibility to conduct themselves with respect for the rights and property of others in school and during all school-sponsored activities, both on and off school grounds, including those times when riding school buses or other school-provided vehicles.

## **DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES**

In the Mansfield Public Schools there are three levels of disciplinary offenses: Level I/Minor Offenses; Level II/Major Offenses; and Level III/Illegal Acts. Most disciplinary violations are included within these three levels of offenses, but the school retains the right to identify acts of misconduct as deemed appropriate at the discretion of the Principal.

#### **Level I: Minor Offenses**

Level I offenses include but are not limited to the following: pass violations, tardiness, failure to attend assigned detention and chronic gum chewing.

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**Level II: Major Offenses**

Level II offenses include but are not limited to truancy, insubordination, disrespectful behavior, disruptive behavior, harassment, vulgar and obscene language, fighting, other physical altercations, smoking, repeated Level I offenses, unauthorized access to another student's locker, failure to report to a class or other assigned area (library, assembly, Nurse's office, guidance office), or participation in a school-sponsored activity while suspended.

**Level III: Illegal Acts**

Level III offenses include all acts that are illegal under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, including, but not limited to: vandalism, theft, sexual harassment, assault, possession of illegal drugs, use of illegal drugs, distribution of illegal drugs, possession of dangerous weapons or objects, false alarms, threats, or violation of the civil rights of a staff member or another student, or unauthorized use of computer networking systems and/or tampering with computer equipment, resident programs, or files.

**CONSEQUENCES**

The following consequences may be used either alone or in combination for different offenses depending on the severity of the offense.

**Teacher Detention**

A student failing to report to a teacher detention will be reported to an administrator and will be assigned a detention, as deemed appropriate by the administrator. The length of a teacher-assigned detention is from 1:49-2:20 p.m. Students assigned to detention are to report to the room designated at the time given and for the number of days assigned. 24-hour notice is to be given. Parents should be made aware of assigned detentions

**Lunch Detention**

A school administrator may assign a lunch detention for any day lunch is being served at school. During a lunch detention, a student is to bring their lunch to the office to be eaten away from the cafeteria. No child serving a lunch detention will be denied the ability to eat lunch. Students buying lunch and students who receive free and reduced lunch will be able to go to the cafeteria to get their lunch.

**Office Detention**

A school administrator may assign office detention on certain designated days of the week immediately after school for those students with undesirable patterns of attendance, for frequent tardiness, or for behavioral misconduct. Office detentions may be assigned in lieu of internal or external suspensions, at the administrator's discretion. Failure to attend office detention, or behavioral misconduct in office detention, may result in a suspension from school. Students must have sufficient materials and books to study for the time in detention and must cooperate with the detention supervisor. Office Detentions are scheduled between 1:50 - 2:50 p.m. In certain situations, an extended detention lasting until 3:50 pm may be assigned.

**Saturday Detention (Level II and Level III offenses only)**

Saturday detentions are assigned by an Assistant Principal for Level I and II offenses and are held from 8 a.m. – noon in the Mansfield High School Library. Students are expected to bring school work to complete during the detention.

**In School Suspension (Level II and Level III offenses only)**

An in-school suspension may be used as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary events. An in-school suspension means the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in one school year.

**Emergency Removal #JIC (Level II and Level III offenses only)**

Under section 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ , nothing shall prevent a principal or designee from removing a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially disrupts the order of the school. The temporary removal shall not exceed three (3) school days, which shall include the day of the emergency removal.

**External Suspension #JIC (Level II and Level III offenses only)**

Students assigned an external suspension are not allowed to be present on school grounds at any time during the duration of their external suspension, except to attend scheduled meetings as required to uphold their due process rights. Students assigned an external suspension are not allowed to attend or to participate in any school-sponsored activity. If an externally suspended student is found on school property during the dates of the suspension, the length of the suspension may be extended. If an externally suspended student attends or participates in a school-sponsored activity during the dates of the suspension, the length of the suspension may be extended.

**Additional Information Regarding Threats to Oneself or Others**

Any student suspended externally as a result of a violent act or threat to oneself or others may be referred to a psychologist for a safety and/or threat assessment. If the school administration determines that the offense necessitates a safety and/or threat assessment, the student may not return to school until the psychologist has completed the safety and/or threat assessment and has provided the administration with the results, regardless of the length of the assigned suspension. If the results of the threat and/or safety assessment raise concerns regarding the student's return to school, the student and his/her parents/guardians shall be required to meet with the administration.

**PROCESS FOR DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES #JIC**

Fourteenth Amendment – Rights of Due Process: In 1975, the United States Supreme Court ruled that public school students facing suspension are protected by the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. A student suspended by a disciplinary action is entitled to due process, including the right to receive oral and written notice of the charges against him or her, an explanation of the evidence supporting the charges,

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and an opportunity to present his or her side of the story prior to suspension. A student facing a suspension of greater than ten (10) days is entitled to a formal hearing to express his/her position relative to the incident that resulted in a disciplinary action and to a written explanation of the reasons for any action taken prior to the suspension, in cases where an emergency removal is required under section 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$  students may be removed prior to hearing.

### **Procedures for an In-School Suspension**

If the principal or his/her designee chooses this alternative, the principal or his/her designee shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for that charge and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charge and explain the circumstances surrounding the charge. If an in-school suspension is issued, the principal or his/her designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the offense, and the length of the in-school suspension.

The principal or his/her designee shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. This meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension, if possible, or as soon as possible thereafter. The principal or his/her designee shall also send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to the above described meeting, if such meeting has not already occurred.

### **Procedures for Short Term Suspensions #JIC**

A student facing suspension of ten (10) days or less is entitled to oral and written notice of the charge(s), an explanation of the evidence that the school authorities have regarding the charge(s), and an opportunity to present his or her side of the story. Student has the right to have a parent or guardian present during the hearing, unless the parent is unreachable, after "reasonable efforts".

### **Procedures for Long Term Suspensions and Appeal**

A student facing a suspension of more than ten (10) days, or the possibility of expulsion, will be accorded the following rights:

1. Prior oral and written notice of possible suspension
2. Oral and written notice of the charge(s), offense, potential length of suspension
3. The right to be represented by an attorney or advocate, at the expense of the student
4. Adequate time to prepare for the suspension/expulsion hearing
5. Access to documentary evidence prior to the hearing
6. The opportunity to present witnesses and evidence at the hearing.
7. Access to interpreter services is needed.
8. Opportunity for parent or guardian present during hearing, after a reasonable effort to contact.
9. A prompt written decision normally rendered within three (3) school days of the hearing, which includes specific grounds for the decision.
10. Notification to appeal principal's decision to the Superintendent.

The procedures for appealing administrative action taken for Level III offenses are as follows, except for procedures defined by Massachusetts General Law and referenced elsewhere in the pages of the Common Handbook.

1. A written request for an appeal hearing must be submitted to the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent/guardian may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days.
2. The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.
3. The Superintendent will conduct an appeal hearing within three (3) school days of the request, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days. The Superintendent will render decision upon completion of that hearing, within five (5) calendar days.
4. The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

## **DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS EDUCATED ON AN IEP**

All students are expected to meet the requirements as set forth in this handbook. Massachusetts General Laws require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible or are currently in the evaluation process, by an Evaluation Team, to have special needs and whose program is or could be described in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of special needs students.

