Avon Public Schools

Employee Handbook

2022-2023

***The Avon Public Schools is committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. We do not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, gender, gender identity, homeless status, or sexual orientation.***

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

**PURPOSE**

This handbook summarizes a number- but not all-laws, policies, protocols, and expectations for employees of the Avon Public Schools. Laws, policies, protocols, and expectations are subject to change at any time. Avon Public Schools reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time, with or without notice.

**OUR MISSION**

To educate all students to be lifelong learners and responsible citizens in a global society.

**OUR VISION**

The Avon Public Schools are committed to excellence in teaching and learning and are a source of pride in the community. We respect and appreciate individual differences. We utilize a variety of teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of our students and foster an atmosphere of intellectual pursuit. All students will graduate from the Avon Public Schools with the skills necessary to be lifelong learners and productive and responsible citizens in a global society.’

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER**

The School Committee subscribes to the fullest extent to the principle of the dignity of all people and of their labors and will take action to ensure that any individual with in the District who is responsible for hiring and/or personnel supervision understand that the applicants are employed, assigned, and promoted regardless of to their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, genetic information, ancestry, military status, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions, or disability. Every available opportunity will be taken in order to ensure that each applicant for a position is selected on the basis of qualifications, merit, and ability.

*School Committee Policy GBA*

**NON- DISCRIMINATION**

The purpose of this document is to state and reaffirm the commitment of the Avon Public Schools to maintaining an educational environment and workplace where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination on the basis of age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, gender, gender identity, homeless status, or sexual orientation have no place and where any form of intimidation, threat, coercion, and/or harassment that insults the dignity of others and interferes with their freedom to learn or work is unacceptable. This policy will extend not only to students with regards to education opportunities, but also to employees with regard to employment opportunities, the general public, and individuals with whom the Committee does business. The Avon Public Schools will ensure fair and equitable educational and employment access and opportunities without regard for age, color, pregnancy, or pregnancy conditions, disability, national origin, race, religion, gender, gender identity, homelessness status, or sexual orientation.

The Avon Public Schools will not tolerate from its students, teachers, or other employees any form of discrimination, including, intimidation, threat, coercion, and/or harassment, for such conduct is contrary to the mission of the Avon Public Schools. Furthermore, retaliatory conduct towards persons who have filed complaints will not be tolerated, as well as retaliation against any person who has testified, assisted, or participated in an investigation, proceeding, hearing, or a complaint. Unacceptable conduct for which the Avon Public Schools has no tolerance includes, but is not limited to, any action or speech that contributes to, promotes, or results in a hostile or discriminatory environment. Many forms of harassment have been recognized as violations of the civil rights laws by federal courts, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the US Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Accordingly, derisive statements made regarding person’s age, color, pregnancy, or pregnancy related conditions, disability, national origin, race, religion, gender, gender identity, homelessness status, or sexual orientation, including statements made in person or by telephone, postal, or electronic mail, or any other means of communication, if sufficiently serve, pervasive, or persistent that they (a) interfere with or limit an individual’s ability to participate in or benefit from employment in the Avon Public Schools or from any Avon Public School program or activity, or (b) create an intimidating , threatening, or abusive educational or working environment, will not be tolerated by the Avon Public Schools. The Avon Public Schools will vigorously implement and enforce its policies of non-discrimination to foster a fair and respectful environment where equal and fair treatment of its students and employees is an integral part of its daily operations. Any member of the Avon Public School community who believes s/he has been subject to discrimination or harassment, or who has information regarding any such discriminatory or harassing conduct within the Avon Public Schools is encouraged to report such matters to the Title IX Compliance Officer. The Title IX Compliance Officer will investigate the claim and will recommend corrective action, if necessary to the Superintendent. Any individual who, for whatever reason, is uncertain about or has questions regarding the reporting procedures is encouraged to contact the Superintendent of Schools. All students and employees will be notified of the name, address and telephone number of the Title IX Compliance Officer.

*School Committee Policy AC*

**AVON SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name | Title |
| Tracy Sheehan | Chair |
| Anne Hagberg | Vice Chair |
| Maria Piccirilli | Secretary |
| Paul Chapman  | Member |
| Claudia Lael Lucia | Member |

**AVON PUBLIC SCHOOLS CENTRAL OFFICE**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name | Title |
| Christine Godino | Superintendent |
| Kathleen McDonald | Coordinator of School BusinessCivil Rights Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator |
| Jennifer Meek | Director of Pupil ServicesSpecial Education Director, Civil Rights Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, Title II Coordinator, Section 504 Coordinator, Homeless Student Liaison |
| Ashley Lawson | Central Office Assistant |
| Elaine Egersheim | Central Office Secretary |
| Hallam Depina-Holmes | Transportation Coordinator |
| Scott Hulien  | Director of Technology |
| Brian Cream | IT Technician |
| Lisa Silvia | Coordinator of Administrative Services |
| Sharon Swain | Humans Resources/Payroll Assistant |

**LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name | Title |
| Sarah Shaw | Principal; Butler Elementary School |
| Kim Bothwell | Assistant Principal; Butler Elementary School |
| Shawn Desmond | Principal: Avon Middle High School |
| Julie Minahan | Assistant Principal; Avon Middle High School |

 **AVON MIDDLE HIGH SCHOOL CRISIS TEAM**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name | Title |
| Shawn Desmond | Principal |
| Julie Minahan | Assistant Principal |
| Mary Blackburn | Nurse |
| Kaitlyn Fuller | Adjustment Counselor |
| Dawn Kosinski | School Psychologist |
| Caterina Francisco | Coordinating Teacher |
| Christina Berardi | Guidance Counselor |

**BUTLER CRISIS TEAM**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name  | Title |
| Sarah Shaw | Principal |
| Kim Bothwell | Assistant Principal |
| Amanda Dowd | Nurse |
| Nicole Ruggles | Adjustment Counselor |
| Emily Haworth | Coordinating Teacher |

The Crisis Team members are trained in Nonviolent Crisis Prevention through the Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI). The Crisis Team members are available to all students who are experiencing difficulties.

**504 COORDINATORS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name  | Title |
| Christina Berardi | Avon Middle High School |
| Nicole Ruggles | Butler Elementary School |

**STUDENT SCHOOL HOURS**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| School | BuildingOpens | SchoolStarts | Regular Dismissal | Early Release Dismissal |
| Avon Middle High School | 7:25 a.m. | 7:35 a.m. | 2:05 p.m. | 10:55 a.m. |
| Butler Elementary School | 8:10 a.m. | 8:25 a.m. | 2:40 p.m. | 11:40 a.m. |

**SCHOOL DELAYS & CANCELLATION**

The Superintendent’s office, in collaboration with other town departments, makes the determination regarding school delays and cancellations.

All School delay or cancellation will be made via the ConnectEd messenger communication system, a telephone/email system that allows a recorded message to be sent to each employee household. When feasible, a message will be delivered at approximately 5:45 A.M. on the morning of the cancellation. If the conditions are such that the information is known on the previous day, notification may be sent in the evening prior to the cancellation.

1. **STAFF CONDUCT & EXPECTATIONS**

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

In the area of personal conduct, the Committee expects that all staff will conduct themselves in a manner that not only reflects credit to the school system, but also sets forth a model worthy of emulation by students. All staff members will be expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern. Essential to the success of the ongoing school operations and the instructional program are the following specific responsibility, which will be required of all personnel:

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

*School Committee Policy GBEB*

**BULLYING**

Bullying is defined per M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O as ''Bullying'', the repeated use by one or more student or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying. All staff shall be trained annually on the Avon Public Schools Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan which is on the Avon Public Schools website.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

All personal/sensitive information pertaining to Avon Public Schools, staff, students, or legal guardians is confidential and protected under Federal and State Law (FERPA). Any such information regarding staff, students, and/or legal guardians is not to be disclosed to anyone other than assigned staff or legally authorized individuals/agencies.

* Staff will access confidential, protected, or privileged information for legitimate business purposes only.
* Confidential information will; be stored in a way that preserves confidentiality and will not leave the school building, physically or electronically.
* Staff will not in any way disclose, misuse, alter, or destroy confidential information.
* Staff will prevent unauthorized use of confidential information and report misuse to their supervisor.
* Staff will limit communication about confidential information; conversations that include such information will take place in a private area where non-involved staff and/or other students cannot overhear.

*Employees should consult their supervisors with any questions regarding confidentiality.*

**EMPLOYEE ATTIRE & WORK AREA**

All faculty and employees of the Avon Public Schools serve as role models for the students with whom they work and as leaders in the community. Consistent with these roles, all faculty and employees shall dress in a manner and have an appearance that is appropriate and professional in light of the environment in which they work, the duties of their jobs, and the impressionable youth they serve. Employees are also required to keep their work environment clean and orderly throughout the day. Before departing at the end of the workday, employees should lock all essentials, especially if they contain materials of a sensitive or confidential nature.

**ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY**

Punctual and regular attendance is an expectation for all employees of Avon Public Schools.

Late arrivals, early departures, and other absences are disruptive and impose an unfair burden on one’s colleagues, including on building administrators who must coordinate coverage.

“Absence” is defined as an employee not reporting to work when s/he is scheduled. If it is

necessary for an employee to be absent or late for work because of an illness or an emergency, the employee must notify his or her supervisor. Every effort should be made to notify the supervisor the night before the absence. If the employee is unable to call, the employee must have someone call for them. Administration understands that there may be extenuating circumstances. Please see your building Assistant Principal for more information on reporting absences.

Employees are expected to return from scheduled breaks on time. Employees who cannot return from a scheduled break on time or who must leave work before the end of their scheduled shift must notify a supervisor immediately. Please reference employee contracts for specifics regarding absences.

A physician’s certification of illness is required after 5 consecutive sick days or if there is excessive absenteeism.

**CELL PHONES-EMPLOYEE USE**

Employees will limit personal use of cell phones and other electronic devices during the school day. Employees will never share personal contact information with students or legal guardians.

**MANDATED REPORTING**

All Avon Public School (APS) Employees are mandated reporters and are REQUIRED to report suspected and alleged cases of child abuse. All APS employees must immediately report suspicion of child abuse orally to the building principal or designee. All employees are trained on mandated reporting procedures when hired.

**DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

In accordance with the Drug Free WorkPlace Act of 1988, the Town of Avon has established a Drug-Free Workplace, which affects all employees. The School Committee is committed to providing a drug free workplace in observance and enforcement of state and federal laws regulating the use of alcohol and controlled substances. It is equally committed to creating conditions conducive to the physical and psychological health of everyone who works or studies within its jurisdiction. Please reference the Avon School Committee Manuel section GBEC for the full guidelines.

*School Committee Policy GBEC*

**SMOKE-FREE SCHOOL POLICY**

Use of any tobacco products, including but not limited to: cigarettes, electronic cigars, little cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, snuff, and electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes, or other similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization, within the school buildings school facilities, on school grounds, on school buses, or at school sponsored events by any individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the discipline code. This policy shall be promulgated to all staff and students in appropriate handbook(s) and publications. Signs shall be posted in all school buildings informing the general public of the District policy and requirements of state law.

*School Committee Policy ADC*

**ETHICS REFORM LAW**

The School Committee expects members of its professional staff to be familiar with the code of ethics that applies to their profession and to adhere to it in their relationships with students, parents, coworkers, and officials of the school system. No employee of the Committee will engage in or have a financial interest in, directly or indirectly, any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his/her duties and responsibilities in the school system. No staff member will engage in any type of private business during school time or on school property. Employees will not engage in work of any type where information concerning customer, client, or employer originates from any information available to them through school sources.

Moreover, as there should be no conflict of interest in the supervision and evaluation of employees, at no time may any administrator responsible for the supervision and/ or evaluation of employees be directly related to him/her. Every year, all current employees including School Committee members, must complete the State Ethics Commission’s online training. New employees must complete this training within 30 days of beginning employment and every year thereafter. Upon completing the program, employees should print out the completion certificate and keep a copy for themselves. Employees will be required to provide a copy of completion certificate to the municipal or district Clerk through the Superintendent’s office. In order to avoid the appearance of any possible conflict, it is the policy of the School Committee that when an immediate family member, as defined in the Conflict of Interest statute, of a School Committee member or district administrator is to be hired into or promoted within the School District, the Superintendent shall file public notice with the School Committee and the Town or District Clerk at least two weeks prior to executing the hiring in accordance with the law.

*School Committee Policy GBEA*

**EQUIPMENT**

No equipment may be taken or altered without written permission from the school principal. No chairs, stands, or other property may be loaned out to individuals or groups or brought in by individuals or groups without permission of the Superintendent. Staff should not bring in personal furniture or equipment. Furthermore, existing school equipment should not be altered. Please see your building principal for needed equipment.

**MONEY OR VALUABLES**

Money and valuables of any description should not be left in a staff's desk or closet in any school or APS property. APS is not responsible for any lost or stolen personal valuables.

**PHYSICAL RESTRAINTS**

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the school district. Further, students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Such restraint shall be used only in emergency situations as a last resort and with extreme caution after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate. When an emergency situation arises, and physical restraint is the only option deemed appropriate to prevent a student from injuring himself or herself, another student or school community member, a teacher, employee, or agent of the school district may use such reasonable force needed to protect students, other persons, or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603 CMR 46.02. The use of mechanical restraint, medical restraint, and seclusion are prohibited.

Physical restraint, including prone restraint where permitted under 603 CMR 46.03, shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited except when a student’s behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to themselves and/or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful less intrusive behavior interventions are deemed inappropriate.

The superintendent will develop procedures identifying:

* Appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention;
* Methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide, including crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors among groups of students or individuals;
* Description and explanations of alternatives to physical restraint as well as the school’s method of physical restraint for use in emergency situations;
* Descriptions of the school’s training and procedures to comply with reporting requirements including, but not limited to, making reasonable efforts to orally notify a parent of the use of restraint within 24 hours of its imposition;
* Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints;
* Methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;
* A statement prohibiting: medical restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint unless, permitted by 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), seclusion, and the use of physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00;
* A process for obtaining Principal approval for a time out exceeding 30 minutes.

Each building principal will identify members to serve as school-wide resources to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These staff members will participate in an in-depth training program in the use of physical restraint.

In addition, each staff member will be trained regarding the school’s physical restraint policy and accompanying procedures. The Principal will arrange training to occur in the first month of each school year, or for staff hired after the beginning of the school year, within a month of their employment.

Physical restraint is prohibited 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 or physical harm to the student or others.

Physical restraint is prohibited when it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but

Not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;

The use of “time out” procedures during which a staff member remains accessible to the student shall not be considered “seclusion restraint.”

This policy and its accompanying procedures shall be reviewed and disseminated to staff annually and made available to parents of enrolled students. The Superintendent shall provide a copy of the Physical Restraint regulations to each principal, who shall sign a form acknowledging receipt thereof.

*School Committee Policy JKAA*

**ANTI-DISCRIMINATION/ANTI HARASSMENT POLICY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

The Avon School District is committed to maintaining and promoting an educational environment free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment. The civil rights of all school committee members are guaranteed by law, and the protection of those rights is of utmost importance and priority to the District. Discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, genetic information or testing, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, pregnancy, pregnancy related condition, or disability (hereinafter “membership in a protected class”) will not be tolerated. Retaliation against any employee or other individual who has complained of discrimination including harassment, or individuals who have cooperated with an investigation of such a complaint, is also unlawful and will not be tolerated. The District will promptly investigate, remedy any harm, seek to prevent recurrence of such conduct, and will also develop procedures to accomplish this end. This policy applies to the conduct directed toward persons associated with the educational community by all other persons associated with the educational community including, but not limited to, students, district employees, the School committee, school volunteers, and independent contractors.

I. What is Discrimination, including Harassment?

A. Discrimination: Treating persons differently, or interfering with or preventing them from enjoying the advantages or privileges afforded to others because of their membership in a protected class.

B. Harassment: Oral, written, graphic, electronic, or physical conduct relating to a person’s actual or perceived membership in a protected class that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit that person’s ability to participate in the District’s programs or activities by creating a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive educational environment. Harassing conduct based on a person’s protected status may include, but is not limited to: Degrading, demeaning, insulting, or abusive verbal, or written statements; taking personal belongings, taunting, teasing, name-calling, or spreading rumors; drawing or writing graffiti, slogans, visual displays, or symbols on school or another’s property; telling degrading or offensive jokes; unwanted physical contact of any kind; physical violence, threats of bodily harm, physical intimidation, or stalking; threatening letters, emails, instant messages, or websites that come within the scope of the District’s disciplinary authority; defacing, damaging, or destroying school or another’s property.

C. Sexual Harassment: Conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following: A school employee conditioning education benefits on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e. quid pro quo); or unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would determine is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school’s education program or activity; or sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act as: any sexual act directed against another person, without consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking (as defined in the Violence Against Women Act as: engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to: (1) Fear for the person’s individual safety or the safety of others; or (2) Suffer substantial emotional distress).

