

# Dudley-Charlton Regional School District



2022 - 2023

## MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

Dudley Middle School

Charlton Middle School

*“...to advance the knowledge and well being of our children and our community.”*

## The Principals' Letter

Dear Students, Parents and Guardians:

We would like to welcome you to Dudley and Charlton Middle Schools. The middle school years are filled with new opportunities and experiences for our students. We encourage each of you to get involved in the educational programs and school activities that will be happening this year. No educational endeavor is successful without the support of parents and families.

The Middle School Handbook is provided to inform students and families about the expectations and regulations for the middle schools. This handbook was written to reflect the vision of the middle schools and provide guidelines for a safe, developmentally appropriate educational experience for young adolescents.

We look forward to working with you this year. Please feel free to call your middle school if you have any questions or concerns.

Yours truly,

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## **IMPORTANT DATES**

### **First Trimester – 9/1/22 through 12/2/22**

Parent Conferences	October 27, 2022
Report Cards	Week of December 12th 2022

### **Second Trimester – 12/5/22 through 3/17/23**

Report Cards	Week of January 27, 2023
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### **Third Trimester - 1/24/23 through Last day of school**

Report Cards will be available on the parent portal on the last day of school.

***Schedule may be adjusted due to school cancellations***

**Report Cards will be available on the parent portal during the week indicated. An email will be sent on the date that the report cards become available.**

**You can always have access to your child's grades throughout the school year on the parent portal.**

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## DUDLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Colors:

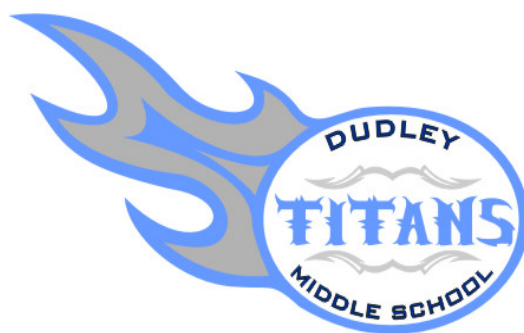
Light Blue and Black

Mascot:

Titans

Motto:

*Students First*



## CHARLTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Colors:

Maroon and Gold

Mascot:

Grizzly Bears

Motto:

Strength  
Through  
Team Work



## **VISION STATEMENT**

The Middle Schools in Dudley and Charlton will focus on the unique needs of a learner in transition from childhood to adolescence.

These schools will provide a safe, child-centered environment with enough flexibility to ensure maximum opportunities for all students.

In these schools, teaming will be the foundation for a challenging academic climate, personal and social growth, and parent and community partnerships.



## **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY STATEMENT**

**(Refer: Policy 5122.2)**

### Students

#### Educational Opportunities

"It is the policy of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendment."

**The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District is committed to ensuring that all of its programs, activities, employment, practices and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. We do not discriminate in or deny access on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, or sexual orientation.**

### **Title IX, Chapter 622 Student Grievance Procedure**

Any person who feels aggrieved as a result of policies and practices within the Dudley-Charlton District with regard to educational opportunities regulated by Title IX, Chapter 622 legislation will direct their complaints as follows:

Grievances in regard to educational practices and opportunities shall be directed at first level to the building principal where the student resides.

A resolution of the complaint or grievance will be attempted at that level. If the grievant, be they student or parent, is not satisfied with the resolution or disposition of the complaint with regard to educational opportunities, they shall register their complaint with the superintendent of schools.

If a just and equitable resolution of the complaint is not arrived at the level of superintendent of schools, in terms of educational opportunities, the grievant or the parent of the grievant shall request to be placed on the agenda of the most appropriate and convenient school committee meeting.

Upon reviewing the matter of grievance, the school committee shall uphold the complainant or make suggestions to modify and resolve the problem or shall uphold any decisions rendered by the administration and superintendent of schools at this point. This decision by the school committee and its reasons for its decision shall be rendered in writing to the complainant.

## **BULLYING, HARASSMENT and THREATENING BEHAVIOR**

Because we believe that all students deserve a safe learning environment and that, in our diversified population, students must learn understanding and respect for all individuals, bullying, teasing and threatening behaviors will not be tolerated at the Dudley and Charlton middle schools. Any behavior deemed by an administrator to be bullying will result in consequences.

State law and district policy (Policy #1349) define bullying as the repeated use by one or more students 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 communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that has the effect of:

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

State law and district policy prohibit bullying:

- at school and at all school facilities;
- at school sponsored or school related functions, whether on or off school grounds;
- on school buses and school bus stops;
- through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, licensed or used by a school; and
- at non-school related locations and through non-school technology or electronic devices, if the bullying affects the school environment.

State law and district policy mandate that all schools expressly prohibit bullying and have a bullying prevention and intervention plan. The following represents a summary of that plan relative to Dudley and Charlton Middle Schools:

In an effort to provide all students with an educational environment free from bullying, administration, faculty and staff at Dudley and Charlton Middle Schools will:

- Be provided with annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan;
- Be provided with annual training on said plan;
- Provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention to the students;
- Provide information to parents regarding bullying prevention efforts at school;
- Prohibit bullying in accordance with state law and district policy;
- Prohibit retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying;
- Be required to immediately report any instance of bullying or retaliation that they have witnessed or become aware of to the principal or his designee, who shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the principal or his designee determines bullying has occurred, he will:
  - a. notify law enforcement if he determines that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator;
  - b. take appropriate disciplinary action (as defined on page 33 of this handbook);
  - c. notify parents / guardians of the perpetrator; and
  - d. notify the parents / guardians of victim and provide them with the action taken to prevent further acts of bullying.

For further information regarding the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District policy or the complete Massachusetts state law on bullying, including the legal definition of terms relative to bullying, please visit the following websites or contact your child's school directly.

- Dudley-Charlton Regional School District policy can be found at <http://www.dcrsd.org/district.cfm?subpage=361905>
- Massachusetts General Law governing bullying can be found at <http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2010/Chapter92>

## **SCHOOL DAY AND SCHOOL SPONSORED ACTIVITIES**

The rules and regulations contained in this handbook apply during the school day, at extracurricular activities and at school sponsored events/activities.

Students who are eligible to participate in extracurricular activities must meet the following criteria:

- Attend school the day of all activities;
- Not have received a suspension or detention assigned the day of the activity;
- Membership in a team sport or on-going club activity may require team/ teachers' recommendation and contract if academic and behavior performance is less than satisfactory.
- To participate in interscholastic sports at grades 7 and 8 will require a passing grade in all core major subjects.

## **VISITORS**

All visitors must ENTER THROUGH THE MAIN ENTRANCE. They will be admitted by using the voice/video entry system. They must sign in at the main office and receive a visitor's badge. This badge must be worn in the school at all times.

Badges must be returned when a visitor leaves the building.

## **SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS/DELAYS**

**School cancellations due to inclement weather will be made over radio stations WESO in Southbridge, WTAG in Worcester, WSRS in Worcester, and WORC in Webster; in addition, television stations WBZ and ABC Channel 5; and, the school website ([www.dcrsd.org](http://www.dcrsd.org)).**

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular and consistent attendance is essential to learning and to improving the achievement of all students. The goal of the student attendance policy is to promote consistent, daily school and class attendance. The expectation is that all students will have, at a minimum, at least ninety five percent (95%) attendance in school and in each class during each school day.

In supporting student achievement, punctuality and attendance at school are recognized as the primary responsibility of the student and the parent/guardian. However, the school, through its attendance policy, intends to monitor and ensure regular attendance.

State law requires the Dudley-Charlton RSD to investigate cases of excessive school absence. For this purpose, the Committee defines excessive absence as more than ten (10) unexcused absences per school year. All absences (even those authorized by parents/guardians) are considered unexcused unless the required documentation is provided.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons:

- Illness or quarantine (with a doctor's note)
- Bereavement or serious illness in family
- For observance of major religious holidays
- Legal (with documentation from the court, lawyer etc.)
- Other - a student may be excused for other absences with approval from the school principal.

Documentation for the above absences should be provided to the school principal or designee within five (5) school days of the absence. Documentation provided after ten (10) school days may require a meeting with a principal or designee.

Additionally, principals or designee must ensure that notification is provided to the parent or guardian of a student who has five (5) or more unexcused absences within a school year. School principals, or a designee, must make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent or guardian of a student who has five (5) or more unexcused absences to develop a plan that includes the specific action steps necessary to address the student's poor attendance. The plan, including the action steps, shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school principal, or a designee, the student and the student's parent or guardian, and may include suggestions from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies.

In a case where parents or guardians are unresponsive to the school administration's efforts to develop a plan and implement action steps designed to address poor attendance, or in the case where a plan is in place and poor attendance continues, excessive unexcused absences will require unilateral assessment and intervention by the school administration. Interventions may include involvement of a School Resource Officer and the Dudley or Charlton Police Department, case management services, and service referrals. In situations in which attendance does not improve despite additional intervention by the school administration, the school may take one or more of the following actions:

- A Failure To Send, Criminal Complaint, against the parent will be sought at the District Court
- A 51A for parental neglect will be filed with the Department of Children and Families
- A Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) application may be submitted to the Trial Court of Massachusetts Juvenile Court Department.