1. The principal or designee will notify the Special Education Office of the suspension of a special needs student and a record will be kept of such suspensions.
2. In accordance with special education regulations, when it is known that the suspension(s) of a special needs student will accumulate to greater than ten (10) days in a school year, a manifestation hearing will convene to determine whether the student's disciplinary behavior is a manifestation of his/her handicapping condition. The IEP will be reviewed to determine appropriateness of the student's placement or program.
3. If a special education student commits an offense which causes the student to be expelled from school, the school district continues to be responsible for providing the student with a free appropriate public education in another educational setting.
4. There are certain situations in which school personnel may order a change in placement of a special education student without regard to whether the student's behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability. These situations include:
  - a. carrying or possession of a weapon
  - b. knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance
  - c. has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)- The IDEA protections summarized above

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also apply to a child who has not yet been found eligible for services under the statute if the district is “deemed to have knowledge” that the child was eligible for such services before the conduct that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. The IDEA provides that a school district is “deemed to have knowledge” if: (1) the child’s parent had expressed concern in writing to district supervisory or administrative personnel or the child’s teacher that the child needs special education and related services; (2) the child’s parent had requested an evaluation of the child to determine eligibility for special education services; or (3) the teacher of the child or other school district personnel had expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior by the child directly to the district’s director of special education or to other supervisory personnel. However, a school district is not “deemed to have knowledge” if the district evaluated the student and determined that the child was not eligible for special education services or the child’s parent refused an evaluation of the child or IDEA services.

If the school district has no knowledge that a student is an eligible student under the IDEA before taking disciplinary measures against the student, the student may be disciplined just as any other student may be. If, however, a request is made for an evaluation to determine eligibility while the student is subject to disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner. Pending the results of the evaluation, the student must remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion without services. If the student is determined eligible for an IEP as a result of the evaluation, the school district must provide the student with special education and related services in accordance with the IDEA.

### **DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS EDUCATED ON A 504 Plan**

School personnel may not suspend a student on a 504 plan for more than ten consecutive days without a manifestation determination. Procedural protections for eligible 504 students are the same as those afforded to special education students.

### **OTHER OFFENSES, SECTION 37H $\frac{3}{4}$ #JIC**

In accordance with the New Student Discipline Rules Ch. 222 of the Acts of 2012, Ch. 71, Section 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ , disciplinary action, including suspension may be taken for all other serious offenses.

The Law, codified at M.G.L. c.71, 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$  does not apply to cases involving possession of weapons or drugs in school, instances of student assaults on staff members, or cases in which a student has been indicated for a felony or felony delinquency. The process for imposing discipline in those matters is still subject to M.G. L. c. 71, 37H & 37H  $\frac{1}{2}$ . The new law limits the duration of suspension to not more than 90 school days; this limitation does not apply to suspensions or exclusions under 37H & 37H  $\frac{1}{2}$ . In all cases the school district must continue to provide educational services to students if they suspended or excluded for more than school 10 days.

## MASSACHUSETTS LAW CHAPTER 71

### Controlled Substances, Dangerous Weapons, Assault Upon Staff, Section 37H #JIC

In accordance with the education reform act of 1993, ch. 71, section 37h, a student may be subject to expulsion according to the following regulations:

- a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife: or a controlled substance as defined in Ch. 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.
- b) Any student who assaults a Principal, Assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.
- c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) will 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.
- d) After said hearing, a Principal may, at their discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).
- e) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions will have the right to appeal to the Superintendent. The expelled student will have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of the appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal will not be solely limited to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
- f) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, schools and school district within the Commonwealth will be required to admit such student and to provide educational services to said student. If the student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the Superintendent of the school district to which application is made may request and will receive from the Superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reason for said expulsion. Upon expulsion of said student, schools and school district will be required to provide educational services to such student to be determined by the school Principal.

### **Suspension/Expulsion: Felony Complaint Or Conviction, Section 37H ½ #JIC**

In accordance with the Education Reform Act of 1993, Ch. 71, Section 37H 1/2, the following disciplinary action may be taken upon a felony complaint or conviction:

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 may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said Principal if said



Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student will receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student will also receive written notification of the right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension: provided, however, that such suspension will remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent.

The student will have the right to appeal the suspension to the Superintendent. The student will notify the Superintendent in writing of this request for an appeal no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Superintendent will hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three (3) calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student will have the right to present oral and written testimony on their behalf, and will have the right to counsel. The Superintendent will have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Superintendent will render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such decision will be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

1. Upon the 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 may expel such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said Principal if said Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student will receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student will also receive written notification of the right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that such expulsion will remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent.

The student will have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Superintendent. The student will notify the Superintendent in writing of the request for an appeal no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Superintendent will hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three (3) calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student will have the right to counsel. The Superintendent will have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Superintendent will render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such decision will be the final decision of the school district with regard to the expulsion.

Upon expulsion of said student, schools and school district will be required to provide educational services to such student to be determined by the school Principal.

**Education Services And Academic Progress Under Sections 37H, 37H ½ and 37H ¾ #JIC**

Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion will have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of their removal from the classroom or school. The Principal will inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, will have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

The Principal will notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice will be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English as determined by the home language survey, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice will include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

**SCHOOL SAFETY****CANINE SEARCH**

In cooperation with the Mansfield Public Schools, the Mansfield Police Department may conduct canine searches of the middle school, high school, and student parking lots with prior approval from the Superintendent of Schools.

**FIRE DRILL #EBDC**

Fire drills at regular intervals are required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone obeys orders promptly and clears the building by the prescribed route as quickly as possible. The teacher in each classroom will give instructions to the students and the students are expected to stay with the teacher in order that attendance may be taken.

**LOCKDOWN DRILLS #EB**

In the event that a lockdown drill is conducted, it is essential that when the first signal is given, students and staff obey orders promptly and adhere to the reverse evacuation plan as outlined in the crisis manual.

## **EVACUATION OF THE SCHOOL**

If it is necessary to evacuate the building, students must follow the directions of the adult in charge. If they are not with an adult when the building is being evacuated, they should leave by the nearest exit. We expect students to follow all of the established procedures for a fire drill if we must evacuate the building in an emergency. In the event of a lockdown, students must follow the instructions of the teacher in charge.

## **PREVENTION OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF A STUDENT**

The Mansfield Public Schools complies with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) regulations 603 CMR 46.00 to the extent required by law, in order to protect students of the district from the use of unreasonable physical restraint at school and at school-sponsored events and activities, whether or not on school property. The Mansfield Public Schools prohibits the use of mechanical restraint, medical restraint, and seclusion restraint.

School personnel will use physical restraint only as an emergency procedure of last resort and only after other less-intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, with these goals in mind:

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

School personnel will not use physical restraint when it is medically contraindicated, as a means of punishment, or as a response to destruction of property, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to the student or others.

## **SCHOOL CANCELLATION AND CLOSING**

In the event of unusually severe weather or other special circumstances that might prevent or delay the opening of school, announcements are broadcast between 6 - 8 A.M. on the following stations. Parents/guardians need to make advance arrangements for a possible delayed start of school, which could be up to ninety (90) minutes. In the event that students need to be released from school early, parents/guardians should check these stations for current information:

- WBZ Channel 4
- WCVB Channel 5
- WLNE Channel 6
- WHDH Channel 7
- WJAR Channel 10

- WPRI Channel 12
- WBZ Radio 1030 AM
- WRKO Radio 690 AM
- WPRO Radio 630 AM

Information about school cancellations will also be posted on the Mansfield Public Schools website ([www.mansfieldschools.com](http://www.mansfieldschools.com)), and parents will receive a School Messenger alert. Families should notify the school office in writing of any changes to their emergency contact information.