II. Responsibilities of all Persons Associated with Educational Community

Each member of the educational community is personally responsible for ensuring that his/her conduct does not in any way harass or discriminate against any other person that s/he has contact with in the performance of his/her duties or studies or while acting as a member of the school community. In addition, each member of the educational community is required to fully cooperate in any investigation of alleged discrimination, including harassment. Further, District Employees are obligated to intervene and stop any discrimination, including harassment they witness, and to immediately report to the appropriate party instances of discrimination, including harassment, that are reported to them or of which they otherwise learn.

III. Designated Officials for Addressing Discrimination and Harassment Complaints

The Civil Rights Coordinator(s) and Title IX Coordinator(s) are responsible for receiving reports and complaints of violations of this policy. Individuals may file a report or complaint of discrimination, including harassment, with the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) and/or Title IX Coordinator(s). If the complaint involves allegations of discrimination based on disability, the person filing the complaint also has the option to file his/her complaint with the building level 504 coordinator. A report or complaint of a violation involving the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) and/or Title IX Coordinator(s) should be filed with the Superintendent. A report or complaint of violation involving the Superintendent should be filed with the Committee.

IV. Procedure for Reporting Discrimination and Harassment

The following complaint procedure has been established to ensure prompt and effective investigation into allegations of discrimination, including harassment.

A person who believes that s/he has been discrimination against including being harassed may, to the extent that they feel comfortable, immediately:

1. confront the harasser(s) or person(s) believed to be discriminating against him/her;
2. state the conduct that s/he objects to;
3. indicate that s/he finds such conduct offensive, intimidating and/or embarrassing;
4. insist that the person that the person(s) engaging in the conduct stop the conduct immediately; and/or
5. report the conduct immediately.

If the individual with the concern is not comfortable with such a confrontation, or feels that

Such a confrontation is unsafe and/or otherwise inappropriate, s/he should instead report the situation to the Civil Rights Coordinator(s). Report/complaints are to be filed within ninety (90) days after the conduct complained of occurred or within the time the individual reasonably became aware of the conduct. (Note: this filing period may be extended for good cause.) Reports/complaints filed after ninety (90) days will still be accepted, however, it is important to know that the investigation may be impeded due to the passage of time after the conduct or occurrence. The report can be written or oral and should consist of the following:

1. the specific conduct objected to,
2. the date(s) and the time(s) such conduct took place,
3. the name(s) of the alleged harasser(s) or person(s) believed to be discriminating against them,
4. the location(s) where the conduct occurred,
5. the name(s) of any witness(es),
6. action sought to remedy the situation, and
7. any other details or information requested by the designated official.

The individual can contact the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) to file a report/complaint as well as to seek assistance in the filing of a report/complaint. If a report/complaint is filed, the person should provide the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) with any documentation (emails, notes, pictures, etc.) or other information in support of the allegation of discrimination, including harassment.

V. Investigation of Complaints

Upon receipt of a report or complaint, the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) should conduct a prompt investigation. The investigation must allow for the complainant, the subject of the complaint, the alleged harasser(s), and any other appropriate party to provide information, including should conduct a prompt investigation. The investigation must allow for the complainant, the subject of the complaint, the alleged harasser(s), and any other appropriate party to provide information, including witnesses or other evidence, relevant to the consideration and resolution of the complaint. The Civil Rights Coordinator(s) will also endeavor to promptly interview and obtain detailed written statements from potential witnesses. If further documentation or information is necessary, the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) will notify the appropriate party, asking that the information be provided within ten (10) school/working days.

The District will take interim steps, as necessary, to ensure the safety and well-being of the complainant and the alleged harasser(s) while the investigation is being conducted. Interim measures are available even if the complainant does not file or continue to pursue a complaint.

The Civil Rights Coordinator(s) shall notify the complainant and the alleged harasser(s) of specific types of interim measures available, which may include measures to avoid contact with the other party, allowing employees to change work situations as appropriate, or prohibiting contact between the parties pending the results of the District’s investigation. At any time, a complainant or the alleged harasser(s) may request either orally or in writing to the Civil Rights Coordinator that specific interim measures be taken pending the outcome of the investigation.

A written determination regarding the complaint and any resolution will be provided by the Civil Rights Coordinator to the complainant and the alleged harasser(s) within thirty (30) school/working days of the complaint. The determination of whether the District’s antidiscrimination policy has been violated will be based upon a preponderance of the evidence standard. The complainant or the alleged harasser(s) may request reconsideration of the determination and/or resolution of a complaint by notifying the Superintendent in writing or verbally within seven (7) school/working days of receipt of the written determination of the Civil Rights Coordinator. The Superintendent or his/her designee will respond to such a request with notice to both parties within (30) thirty school/working days of receipt of the request for reconsideration; his/her decision is final. If a violation is found to have occurred, the District will take steps to prevent recurrence of the violation and correct its discriminatory effect on the person(s) affected. Such steps may include appropriate disciplinary action, counseling, development of a safety plan and other remedies, as appropriate.

VI. Consequences of Violating Policy- Discipline & Discharge

Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the contractual provisions governing his/her employment. In appropriate circumstances, the District may also refer the matter to law enforcement officials for possible prosecution. Any Student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may range from detention, suspension from school, or expulsion from school. (Note: students with disabilities will be subject to the applicable disciplinary procedures set forth in the Students’ Rights and Responsibilities District handbook, which adhere to Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973.) In appropriate circumstances, the District may also refer the matter to law enforcement officials for possible prosecution.

VII. Confidentiality

Investigations of discrimination, including harassment complaints, shall be conducted in such a manner as to disclose information only to those with a need to know or those who may have information pertinent to the investigation. Please note, some level of disclosure may be necessary in the course of conducting interviews in connection with investigation of any complaint under this policy. The District shall endeavor to keep such information as confidential as it can without compromising the thoroughness of the investigation.

VIII. State and Federal Authorities

In addition to the process described above, the complainant may, at any time, file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, or other appropriate federal or state agency charged with enforcement of state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination, including harassment, based on membership in a protected class.

U.S. Department of Education for Civil Rights

5 Post Office Square

8th Floor, Suite 900

Boston, MA 02109-3921

Telephone: (617) 289-0111 http://www/ed/gov

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination

436 Dwight St., 2nd Floor, Rm.220

Springfield, MA 01103

Telephone: (413) 739-2145

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

75 Pleasant Street

Malden, MA 02148-4906

Telephone: (781) 338-3000

IX. Procedure for Reporting and Investigating Harassment on the Basis of Sex

Reporting: Any person may file a report of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), at any time in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person’s verbal or written report. However, if a person files a false complaint in bad faith, knowingly and intentionally, they will be subject to discipline.

*Investigations*: The school is considered to have actual knowledge of a sexual harassment complaint if a notice of sexual harassment or an allegation of sexual harassment is provided to a Title IX Coordinator, any school official, or any school employee. The School will investigate every formal complaint (which may be filed by a complainant or by a school’s Title IX Coordinator). If the alleged conduct does not fall under Title IX, then a school may address the allegations under the school’s code of conduct and can still provide supportive measures. The allegations to both parties upon receipt of a formal complaint, and investigate under specified procedures.

The School will investigate and adjudicate formal complaints of sexual harassment using a grievance process that incorporates due process principles, treats all parties fairly, and reaches reliable responsibility determinations. The school’s grievance process will: Give both parties written notice of the allegations, an equal opportunity to select an advisor of the party’s choice (who may be, but does not need to be, an attorney), and an equal opportunity to submit and review evidence throughout the investigation;

Use trained Title IX personnel to objectively evaluate all relevant evidence without prejudgment of the facts at issue and free from conflicts of interest or bias for or against either party; Protect parties’ privacy by requiring a party’s written consent before using the party’s medical, psychological, or similar treatment records during a grievance process;

Obtain the parties’ voluntary, written consent before using any kind of “informal resolution” process, such as medication or restore justice, and not to use informal process where an employee allegedly sexually harassed a student;

Apply a presumption that the respondent is not responsible during the grievance process (often called a “presumption of innocence”), so that the school bears the burden of proof and the standard of evidence is applied correctly;

Use the preponderance of the evidence standard for all complaints of harassment on the basis of sex, regardless of whether the complaint is against students or district employees

Ensure the decision-maker is not the same person as the investigator or the Title IX Coordinator (i.e., no “single investigator models”);

Allow parties to submit written questions for the parties and witnesses to answer; Protect all complainants from inappropriately being asked about prior sexual history (“rape shield”)

Send both parties a written determination regarding responsibility explain how and why the decision-maker reached conclusions;

Effectively implement remedies for a complainant if a respondent is found for sexual harassment; Offer both parties an equal opportunity to appeal; Protect any individual, including complainants, respondents, and witnesses, from retaliation for reporting sexual harassment or participating (or refusing to participate) in any Title IX grievance process; Make all materials used to train Title IX personnel publicly available on the school’s website or, if the school does not maintain a website, make these materials available upon request for inspection by members of the public; and Document and keep records of all sexual harassment reports and investigations for at least seven years.