Reference DCRSD Policy JE

## ABSENCE BEING CHECKED

The Middle schools in the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District have implemented Project ABC (Absence Being Checked). The purpose of this project is to:

- confirm with parents the absence of the child from school.
- attempt to ensure the safety of Middle School students.
- continue to develop, extend, and enhance the lines of communication between the home and the school.

In the event of student absence from school, we ask for your cooperation. PLEASE CALL THE SCHOOL OFFICE TO REPORT YOUR CHILD'S ABSENCE prior to 9:00 A.M. Between 9:00 –10:00 A.M. a call from the school will be made to the home of any student whose absence has not been reported.

In addition:

- During school hours if you are going to pick up your child for any reason, you must come to the office and sign him/her out.
- Students should not arrive or be dropped off at school prior to 7:30 A.M.

## Absenteeism due to Family Vacations

Absenteeism due to family vacations are considered unexcused absences and are counted towards accumulated absences. The following procedures should be followed if a vacation time is planned during scheduled school days:

- A vacation notification form should be completed prior to departure.
- Class work that the student misses during this time period will be saved and given to the student upon their return from school or provided to the student beforehand upon parental request and agreement by the teacher.

## APPEAL

After a student has exceeded his/her allowable absences, a parent may request an appeal for review in order to re-examine the specific conditions relating to the individual case. Requests for review must be made in a timely fashion and no later than May 1st of the current school year. The principal will review the material presented and may determine the absences to be valid for unusual or extenuating reasons.

## PROMOTION

Students must pass all core courses (language arts, math, social studies, science and reading, literacy/foreign language), or make up the subject in summer school, if available, to be eligible for promotion to the next grade. Students who fail any Unified Arts class will be subject to review by the Principal before promotion is recommended.

For purposes of promotion, students who have more than **12 absences** for the year from a core course and have not met the criteria for an appeal will be required to make up the course(s) in summer school to be considered for promotion.

It should be noted that no more than two (2) subjects can be completed in summer school and only with prior administrator's recommendation. Additionally, no course in which the final grade is below 53 can be made up in summer school. The summer school grade will not replace the final grade. However, it will be noted on the transcript and used for promotion purposes. A minimum grade of 75 in the summer school course is required for promotion purposes.

## MAKEUP WORK

If a student is absent from school, due to illness or family emergency, he/she will have one (1) day more than the number of days absent to complete makeup work [days = school days]. Serious/long term absences will be referred to the principal for a schedule of schoolwork.

Students who are absent from school more than 3 days due to illness should request work to be sent home.

Students who are absent from school for extended periods will be given their schoolwork in advance of their absence as requested. All assigned work **will be due upon return to school**. **Additional assignments** may have been given in school during the absence; these will be given to the student upon his/her return to school for completion in a timely manner. Students who have been absent are encouraged to schedule some review time with their teachers for follow up.

Parents are encouraged to contact teachers if there are any questions. Requests for work prior to the absence should be made **no less** than 48 hours before the anticipated absence.

Students leaving for extended periods of time must get their assignments beforehand and all work will be due one day after their return. Students may receive a "0" for incomplete assignments.

### **TARDIES/EARLY DISMISSAL**

Students who come in late to school must:

- bring an acceptable note signed by a parent/guardian;
- upon entering school, check in with the main office and obtain a late slip.

If the student fails to bring in a note, a parent will be notified.

**Unsubstantiated tardies in excess of eight may result in a parent conference and/or after school detentions.**

Students who are being dismissed early must:

- bring in an acceptable note signed by a parent/guardian with the following information
  1. Student name
  2. Reason for dismissal
  3. Time of dismissal
  4. Person picking up student and a telephone number to confirm if necessary
- bring this note to the main office or homeroom teacher, as per school practice, during homeroom

Parents and guardians are required to pick up their children at the middle school main office. People picking up students will be required to show a picture ID and sign out the student.

### **DRESS CODE**

DCRSD respects individual rights of expression, however it is expected that students will dress appropriately in school with consideration for public sensibility with an emphasis for a safe and orderly environment. Clothing and personal appearance should reflect self-respect and respect for others. The following dress code is not meant to be restrictive, but is intended to guide students and their parents/caregivers in choosing clothing that is safe and appropriate to wear in school. Students may dress in a manner reflecting current style and fashion; however, manner of dress may not be distracting or disruptive of the educational process. Lastly, we expect that all students will dress and groom themselves neatly in clothes that are suitable for school activities. Students will adhere to the following

- Students are expected to discuss with caregivers what is appropriate to wear to school and what is not. Clothing that exposes underpants or private parts (must also not be see-through), no bare midriffs, shorts/skirts/dresses may be no higher than mid-thigh are inappropriate for the school community.
- Any clothing that promotes violence or hate speech (symbols or insignias), drugs, tobacco, alcohol, or any other vulgar symbol/text is strictly prohibited. Moreover, any clothing with wording or symbols that creates a substantial disruption in the school ecosystem will result in the student being asked to change outfits.
- Clothing must comply with a student's science labs and physical education classes. Teachers will review what clothing is appropriate for those specific situations.
- Items such as coats, outerwear, and hats are allowed to be worn by the student body as long as they do not overtly hinder the identification of one as a student. For safety purposes, we must err on the side of caution. If a hat or coat contradicts the identification of one student, the student will be asked to remove said clothing.
- We encourage students to embrace their cultural heritage in their outfits. Items such as bonnets, doo rags, jewelry, bandannas, saris, hijabs, etc. are allowed and encouraged by our faculty. If one feels targeted for representing their cultural heritage, speak out and address the issue with the administration.

The administration reserves the right to decide whether certain clothing is appropriate for school. Parents will be notified and students will be asked to change their clothing if deemed inappropriate. If a student refuses to change or a parent is unable to bring in appropriate clothing, a student may be asked to serve the remainder of the day in an area designated by administration (i.e. Guidance suite, In-school suspension area, nurses office, auxiliary classroom) or may be sent to the nurse *and/or guidance* to get appropriate clothing. Repeat offenses may result in parent conference and/or more serious consequences.

Please practice common sense when it comes to choosing outfits. The dress code is a thin line between suitability and inappropriateness. When in doubt, always edge to the side of suitability.

Dress Requirements for Physical Education. In order to receive credit for Physical Education, students must wear appropriate clothing for physical activity, including t-shirt or sweatshirt, shorts, sweatpants, or wind pants, and sneakers. No clothing with zippers, loops, straps, or other potentially unsafe attachments will be considered acceptable.

## **GRADING**

Grades in core courses (English / language arts, math, social studies, science, and Spanish) are registered in numeric form. Passing grades will range from 60 to 100. Failing grades are 59 and below.

Unified Arts classes (physical education, health, computer, STEM, art, and music) and Reading/ literacy are graded using the following designations:

- Pass with Excellence (PE)
- Pass (P)
- Needs Improvement (NI)
- Fail (F)

Exploratory classes are graded using the designations Pass (P) and Fail (F).

## **CHEATING**

Cheating is an act of dishonesty that is not acceptable in society. Any form of cheating will not be tolerated at the middle schools. This includes obtaining answers by any means not accepted by the teacher, as well as giving or receiving information. It also includes plagiarism or copying another's work and submitting it as if it were the original work of the student.

Students will receive a grade of "0". Parents and counselors will be notified. Additional offenses will result in a parent conference and further consequences.

## **HONOR ROLL**

As soon as possible after each quarterly marking period, an honor roll will be published. This list is posted in the main office, the grade level floors, the guidance office, and the hallway recognition board for one week prior to publication in the newspaper. It is the individual student's responsibility to verify whether or not his/her name is properly listed.

The Honor Roll will be calculated using the following guidelines:

### **Middle School High Honors**

- Minimum average of 93 in core subjects
- No grade below 90 in any core subject
- No mark of needs improvement or failure in any other class

### **Middle School Honors**

- Minimum average of 83 in core subjects
- No grade below 80 in any core subject
- No mark of needs improvement or failure in any other class

## **LOCKERS/BACKPACKS**

All students will be assigned corridor lockers. Students will be held responsible for the condition of the locker. Students should not share their locker combination with anyone. No valuables should be stored in a student locker.

Lockers are the property of the middle school and are provided for student convenience only. The school reserves the right to inspect and/or search the locker and its contents if the administration has reasonable grounds to believe that it contains materials contrary to the best interests of the school and/or student body.

Students will be responsible for the replacement of damaged locks or lockers. **Locker privileges may be revoked if misuse occurs.**

Backpacks/book bags are to be stored in the student's locker during the day. Students will not be allowed to carry book bags, backpacks or bags of any kind during the school day unless travelling to and from lunch or physical education classes or at the discretion of the administration.