## **SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER**

The Mansfield Public Schools and the Mansfield Police department have established a School Resource Officer (SRO) program to help maintain a safe school environment. In keeping with the Mansfield Public Schools' mission, the primary role of the SRO is to:

- Provide support and assistance to the school administration and staff to maintain a safe and constructive learning environment
- Enforce local, state, and federal laws
- Serve as a resource to administrators and teachers in planning and providing age-appropriate educational programs that foster respect for the law, an understanding of law enforcement, and safe and healthy behaviors
- Serve as a resource to administrators and staff concerning law enforcement and child welfare issues
- Assist individual students and their families in addressing issues related to law enforcement and helping students to have a meaningful school experience
- Serve as a liaison between the schools and the Mansfield Police Department in addressing issues of concern to both departments

The School Resource Offices (SRO) are:

Officers Ken Wright and Derek McCune

Tel: 508-261-7540 Ext. 33155 (school)

Tel: 508-261-7300 Ext. 61225 (Mansfield Police Department)

Email: [Kenneth.Wright@Mansfieldschools.com](mailto:Kenneth.Wright@Mansfieldschools.com), [Derek.McCune@Mansfieldschools.com](mailto:Derek.McCune@Mansfieldschools.com)

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE #JIH**

The Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution guarantee freedom from unreasonable search of one's person and property. Equipment assigned to students, such as lockers and desks, belongs to the Mansfield Public Schools. As such, there is no expectation of privacy in lockers, desks, or any other property belonging to the Mansfield Public Schools, which reserves the right to inspect such property.

The search of students or their property or their vehicles on school property will comply with the following procedures:

1. There will be reasonable suspicion for school personnel to believe that a search will disclose evidence of a violation of a school rule or law.

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2. When such reasonable suspicion exists, a search may be conducted under the explicit authorization of the Principal or designee.
3. Items that might be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, such as weapons or illegal substances, will be removed from the student's possession. Parents will be notified when such a search has been conducted. Body searches are not conducted.
4. School personnel will assist or permit the police to search a student, their possessions, or assigned school equipment, when the police have obtained a search warrant authorizing the search, or consistent with applicable legal requirements.

## **SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS #ECAF**

The Mansfield School Committee supports the use of security cameras throughout the District for the purpose of enhancing school safety and security, as part of the District's overall security plan. The Committee's goal is to foster measures that improve the safety and security of the teaching and learning environment for students and staff, to maintain order and discipline on school property and on school vehicles, to ensure public safety for students, staff, and visitors to our schools, and to help safeguard District facilities, grounds, and property.

The District's security camera system will be in operation and may be monitored by school personnel throughout the year. Security cameras may be used both inside and outside of school buildings and on school buses to record students, staff, and property.

Security cameras are installed in public areas only; these areas include school buses, grounds, athletic areas, exterior entrances or exits to school buildings, and large gathering spaces such as classroom corridors, cafeteria, lobby, and main entries.

Security cameras may not be used in an area where there is a "reasonable expectation of privacy." No security cameras will be placed in restrooms, changing rooms, private offices, Nurse's offices, and locker rooms.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

### **ADJUSTMENT COUNSELOR AND SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST**

The Adjustment Counselors and School Psychologists at the Qualters Middle School have special training to help students overcome problems that impede learning and to assist students in emotional and psychological growth and maturity. The Adjustment Counselors and School Psychologists support children, parents and teachers by facilitating and providing assessments, direct counseling, topic-specific groups, crisis intervention, and parent workshops.

Students may benefit from assistance with separation/adjustment issues, social conflicts, and family changes such as a death, divorce or moving. Referrals may be received from teachers, administrators, parents and students. All services except crisis intervention require the permission of parents/guardians.

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## **COMPUTER LAB**

The computer lab, located on the second floor, is open two days a week after school. Check the lab for available days and times. Students are not allowed in the computer lab unsupervised and should make arrangements to utilize the lab on the days it is open.

## **FOOD SERVICES #EF, EFC**

A lunch period is scheduled daily. Hot lunch, which includes milk, is served daily at a cost of \$3.00. Milk may also be purchased separately for \$0.65. School staff members supervise the lunch period.

Students in all schools are issued four-digit pin numbers that are used to purchase food in the cafeteria. Parents may deposit money into their child's account by sending in a check or cash, or online with a credit card.

Students who go through the cafeteria line with either no prepayment or no money for lunch will be given a lunch, but must bring payment the next day. No child will be allowed to go hungry at school, however students will be given a predetermined lunch, they will not have the option to choose from any meal on the lunch menu.

Prepayment is recommended to avoid lost or forgotten lunch money. Prepayment by check for lunch, not including available snacks, may be made out to the Mansfield Food Service and given directly to the cafeteria staff. Parents will be informed if a student's balance is outstanding.

Applications for Free and Reduced Lunch are available at the QMS main office and on the district website. Applications may be submitted at any time during the school year.

### **Meal Charges**

The goal of the Mansfield Public Schools Food Services is to provide student access to nutritious no- or low-cost meals each school day. However, unpaid charges place a large financial burden on our district. The intent of this policy is to establish a process and procedure to handle situations when children eligible for reduced-price benefits or who pay for full-price meals have insufficient funds to pay for school meals, and to communicate the process for the collection of unpaid meal charges and delinquent account debt in compliance with federal requirements for the USDA Child Nutrition Program.

Under federal regulation, funds from the non-profit food service account cannot be used to cover the cost of charged meals or food items that have not been paid.

### **Meal Payment and Account Limits**

Free meal status allows a student to receive a free meal (breakfast and lunch) everyday.

Reduced-price eligible students are able to purchase a breakfast for \$.30 and lunch for \$.40 each day. A reduced-price eligible student will be allowed to charge a maximum dollar

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equivalent of five (5) meals to their account after the balance reaches zero, which will be known as the “account limit.”

All other students who pay for meals at the school’s published paid meal rate each day will be allowed to charge a maximum dollar equivalent of five (5) meals to their account after the balance reaches zero, which will be known as the “account limit”.

### **Charged Meals and A la Carte Items**

Charged meals offered to students will be reimbursable meals that are available to all students. A la carte items are not included in the USDA program, and charging of a la carte items is not allowed. Milk purchased alone and not part of a school lunch or breakfast is considered an a la carte item and must be paid for when purchased.

If the student has a negative meal account balance, a la carte items cannot be purchased until the negative balance is paid, regardless of the student’s ability to pay for a la carte items at the time of sale.

### **Alternate Meals**

When a student reaches the “account limit” and does not have sufficient funds in their account or cannot pay cash for a meal, the District will provide an alternate lunch meal (Robinson students are exempted from receiving an alternate meal and will continue to receive a regular lunch meal). Regular breakfast meals will continue to be served.

The designated lunch menu alternate will contain all of the components for a complete lunch meal under state and federal requirements: milk, fruit, vegetables, whole grain, and meat / meat alternate (e.g., a sunflower & jelly sandwich or a turkey sandwich, with milk, fruit, and vegetables). Accommodations will be made for special dietary needs. The cost of the alternative meal will be charged to the student’s account at the standard rate.

This alternate meal will be offered until the account is current and the debt is paid. The designated meal alternative will be charged to the student’s account at the standard rate. Parents/guardians are responsible for payment of these meals to the Food Service program.

### **Student Meal Accounts**

All families are encouraged to prepay for school meals to avoid unpaid meal charges. Funds should be maintained in student meal accounts to minimize the possibility that a child may be without meal money on any given day. Any remaining funds for an individual student at the end of the school year will be carried over to the next school year.