 X. Record Keeping for Sexual Harassment Complaints

Records relating to the complaints of sexual harassment must be kept for not less than seven years. Such records include: records of a school’s investigation (including notices, the determination, investigative report, disciplinary measures or remedies, etc.); records of any appeals and materials associated with the appeal; records of any supportive measures taken in response to a complaint of sexual harassment (even if the complainant does not file a formal complaint); records of any informal resolution process; and all materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, Investigators, decision makers, and those facilitating an informal resolution. The training materials must be kept on the school’s website.

XI. Retaliation

Retaliation is prohibited. Any person who experiences retaliation for exercising their rights under Title IX can file a retaliation complaint with the Title IX Coordinators. The school will keep the names/identity of parties and witnesses confidential unless such disclosure is required under another law, or is necessary to conduct a thorough grievance procedure.

XII. Supportive Measures

When alleged sexual harassment is reported, the Title IX Coordinators must inform the victim to their right of supportive measures even if a formal complaint is filed. The school must consider the alleged victim’s wishes with respect to supportive measures. Supportive measures for those involved in the sexual harassment complaint process may include: counseling, extending deadlines, modifications of work and/or class schedules, school escort services, increased school security and/or monitoring, and mutual restrictions on contact between the individuals involved through a safety plan.

Supportive measures will be kept confidential whether they are provided to the alleged victim or accused person to the extent the confidentiality will not interfere with the supportive measure offered.

*School Committee Policy ACAB*

**STUDENT SAFETY**

APS employees are reminded that a primary concern is the continuous well-being and safety of children in our charge. In today's litigious times, caution must be applied to guard against potential personal liability. All staff members should observe, but not limited to the following:

* Be on time for your assignments and duties. This is a fundamental expectation.
* Never leave pupils unattended. Staff must be in the classroom, hallway, or general assembly areas greeting students at the door upon entrance and exit throughout the entire school day and/or extended school day/year events/programming.
* Provide alert supervision at all times and address students requiring reminders to follow student handbook and/or school specific requirements/procedures.
* Verbally report immediately to the building principal any dangerous or potentially dangerous conditions. Follow up verbal reports in writing within 24 hours.

**SCHOOL SECURITY-VISITORS TO BUILDINGS**

All visitors to any school building must report to the main office and obtain an identification badge and label. If you see someone in the building without a badge or label whom you do not recognize, call the office at once. All doors in the building must remain locked throughout the duration of the school day. Doors should not be pegged open for any reason. Staff and students should not open any doors for visitors; admittance to the school should always occur through the main door under the supervision of office/administrative staff.

The School Committee encourages parents and guests to visit classrooms to observe and learn about the instructional programs taking place in our schools. Such visits can prove most beneficial in promotion of greater school-home cooperation and community understanding of how we carry out the school system’s mission and goals.

Visits by parents to several classrooms in a given grade for the purposes of comparing teaching styles to provide a basis for a request for student assignment to a particular teacher are strongly discouraged, as assigning a student to a particular class is the sole responsibility of the building Principal in consultation with the staff of that school.

The following guidelines to classroom and school visits should be followed:

1. Parental requests for the classroom visitations will be welcomed so long as the educational process is not disrupted. To this end we request that such requests be made at least forty-eight hours in advance to allow for proper arrangements to be made.
2. The building Principal has the authority to determine the number, times, and dates of observations by visitors. This will be done in consultation with staff members so as to give adequate notice to the staff members of the impending visits.
3. For security purposes, it is required that all visitors report to the Principal's office upon entering and leaving the building and sign a guest log showing arrival and departure times. Teachers are encouraged to ask visitors if they have registered in the Principal's office.
4. Under ordinary circumstances, classroom observations will be strongly discouraged during the first three weeks of school in September and during the month of June.
5. Any student who wishes to have a guest in school MUST ask permission of one of the administrative staff 24 HOURS in advance of the proposed visit. If permission is granted, the guest is expected to follow the standards of behavior expected of all students. Upon arrival, the guest must register in the office. Any guest who fails to comply with student regulations will be asked to leave the school building and grounds immediately.

*School Committee Policy KI*

**III. HUMAN RESOURCES AND BENEFITS**

**CHANGE OF NAME OR ADDRESS**

If you change your name, address, or telephone number, please email Human Resources so your contact information can be updated.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**

Avon Public Schools complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and applicable state and local laws providing for nondiscrimination in the employment of qualified individuals with disabilities. Avon Public Schools also provides reasonable accommodations for such individuals in accordance with these laws. It is the Avon Public Schools policy to, without limitation:

1. Ensure that qualified individuals with disabilities are treated in a non- discriminatory manner in the pre-employment process and that qualified employees with disabilities are treated in a non-discriminatory manner in all terms, conditions, and privileges of employment;
2. Keep all medical-related information confidential in accordance with the
requirements of the ADA and retain such information in separate confidential files;
3. Provide qualified applicants and employees with disabilities with reasonable
accommodation, except where such an accommodation would create an undue hardship on the Avon Public Schools;
4. Notify individuals with disabilities that the Avon Public Schools provides reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities, including this policy in the Avon Public Schools Personnel Handbook and by posting the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's poster on prohibiting discrimination against individuals with disabilities and other protected groups in the workplace.

**Procedure for Requesting and Accommodation:**

Qualified individuals with disabilities may make direct requests for reasonable accommodations to the Superintendent, in writing or verbally. On receipt of an accommodation request, the Superintendent will meet with the requesting individual to discuss and identify the precise limitations resulting from the disability and the potential accommodation that Avon Public Schools might make to help overcome those limitations. The Superintendent, in conjunction with only those administrator(s) identified as having a legitimate business need to know, will determine the reasonableness of the requested accommodation. They will consider various factors, including, but not limited to the following: the nature and cost of the accommodation, Avon Public Schools overall financial resources and organization, and the accommodation's impact on the operation of the District, including its impact on the ability of other employees to perform their duties and on the District's ability to provide service to the students and the community. The Superintendent will inform the employee of the District's decision on the accommodation request and/or how it will make the accommodation.

**CORI/SAFIS BACKGROUND REQUIREMENTS**

It shall be the policy of the district to obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) from the department of criminal justice information services for all prospective employee(s) or volunteer(s) of the school department, including any individual who regularly provides school related transportation to children or who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, prior to hiring the employee(s) or to accepting any person as a volunteer. State law requires that school districts obtain CORI data for employees of taxicab companies that have contracted with the schools to provide transportation to pupils.

The Superintendent, Principal, or their certified designees shall periodically, but not less than every three years, obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information from the department of criminal justice informational services on all employees, individuals who regularly provide school related transportation to children, including taxicab company employees, and volunteers who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, during their term of employment or volunteer service. The district obtains a CORI every three years for employees and every year for volunteers.

The Superintendent, Principal, or their certified designees may also have access to Criminal Offender Record Information for any subcontractor or laborer who performs work on school grounds, and who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, and shall notify them of this requirement and comply with the appropriate provisions of this policy.

Pursuant to a Department of Education regulation, “‘Direct and unmonitored contact with children’ means contact with students when no other employee, for whom the employer has made a suitability determination of the school or district, is present. “Contact” refers to any contact with a student that provides the individual with opportunity for physical touch or personal communication. The school employer may determine when there is potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children by assessing the circumstances and specific factors including, but not limited to, whether the individual will be working in proximity with students, the amount of time the individual will spend on school grounds, and whether the individual will be working independently or with others. An individual shall not be considered to have the potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children if he or she has only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact in commonly used areas of the school grounds.”

In accordance with state law, all current and prospective employees, volunteers, and persons regularly providing school related transportation to children of the school district shall sign an acknowledgement form authorizing receipt by the district of all available CORI data from the department of criminal justice information services. In the event that a current employee has a question concerning the signing of the acknowledgement form, s/he may meet with the Principal or Superintendent, however failure to sign the CORI acknowledgement form may result in a referral to local counsel for appropriate action. Completed acknowledgement forms must be kept in secure files. The School Committee, Superintendent, Principals or their designees certified to obtain information under the policy, shall prohibit the dissemination of school information for any purpose other than to further the protection of school children. CORI is not subject to the public records law and must be kept in a secure location, separate from personnel files, and may be retained for not more than three years. CORI shall be shared with the individual to whom it pertains, pursuant to law, regulation, and the following model policy, and in the event of an inaccurate report the individual should contact the department of criminal justice informational services.