## **TEXTS AND SCHOOL MATERIALS**

Every attempt is made to issue to each student textbooks which are in good condition. If these books are damaged, defaced, or lost, the student is required to pay for them. All books should be covered immediately and remain covered throughout the year. A student is responsible for all books, materials, and equipment issued to him/her. If the item issued to the student is misplaced, stolen, or damaged, the student will be required to pay for the item(s). The school is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items belonging to the student.

## **AGENDA BOOKS**

Each student will be provided with one daily agenda book free of charge. This book is the responsibility of the student. If a student loses or destroys his/her book, replacement books are available for sale from the main office for the sum of \$6.00, while supplies last.

## **MEDICATION POLICY**

The individual school nurses will be permitted to administer medication, prescription and/or non-prescription, only when the following requirements are met:

1. Prescription medication must be in a pharmacy labeled container bearing the child's name, name of medication, dosage, time of administration, name of physician and date of prescription.
2. A written, signed and dated letter from a physician authorizing administering of all medication (prescription and non-prescription) is provided.
3. All medication will be brought to the nurses by a parent or guardian.
4. Psychotropic drugs may be administered at school only after the proper certification by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Not more than one month's supply may be kept at the school.

Self-medication is strictly forbidden. No medication, including non-prescription will be dispensed at the school unless the above procedures are carried out.

## **INJURIES**

Medical documentation should be provided for any student who has sustained an injury for which school accommodations are necessary.

## **GUIDELINES FOR KEEPING SICK CHILDREN HOME FROM SCHOOL**

Each day many parents are faced with a decision: should they keep their sick children at home or send them off to school? Often the way a child looks and acts can make the decision an obvious one. The following guidelines should be considered when making the decision:

**Fever.** The child should remain at home with a fever greater than 100°. The child can return to school after he/she has been fever free for 24 hours (without fever-reducing medicine such as Tylenol or Motrin).

**Diarrhea/Vomiting.** A child with diarrhea and /or vomiting should stay at home and return to school only after being symptom-free for 24 hours, unless otherwise specified by the school nurse or licensed health care provider.

**Conjunctivitis.** Following a diagnosis of conjunctivitis, the child may return to school 24 hours after the first dose of prescribed medication and if there is no eye discomfort.

**Rashes.** Common infectious diseases with rashes are most contagious in the early stages. A child with a suspicious rash should return to school only after a healthcare provider has made a diagnosis and authorized the child's return to school.

**Colds.** Consider keeping your child at home if he/she is experiencing discomfort from cold symptoms, such as nasal congestion and cough. A continuous green discharge from the nose may be a sign of infection. Consider having the child seen by your healthcare provider. When your immune system is down, continue good hand washing, drink lots of fluids to stay hydrated and plenty of rest. Staying home for 24 hours prevents the spread of illness in the school community and allows your child the opportunity to rest and recover

## **ACCIDENTS**

Report all accidents on school property to the supervising staff member or the nearest teacher. The school nurse will attend to accidents and file an accident report.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

All electronic devices (phones, computers, smartwatches, AirPods, Tablets, etc.) are allowed to be brought to school and should be turned off, or put on Silent-Mode, in their locker and/or person. Personal electronic devices may be used freely before or after school academic hours as long as the student is adhering to the Acceptable Use Policy (Page 47-51). Personal electronic devices should not be utilized during class time unless they serve an educational purpose and are approved and directed by a teacher to do so. It is prohibited for students to use any and all electronic devices during passing time and/or restroom breaks. Any such devices not adhering to the Acceptable Use Policy and/or not being used for an educational purpose that are approved and directed by a teacher will be confiscated and the discipline guideline found on page 41.

However, the school's administration reserves the right to restrict the use of electronic devices if they believe they are having a detrimental impact on the safety or operation of the school. If the decision is made to restrict students from using these devices during these times, appropriate notice will be provided to the student body. Depending on the nature of the incident, a warning could be issued. Students who use an electronic device in an inappropriate context will be directed to turn that device into the main office where it will be confiscated and held at the office for claiming by a parent or caregiver. Additionally, administration reserves the right to work in conjunction with the student's parent/caregiver to create a personal electronic device plan for a mutually agreed upon timeframe to ensure proper educate. Refusal to turn in an electronic device will result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, Office Detention and/or in-house suspension.



## **SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

If there are restrictions and /or special conditions regarding parental and/or other contact with a student, medical needs, etc. it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to make the school aware of the situation. These restrictions or special conditions must be submitted in writing and kept on file at the school.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

An article that is found should be turned into the lost and found. Students who lose articles should check with the office as soon as possible. However, the school assumes no liability for lost or stolen items. Lost and found items will be donated to local charities at the end of each quarter.

## **CAFETERIA AND FOOD IN THE ACADEMIC AREAS**

Students are expected to be courteous during lunch. Students are responsible for the condition of their area and are expected to leave the cafeteria clean. Students are not allowed to bring food or drink outside of the cafeteria without permission.

## **ENERGY DRINKS**

In recent years, we have seen an increase in middle school students' consumption of highly-caffeinated beverages often referred to as "energy drinks." Due to the adverse effects these beverages can have on middle school aged children (such as increased heart rate and blood pressure, dehydration, nervousness, irritability and insomnia), beverages such as Red Bull, Monster, Rock Star, Venom and others are not permitted on school grounds, buses or any school sponsored activities. In addition, students will not be permitted to bring to school any coffee based products.

## **GAMBLING, CARD PLAYING, ETC.**

Gambling and card playing will not be permitted at any time.

## **SELLING OF ITEMS**

The selling of any items, unless a school-sponsored fundraiser, is prohibited at any time.

## **SKATEBOARDS, ROLLER BLADES, and any similar EQUIPMENT**

Students are not allowed to use skateboards, roller blades or similar equipment within school buildings or on school property during school hours. The only exception will be if such equipment and students are under the direct supervision of a teacher **and/or** the activity is part of a class.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

The middle schools adhere to all federal and state regulations concerning the maintenance and access to student records.

## DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

### **POLICY**

#### **General Complaints from the Community**

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The school committee realizes that in order to continuously attempt to create and maintain schools that reflect the public's wishes, a system needs to be in place for receiving, considering and acting upon complaints from the community.

Although no member of the community will be denied the right to have his/her complaints heard and investigated, he/she will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the committee is considered. Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

The school committee believes that complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints will be as follows:

- Level 1 – Teacher (move to level 2 if applicable, non-applicable or unresolved),
- Level 2 – Principal or principal's designee and teacher (move to level 3 if unresolved)
- Level 3 – Superintendent, principal and teacher (move to Level 4 if unresolved and if applicable)
- Level 4 – School Committee (if applicable).

Upon written receipt of such complaint and all action taken thus far, the school committee and the superintendent shall confer as to whether the issue presented is one within the jurisdiction of the school committee under Massachusetts General Laws.

*Complainants should be aware that the school committee does not hire, fire or discipline any school employee other than the superintendent, assistant superintendent or administrator of special needs*

In the event the school committee determines that the complaint is not within its jurisdiction or certain levels have been skipped, it will be referred back through the proper channels.

If the complaint warrants discussion and/or action by the school committee, the complainant shall be informed that the issue will be placed on an upcoming agenda. The school committee will give careful consideration to the problem while affording all involved any legal rights they may have under applicable law and contract, and will inform the complainant of any action taken to arrive at a solution to the extent the release of such information does not abrogate any such right.

Adopted July 10, 2002

Amended February 27, 2013

### **POLICY**

#### **Complaints Concerning Instructional Materials**

KEC

It is recognized that opinions differ concerning appropriateness of instructional materials. Occasionally an individual or group may find instructional materials used in the schools in conflict with their views.

The following procedures have been established to provide a system for receiving, considering, and acting upon written complaints regarding instructional materials used by the school district.

All complaints must be presented in writing to the building principal and will include the name of the author, title, the publisher, and the objections by pages and items; or in case of materials other than printed material, written information specifying the precise nature of the objection shall be given. The statement must be signed and identified in such a way that a proper reply will be possible.

When a complaint is received by a principal, the principal will acknowledge the receipt of the complaint and answer any questions regarding procedure. The principal will then notify the superintendent and the teachers involved. The superintendent will determine whether the complaint should be considered an individual request or if a building or district level review committee should be activated to reevaluate the material.

An individual student may be excused from using challenged materials after the parent or guardian has presented written complaint. The teacher will then assign the student alternate materials of equal merit.

The building level review committee shall be under the direction of the superintendent and composed of the building principal and four or more members selected by him or her from school or district personnel directly concerned.

The district level review committee shall be under the direction of the superintendent and composed of five or more members selected by him or her from the administrative and instructional areas directly concerned.

The use of challenged materials by class, school or district shall not be restricted until final disposition has been made by the appropriate review committee but those individuals who have expressed concern may be excused from using challenged materials.

In the deliberations of challenged materials, the review committee may consider among other things the educational philosophy of the school district, the professional opinions of other teachers of the same subject and of other competent authorities, reviews of the materials by reputable bodies, the teacher's own stated objectives in using the materials, and the objections of the complainant.