#### *Meal Payment Options*

- a. **Cash or Check payments** may be made at any cafeteria register. Checks should be made out to “Mansfield Food Service”. Please include the child’s full name on the memo line. Even if you choose to pay at the register for your student’s meals, you can register at

MySchoolBucks.com to see what is being purchased and to have a "low-balance" email reminder sent to you. This part of the website is free of charge.

- b. **MySchoolBucks.com** is an online program that allows the parent to "see" what is happening in the account. An account may be linked to a credit card or bank account and electronically transfer funds into a student meal account. There is a small transaction fee to use this electronic transfer. The "low-balance" email reminder and transaction report are free.

#### *Block On Accounts*

A parent may call the Food Service Director to place a block on their child's account to prohibit the purchase of a la carte items or set dollar cap.

#### *Refunds and Unclaimed Funds*

- a. **Withdrawn or graduating students** may request a refund by writing or emailing Dawn Langtry, Food Service Director, 250 East Street, Mansfield, MA 02048, dawn.langtry@mansfieldschools.com for a refund of any money remaining in their account.
- b. Students who are graduating at the end of the year will be given the option to transfer remaining funds to a sibling's account with a written request.
- c. All refunds must be requested within 180 days of the student leaving the district. Any **unclaimed funds** after 180 days will become the property of the Mansfield Public Schools Food Service Program.

#### **Preventing Meal Charges**

Low-balance email reminders and account tracking is available on MySchoolBucks.com and is free of charge to help ensure households are aware of the potential to accrue meal debt. The Food Services Department will call or email households on a bi-weekly basis or as needed to inform parents/guardians of a negative balance owed by the student.

Students may be discreetly reminded at the time of purchase if they need to bring in money for meal purchases. When a student is close to the allowable limit for meal charges, they will be told if payment is not received, they may only be offered an alternative meal.

Food Services will notify the building administration and the parent/guardian before a student is offered an alternative meal. If a student is without meal money on a consistent basis, the administration will investigate the situation more closely and take further action as needed. If financial hardship exists, parents and families will be encouraged to apply for free or reduced price lunches for their child if applicable.

#### **Applying for Free and Reduced Price Meals**

Free and Reduced Price Meal Applications may be submitted at any time during the school year. The determination of free or reduced price meals based on the application is valid for the entire school year. A new application can be completed if your financial situation changes during the school year.



Applications and directions are available as part of the opening day packet from your child's school. The applications and directions are also posted on the Mansfield Public School website under the Food Service tab. If you need assistance with completing an application, please contact Dawn Langtry, Food Service Director, 508-261-7400 x33124 or dawn.langtry@mansfieldschools.com.

Parents/guardians are expected to submit the Free and Reduced Lunch Application as soon as possible each school year or as their financial situation changes, unless they have received a letter of Direct Certification from the Food Service Department. Direct Certification determinations (electronic match process) through the Massachusetts Department of Health and Human Services will be made at a minimum of three times per year and when a student transfers into the district.

### **Unpaid Charges, Delinquent Debt, and Bad Debt**

All communication regarding unpaid meal debt will be directed at parents/guardians. Unpaid meal charges are considered "delinquent debt" and are identified as a financial obligation of the parents/guardians. Mansfield Food Services is required by federal regulation to continue to collect meal charges defined as delinquent

Student meal account balances may be checked at any time by logging into [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com) or by emailing the Food Services Director. Payment for negative account balances may be made online at anytime via the MySchoolBucks.com account portal. Students may bring cash or check payments (payable to Mansfield Food Services) to the cashier in their school cafeteria. Payment also may be made by check and mailing it or dropping it off at the Food Service Director's Office, Mansfield High School, 250 East Street, Mansfield, MA 02048.

Checks Returned for Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF) will result in a penalty fee (currently \$25). When a check is returned to the Town Treasurer's Office for "NSF," a letter will be mailed by the Food Services Director to inform the parent/guardian. Payment along with any applicable fees must be received within ten (10) business days of the date of the letter. When the NSF notice is received, the Food Services Director will deduct the check amount from the student's account.

All accounts must be paid by the end of the school year or at the time a student withdraws from the district. Any balance owed to the Food Service program will be carried over into subsequent years in an attempt to collect the debt. Repayment plans may be developed on an individual basis in order to clear the balance owed. The consequences of non-payment will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the building principal.

### **HEALTH SERVICES #JLC, JLCD, ADFR**

The mission of the Health Services in the Mansfield Public Schools is to enhance the educational process by modification or removal of health-related barriers to learning and to promote an optimal level of wellness. The role of the School Nurse is to provide first aid, illness assessment

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and case management for students with special health care needs. The School Nurse does not diagnose or prescribe treatment. Based on the Nurse's assessment, parents may be contacted and advised to follow up with their private physician. **Students may not text/call parents for a health-related dismissal.** All health-related dismissals must occur through the health office. Nurse dismissals are not considered excused absences. Students may not leave the building due to illness without authorization. If the School Nurse is not available, students are to report to the Main office for assistance.

**The following Health Services are provided in the Mansfield Public Schools:**

- Student Health Records that include the student's medical history, immunizations, screening results and physical examinations that are required in grades Pre-K, K, 4,7,10 and each year for high school sports eligibility
- Individual Health Care Plans (IHCP) that include skilled nursing care and case management for student with special health care needs
- Screenings for height, weight, vision, hearing, postural development: Massachusetts State regulations require Health Services in public schools to perform screening for all students. Students in grade 7- 8 will participate in postural screening and students in grade 7 will participate in hearing and vision screenings. Abnormal results will be provided to parents. Height and weight will be measured in grade 7. Parents and legal guardians will be provided with an opportunity to request, in writing, that their student not participate in the program.
- Direct nursing care including First Aid, Illness Assessment, Communicable Disease Control and Health Care Referrals
- Medication Administration if a student's physician determines that it is necessary for a student to receive medication during school hours.
  - The medication must be registered with the School Nurse with the written permission of a parent/guardian and a physician's order. All medications, including prescription and over the counter, must be provided by the parent in the original container with the prescription or manufacturer's label. No student is allowed to carry medication at school without parent permission and the approval of the School Nurse, who may require a physician's approval.
- Health Insurance Assistance
- Individual Health Counseling
- Individualized Health Education

### Life-Threatening Allergies

The Mansfield Public Schools is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for students. Recognizing the increasing prevalence of life-threatening allergies (LTAs) among school populations, the Mansfield Public Schools works in cooperation with parents, students, and physicians to minimize risks and to provide a safe educational environment for all students. The focus of allergy management is prevention, education, awareness, communication, and emergency response.

The Mansfield Public Schools sets age-appropriate plans/guidelines for students and schools within the Mansfield system that minimize the risk for students with life-threatening allergies

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to be exposed to offending allergens that may trigger a life-threatening reaction. Such guidelines include:

- Building-based general medical emergency plans
- Life-threatening allergy emergency plans
- Individual healthcare plans for all students diagnosed with LTA
- Appropriate training of staff
- Availability on site of medical equipment for quick response to life-threatening allergic reactions
- And such other guidelines that will ensure that students with LTA can participate fully in school activities without undue fear of harm from exposure to life-threatening allergens.

Specific building-based guidelines/actions take into account the health needs and well-being of all students without discrimination or isolation of any student. No student will be excluded from school activities based solely on their allergies. In order to assist students with LTAs to assume more individual responsibility for maintaining their safety as they grow, these guidelines will shift as students advance through the primary grades and through secondary school.