Access to CORI material must be restricted to those individuals certified to receive such information. In the case of prospective employees or volunteers, CORI material should be obtained only where the Superintendent had determined that the applicant is qualified and may forthwith be recommended for employment or volunteer duties. The hiring authority, subject to applicable law and the model policy, reserves the exclusive right concerning any employment decision. The Superintendent shall ensure that on the application for employment and/or volunteer form, there shall be a statement that as a condition of the employment or volunteer service the school district is required by law to obtain Criminal Offender Record Information for any employee, individual who regularly provides transportation, or volunteer who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. Current employees, persons regularly providing school related transportation, and volunteers, shall also be informed in writing by the Superintendent prior to the periodic obtaining of their Criminal Offender Record Information.

The Superintendents shall amend employment applications to include questions concerning criminal records which the Massachusetts Commission against Discrimination has determined may be legally asked of prospective employees. Any employment application which seeks information concerning prior arrests or convictions of the applicant shall include the following statement: “An applicant for employment with a sealed record on file with the commission of probation may answer ‘no record’ with respect to an inquiry herein relative to prior arrests or criminal court appearances. In addition, any applicant for employment may answer ‘no record’ with respect to any inquiry relative to prior to arrests, court appearances and adjudications in all cases of delinquency or as a child in need of service which did not result in a complaint transferred to the superior court for criminal prosecution.”

Records sealed pursuant to law shall not operate to disqualify a person in any examination, appointment, or application for public service on behalf of the Commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof.

The Superintendent shall revise contracts with special education schools and other providers to require a signed statement that the provider has met all legal requirements of the state where it is located relative to criminal background checks for employees and others having direct and unmonitored contact with children.

*School Committee Policy ADDA*

**BENEFITS**

Specific information and questions regarding benefits should be directed to Human Resources.

**THE PREGNANT WORKERS FAIRNESS ACT**

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (“the Act”) amends the current statute prohibiting discrimination in employment, G.L. c. 151B, §4, enforced by the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD). The Act, which goes into effect on April 1, 2018, expressly prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, such as lactation or the need to express breast milk for a nursing child. It also describes employers’ obligations to employees that are pregnant or lactating and the protections these employees are entitled to receive. Generally, employers may not treat employees or job applicants less favorably than other employees based on pregnancy or pregnancy- related conditions and have an obligation to accommodate pregnant workers. If you have questions regarding maternity leave/family leave, please contact Human Resources.

**RETIREMENT**

All employees should reach out to Human Resources with any questions regarding retirement benefits.

**SALARY PAYMENTS**

All staff are paid on a biweekly pay schedule. Please refer questions regarding salary payment to Human Resources.

**SOCIAL SECURITY**

Your earnings from this job are not covered under Social Security. When you retire, or if you become disabled, you may receive a pension based on earnings from this job. If you do, and you are also entitled to a benefit from Social Security based on either your own work or the work of your husband or wife or former husband or wife, your pension may affect the amount of the Social Security benefit you receive.

Social Security publications and additional information, including information about exceptions to each provision, are available at https://www.ssa.gov/. You may also call toll free 1-800-772-1213, or for the deaf or hard of hearing, call the TTY number 1-800-325-0778, or contact your local Social Security office.

**WORKER’S COMPENSATION**

Any employee who sustains an injury at work must report each accident to the building principal, manager, or supervisor, and school nurse. All work-related injuries shall be reported to Human Resources within a twenty-four-hour period. An accident report can be found on SDI.

**IV. INSTRUCTION**

**STUDENT SPECIFIC PLANS (504, IEPs, Health Plans)**

Students may have a specific learning plan that they require for their disability. 504 accommodation plans and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) are housed in the School Information System (SchoolBrains). It is the responsibility of the employee working with these students to read all information and ask any questions to the special education liaison, the 504 coordinator, school nurse, or building administrator. Teachers and instructional staff will be asked to sign off on reading all plans. Teachers shall maintain confidentiality. Each building principal is designated as the 504 Compliance Officer.

**CURRICULUM GUIDES, DEVELOPMENT, REVISION, ADOPTION**

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

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

The School Committee will rely on its professional staff to design and implement instructional programs and courses of study that will forward the educational goals of the school system. The Superintendent will have authority to approve new programs and courses of study after they have been thoroughly studied and found to support educational goals. The Committee itself will consider, and officially adopt, new programs and courses when they constitute an extensive alteration in instructional content or approach. The Committee wishes to be informed of all new courses and substantive revisions in curriculum. It will receive reports on changes under consideration. Its acceptance of these reports, including a listing of the high school program of studies, will constitute its adoption of the curriculum for official purposes.

*School Committee Policy IGA/IGD*

Curriculum documents are housed on our SDI. Questions regarding curriculum and instructional materials and resources should be directed to the building principals.

**STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

The School Committee believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that does not violate the rights and privileges of others. They will be required to respect constituted authority and to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Each Principal shall include prohibited actions in the student handbook or other publication made available to students and parents. Principals and staff shall not use academic punishment of any form as a consequence to inappropriate behaviors/actions by students.

The Principal may, as a disciplinary measure, remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the remainder of this policy, law, or regulation.

Suspension

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, a Principal shall consider ways to re-engage the student in learning and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Notice of Suspension

Except for emergency removal or an in-school suspension of less than 10 days, a Principal must provide the student and the parent oral and written notice, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing before imposing suspension as a consequence for misconduct. The Principal shall provide both oral and written notice to the student and parent(s) in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English. The notice shall include the rights enumerated in law and regulation. To conduct a hearing without a parent present, the Principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent.

Emergency Removal

A Principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the Principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The Principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal, including a description of the danger presented by the student.

The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal shall: Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters required in the notice; Provide written notice to the student and parent as required above; Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with applicable regulations, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Principal, student, and parent; Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of applicable law and regulation. A Principal shall also ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation prior to removal.

In School Suspension

Not More Than 10 Days Consecutively or Cumulatively the Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

The Principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the Principal follows the process set forth in regulation and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by law and regulation.

Principal’s Hearing-Short Term Suspension of up to 10 Days

The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the Principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the Principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in law and regulation.

The Principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

The Principal shall, based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The Principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as required by law and regulation. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice. If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

Principal’s Hearing – Long Term Suspension of more than 10 days but less than 90 days (consecutive or cumulative)

The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights: In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the Principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

The Principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

The Principal shall, based on the evidence, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as required by law and regulation, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long- term suspension. The Principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand- delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Principal and the parent.

If the Principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal; identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as required by law and regulation; inform the student of the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee, but only if the Principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, and shall include the following information:

The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the Principal's determination on appeal. If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension before the suspension takes effect.

Superintendent’s Hearing

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Principal shall have the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent. The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent within the time period noted above (see Principal’s hearing – Suspension of more than 10 days). If the appeal is not filed in a timely manner, the Superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause. The Superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Superintendent shall grant the extension.

The Superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the Principal's hearing for long-term suspension.

The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of law and regulation. If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Principal's decision. The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

**Expulsion**

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as allowed by law for: possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, assault on a member of the educational staff, or a felony charge/ felony delinquency complaint or conviction/ adjudication, or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. Any student alleged to have committed one of these acts shall be afforded the same due process rights as for a long term suspension. Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

**Academic Progress**

Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The Principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed. Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

The Principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under the law.

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

For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in- school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

**Reporting**

The school district shall collect and annually report data to the DESE regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals, access to education services, and such other information as may be required by the DESE.

The Principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status in accordance with law and regulation.

NOTE: The DESE regulations on student discipline and this policy, consistent with law, set forth the minimum procedural requirements applicable to the suspension of a student for a disciplinary offense other than: possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, assault on a member of the educational staff, or a felony charge/felony delinquency complaint /conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student’s continued presence in the school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, S. 37H or 37H1/2. The Principal, pursuant to the previously referenced statute, may remove a student who has committed any of the disciplinary offenses above referenced from school for more than 90 days in a school year. The removal from school for such offenses is subject to the provision of continuing educational services needed to make academic progress and the requirement that all school districts regardless of the type of offense shall report school discipline data and analysis to DESE. Also, the prohibited actions above referenced are subject to the provision that allows the Commissioner to investigate each school that has a significant number of students suspended and expelled for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year and to make recommendations thereon.