The findings of the building review committee and/or district review committee shall be a matter of written record and transmitted to the superintendent and regional school committee for the final action before a response is made to all interested parties.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

A grievance procedure is a complaint brought by a student or group of students, who feel that a provision of a school regulation has been misinterpreted, applied inequitably or unjustly. When a grievance is alleged, the following procedures should be followed:

1. The aggrieved party should attempt remediation through a conference with the teacher involved. Should this prove unsatisfactory, the grievance may be taken to the guidance counselor.
2. The aggrieved party, if dissatisfied, may present his/her grievance to the principal who, after hearing the facts and after consultation with the teacher, may take any action deemed necessary.
3. If the aggrieved party feels the solution/decision is not agreeable, he/she may appeal to the Superintendent, who after consultation with the Principal, may take any action deemed necessary.
4. Still dissatisfied, the aggrieved party may present the case to the School Committee.

## **POLICY**

Smoke-Free Environment

**ADC**

Smoking, chewing, or other use of tobacco products by staff, students, and members of the public shall be banned from all district buildings. All forms of tobacco use shall be banned from all district buildings. All forms of tobacco use shall be prohibited on all district property. There shall be no smoking or use of tobacco products on any school bus at any time. In addition, there shall be no smoking or use of tobacco products by students at any school-sponsored events, even though those events may not take place on school grounds. (This is not to be construed as prohibiting the use of nicotine patches and other products to curb smoking.)

## **POLICY**

Use of Alcoholic Beverages

**JCH**

The possession, serving, or consumption of any alcoholic beverage on school property or at school functions is prohibited.

Those students identified as having been drinking alcoholic beverages prior to attendance at, or participation in, school-sponsored activities will be barred from such activities.

Students attending school, or a school activity, who are in possession of alcoholic beverages, or have been drinking alcoholic beverages, will be suspended from school for a minimum of five school days up to 10 school days. Students selling or possessing with intent to sell any alcoholic beverages on school property, or at any school function will be suspended for 10 school days. A report will be made to the local police authorities of all suspensions under this policy and the incidents relating to the suspension.

A satisfactory conference with the student and his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) should take place before the student is readmitted. Conditions must be established and made clear to the student before his readmission. Readmission will include evidence that steps have been or are being taken to seek solutions to the problems which were the basis of the suspension.

## **POLICY**

Teaching about Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs

**IHAMA**

### **Teaching About Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs**

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

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

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

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

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

### **DRUGS (Refer: Policy 5131)**

**Chapter 133, Sec. 430.** The second paragraph of Section 37H of Chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after the first sentence the following:

In cases involving the possession or use of weapons, the possession or use of illegal substances, the illegal possession of alcohol, or the use of excessive force, provided that the violation occurs on school property, the principal or headmaster of every school system within each city, town or district shall have the authority to suspend a student, including an indefinite suspension, and no other disciplinary measure adopted as a rule or regulation may inhibit this authority to suspend. Where a student has been suspended by a principal or headmaster under the authority of the previous sentence, the school committee may review such suspension and alter the disciplinary measure after a hearing.

Students attending school or any school activity who are in possession of any illicit drug or have been using any illicit drug, will be suspended from school for a minimum of five school days up to 10 school days. A satisfactory conference with the student and his or her parent or legal guardian should take place before the student is readmitted. Conditions must be established and made clear to the student before his readmission. Readmission will include evidence that steps have been, or are being taken to seek solutions to the problems that were the basis for the suspension.

Students selling, or possessing with intent to sell any illicit drug on school property, or at any school function, will be suspended for 10 school days.

A report will be made immediately to the local police authorities of all suspensions under this policy and the incidents relating to the suspension. In the event that there is a conviction for selling drugs at school, the student will be brought before the school committee for exclusion from school.

Any suspension (pursuant to the provisions herein) shall be a prohibition against such student in attending school, school functions or school-affiliated activities during the period of time of suspension.

If the duration of the suspension exceeds the number of school days left in the school year then whatever days remain on the suspension shall be served at the start of the next school year. When the student involved is a high school senior and the days left in the school year is less than the days remaining under the suspension, then the student shall not be allowed to attend graduation exercises or any other school activities that extend beyond the last school day.

**POLICY**

Student Conduct

**JIC**

Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others.

Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner that respects the rights and privileges of others. They will be required to respect authority, to conform to school rules as expressed in the student handbook, and to adhere to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Any of the following actions may subject a student to suspension, expulsion, or other disciplinary measures by the principal under the terms of MGL 71:37H:

1. Possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games.
2. An assault on a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff member on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related event including athletic contests.

Any of the following actions will subject a student to suspension or other disciplinary measures:

1. Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property; or stealing or attempting to steal school property.
2. Causing or attempting to cause damage to private property; stealing or attempting to steal private property.
3. Causing or attempting to cause physical injury to another person except in self-defense.
4. Repeatedly and intentionally defying the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, or administrators.

The above prohibited actions will be outlined in detail in the student handbook and made available to students and parents.

**LEGAL REF.: MGL 71:37H**

Adopted December 12, 2012

**POLICY**

Bus Conduct

**JICC**

The right of students to ride a school bus is contingent upon their good behavior and their observance of established regulations.

The driver of a school bus shall be responsible for the safety of the students on a bus, both during the ride and while students are entering or leaving the vehicle. Therefore, it is the bus driver's duty to notify the building principal of the school involved if any student continues to violate the established rules of conduct.

Parents of children whose behavior or misconduct on a school bus endangers the health, safety and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges.

A principal may withhold from the student the privilege of riding the school bus for a violation of established regulations. Loss of bus privileges will require parents to arrange transportation to and from school for the duration of the suspension.

Adopted February 7, 1974  
Amended April 10, 2002  
Amended December 12, 2012

## **DETENTION**

Detentions may be given by teachers or administrators for inappropriate behaviors and will usually last 60 minutes. A written 24 hour notice will be given to the student. This must be signed and returned to the teacher or administrator. Failure to return the notice will result in a call to the parent. Detentions are the first responsibility for all students and take priority over any extracurricular activities or responsibilities. Skipping detentions will result in consequences consistent with the disciplinary guidelines on p. 38.

## **SUSPENSION (in-school)**

In-school suspension may be an option in certain circumstances to be determined by the administration. If a student is assigned to in-school suspension, the student will:

- Get his/her books and school materials and report directly to the in-house room for morning attendance.
- Fill out the forms for assigned work to be sent to the in-house room by team teachers and unified arts
- Work quietly throughout the day, asking for the supervisor's help when needed
- Be prepared with appropriate independent reading if schoolwork is finished.

In-school suspension will not be counted as an absence from class if all assigned work is completed during the day.

**Poor behavior while serving an In School Suspension will result in out of school suspension and the In School Suspension time will be completed upon return to school.**

## **POLICY**

Physical Restraint of Students

**JKA**

In response to recent changes in state law, the Dudley-Charlton Regional School Committee has amended its policy on physical restraint of students. Any questions related to restraint of students may be directed to the Administrator of Special Needs (508-943-6888 x272). The full policy can be found on the district website:

<http://www.dcrsd.org/about-dcrsd/district-policies/jka>

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION  
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 the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to demonstrate civility and respect 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 and make those provisions available to students and parents/guardians.

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 other alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

**Notice of Suspension**

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

**Emergency Removal (See 603 CMR 53.07)**

A principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the Principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

The principal shall immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal including a description of the danger presented by the student.

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

A principal shall also ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation prior to removal.

### **In School Suspension – Not More Than 10 Days Consecutively or Cumulatively**

The principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

The principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under 603 CMR 53.10 and this provision, provided that the principal follows the process set forth in the regulation and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by law and regulation.

### **Principal's Hearing – Short Term Suspension of up to 10 Days**

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

At a minimum, the principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information.

The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in law and regulation.

The principal shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student. The principal shall, based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The principal shall notify the student and parent/guardian of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as required by law and regulation. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

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

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

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

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



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

If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal; Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as required by law and regulation; Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, and shall include the following information: The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent/guardian must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent/guardian may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension before the suspension takes effect.

### **Superintendent's Hearing**

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

The student or parent/guardian shall file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within the time period noted above (see principal's hearing – Suspension of more than 10 days). If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the superintendent shall grant the extension.

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

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

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

## **Expulsion**

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently as allowed by law for possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines and makes a separate finding 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/guardian of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

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

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

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

For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether inschool 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.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:37H ½; 71:37H3/4; 76:17; 76:21 603 CMR 53.00

## **Proposed for Amendment**

First Reading: Wednesday, September 10, 2014

Second Reading and Adoption: Wednesday, September 24, 2014

## HAZING

Hazing of students is prohibited by state law (MGL 269, Sections 17-19) and is defined as any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of the student.

1. All incidents of hazing will be reported to the appropriate police authorities as required by law.
2. Depending on the seriousness of the hazing incident, the first occurrence will result in informing parents and assignment of in-school suspension or out of school suspension for up to ten days. The second occurrence will result in out of school suspension for ten days.