#### Guidelines For Contacting The School Nurse

If a student is experiencing any of the following, parents/guardians are to contact the School Nurse:

- Newly diagnosed with a chronic health problem, e.g., seizures, diabetes, asthma, severe allergies
- Daily medication for an extended period of time
- Documentation of immunization or boosters
- Communicable disease
- Health problem that may affect school performance, e.g., vision or hearing, attention deficit disorder
- Health problem that may affect school attendance
- Treatment for any problem that may impair safety or mobility during the school day or restrict gym or recess, e.g., broken bones, orthopedic problem, on crutches, mononucleosis, recent surgery, upcoming surgery, concussions, or any head injury
- Family experiencing a problem and needing support, assistance, or a referral for help, e.g., death in the family, change in marital status, parenting issues, substance abuse, mental health problems

Sharing the above information will allow the School Nurse to better safeguard the health of each student, especially in times of emergency. In addition to the above guidelines, parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the School Nurse with any questions or problems.

#### Head Injury Management Policy #JJIF, JJIF-R

Head injuries and concussions can have serious consequences for students, but proper management can help to maximize recovery and minimize academic impact.

Please notify the school nurse as soon as possible following any head injury. The school nurse

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will work with you, your student, physician, and school staff including Athletic Trainer and coaches if applicable to ensure that appropriate accommodations are in place. Suspected concussions that occur during school activities are reported to families for referral to a provider.

Based on state regulations regarding concussion, please note the following: \*\*All students must be cleared by their primary care provider to return to physical activity and full academic workload once they have improved. There are no exceptions to this. The nurses can provide you with a form letter to bring to your doctor for completion or you may obtain a written document from your doctor stating your student is fully cleared from concussion restrictions and may fully participate in academics and athletics including physical education.

\*In addition: All students that are athletes (during any season) must be cleared as above before returning to play. This process requires communication with the Athletic Trainer, documentation from your physician, passing the ImPact test and a graduated return to play. We recommend your student meet with the Athletic Trainer at their earliest convenience to discuss a specific plan. Please refer to Head Injury Management and Protocols available on district website under School Committee Policy Index.

### School Exclusion Guidelines

For the protection of your student as well as the school community, students should be kept home from school or will be dismissed from school under the following circumstances:

- The student has a communicable disease. Students who are prescribed antibiotics for strep throat infection or impetigo (for example) must complete 24 hours of treatment before returning to school. For all other communicable diseases, the student may return to school based on Massachusetts Department of Public Health Guidelines. Surveillance and monitoring of communicable disease outbreaks is done in collaboration with the Mansfield Board of Health and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.
- The student has a temperature of over 100 degrees. The student may return after they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducers.
- The student has an eye infection that may need to be evaluated by a physician. Students may return the day after any indicated treatment has begun for bacterial conjunctivitis, unless the student is at a developmental level that prevents them from maintaining proper hygiene.
- The student has persistent coughing or trouble breathing. They may need to be evaluated for asthma, or a serious respiratory infection.
- The student has an undiagnosed rash. Rashes may need to be evaluated by a physician to rule out communicable disease.
- The student has head lice or nits. The student may return to school after the first treatment and all nits are removed.
- The student has diarrhea within 24 hours. Diarrhea is defined as multiple loose watery stools unrelated to food, medication or a diagnosed chronic condition. The student may return when they have been symptom-free for 24 hours.

- The student has been vomiting within the past 24 hours not associated with a diagnosed condition or medication side effect. The student may return when they have been symptom-free for 24 hours.
- The student has an illness that prevents them from participating comfortably in activities as determined by the staff.
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff determine they can provide without compromising their ability to care for other students.

## LIBRARY USE

The QMS Library is open for student use from 7:15AM to 2:45 PM. Before Homeroom, students are encouraged to use the library to return, take out, or renew books. During the day students may use the library with their class or with a pass from one of their teachers. After school, the library is a quiet place to work. Computers are available for student use in the library.

## STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES/SCHOOL BUSES #EEA, EEAA

The Mansfield Public Schools determines student eligibility and provides bus transportation to eligible students. The school day begins when the student boards the bus and ends when the student gets off the bus. During this entire period the students are under the jurisdiction of the school administration.

- In accordance with Massachusetts Law, Chapter 71, Section 68, as most recently amended, only students in Grades K through 6 residing two or more miles from their assigned school are eligible for free transportation services.
- Students may have to walk up to a half mile to their bus stop.
- Students who are bus riders must have written permission signed by the Principal before they will be allowed any short-term change in their assigned bus. A short-term change will be done on an emergency basis only, such as for illness or a mechanical car problem.
- Walkers are **never** allowed bus transportation.
- Students are normally assigned to bus transportation to and from their home address. Parents/guardians may request transportation for a child to and/or from an address other than home. A child may be picked up at a different location than they are dropped off at **as long as the location is the same five days per week**. For example, a student may be picked up at home every morning and dropped off at a daycare location every afternoon. To make this request, a parent/guardian must complete a Bus Change Form in the school office. Requests are granted on a space-available basis through the Central Office, and must be completed yearly.
- Students in Grades K-6 whose legal residence is within 2.0 miles from their assigned school may purchase transportation on a space-available basis. Applications are available in the school office. A list of streets that are less than 2.0 miles is posted in all the Mansfield Public Schools, at the Mansfield Public Library, and at the Mansfield Town Hall.
- Whenever seats are declared available on a regular (not special education) school bus, and when the route timing will not be adversely affected, the school department may make said seats available to non-eligible students in grades K-6 residing less than two miles from school and to all students in Grades 7 through 12 on a PAY-N-RIDE basis.

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- Special Education students will be transported on special education vehicles or regular school buses in accordance with the specifications of their Individualized Educational Program and in conformance with applicable state requirements.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to provide health information to school bus drivers. If your child has a Life-Threatening medical condition that their bus driver should be aware of, please use the form available on the school website entitled “Emergency Medical Information for Bus Drivers.” Return completed forms by mail to Michael J. Connolly Bus Co., 241 Francis Ave., Mansfield, MA 02048 or fax to Connolly at 508-261-7517. Due to confidentiality laws, we do not share health information with the bus company.

The Pay-N-Ride fees for the 2016-2017 school year are as follows:

- First Student..... \$ 225.00 for the year
- Second Student..... \$ 200.00 for the year
- Third Student..... \$ 150.00 for the year
- Maximum per Family... \$ 575.00 maximum per family

Parents/guardians must provide transportation when a student stays for after-school programs, extra help, discipline, etc. One-day notice will be given so that the parent/guardian can make arrangements for transportation.

Under MA General Laws, students who are eligible for free or reduced lunch may be eligible for a transportation fee waiver. Parents may request a fee waiver application at their child’s school. It must be filled out and have attached proof of income, i.e., copy of payroll stub, income tax return, etc.

## **COMPLIANCE AND SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY**

### **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION #JICFB, JICFB-R**

The Mansfield Public Schools is committed to providing a safe haven that fosters a culture of respect free from harassment, intimidation, bullying, cyber bullying, and retaliation to support the diverse human needs of all our students, employees, volunteers, visitors, and patrons. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning in a safe environment, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

The District will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation, in district school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. This prohibition applies to all MPS employees, volunteers, independent contractors, students, and parents/guardians, including conduct between/among all parties. All reports and complaints of bullying, cyber bullying, and retaliation will be investigated promptly and action taken to end that behavior and restore the target’s sense of safety. This commitment will be supported in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent/guardian involvement.

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Administrators and supervisors are expected to make clear to students and staff that any bullying behaviors, as defined below, will not be tolerated in school buildings, on school grounds, on the bus or school-sanctioned transportation, or at school-sponsored events or activities.