*School Committee Policy JIC*

***Effective November 8, 2022***:

**Alternative Remedies**

The changes to M.G.L. Chapter 71 §37H¾ reflects the legislature’s intent to require school districts to regularly implement alternative remedies such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and/or collaborative problem solving prior to suspension, and for schools to document the use of such alternative remedies. Schools should adopt common forms of alternative remedies that can be quickly implemented as a response to student incidents.

General Requirements for Suspension under M.G.L. Chapter 71, §37H¾

A student may not be suspended under M.G.L. Chapter 71, §37H¾, unless one or more of the following exceptions apply:

1) Alternative Remedies Attempted- A Principal may suspend if there is documentation related to attempts to use alternative remedies to correct the student’s behavior, and such attempts have not been successful.

2) Unsuitable or Counterproductive- A Principal has documentation regarding specific reasons why alternative remedies are unsuitable or counterproductive. There is no specific guidance on what constitutes “unsuitable or counterproductive”, or what level of documentation would be needed to meet this standard. A school invoking this exception should provide as much detail as possible as to why it believes an alternative remedy is an unsuitable or counterproductive response to the infraction.

3) Serious Risk of Harm- The incident or incidents are of such a nature that the student’s continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person at school. This will be a vitally important exception when addressing serious matters in a school related to violence or threats of violence.

**Notable Exceptions**

These additional requirements do not apply to M.G.L. Chapter 71, §37H for infractions involving assault of staff, possession of weapons, or possession/distribution of controlled substances. The additional requirements also do not apply to M.G.L. Chapter 71, §37H½ related to felony charges and convictions. School or District-wide Models to Re-Engage Students Important to note is that in addition to the extra steps required to suspend students under Chapter 71 §37H¾, the law now requires the Principal or Superintendent to implement a school-wide or district-wide model to re-engage students in the learning process. This must include, but is not be limited to, (i) positive behavioral interventions and supports models and (ii) trauma sensitive learning models. The model selected by a school is to be implemented proactively, and not as a direct response to a specific incident. Please consult building administration for building level discipline procedures.

**MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION**

Upon the tenth day of suspension, a **TEAM** meeting must be called to determine if the student’s behavior is caused by or related to the student’s disability. Whenever possible, the Administrator of Special Education should attend Manifestation Determination meetings. In making this determination, the TEAM must consider the following questions:

* Is the student’s program appropriate?
* Is the program being implemented?
* Is the misconduct a manifestation of the disability?
* Does the student have the ability to control the behavior?

If the misconduct is determined to be a manifestation of the student’s disability, the TEAM can consider changing the IEP or 504 and/or the behavioral intervention plan. All other regular discipline processes are followed. However, FAPE must be provided to students with special education needs. Therefore, after the Principal completes the discipline process, the TEAM must meet to determine the appropriate services and determine where those services will be provided. All determinations are provided to parents/guardians in writing along with a copy of the Parent’s Rights Brochure informing the parents of their due process rights under special education regulations. As needed, training in the manifestation determination process will be provided to TEAMs by the Administrator of Special Education. If a lawyer is present representing the child and family, do not hold the manifestation determination meeting until a school attorney can also be present. While the school department must hold the determination in a timely fashion, we are at the same time entitled to have legal representation if a student and his/her family have representation. Contact the Administrator of Special Education immediately should these or other circumstances develop.

**HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**

The school nurse shall act as the building principal’s designee and should be notified of all students absent for 14 calendar days or more who require home/hospital tutoring as provided under MGL Chapter 71B, Chapter 766. The Home Hospital Tutoring form must be completed by the student’s physician and returned to the Director of Pupil Services. Teaching staff should communicate with the student’s tutor, provide all curriculum materials and assignments, correct and grade all curriculum materials and assignments, and provide grades and/or progress reports in alignment with school marking periods.

The schools may furnish homebound instruction to those students who are unable to attend classes for at least two consecutive weeks due to a physical injury, medical situation, or a severe emotional problem. The instruction is designed to provide maintenance in the basic academic courses so that when a student returns to school s/he will not be at a disadvantage because of the illness or the hospitalization. To qualify for the program, the student needs a written statement from a medical doctor requesting the homebound instruction, stating the reasons why, and estimating the time the student will be out of school. This statement needs to be sent to the Director of Pupil Services.

Homebound instruction is offered in basic elementary subjects and in secondary subjects which do not require laboratories and special equipment, subject in all cases to the availability of qualified teachers. Certified teachers are assigned to homebound instruction by the Director of Pupil Services with the approval of the Superintendent.

*School Committee Policy IHBF*

**HOME SCHOOLING**

Parents who opt to educate their children at home must contact the office of the Superintendent.

The Massachusetts General Law requires the School Committee to determine that a Homeschooling program meets the minimum standards established for public schools in the Commonwealth prior to approving such a program. When a parent or guardian of a student below the age of 16 wants to establish a home-based educational program for his/her child, the following procedures shall be followed in accordance with the law: Prior to removing the child from public school, the parent/guardian must submit written notification of establishment of the home-based program to the appropriate administrator 14 days before the program is established, and resubmit notification on an annual basis as long as the child or children are being educated in a home- based environment. The parent/guardian must certify in writing, on a form provided by the District, the name, age, place of residence, and number of hours of attendance of each child in the program.

The Superintendent shall give the notice to produce records required by law if there is probable cause to believe the program is not in compliance with the law. Factors to be considered by the Superintendent or School Committee in deciding whether or not to approve a home education proposal may be:

1. The proposed curriculum and the number of hours of instruction in each of the proposed subjects

2. The competency of the parents to teach the children

3. The textbooks, workbooks, and other instructional aides to be used by the children and the lesson plans and teaching manuals to be used by the parents.

4. Periodic standardized testing of the children to ensure educational progress and the attainment of minimum standards. A student being educated in a home-based program within the District may have access to public school activities of either a curricular or extracurricular nature upon approval of the Superintendent. A student, with the approval of the School Committee, may be awarded a high school diploma if he or she has satisfied the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's competency requirements and has met the District's educational standards for graduation.

*School Committee Policy IHBG*

#### HOMELESS STUDENTS

Students living in a shelter, motel, vehicle, campground, on the street, in an abandoned building or trailer, or doubled-up with friends or relatives are deemed homeless by the Department of Education. These students have the right to immediately enroll in school, potentially stay in their old school even if they are living in a different district, potentially receive transportation to and from school, automatically qualify for free lunch, and receive the same services as all other students. If you believe one of your students is homeless or is a ward of the state, contact the District Homeless Student Liaison (Director of Pupil Services). There is a form on SDI that should be completed when a student is assumed homeless.

#### OPENING EXERCISE

The daily salute to the flag shall be part of the opening exercises in all schools.

While Massachusetts General Laws c. 71, s. 69 requires teachers to lead their classes in a daily recital of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, the Courts have determined that it is unconstitutional for any student or staff to be compelled to participate in the Pledge. Therefore, we believe that no member of the school community can be compelled by policy to recite or lead a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. Any individual in the school may choose to recite the Pledge along with the public recitation. No staff member or student shall cause or encourage any other individual in a school to recite the Pledge of Allegiance or establish in any way a norm of active acknowledgment. No staff member or student may prevent, prohibit, or demean active acknowledgment (or absence of acknowledgment) of the Pledge by another student or staff member. Opening exercises may also include patriotic poems and songs. They shall include a moment of silence per General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 71, Section 1A.