## POLICY

### Weapons in Schools

### JICI

It is the intention of the school committee to ensure that all students shall be able to attend school in a safe environment that is free of weapons and the violence associated with the use, or threatened use, of a weapon against another student or staff member.

In compliance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapters 37H, 37 H $\frac{1}{2}$ , and 37H $\frac{3}{4}$ , the school committee prohibits firearms and other dangerous weapons in schools and adopts the statutory definitions of a firearm and other dangerous weapons.

Possession and/or use of any firearm, or other dangerous weapon on school grounds, in a school building, on a school bus or at any other school sponsored activity will not be tolerated.

The school district supports the prosecution of all school related weapons assaults.

Any student found in possession of a firearm or other dangerous weapon shall be:

- a) suspended for a minimum of 10 school days
- b) reported to the police for possible prosecution
- c) reported to the superintendent for consideration of expulsion for up to the maximum allowed by law or regulation.

LEGAL REFS.: MGS Ch. 37H, 37H  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$

Adopted May 19, 1992  
Amended July 14, 1993  
Amended April 10, 2002  
Amended January 9, 2013

# DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

## DISCRIMINATION / HARASSMENT POLICY

POLICY  
Harassment

ACA

### I. Introduction

It is the goal of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District to promote an environment that is free from discrimination and which affirmatively provides access to employment and equal educational opportunity. Discrimination or harassment, that is based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, age, sexual orientation, and gender identity, is unlawful and will not be tolerated. Further, any retaliation against an individual for initiating, or cooperating with an investigation of, a discrimination complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated. This policy is designed to assist in achieving the aforementioned goal by providing procedures by which an employee, student or other member of the community should report allegations of illegal, inappropriate conduct, and pursuant to which any such allegation will be investigated, and appropriate, corrective or disciplinary action taken if warranted based on the outcome of such investigation

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District takes allegations of illegal discrimination and harassment seriously and intends to respond promptly to such complaints. Where it is determined, after a factual investigation, that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, the district will take reasonable, timely, corrective action, including disciplinary action where appropriate, designed to eliminate the conduct.

While this policy sets forth the goal of promoting an educational environment and workplace free of harassment, the policy is neither designed nor intended, and shall not be construed so as, either: (a) to limit the district's authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which the district deems unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of harassment; or (b) to create additional, legal remedies in any forum other than the district, as to which see, for example, Section VII below for pre-existing forums, laws and regulations which already provide an extensive system for enforcement of legal rights and remedies for violations of same.

### II. Definition of Harassment

Harassment consists of conduct, whether verbal, physical, or written/drawn, that is based upon a person's protected status based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, disability, age, sexual orientation, and gender identity, and that is illegal under applicable, federal or commonwealth law or regulations.

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

- Bullying
- Making dehumanizing remarks
- Extortionate behavior
- Displaying offensive cartoons or pictures
- Writing messages of an offensive nature
- Harassment occurs when such conduct, based on objective criteria and a reasonable person's perception, has the purpose or effect of substantially and unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance, or of creating an unreasonably intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment
- Harassment occurs when submission to such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or success as a student

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

### III. Complaints of Harassment

If any Dudley-Charlton student or employee believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment, as described above, they have the right to file a complaint with the school district.

If you would like to file a complaint, you may do so by contacting any building principal, the superintendent of schools, or other central office administrator. These personnel are also available to discuss any concerns you may have and to provide information to you about the district policy on harassment and the complaint process.

**Principal**

Charlton Elementary School  
9 Burlingame Road  
Charlton, MA 01507  
508-248-7774

**Principal**

Mason Road School  
20 Mason Rd.  
Dudley, MA 01571  
508-943-4312

**Principal**

Shepherd Hill Regional High School  
68 Dudley-Oxford Rd.  
Dudley, MA 01571  
508-943-6700

**Principal**

Heritage School  
34 Oxford Road  
Charlton, MA 01507  
508-248-4884

**Principal**

Dudley Elementary School  
16 School St.  
Dudley, MA 01571  
508-943-3351

**Superintendent of School**

Dudley-Charlton Regional School District  
68 Dudley-Oxford Rd.  
Dudley, MA 01571  
508-943-6888

**Principal**

Charlton Middle School  
2 Oxford Rd.  
Charlton, MA 01507  
508-248-9145

**Principal**

Dudley Middle School  
70 Dudley-Oxford Rd.  
Dudley, MA 01571  
508-943-2224

**Director of Student Resources**

Shepherd Hill Regional High School  
68 Dudley-Oxford Rd.,  
Dudley, MA 01571  
508-943-6700

### IV. Harassment Investigation

When a complaint has been reported, the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District will investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. The investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and the witness(es), if any. The district will also interview the person alleged to have committed harassment. When the district has completed the investigation the administrator, to the extent appropriate, will inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

If it is determined that inappropriate, illegal conduct has occurred, the administrator will take such timely action as the administrator believes will reasonably serve to eliminate the offending conduct, including, where appropriate, disciplinary action.

#### Formal Procedures for Resolution

- A. Both students and employees may direct the complaint to the administrator or supervisor who has immediate jurisdiction over the school involved. Students and employees are expected to direct the complaint no later than 20 calendar days after the alleged discriminatory practice occurred in order for an expeditious investigation to be conducted, unless extenuating circumstances exist. The student or employee shall submit the complaint in writing and will state the name of the individual and the location of the school/department where the alleged harassment practice occurred, the basis for the complaint, including the date(s) on which the violations are alleged to have taken place and the details of same with sufficient specificity for the administrator to investigate same, and the corrective action the student or employee is seeking. If the complaint is filed by or on behalf of a student and involves an administrator or supervisor, it shall be addressed to the director of student resources.
- B. The appropriate administrator, supervisor or director will conduct the necessary investigation in a timely fashion after receiving the formal, written, complaint. In the course of the investigation, the appropriate administrator, supervisor, or director shall contact those individuals who have been referred to as having pertinent information related to the complaint. This process shall include, at a minimum, contacting the complainant and the person against whom the complaint was filed and, if appropriate, the principal or appropriate authority involved. Strict timelines cannot be set for conducting the investigation because each set of circumstances is different. For

example, sometimes the students or employees that are involved in the complaint are not immediately available. The appropriate administrator or director, however, will make sure that the complaint is handled as quickly as is reasonably feasible and will strive to complete the investigation within 30 school or working days. When more than 30 school or working days are required for the investigation, the administrator or director shall inform the student or employee who filed the complaint that the investigation is ongoing.

- C. After completing the initial investigation, the administrator or director shall request a meeting with the person against whom the complaint was filed to discuss the tentative findings and, at the same time, to give the person against whom the complaint was filed an opportunity to respond to such findings, and to seek to resolve the complaint. When feasible and appropriate, the administrator or director will make every attempt to resolve the issue within the time parameters of this initial meeting; however, more than one meeting may be necessary. The administrator or director will strive to complete both the investigation and the resolution of the complaint within 30 school or working days. When more than 30 school or working days are required for the investigation and resolution process, the administrator or director shall inform the student or employee who filed the complaint and the individual against whom the complaint was filed that additional time is needed for the resolution process.
- D. If the administrator or director finds that there is reasonable cause for believing that an illegal, harassing practice has occurred, he/she will either take appropriate action as discussed above or will refer the matter to the superintendent of schools for the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District for appropriate action, up to and including, if apt, expulsion for students or termination for employees.

### **Disciplinary Action**

Disciplinary action will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, Massachusetts and federal laws, and school district policies. Any staff member or student who is dissatisfied with the results or progress of the school's investigation may discuss his/her dissatisfaction directly with the building principal, or if the complaint is against the principal, with the superintendent of schools. The superintendent shall have the right to consider or review any complaint or the prosecution or disposition of same in the superintendent's discretion, but shall not be required to do so unless the complaint has been made against a principal, an employee of the central school district administrative office or another employee for whom the superintendent has primary responsibility under M.G.L. Ch. 71:42.

### **State and Federal Remedies**

In addition to the above, if a student or employee believes he or she has been subjected to harassment with regard to protected status, he or she may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using our complaint process does not prohibit a student or employee from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim (EEOC-- 180 days; MCAD -- six months.)

<b>The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)</b> JFK Federal Building Room 475 Government Center <u>Boston, MA 02203</u>	<b>Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)</b> One Ashburton Place Room 601E Boston, MA 02108 617-727-3990
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LEGAL REF. MGL Ch. 71:42

Adopted January 24, 2007

# DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

## POLICY

### Sexual Harassment

## ACAB

### **I. Introduction**

It is the goal of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District to promote an educational environment and workplace that is free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment of students or employees by anyone, including a fellow student, teacher, coach, supervisor, co-worker, vendor, or other third party is unlawful and will not be tolerated. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated. To achieve our goal of providing an educational environment or workplace free from sexual harassment, the conduct that is described in this policy will not be tolerated and the district has provided a procedure by which inappropriate conduct will be dealt with, if encountered by students or employees.