Bullying is prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds;
- At school bus stops;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district;
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by the Mansfield Public Schools

Bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the Mansfield school district if the act or acts in question create a hostile environment at school for the target; infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

### **Definitions**

To effectively support a comprehensive and collaborative approach to school safety, it is essential for school personnel, students, parents/guardians, law enforcement agencies and other interested parties to use common language. The following definitions, several of which are copied directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, are provided to help facilitate this:

Aggressor is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation.

Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- places the target in reasonable fear of harm to oneself or of damage to their property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyber bullying is defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which will include, but will not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not

limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber bullying will also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Cyber bullying will also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. 37O(a)

Hostile environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is a decision-making framework that guides selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence-based academic and behavioral practices for improving important academic and behavior outcomes for all students. PBIS emphasizes four integrated elements:

- (a) data for decision making,
- (b) measurable outcomes supported and evaluated by data,
- (c) practices with evidence that these outcomes are achievable, and
- (d) systems that efficiently and effectively support implementation of these practices.

Response to Intervention (RTI) integrates assessment and intervention within a multilevel prevention system to maximize student achievement and to reduce behavior problems. With RTI, schools identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, monitor student progress, provide evidence-based interventions and adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on a student's responsiveness, and identify students with learning disabilities or other disabilities.

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

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

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

For the purpose of this policy and accompanying plan, whenever the term bullying is used, it is to denote either bullying or cyberbullying.



## **Prevention and Intervention Plan**

The Superintendent will oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, and parents/guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws.

The Superintendent or designee will review and update the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan by December 31 each year.

Each Principal will implement and oversee the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan within their school.

## **Reporting**

### **Responsibility of Students**

Students who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, should report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target will, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying.

Each school will have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action will be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying may be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

### **Responsibility of School Staff**

School staff will take all reasonable measures to prevent bullying. Any employee that witness, hear of, or have reasonable grounds to believe that bullying behaviors are taking place, is obligated to report such behaviors to the principal or their designee. Additionally, any employee who observes an incident of bullying on school property or at a school-related event on or off school property must immediately notify the principal or their designee.

This report should be made verbally as soon as possible but no later than the end of the student's school day. Staff members are required to report all acts or incidents of bullying.

## **Investigation Procedures**

The Principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, will promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying to discuss the actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying. The Principal or designee will promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber Bullying Report

Form. The investigation may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

Student support staff will assess an alleged target's needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that will restore a sense of safety for that student. Confidentiality will be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying. If the Principal or designee determines that bullying has occurred, they will take appropriate disciplinary action.

Furthermore, school staff also must report all crimes to the police. Staff should notify the Principal, who will notify the Superintendent and the School Resource Officer. The SRO will coordinate notification to the police. Reporting of any such incident will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

The investigation will be completed within fourteen school days from the date of the report unless there are extenuating circumstances that prevent access to the students who are involved. The parents or guardians will be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or will be taken. At a minimum the Principal or their designee will contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis.

### Retaliation

The Mansfield Public Schools prohibits retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

### Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law.

### Disciplinary Action

The Mansfield Public Schools is committed to creating a campus environment that promotes timely and fair adjudication of bullying incidents. Principals will establish guidelines to protect the rights and privacy of the targeted student as well as the due process rights of the alleged aggressor. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by a student, the Mansfield Public Schools will take such action as it deems appropriate under the circumstances and that is consistent with the school's Student Code of Conduct. Such action may range from counseling and/or discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion from school. All employees, including supervisors and managers, who engage in bullying are subject to immediate disciplinary action, including possible termination of employment.

The District will provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to both the targeted student and aggressors as necessary.

The Principal or designee will document and maintain a file on any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy. The Principal will provide a monthly report to the Superintendent.

### **Prevention: Training and Education**

#### **Staff Training**

The Mansfield Public Schools will provide annual training in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students and will provide annual training for faculty and staff at each school on the Bullying Prevention and Intervention plan as it pertains to their respective school.

#### **Student Education**

On-going, age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention will be incorporated into the curriculum for all K-12 students.

### **Student-to –Student Harassment**

Harassment of students by other students will not be tolerated in the Mansfield Public Schools. This policy is in effect while students are on school grounds, school district property or property within the jurisdiction of the school district, school buses, or attending or engaging in school activities.

Harassment prohibited by the district includes, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis of race, sex, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, marital status or disability. Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Harassment means conduct of a verbal, written, or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, disturb or trouble students when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education or of a student's participation in school programs or activities;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions affect the student, or;
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's performance or creating an intimidating or hostile learning environment.

Harassment as describe above may include, but is not limited to:

- Verbal, physical or written (which includes texting, blogging, or other technological methods) harassment or abuse;
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, or other school

matter.

- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student.

The district will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment. The Principal of each building will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging harassment.

Retaliation against a student because a student has filed a harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment investigation or proceeding is also prohibited. A student who found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion.

The Superintendent will develop administrative guidelines and procedures for the implementation of this policy.

### **HOMELESS STUDENTS #JFABD**

To the extent practical and as required by federal law under the McKinney Vento Act, the Mansfield Public Schools will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs.

For further information and assistance, please contact:

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Liaison:

Jim Leonard, Director of Special Education

Mansfield Public Schools

508-261-7507

Jim.Leonard@mansfieldschools.com

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION #AC, JIE**

The Mansfield Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national origin, ancestry, retaliation, marital status, genetics, military status, limited English proficiency, homelessness, or any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under state or federal law in its programs or activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

The Mansfield Public Schools is committed to compliance with Title VI and Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title I and Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1991, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the

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Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA), the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA), and with Massachusetts General Laws, c. 76 §5, Chapter 151B, and 151C, all as amended.

The Mansfield Public Schools has designated a Title IX compliance officer to coordinate the District's efforts to comply with these laws and to respond to matters of civil rights that arise in the school setting. If a student or employee feels that they have been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, homelessness, or any other status or category protected under federal or state law, they may complain to the Principal of the school, director of human resources (employees), or to Title IX Officer for the school district.

Discrimination complaints are dealt with at the individual school level whenever possible, with notification to the district-wide Title IX Officer. All reasonable efforts will be made to inform only those with a "need to know" of the complaint.

Title IX Officer and Section 504/ADA Coordinator:

Michael Connolly, Assistant Superintendent  
Mansfield Public Schools  
2 Park Row  
Mansfield, MA 02048  
508-261-7500

Middle School 504 Coordinators:

Kevin Hoffman & Michele Kitchen 508-261-7530

Qualters Middle School Principal:

David McGovern, 508-261-7530

Alternative Complaint Procedures:

Individuals are not limited to a formal complaint process through the Mansfield Public Schools but may seek resolution through other agencies.

Inquiries Regarding Federal Law:

U.S. Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office  
5 Post Office Square, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02109  
617-289-0111  
TTY: 800- 877-8339  
OCR.Boston@ed.gov

Inquiries Regarding State Law:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Office of Program Quality Assurance Services  
75 Pleasant Street  
Malden, MA 02148  
781-338-3000

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)  
1 Ashburton Place, #601  
Boston, MA 02108  
617- 994-6000

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT/HARASSMENT**

### **(Unless otherwise defined by Massachusetts General Law) #ACAB**

All persons associated with the Mansfield Public Schools including, but necessarily limited to, the Committee, the administration, staff, and students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment, while acting as a member of the school community, will be in violation of this policy. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

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

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

#### Definition of Sexual Harassment

Unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment where:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment or educational development.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or education decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, offensive working or educational environment.