**ONLINE FUNDRAISING AND SOLICITATIONS – CROWDFUNDING**

School District employees shall comply with all of the following provisions relating to online solicitations and the use of crowdfunding services for school-related purposes as well as all applicable laws, regulations and district policies. No online fundraising may occur except as provided below. The Superintendent shall have final authority to approve any online fundraising activities by school district employees and shall determine and communicate to Principals the circumstances under which online fundraising proposals shall require Superintendent or School Committee approval in accordance with law and school district policy (KCD). The Principal of each school shall approve all online fundraising activities within their buildings prior to any employee posting any such fundraising solicitation. Any solicitation shall be for educational purposes only (field trips, supplies, supplemental materials, books, etc.). The solicitation of personal items (coats, nutritional snacks, etc.) shall only be to benefit students directly. To the extent an employee solicits any technology or software, the employee shall secure the prior written approval of the Director of Technology or designee prior to any such solicitation. Any employee seeking to display or post a photograph of a student in conjunction with a fundraising solicitation must first secure the written consent of the student's parent or guardian. Employees shall not use a crowdfunding source, or set up their appeal in such a way, that they are asking for donations directly from people over whom the employee making the request has authority, or with whom the public employee is having official dealings (such as parents of students in a teacher's classroom - the solicitation can say "Classroom X needs tissues and crayons," but it shouldn't be directed to parents who have shared email addresses with the teacher for purposes of communicating about their student). Employees using crowdfunding services shall periodically disclose in writing to the Superintendent the names of all individuals whom the employee has directly solicited in any manner including but not limited to oral, written, or electronic solicitation. The Superintendent shall maintain these disclosures as public records available for public review. Employees may only use crowdfunding services that send the items or proceeds solicited by the employee directly to the employee's school or to the school district. Employees must verify under the crowdfunding service's terms and conditions that they meet all requirements for such solicitation. Items or proceeds directly sent to employees are considered gifts to the employee and may result in violation of state ethics laws. If an employee's proposal is approved by the crowdfunding service, the employee agrees to use the donated materials solely as stated in the employee's proposal. If a solicitation is not fully funded within the time period required by the crowdfunding service, or the solicitation cannot be concluded for any reason, every attempt will be made to return donations to the donors. Donations unable to be returned shall only be used as account credits for future solicitations. Unless otherwise approved by the Superintendent in writing, all goods and/or proceeds solicited and received through any online solicitation shall become the property of the School Committee, and not of the individual employee who solicited the item(s) or funds. The employee is prohibited from taking any such item(s) or funds to another school or location, without the Superintendent's written approval. NOTE: Crowdfunding services are defined as any online service used for the solicitation of goods, services, or money from a large number of people via the internet or other electronic network. Examples include GoFundme, Kickstarter, Indiegogo, YouCaring, and DonorsChoose.

*School Committee Policy GBEBD*

**FIELD TRIPS/STUDENT TRAVEL**

School sponsored field trips and/or any travel by students that is off campus shall be subject to administrative approval except in the following cases where School Committee approval will be required:

1. All students’ trips sponsored by the Avon Public Schools that are planned between the hours of midnight and 6:00 A.M. and/or any overnight travel must have prior approval of the School Committee. Initial approval by the School Committee is required before engaging students in fundraising activities. The School Committee will also consider the educational value of the trip in relation to the cost prior to granting initial approval. Overnight trips should offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips should be appropriate for the grade level. Final approval will not be granted until all preparations for the trip have been completed including, but not limited to, all logistical details involving safety of transportation, accommodation arrangements, and fundraising efforts. The School Committee requires that final approval be sought no less than 30 days prior to the scheduled trip dates.

2. All student trips that involve or require a total operating budget expenditure for the trip in excess of $500 This policy includes athletic travel which must be approved by the School Committee when travel requires an overnight stay and/or is planned between the hours of midnight and 6:00 A.M. (#1.). Athletic travel is exempt from School Committee approval when trips involve or require a total operating budget expenditure in excess of $500 (#2.) Teachers and other school staff are prohibited from soliciting for privately run trips through the school system and in the schools. The School Committee will only review for approval of school sanctioned trips. The School Committee will not review or approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.

*School Committee Policy JJH / IJOA*

**EMERGENCY PLANS**

Advance planning for emergencies and disasters is essential to provide for the safety of students and staff. It also strengthens the morale of all concerned to know that preparedness plans exist and that students and staff have been trained in carrying out the plans. The Superintendent will develop and maintain plans that meet the requirements of state law for preparedness. The Avon Public Schools’ Emergency Preparedness Plan is found in the Administrative Office of each school site and in each classroom. The procedures outlined in this plan should be followed should any of the following critical incidents arise: Sexual Assault, School Bus Accident, Intruder in The Building, Fire/Hazardous Materials, Communicable Disease, Missing Child/Kidnapping, Suicide Intent or Attempt, Bomb Threat, Lock Down Procedure, Medical Emergency/Death or Serious Injury, Natural Disaster/Weather Emergency. Building principals will meet all requirements for conducting drills to give students and staff practice in moving with orderly dispatch to designated areas under emergency conditions. Building Principal will also allow staff to practice carrying out their assigned responsibilities.

#### PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES PROCEDURE

Any staff member wishing to attend a professional conference will submit a professional development form with pertinent information (source of funding, title, date(s), location of the conference, and the participant’s name) to the principal for approval. If approved by the Principal, the form should then be sent to the office of the Superintendent for final approval. The professional development request form is located on SDI. All staff members will be encouraged in and provided with suitable opportunities for the development of increased competencies beyond those they may attain through the performance of their assigned duties and assistance from supervisors. Opportunities for professional growth may be provided through such means as the following:

1. Planned in-service programs and workshops offered within the school system; these may include participation by outside consultants.
2. Membership on curriculum development committees drawing personnel from within and outside the school system.
3. Released time for visits to other classrooms and schools and for attendance at conferences, workshops, and other professional meetings.
4. Leaves of absence for graduate study, research, and travel.
5. Partial payment of tuition for approved courses per contract.

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

*School Committee Policy GCIA*

**REPORT CARDS - GRADES Pre-K to 12**

The School Committee recognizes the school's obligation to give periodic reports of a student's progress and grades. The School Committee further recognizes that these reports are a vital form of communication between the schools and parents. The School Committee also believes that all progress reports must be based upon full information, accurately and honestly reported with the proper maintenance of confidentiality. A report depicting the student's progress will be issued periodically following an evaluation by the appropriate teacher(s) or other professional personnel. In addition to the periodic reports, parents will be notified when a student's performance warrants attention. Grading and promotion will be based on improvement, achievement, capability of the student, and the professional judgment of the teacher and Principal. Major changes in the reporting system shall be preceded by a cooperative study and evaluation by teachers, principals, parents, and the Director of Pupil Services, who will submit the proposal to the School Committee for consideration and approval.

*School Committee Policy IK*

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Students are identified as having disabilities by the Special Education Evaluation Teams. Eligible students receive special education and/or support services in the least restrictive environment to ensure access to the general education curriculum. These services are delineated on each student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP). IEPs can be accessed through SchoolBrains. Questions about IEPs should be directed to the special education liaison or Team Chairperson. Legal guardians also have the right to request an evaluation. This request can be made verbally or in writing, and must be reported immediately to the Building Administration to comply with Special Education legal time requirements. All students have the civil right to access the curriculum regardless of their age, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin under Title IX section 504 and Chapter 622 regulations. All tests, test records, and other materials placed in the students' folders should be filed carefully, and should not be discarded unless approved by the Administrator of Special Education. The goals of this school system's special education program are to allow each child to grow and achieve at his own level, to gain independence and self-reliance, and to return to the mainstream of school society as soon as possible. The requirements of law and regulation will be followed in the identification of children with special needs, in referrals for their evaluation, in prescribing for them suitable programs, and in assessing their educational progress. In keeping with state requirements, all children with special needs between the ages of three to twenty-two who have not attained a high school diploma or its equivalent will be eligible for special education. The School Committee believes that most children with special needs can be educated in the regular school program if they are given special instruction, accommodations, and the support they need. These children should also be given the opportunity to participate in the school system's

non-academic and extracurricular activities. The School Committee further recognizes that the needs of certain children are so great that special programs, special classes, or special schools may be necessary. When appropriate programs, services, or facilities are not available within the public schools, the Committee will provide these children with access to schools where such instruction and accommodations are available. It is the desire of the Committee that the schools work closely with parents in designing and providing programs and services to children with special needs. Parents will be informed, and conferred with, whenever a child is referred for evaluation. In event of any disagreement concerning diagnosis, program plan, special placement, or evaluation, the parents will be accorded the right of due process. The Committee will secure properly trained personnel to work with children with special needs. Since the financial commitment necessary to meet the needs of all of these children is extensive, the Committee will make every effort to obtain financial assistance.

Please refer to the Special Education Manual or ask the Director of Pupil Services if questions regarding special education arise.

*School Committee Policy IHB*

**TRANSLATION OF ORAL and/or WRITTEN MATERIALS**

To assure equal access to information disseminated in the school district, all written materials, including forms, notices, handbooks, and applications, when requested, will be made available in the home language of legal guardians for whom the first language is not English. If translation is required, please use the translation/interpreter request form available on SDI. The completed form should be emailed to the Central Office Secretary at least one week prior to the event.

**V. SCHOOL OFFICE PROCEDURES**

**ABSENCE OF PUPILS**

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Committee recognizes that parents of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law. Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons: illness or quarantine, bereavement or serious illness in family, weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child, and observance of major religious holidays. A child may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the Principal or designee.

A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of his/her character. Parents can help their children by not allowing them to miss school needlessly. Accordingly, parents will provide a written explanation for the absence or tardiness of a child. This will be required in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible. In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justified.

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 shall meet with any student, and that student’s parent/guardian, who has missed five (5) or more unexcused school days (a school day shall be equal to two (2) or more class periods in the same day) in a school year. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall 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.