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

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

### **II. Definition of Sexual Harassment**

In Massachusetts, the legal definition for sexual harassment is this:

"sexual harassment" means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

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

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

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

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

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

- Unwelcome sexual advances - whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;

- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and,
- Discussion of one's sexual activities.

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

**III. Complaints of Sexual Harassment**

If any of our Dudley-Charlton students or employees believe that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, as described above, they have the right to file a complaint with the school district. This may be done in writing or orally.

If you would like to file a complaint, you may do so by contacting any building principal, the superintendent of schools, or other central office administrators. These personnel are also available to discuss any concerns you may have and to provide information to you about our policy on sexual harassment and our complaint process. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District Title IX Coordinator is Dr. Brian Ackerman at 508.943.6888 x 278 and [backerman@dcrsd.org](mailto:backerman@dcrsd.org).

<p><b>Principal Jennifer Lilley</b> Charlton Elementary School 9 Burlingame Road Charlton, MA 01507 508-248-7774 <a href="mailto:jlilley@dcrsd.org">jlilley@dcrsd.org</a></p>	<p><b>Principal Peter Olson</b> Heritage School 34 Oxford Road Charlton, MA 01507 508-248-4884 <a href="mailto:polson@dcrsd.org">polson@dcrsd.org</a></p>	<p><b>Principal Dean Packard</b> Charlton Middle School 2 Oxford Rd. Charlton, MA 01507 508-248-9145 <a href="mailto:dpackard@dcrsd.org">dpackard@dcrsd.org</a></p>
<p><b>Principal Jennifer Desto</b> Mason Road School 20 Mason Rd. Dudley, MA 01571 508-943-4312 <a href="mailto:jdesto@dcrsd.org">jdesto@dcrsd.org</a></p>	<p><b>Principal Kelly True</b> Dudley Elementary School 16 School St. Dudley, MA 01571 508-943-3351 <a href="mailto:ktrue@dcrsd.org">ktrue@dcrsd.org</a></p>	<p><b>Principal Chris Starczewski</b> Dudley Middle School 70 Dudley-Oxford Rd. Dudley, MA 01571 508-943-2224 <a href="mailto:cstarczewski@dcrsd.org">cstarczewski@dcrsd.org</a></p>
<p><b>Principal Darren Elwell</b> Shepherd Hill Regional High School 68 Dudley-Oxford Rd. Dudley, MA 01571 508-943-6700 <a href="mailto:delwell@dcrsd.org">delwell@dcrsd.org</a></p>	<p><b>Superintendent of Schools Steven Lamarche</b> Dudley-Charlton Regional School District 68 Dudley-Oxford Rd. Dudley, MA 01571 508-943-6888 <a href="mailto:slamarche@dcrsd.org">slamarche@dcrsd.org</a></p>	<p><b>Director of Student Resources Robert Bergeron</b> Shepherd Hill Regional High School 68 Dudley-Oxford Rd., Dudley, MA 01571 508-943-6700 <a href="mailto:rbergeron@dcrsd.org">rbergeron@dcrsd.org</a></p>

**IV. Sexual Harassment Investigation**

When the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District receives a complaint we will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. The investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and the witnesses. The district will also interview the person alleged to have committed sexual harassment. When the district has completed the investigation we will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

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



**V. Procedures for Resolution**

- A. Before initiating the formal procedure, the student or employee should, if possible, resolve any complaint regarding an alleged discriminatory practice on an informal basis.
  - 1. The student can raise the issue to his or her teacher, assistant principal, principal or the director of student resources.
- B. Both students and employees may direct the complaint to the administrator or supervisor who has immediate jurisdiction over the school involved. Students and employees are expected to direct the complaint no later than 20 calendar days after the alleged discriminatory practice occurred in order for an expeditious investigation to be conducted, unless extenuating circumstances exist. The student or employee shall submit the complaint in writing and will state the name of the individual and the location of the school/department where the alleged harassment practice occurred, the basis for the complaint and the corrective action the student or employee is seeking. If the complaint involves an administrator or supervisor, it shall be addressed to the director of student resources.

After filing the formal written complaint, the appropriate administrator, supervisor, or director will conduct the necessary investigation promptly after receiving the complaint. In the course of the investigation, the appropriate administrator, supervisor, or director shall contact those individuals who have been referred to as having pertinent information related to the complaint. This process shall include, at a minimum, contacting the complainant and the person against whom the complaint was filed and/or the principal or appropriate authority involved.

Strict timelines cannot be set for conducting the investigation because each set of circumstances is different. For example, sometimes the students or employees that are involved in the complaint are not immediately available. The appropriate administrator, supervisor, or director, however, will make sure that the complaint is handled as quickly as is feasible and will strive to complete the investigation within 30 school or working days. When more than 30 school or working days are required for the investigation, the administrator, supervisor, or director shall inform the student or employee who filed the complaint that the investigation is ongoing.

After completing the formal investigation of the complaint, the administrator, supervisor, or director shall request a meeting with the person against whom the complaint was filed to discuss the findings and, at the same time, to give the person against whom the complaint was filed an opportunity to respond to the findings, and to seek to resolve the complaint. When feasible and appropriate, the administrator, supervisor, or director will make every attempt to resolve the issue within the time parameters of this initial meeting; however, more than one meeting may be necessary. The administrator, supervisor, or director will strive to complete both the investigation and the resolution of the complaint within 30 school or working days. When more than 30 school or working days are required for the investigation and resolution process, the administrator, supervisor, or director shall inform the student or employee who filed the complaint and the individual against whom the complaint was filed that additional time is needed for the resolution process.

If the administrator, supervisor, or director finds that there is reasonable cause for believing that a harassing practice has occurred, he/she will refer the matter to the Superintendent of Schools for the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District for appropriate action, up to and including expulsion for students or termination for employees.

If no satisfactory resolution can be reached through either the informal or formal resolution procedures detailed above, the student or employee has the right to take the complaint to an appropriate state or federal agency. Moreover, it should be noted that the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District's complaint process does not prohibit any student or employee from filing a complaint with these agencies. For students, complaints may be taken to:

<b>The Office for Civil Rights U.S. Dept. of Education John W. McCormack Building Post Office and Court House Square Boston, MA 02109-4557 617-223-9667</b>	<b>The Bureau of Equal Education Opportunity Massachusetts Department of Education 75 Pleasant St. Malden, MA 02148-5023 781-338-3000</b>
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Or other appropriate state or federal agency.

For employees or applicants for employment, complaints may be taken to:

<b>The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination</b> <b>One Ashburton Place Room 601E</b> <b>Boston, MA 02108</b> <b>617-727-3990</b>	<b>Equal Employment Opportunity Commission</b> <b>JFK Federal Building</b> <b>475 Government Center</b> <b>Boston, MA 02203</b> <b>800-669-4000</b>
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Or other appropriate state or federal agency.

**VI. Disciplinary Action**

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

**VII. State and Federal Remedies**

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

<b>The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)</b> <b>JFK Federal Building Room 475</b> <b>Government Center</b> Boston, MA 02203	<b>Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)</b> <b>One Ashburton Place</b> <b>Room 601E</b> <b>Boston, MA 02108</b> <b>617-727-3990</b>
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Adopted December 11, 1996  
Amended March 27, 2002  
Amended October 25, 2006  
Amended December 12, 2012

**POLICY**

Illness – HIV Infection/AIDS

JLCCA

The school committee adheres to Commonwealth of Massachusetts guidelines and statues concerning HIV Infection/AIDS as they relate to children and adolescents in school settings. The following Department of Public Health documents are an integral part of this policy:

1. Updated Medical Policy Guidelines: *Children and Adolescents with HIV Infection/AIDS in School Settings*, August 1991
2. Appendix A – *Medical Guidelines Regarding Students Who Bleed in an Uncontrollable Fashion in a School Setting*.
3. Appendix B – *Universal Precautions for School Settings*.

**POLICY**

Bullying

**A**

**A.** It is the policy of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District to take pro-active, reasonable measures designed to provide a learning and working atmosphere for students, employees and other members of the school community free from sexual harassment, bullying, hazing and intimidation. These terms are referenced herein as “harassment”, which is more particularly defined below. The district in the strongest possible terms condemns harassment, whether based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, ancestry, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other reason.

“Bullying” is the repeated use by one or more students or 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 para-professional 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 harm to the victim or damage to the victim’s property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear or 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.

**B.** It is a violation of policy for any student or 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, to engage in or condone harassment in school, on school grounds or at or in a school-related function, activity, communication or contact, or to fail to report or otherwise take reasonable corrective measures when he/she becomes aware of an incident of harassment.

**C.** This policy is not designed or intended to, nor shall it, limit the school’s authority to take disciplinary action to take remedial action when such harassment occurs out of school, but has a sufficient nexus to school under applicable law, or is disruptive to an employee’s or student’s work or participation in school-related activities. Reports of harassment, including but not limited to cyber-bullying by electronic or other means, occurring in or out of school will be reviewed, and, when a sufficient nexus to school or school-related work exists, will result in discipline.