### Reporting Sexual Harassment to the Grievance Officer:

The School Committee will annually appoint a Title IX grievance officer who will be vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedure set out below.

### Title IX Grievance Officer:

Michael Connolly, Assistant Superintendent  
2 Park Row Mansfield, MA 02048  
(508)-261-7500  
michael.connolly@mansfieldschools.com

### Complaint Procedure:

1. Any member of the school community who believes that they have been subjected to sexual harassment will report the incident(s) to the grievance officer. All complaints will be investigated promptly and resolved as soon as possible.
2. The grievance officer will attempt to resolve the problem in an informal manner through the following process:
  - a. The grievance officer will confer with the charging party in order to obtain a clear understanding of that party's statement of the facts, and may interview any witnesses.
  - b. The grievance officer will then attempt to meet with the charged party in order to obtain their response to the complaint.
  - c. The grievance officer will hold as many meetings with the parties as is necessary to establish the facts.
  - d. On the basis of the grievance officer's perception of the situation they may:
    - Attempt to resolve the matter informally through reconciliation.
    - Report the incident and transfer the record to the Superintendent or designee, and so notify the parties by certified mail.
3. After reviewing the record made by the grievance officer, the Superintendent or designee may attempt to gather any more evidence necessary to decide the case, and thereafter impose any sanctions deemed appropriate, including a recommendation for termination or expulsion. At this stage of the proceedings the parties may present witnesses and other evidence, and may also be represented. The parties, to the extent permissible by law, will be informed of the disposition of the complaint. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct.
3. The grievance officer, upon request, will provide the charging party with government agencies that handle sexual harassment matters.

## **TEACHING ABOUT DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO #IHAMA**

In accordance with state and federal law, the Mansfield Public Schools will provide age and developmentally-appropriate, evidence-based alcohol, drug, and tobacco education and prevention programs in grades K-12.

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The alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention program will address the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, with emphasis on nonuse by school-age children. The program also will include information about effective techniques and skill development for delaying and abstaining from using, as well as skills for addressing peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.

The objectives of this program, as stated below, are rooted in the Committee's belief that prevention requires education, and that the most important aspect of the policies and guidelines of the District should be the education of children and youth on healthy decision-making:

- To prevent, delay, and/or reduce alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among children and youth.
- To increase students' understanding of the legal, social, economic, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.
- To teach students self-management skills, social skills, negotiation skills, and refusal skills that will help them to make healthy decisions and avoid alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.

## **TEEN DATING VIOLENCE POLICY**

The Mansfield Public Schools is committed to providing a learning environment in which dating violence is not tolerated. Consistent with this philosophy, the Mansfield Public Schools is committed to promoting an environment free from dating violence. Accordingly, the Mansfield Public Schools seeks to increase awareness of teen dating violence and help in responding to the needs of victims and children who are witnesses to such violence.

Teen dating violence occurring in any setting is unlawful, and teen dating violence occurring in any school setting will not be tolerated. Further, retaliation against an individual who has complained about teen dating violence or cooperated in an investigation of teen dating violence will not be tolerated. The Mansfield Public Schools will respond promptly to complaints and reports of teen dating violence or retaliation and corrective action will be taken where necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

### **Procedure for Reporting Teen Dating Violence**

#### **Responsibility of Students**

A student, who believes that they have been a victim of teen dating violence, believes that they are in danger of teen dating violence, or has a restraining order against an individual, may report the matter to any of the following individuals: (1) principal, (2) assistant principal, (3) guidance/counselor, (4) teacher, or (5) school nurse.

Students who observe an act of teen dating abuse, sexual violence, or stalking, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, should report incidents to



school faculty and/or staff. The targeted student will, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report teen dating abuse, sexual violence, or stalking.

The staff member who receives the report must notify the principal or his designee verbally or in writing no later than the end of the student's school day.

#### Responsibility of School Staff

School staff will take all reasonable measures to prevent teen dating abuse, sexual violence, and stalking.

Any employee that witness, hear of, or have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, is obligated to report such behaviors to the principal or their designee. Additionally, any employee who observes an incident of teen dating violence on school property or at a school-related event on or off school property must immediately notify the principal or their designee.

This report should be made verbally or in writing as soon as possible but no later than the end of the student's school day. All staff members are required to report all acts or incidents of dating violence.

These could include:

- Witnessed or reliable information concerning acts or incidents that are characterized by physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse.
- Digital or electronic acts or incidents of dating violence.
- Patterns of behavior that are threatening or controlling.

When a report of teen dating violence is received, whether it occurred off school property or has occurred on school property, on the way to or from school or at a school-related event, or a violation of a restraining order on school property, on the way to or from school or at a school related event is received, the Mansfield Public Schools will act promptly to notify the appropriate authorities of the alleged incident. Reporting of any such incident will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of dating violence will be subject to disciplinary action.

It is important to take third party information seriously where teen dating violence is concerned. It is recommended that an appropriately trained member of the school staff approach the student to discuss what has been heard and potential concerns. If abuse is acknowledged, a "safety plan" should be worked on, in addition to recommending and sharing referrals for counseling, support groups, and police/court assistance.

Additionally, school staff must remember to comply with all statutory reporting obligations for suspected abuse and neglect (51A reporting). Filing of 51A complaints should be done by following the Mansfield Public Schools Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Guidelines, including notifying the principal of the suspected abuse and neglect. Furthermore, school staff also must remember to report all crimes to the police. Staff should notify the principal, who will notify the

Superintendent and the School Resource Officer. The SRO will coordinate notification to the police. Reporting of any such incident will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

### Ensuring Confidentiality

Under state law, any information about a student's status as a target or perpetrator of dating abuse or sexual violence or as the petitioner or respondent of an order of protection and other related information that is either generated by or provided to school officials, regardless of its form, is part of the individual's student record (see Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, 603 CMR 23.00). The information is confidential and must be kept private and secure, and may not be disclosed to third parties without the written consent of the parent or eligible student, except in limited circumstances. An "eligible student" is a student who is 14 years of age or older or who has entered the 9th grade, unless the school committee has extended rights to younger students or those who have not yet entered 9th grade (603 CMR § 23.02). Once the student reaches the age of 18, the student or the parent may consent to the disclosure of information from the student's record to third parties unless the student has limited the parent's right in that regard. (Although a student 18 years of age or older has authority to limit the parent's right to consent to disclosure of his or her student records, the student cannot limit the parent's right to review them.)

Authorized school personnel may have access to student records of students to whom they are providing services when access is necessary to perform their official duties (603 CMR §23.07(3)). In these circumstances, written consent of the eligible student or parent is not required. For example, if the student or student's parent has provided the school a copy of a court order of protection issued on behalf of one student against another student in the same school, they may need to inform the assistant, the school nurse, teachers, and the student's guidance counselor for safety planning and other related purposes.

A school may disclose information to parties in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other individuals. 603 CMR 23.07

### Parental Notification and Disclosure

If school personnel determine that a student is currently in danger or there is potential for danger related to dating abuse, a parent/guardian must be notified. School counselors and administrators will work together with students experiencing dating abuse to find ways of involving parents/guardians in increasing their child's safety. If students choose to notify their parents that they are experiencing abuse, school personnel will assist the student in developing a plan for such disclosure, including meeting with students and parents as needed. The student may disclose the name of the alleged offending student to their parent, but the school cannot disclose the name.