Dropout Prevention

No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered permanently removed from school unless the Principal has sent notice to a student, and that student’s parent/guardian, who has been absent from school for ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absence. The notice shall be sent within five (5) days of the tenth consecutive day of absence and shall offer at least 2 dates and times within the next ten (10) days for an exit interview with the Superintendent or designee, the student, and the student’s parent/guardian. The notice shall be in both English and the primary language of the home, if applicable. The notice shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview and shall indicate the parties shall reach an agreement on the date/time of the interview within the ten (10) day timeframe. The timeframe may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian and no extension shall exceed 14 days.

The Superintendent or designee may proceed with any interview without a parent/guardian present, provided the Superintendent has documented a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian.

The Superintendent or designee shall convene a team of school staff to participate in the exit interview and shall provide information to the student and, if applicable, the student’s parent/guardian on the detrimental effects of early withdrawal from school and the alternative education programs and services available to the student.

*School Committee Policy JH*

**PURCHASES AND DELIVERIES**

All purchases must be made through the requisition and purchase order process. Procurement regulations must be followed. School purchases will be made only on official purchase orders approved for issuance by the appropriate unit head and signed by the superintendent, with such exceptions as may be made by the latter for emergency purchases.

Any payments collected by a staff member (field trips, fundraising, book sales, etc.) must be turned into the school office the day it is collected. Payments should not be left in desks or file cabinet drawers.

School-related organizations e.g., parent councils, clubs, etc. may not use the town's tax exemption number for checking or savings accounts. Groups seeking such status must apply directly to the Internal Revenue Service for a tax exempt number.

Custodians should be instructed to send to the principal's office, immediately on receipt, all slips for deliveries of supplies, oil, etc., which in turn should be promptly forwarded to Central Office. Receipt of textbooks, supplies, or other materials shipped by freight or express directly to the school building should be reported on the shipping destination copy of the purchase order. The School Committee declares its intention to purchase competitively without prejudice and to seek maximum educational value for every dollar expended.

The acquisition of materials, equipment, and services will be centralized in the superintendent’s office of the school system. The Superintendent will serve as purchasing agent. He/she will develop and administer the purchasing program for the schools in keeping with legal requirements and with the adopted school budget.

*School Committee Policy DJ*

**VI. TECHNOLOGY**

**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

The Superintendent and the School Principals will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the online, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process.

The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to improper fraternization with students using social media or other electronic means such as:

1. Teachers may not friend or follow current students on social media.

2. All electronic contacts with students should be through the district’s computer and telephone system, except emergency or special situations.

3. Team, class, or student organization pages, accounts, or groups will be created only in conjunction with the coach or faculty advisor. All groups must include the appropriate administrator as a member. Access to the page will remain with the coach or faculty advisor.

4. All contact and messages by coaches and faculty advisors with team members shall be sent to all team members, except for messages concerning medical or academic privacy matters, in which case the messages will be copied to the appropriate administrators.

5. Teachers will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers without approval of the district. With the prior approval of the Principal or Superintendent, a cell phone number may be given out for class trips or sporting events where for safety reasons a coach or teacher may need to be contacted.

If the Employer has a good faith belief that inappropriate electronic communication has occurred between a staff member and a student, the Superintendent and/or Principal will address the issue with the staff member.

*School Committee IJNDD*

**COMPUTER NETWORK PASSWORD SECURITY/EMPOWERED DIGITAL USE POLICY**

All passwords must be kept confidential and changed frequently. Never leave your password in an unsecured location (a desk drawer, under your keyboard). Passwords should never be shared with other staff members or students.

*Purpose:* The School Committee recognizes the need for students to be prepared to contribute to and excel in a connected, global community. To that end, the district provides ongoing student instruction that develops digital citizenship skill sets for using technology as a tool. Information and communication technology are an integrated part of our curriculum across subjects and grades in developmentally appropriate ways and are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and standards, including seeking knowledge and understanding, thinking critically and solving problems, listening, communicating, and interacting effectively, and engaging and competing in a global environment.

*Availability:* The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the district's system/network for instructional and administrative purposes.All users shall acknowledge that they understand that using digital devices, whether personal or school owned, and the school district network is a privilege, and when using them in accordance with School District guidelines they will retain that privilege.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative guidelines, regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with law and policy, which shall include but not be limited to the following:

* Digital devices, software, and networks shall be used in school for educational purposes and activities.
* An individual's personal information (including home/mobile phone numbers, mailing addresses, and passwords) and that of others shall be kept private.
* Individuals will show respect for themselves and others when using technology including social media.
* Users shall give acknowledgement to others for their ideas and work.
* Users shall report inappropriate use of technology immediately.

These procedures shall be reviewed annually by district administration together with students and teachers, and shall provide a springboard for teaching and learning around topics such as internet safety, digital citizenship, and ethical use of technology.

*School Committee Policy IJNDB*

**IT TICKETS**

Some employees will be issued a school computer or device in order to complete work. If an employee needs technology help or the device needs repair, the employee should submit an IT ticket. The IT ticket can be found on the Avon Public Schools website under “Staff Resources.”

**EMAIL ACCOUNTS**

All personnel of the Avon Public Schools have access to an email account. Questions or concerns about email accounts should be directed to Human Resources.

**WEB PAGE**

The district website can be found at <https://www.avon.k12.ma.us/>

**VII. FACILITIES & OPERATIONS**

**BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT**

All buildings and schoolyards should be clean at all times. Principals are responsible for the supervision and evaluation of custodians using the appropriate evaluation form. Principals should check regularly to make sure all parts of the building and grounds are kept in clean and presentable condition at all times. If you have concerns about buildings and grounds, please immediately reach out to your building principal.

The School Committee’s most important function is to provide for the education of children, and it recognizes that the education of children is dependent upon many factors, including a proper physical environment that is safe, clean, sanitary, and as comfortable and convenient as the facilities will permit or as use requires. The supervision over the care and safekeeping of property used by the school department will be the general responsibility of the Superintendent. S/he will work with other town departments, as necessary, to develop a comprehensive and well-defined plan for the proper maintenance, cleanliness, and safekeeping of all school buildings and grounds to ensure that each school is equally well maintained, equipped, and staffed.

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

*School Committee Policy EC*

**SERVICE AND REPAIR REQUESTS**

All requests for repair or service on equipment must be made by filling out the Custodial Service Request Form on SDI. Questions should be directed to building principals.

**VIII. HEALTH**

**STANDARD HEALTH PRECAUTIONS**

All staff members will have access to a Standard Precautions Kit to be kept ready available containing gloves, gauze pads, etc. to be used in a case of emergency. If a staff member currently does not have a kit and/or need replenishment of these materials, they should see the school nurse.

**ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINE TO STUDENTS**

It is the policy of Avon Schools that a designated school nurse shall be the supervisor of the medication administration program for the Avon Public Schools. The school nurse, the consulting school physician, and the administrative team shall develop policies and procedures relating to the administration of medications. Procedures shall be in compliance with Massachusetts laws and Department of Public Health guidelines M.G.L. c. 112, s. 12F, 105 CMR 210.000: M.G.L. c 94C, 7(g): c 71, 54B. Review and revision of these procedures shall occur as needed, but at least every two years.

All student medication must be dispensed by the school nurse. All medication must be in original packaging with a prescription label. No other staff member shall store or dispense student medication.

Medication may not be administered to students while at school unless such medicine is given to them by the school nurse acting under specific written request of the parent or guardian and under the written directive of the student's personal physician (see below for exceptions). When the school nurse is not present, a student who needs medication during the school day may be called to the office at the scheduled hour and reminded by the secretary to take the medicine. This provision only applies when the correct dosage of medication has been placed in an individual container clearly marked with the student’s name, the dosage to be administered, and the time or conditions under which the medicine is to be taken. In addition, the student must be able to recognize the medicine that he/she is taking. No one but the school nurse, and those others listed in the medical administration plan acting within the above restriction, may give any medication to any student.

*Exceptions:*

The school district shall, through the district nurse leader, register with the Department of Public Health and train personnel in the use of epinephrine auto-injectors.

The school district may, in conjunction with the School Physician and the School Nurse Leader, stock nasal naloxone (Narcan) and trained medical personnel and first responders may administer nasal naloxone to individuals experiencing a life threatening opiate overdose in a school setting.

Following consultation with the school nurse, students who fall into the following exceptions may self-administer medications:

1. Students with asthma or other respiratory diseases may possess and administer prescription inhalers.

2. Students with cystic fibrosis may possess and administer prescription enzyme supplements.

3. Students with diabetes may possess and administer glucose monitoring tests and insulin delivery systems.

*School Committee Policy JLCD-R1*