**D.** It is the responsibility of every employee, student and parent/guardian to recognize acts of harassment and take reasonable action to see that the applicable policies and procedures of this school district are implemented. All members of the school community are, and must act as partners in such efforts if we are to have any reasonable chance of success in preventing or minimizing activity of this type, which is harmful to both the victim and the perpetrator. The children attending our schools are in critical, formative stages of their lives. To the extent that we, working together, are able to show them a better way, they will reap immeasurable, lifelong benefits.

**E.** Any employee or student who believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment has the right to file a complaint and to receive reasonably prompt and appropriate handling of the complaint. While proper enforcement of this policy foreseeably may require disclosure of any or all information received, all reasonable efforts will be made to maintain confidentiality to the extent consistent with such enforcement.

**F.** The building principal/designee shall be responsible for assisting employees and students seeking guidance or support in addressing matters relating to any form of harassment.

## **II. Prohibition and Definitions**

**Harassment**, including bullying, may take a variety of forms. It is utterly unacceptable in a school or work environment. As a result, neither any student, nor employee nor other member of the school community shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying in any public educational institute.

**Bullying** is further defined as behavior that must interfere with an employee's ability to perform his or her duties or with a student's academic performance or ability to learn, or interfere with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from services, activities, or privileges:

1. being offered by or through the school district; or
2. during any district-related educational program or activity; or
3. while in school, on or using school district property or equipment, in a school vehicle, on a school bus, at school-designated bus stops, at school-sponsored activities, at school-sanctioned events; or
4. through the use of data, telephone or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network or any public education institute related to or provided or facilitated by the district; or
5. in circumstances otherwise having a sufficient nexus with the school district.
- 6.. "Electronic communication" as used in this policy means any communication through an electronic device, including but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer or pager.

## **III. Guidelines and Procedures for Investigating and Processing Harassment Claims**

Harassment may take many forms. In a school district such could involve an instance of staff member to staff member, staff member to student, student to staff member, or student to student. It conceivably could also include parent to a student other than the parent's child, staff member to parent, or parent to staff member. This listing is illustrative and the procedures set forth herein are not intended to limit the definition of harassment, nor the district's authority to take appropriate action as to the same except to the extent that specific subject matter is expressly addressed herein.

Guidelines and procedures for dealing with any charge of harassment are as follows:

**A.** By law, harassment is defined by the victim's perception in combination with objective standards or expectations. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, in order to protect the rights of both parties, it is important that the victim make it clear to the harasser that the behavior is objectionable.

**B.** In all charges of harassment, the victim should describe in writing the specifics of the complaint to ensure that the subsequent investigation is focused on the relevant facts. If possible victim should sign the complaint. Oral and anonymous complaints will be reviewed but are inherently difficult to investigate and may not be procedurally fair; as a result, no disciplinary action shall be taken on anonymous complaints unless verified by what the administration in the good faith exercise of its reasonable discretion deems to be clear and convincing evidence. All other complaints will be reviewed based on a preponderance of evidence standard, namely whether the administration in the exercise of its aforementioned discretion, taking into account all material information and circumstances, concludes that a violation of this policy more likely than not has occurred.

**C.** Any school employee who has reasonably reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person may be a target of harassment, bullying or intimidation shall immediately, as a condition of employment, report it to the administration. Each school shall document each prohibited incident that is reported and confirmed, and report each

such incident and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals if any, to the superintendent's office in a timely fashion and without any avoidable delay.

**D.** A good faith report from a staff member is not grounds for any legal liability and, since such reports are a condition of the staff member's employment is considered to have been made in the course of employment for purposes of employment the Municipal Tort Claims Act, M.G.L. Ch. 258. As a result, the employee would not be subject to damages simply by reason of making such a report, and in the event of a suit based solely thereon would be covered by the school district's insurance policy which provides defense of such suits.

**E.** If an instance of student to student harassment, as defined in Sec. II above, is reported to a staff member other than an administrator, the staff member must inform the building principal/designee in a timely fashion. If the alleged harasser would otherwise be responsible for conducting an investigation, the Alternate Harassment Coordinator designated by the superintendent or school committee, who is presently the curriculum coordinator, shall conduct the investigation and report to the alleged harasser's immediate supervisor.

**F.** If a situation involves a charge of staff member to student harassment, as defined in Sec. II. above, is brought to the attention of any staff member, the staff member should notify the building principal immediately.

**G.** Once a charge of harassment has been made, the following course of action should be taken.

1. The building principal or such principal's designee should conduct a reasonable, factual investigation by means of discussions with the individuals involved, any other witnesses if any, review of any documents and other, written or electronic materials, etc.

If the principal himself or herself does not conduct the investigation, he or she should review the designee's report and supporting documentation (by way of example only, any written, signed statements by the complainant setting forth the allegations, any such statement by the accused and witnesses, and any other materials such as those mentioned above), as appropriate to the then current stage of the investigation and before making any determination as to whether a violation more likely than not has occurred, and if the principal deems such necessary or advisable should conduct direct interviews himself or herself during or following such review and before making a determination.

In situations involving allegations against an employee, the employee should be accorded all rights provided by any applicable statute and/or collective bargaining agreement, including but not limited to being informed of his/her right to have a third party present at the time of the discussion if apt, and, in the case of a teacher, of the right to counsel if the any discussion could conceivably lead to a suspension (see, M.G.L. Ch. 71:42D).

In situations involving harassment of students, the principal should conduct an investigation with the appropriate classroom or special subject area teacher. Parents/guardians will be informed of the situation and invited to participate in resolution discussions if warranted.

Parents/guardians of students alleged to have engaged in harassment as to whom suspension is imposed shall be notified that they, or one of them must attend a meeting at which the behavior, words or images giving rise to the complaint may be reviewed. Before any final decision is made as to whether to impose discipline exceeding ten (10) school days, and the nature of such discipline, the student and her or his parent(s)/guardians will be informed in reasonable detail of the factual allegations underlying the complaint and given an opportunity to respond to and provide any information material to same.

In the school administration's discretion, depending on its preliminary assessment of the seriousness of a reported incident of alleged harassment, a student accused of harassment may be suspended from school under the procedures for suspension set forth in the student-parent handbook and not readmitted to the regular school program until the student and his or her parent(s) attend such meeting. A ten (10) school day suspension if deemed reasonably necessary by the administration may be imposed prior to such a meeting, but before any such were imposed the student shall be informed of the ground(s) for such possible suspension in sufficient detail to allow the student to respond to the charge(s). A satisfactory conference with the student and his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must occur prior to the students' readmission.

It is important that each situation be resolved as confidentially and as quickly as circumstances reasonably permit.

2. At any stage of the proceedings the alleged harasser and the victim may discuss the matter at a resolution meeting in the presence of the principal/designee and/or parent when appropriate. During this discussion, the offending behavior should be described by the victim and the administration. If warranted a request for a change in behavior should be made, and a promise should be made that the described behavior will stop and not recur. If circumstances do not permit a face to face meeting the administration will present the victim's position. Follow-up verification procedures will be explained. Failure to comply after a resolution, if any, is voluntarily reached at such a meeting will result in appropriate discipline. The principal or his or her designee at the close of the meeting shall prepare a written summary of the discussion held at the meeting and of any resolution, if any, agreed to at same, and shall ask the parties attending the meeting to review, date and sign the agreement. The administrator shall sign the summary, and if any party to the meeting refuses to sign shall note that fact thereon. No such memorandum must be included in a student's school record or an employee's personnel file unless otherwise required by law, but the principal shall keep a copy of same in her or his records.

**H.** If after a resolution meeting with the involved parties, the building principal determines that further disciplinary action must be taken, the following may occur:

1. In instances involving student to student or student to staff member harassment, subject to applicable law and the disciplinary procedures set forth in the student-parent handbook, the student may be subject to discipline, including but not limited to counseling, suspension or expulsion.

2. In instances involving staff member to student and staff member to staff member harassment, findings will be reported to the superintendent of schools for further action. Personnel action, up to and including discharge from employment, may also be initiated at this point, consistent with applicable law and collective bargaining agreement.

3. In all cases where in the good faith judgment of the principal or superintendent the circumstances so warrant, a referral to law enforcement will be made. School officials will coordinate with the Dudley or Charlton police departments to identify a police liaison for harassment cases.

#### **IV. Retaliation:**

In the event of retaliation in any form against any person who has made or filed, or provided any information as to, a complaint relating to harassment, any employee or student found to have engaged in same shall be subject to discipline in accordance with applicable law. In the case of an employee, discipline may be up to and including dismissal from employment, and in the case of a student may be up to and including expulsion. If warranted, a referral to law enforcement shall also be made.

#### **V. Confidentiality:**

Reports of harassment should be kept completely confidential to the extent consistent with necessary investigation procedures, with the goal of protecting the victim and stopping the behavior.