### Procedures When the School Is Provided With a Copy of a Restraining Order

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When a student has a restraining order against an individual and provides a copy of the order to the school, the school should hold a meeting with the student and their parents/guardians to review the restraining order and its implications. A "safety plan" should be worked out to address the victim's needs and concerns, including staff to which the student may report if any concerns arise or any violation of the restraining order occurs while the student is on school property or at a school-related event. If the restraining order is against another member of the community, a separate meeting should be held with that individual to review the restraining order and its implications, expectations, and the consequences for violation of the order. The development of the "safety plan" will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

#### Disciplinary Action

The Mansfield Public Schools is committed to creating a campus environment that promotes timely and fair adjudication of teen dating violence, and sexual violence cases. Principals will establish guidelines to protect the rights and privacy of the targeted student as well as the due process rights of the alleged offender. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed, the Mansfield Public Schools will take such action as it deems appropriate under the circumstances and that is consistent with the school's student code of conduct. Such action may range from counseling and/or discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion from school.

#### Prevention: Training & Education

##### Student Education

Ongoing age-appropriate education on healthy relationships will be provided to all students in grades K-10, with specific instruction relating to teen dating abuse taught yearly in grades 7–10 through the health curriculum. This curriculum will include, but not be limited to, defining teen dating violence, recognizing warning signs of abuse, and characteristics of healthy relationships. Additionally, students will be provided with the school district's teen dating abuse policy in the student handbook.

##### Parent Education

The District will inform parents of the policy against teen dating abuse and sexual violence and provide them with any additional relevant information and local prevention resources through the Mansfield Public Schools website. The Committee encourages the use of parent workshops at the secondary level on the topic of preventing teen dating abuse and sexual violence.

#### **SPECIAL EDUCATION #IHB**

All students in the Mansfield Public Schools are provided with a free and appropriate education in accordance with the federal Education of All Handicapped Children law and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulations Section 28. In each school building, the Massachusetts Special Education Regulations are available for review. No-cost evaluations to identify special education needs are provided for children from age three (3) through twenty-one (21) who have a disabling condition and have not yet obtained a high school

diploma. An Individualized Educational Program (IEP) is developed by an Evaluation Team and implemented for students with an identified disabling condition that interferes with effective progress in regular education. Special education students are expected to comply with all the rules of behavior and discipline unless modifications to these rules are indicated in the student's Individualized Educational Program.

Parents/guardians have the right to initiate, monitor or terminate special education for students under the age of eighteen (18). A student has the following rights regardless of their age:

- A student has the right to stay in their program until an evaluation, the writing of the Individual Educational Program and any appeals of the Individual Educational Program have been completed.
- A student is entitled to an equal opportunity to participate in all aspects of the school program, both academic and extracurricular, and may not be discriminated against on the basis of their disability.

District Compliance Coordinator  
Jim Leonard, Director of Special Education  
Mansfield Public Schools  
508-261-7507  
Jim.Leonard@mansfieldschools.com

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Bureau of Special Education Appeals  
350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02148

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations afford parents/guardians and eligible students certain rights regarding student educational records. These rights include:

1. To inspect and review the education records of a student within ten (10) days of the day the school system receives a request. Parents/guardians or eligible students should submit to the school Principal or other appropriate school official a written request that identifies the record (s) that they wish to inspect. The Principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. The school department may charge a reasonable copying fee.
2. To ask the Mansfield Public Schools to amend a record. Parents/guardians or eligible students should write to the school Principal, clearly identifying the part of the record that they want changed. If the school system decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible student, the school system will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and advise them of the right to a

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hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. With certain exceptions set forth in the state and federal regulations, to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the education record of the student.

Complaints regarding student records issues may be sent to:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U. S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20202-4605

## **MASSACHUSETTS STUDENT RECORDS REGULATIONS**

In the Mansfield Public Schools, student records are maintained in accordance with the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations. The student record consists of the school transcript and the temporary record. The temporary record includes all information that is relevant to the educational needs of the student and is kept by the school.

### **Accessibility**

The parent/guardian of a student, and an eligible student who is at least fourteen (14) years of age or has entered the ninth grade, has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request to the Principal. The record must be made available to the parent/guardian or eligible student not later than two consecutive workdays after the request is made, unless the parent/guardian or eligible student consents to a delay. The parent/guardian or eligible student may request copies of any part of the student record. A fee may be charged for the cost of copying.

### **Confidentiality**

No individual or organization other than the parent/guardian, eligible student or school personnel working directly with the student is allowed access to students' records without the specific written consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student except in limited instances as specified by the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations.

### **Authorization for Release of Student Records**

In accordance with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Regulations 603 CMR 23.02, the Mansfield Public Schools may release certain information about students and parents/guardians to third parties without first obtaining consent, unless the parent/guardian or eligible student notifies the Mansfield Public Schools in writing that they do not want such information to be released. "Third parties" are defined in these regulations to be, "...any person, private or public agency... or organization other than the eligible student, their parent, or authorized school personnel". For example, third parties to whom the Mansfield Public

Schools may release student record information would include parent teacher organizations, and newspapers that report on student activities, etc.

The directory information that may be released is limited to the following:

- Student's name, address, telephone listing
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Class
- Participation in officially-recognized activities and sports
- Degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans

Students fourteen (14) years of age or older or who have entered grade nine are entitled to receive notification regarding the release of student record information.

Parents/guardians who do not wish this information concerning their children and themselves to be released without their consent may complete and sign a school form so indicating. These forms are available through the Guidance Office.

#### Medical Records

During the time a student is enrolled in a school, the Principal or designee will periodically review and destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information contained in the temporary record provided that the eligible student and their parent are notified in writing and are given opportunity to receive the information or a copy of it prior to its destruction. A copy of such notice will be placed in the temporary record. The School Health and Immunization Record is considered part of the temporary record. Students are provided the opportunity to sign for and take possession of their School Health and Immunization Record during the last few weeks of their senior year or prior to moving from the district. The Mansfield Public School system does not retain a copy of this record, and any unclaimed record is destroyed.

#### Amendment or Deletion of Records

A parent/guardian or eligible student has the right to add relevant comments, information or other written material to the Student Record. In addition, the parent/guardian or eligible student has the right to request that information contained in the record be amended or deleted except for information inserted in the record by a team evaluation. The parent/guardian or eligible student has a right to a conference with the school Principal for the purpose of objecting to information contained in the record. Within a week after such a conference, the Principal must render a decision in writing on the objection. If the parent/guardian or eligible student is not satisfied with the decision of the Principal, the parent/guardian or eligible student may appeal such decision to the Superintendent of Schools.

#### Destruction of Records

The temporary record of a student will be destroyed no later than seven (7) years after the student leaves the school system. The transcript of a student may be destroyed no sooner than

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sixty (60) years after the student leaves the school system. A school Principal or designee may destroy misleading, outdated or irrelevant information contained in the temporary record during the time the student is enrolled in the school system, provided the parent/guardian or eligible student has been notified in writing and given the opportunity to inspect and copy any of the information prior to its destruction.

#### Non-custodial Parents

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H, non-custodial parents are eligible to obtain access to their children's student records unless the school or district has been given documentation that:

- The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitations, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation.
- The parent has been denied visitation.
- The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record.
- There is an order of a probate and family court judge that prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

### **STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLNESS #ADF**

The Mansfield School Committee adopts the principle that, while families are the primary teachers and caregivers for their children, the present and future health, safety, and well-being of students are also the concern of the Mansfield Public Schools. Schools cannot achieve their primary mission of education if students and staff are not healthy and fit physically, mentally, and socially. In addition, schools have a duty to teach students lifelong skills to prevent unnecessary injury, disease, and chronic health conditions.