#### **LEGAL REFS.:**

1. Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 703

2. Title IX of the 1972 U.S. Civil Rights Act.

3. MGL Ch. 151C, Massachusetts General Laws

4. MGL. Ch. 76:5

5. MGL Ch. 269:17, 18, 19

6. MGL Ch. 71:82, 84

Adopted March 24, 2010

Amended December 12, 2012

## GENERAL DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES

The purpose of discipline is to help students meet their responsibilities while affording each student the opportunity to achieve at his/her fullest potential in a safe, orderly learning environment. The usual sequence for addressing disciplinary issues begins with the teacher and the team before any administrative referral. The following list of potential misbehaviors and disciplinary actions is not all-inclusive. The list is provided for students and parents as an informative guideline for situations that may occur. The administration utilizes progressive discipline when repeat offenses occur and reserves the right to use discretion when warranted.

<u>Offense</u>	<u>Disciplinary Action</u>
1. Possession of a weapon in school, on school grounds, or at a school function.	Minimum ten days out of school suspension. Police notified. Subject to expulsion. See Policy JK, Suspension and Expulsion, page 21.
2. Selling, distributing, or possessing with intent to sell or distribute alcohol or drugs (including prescription and non-prescription medication) in school, on school grounds, or at a school function.	Ten days out of school suspension. Police notified. Subject to expulsion. See Policy JK, Suspension and Expulsion, pages 21.
3. Possession, consumption, or under the influence of illegal drugs, chemicals used as inhalants, or alcohol in school, on school grounds, or at a school function.	Five to ten days out of school suspension. Police notified. Subject to expulsion. See Policy JK, Suspension and Expulsion, pages 21.
4 a. Arson b. Setting off incendiary device c. Setting off false alarm.	Ten days out of school suspension. Police notified.
5. Bomb threat.	Ten days out of school suspension. Police notified.
6. Possession of Fireworks or other incendiary device	Five to ten days out of school suspension. Police notified.
7 a. Fighting on school property.	One to five days out of school suspension. (In school suspension may be offered depending on the severity of the incident.)

b. Prearranged fight or incident with clear evidence of provocation.	<p><b>First Offense.</b> Minimum of five days out of school suspension. Police notified.</p> <p><b>Second Offense.</b> Ten days out of school suspension. Police notified.</p>
8 a. Assault/battery on school personnel.	Ten days out of school suspension. Police notified. Subject to expulsion.
b. Assault/battery of another student.	Ten days out of school suspension. Police notified.
9. Threatening or harassment of school personnel or students.	Warning, office detention(s), in-school suspension, or out of school suspension depending on the severity of the incident. Police may be notified.
10. Violent act towards another student(s).	In-school or out of school suspension, depending on the nature and severity of the incident. Police may be notified.
11. Bullying	In-school, or out of school suspension depending on the nature and severity of the incident. Parent notified. Police notified.
12 a. Directing obscenities or vulgar acts, or obscene gestures, towards school personnel.	<p><b>First Offense:</b> One to three days in school or out of school suspension.</p> <p><b>Second Offense:</b> Three to five days out of school suspension.</p>
b. Directing obscenities or vulgar acts, or obscene gestures, towards students	Warning, office detention(s), in-school suspension, or out of school suspension depending on the nature and severity of the incident
13. Dangerous behavior (including, but not limited to, actions that may result in injury).	Warning, office detention(s), in-school suspension, or out of school suspension depending on the nature and severity of the incident.
14. Insubordination and/or disruptive, inappropriate behavior.	Warning, office detention(s), in-school suspension, or out of school suspension depending on the nature, frequency, and severity of the incident.
15. Vandalism and/or theft.	Restitution and office detention(s), in school suspension, or out of school suspension depending upon



the nature of the incident.  
Police may be notified.

16. Possession and/or use of tobacco products. Including but not limited to any nicotine delivery device.

**First Offense:** All materials confiscated. One to three days in school suspension.  
**Second Offense:** All materials confiscated. Three to five days out of school suspension. Referral to Tobacco Awareness Program.

17. Truancy

**First Offense:** Three office detentions.  
**Second Offense:** Three days in school suspension.  
**Third Offense:** Three days out of school suspension. Referral to truancy officer.

18. Falsifying signatures and/or altering notes, excuses, or school documents.

**First Offense:** Two office detentions.  
**Second Offense:** One to three days in school suspension.

19. Falsifying or refusing to give name to school personnel.

Warning, office detention(s), in school suspension, or out of school suspension, depending on the nature of the incident.

20. Cutting class.

**First Offense:** Two office detentions.  
**Second Offense:** One day in school suspension.  
**Third Offense:** Three days in school suspension.

21. Inappropriate use of electronic devices.

**First Offense:** Warning and confiscation of the device. Returned to the student at the end of the school day by teacher and/or administration.  
**Second Offense:** Confiscation of the device by administration. Returned only to parent or caregiver. Parent's will be notified and an electronic plan is discussed and implemented.  
**Third Offense:** Confiscation of the device to the main office. The electronic device will be returned only to parents or caregivers. Parent's notified and an electronic plan is reviewed, revised, and implemented. In addition to the electronic plan being implemented, disciplinary action will come into effect depending on the nature of use.

22. Possession of other materials inappropriate to the education process (obscene materials, etc.).

Warning, office detention(s), in school suspension, or out of school suspension, depending on the nature of the incident. Confiscation. Return only to parent or guardian. Police may be notified.

23. Inappropriate bus behavior.

**First Offense:** Warning

and/or office detention(s).

**Extreme behavior may result in the loss of bus privileges at any time.**

**Second Offense:** In school suspension or out of school suspension depending on the nature of the incident.

24. Failure to report to office detention.

**First Offense:** Two office detentions.

**Second Offense:** One day in school suspension.

25. Failure to report to class or teacher detention.

Two office detentions.

26. Refusal to report to in school suspension or disruptive behavior during in school suspension.

Two days out of school suspension and in school suspension to be completed upon return to school.

27. Refusal to Report to the Office/Administrator.

Warning. Office Detention(s), or In-School Suspension, depending on the nature of the incident.

28. Present in an Unauthorized Area, (including, but not limited to leaving the school building without permission, staying after school without teacher or staff permission and supervision and/or purposefully going to an unsupervised area.)

Warning. Office Detention(s), or In-School Suspension, depending on the nature of the incident.

- 
- Administration will follow due process as outlined in 603 CMR 53.00 regarding student discipline. This student discipline law can be viewed at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr53.html>
  - In addition, the administration may adapt disciplinary actions if deemed appropriate after due process has been rendered.
  - **Repeated disciplinary actions** may lead to exclusion from co-curricular or extra-curricular activities (including, but not limited to, field trips) or may lead to court referral.
  - **Behavior contracts** that address specific issues may be written at any time with students, parents, teams, and administration involvement. Such contracts do not replace any disciplinary action but serve to reinforce positive behavior.
  - **Parents or guardians** will be notified of any violation resulting in office detentions, in school suspension, or out of school suspension. After the third in school suspension during a semester, a parent conference will be mandatory.
  - **Parent conferences** are also required for reinstatement following any out of school suspension.

### **Face Masks:**

The Dudley Charlton Regional School District is committed to standards and procedures to assure the safety of students and staff. We must provide a safe learning and working environment for students and staff. Therefore, in accordance with any mandate that comes from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the School Committee or any other governing agency, the following requirements are in place until further notice.

If mandated, a face mask that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by students and by all other individuals in school buildings and on school transportation with the exception of meals, being outside and indoor mask breaks. This includes all indoor school sponsored activities.

Students and staff shall wear masks at all times except for the following:

- Students may remove masks for eating, when outside and during indoor mask breaks
- Documented medical reasons with consultation of the school nurse
- Special behavioral or individualized needs as determined by the building principal/administrator. Students can

lower their mask to drink water at their desks/seat. Personal water bottles are permitted.

### **Types:**

Face masks can be disposable or reusable and will need to fully cover the nose and mouth and secure under the chin, fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face, and be secured with ties or ear loops.

### **Violations:**

All efforts will be made to work with the student and his/her family. If students are in violation of this requirement or accompanying administrative procedures:

- The student will be provided a mask
- The student will meet with the building principal or designee to try to rectify the situation. Parents/guardians will be notified.
- The building principal will consult with the parent/guardian to work together as a team to rectify the situation.
- Students may be reassigned to an alternative location while continuing to work through the situation.
- For ongoing non-compliance, students will be deemed not ready to attend school and will be dismissed to parents/guardians.
- As a last step, disciplinary action will be at the discretion of the building principal/administrator and on a case by case basis in accordance with listed Discipline Guidelines and the Code of Conduct in all DCRSD Student Handbooks.

## DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

### POLICY

#### Social Networking

### EDC

#### **1. Internet Acceptable Use Policy still in force**

This policy is adopted in addition to, and not as a substitute for, the Dudley-Charlton Regional School district's Internet Acceptable Use Policy, IJNDB and IJNDBA, which governs the use of the school district's technological resources.

#### **2. General Concerns**

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District recognizes the proliferation and, in some instances, usefulness of online conversation between staff members and students or between staff and students' parents/guardians. However, due to the nature of social networking sites, there exists a risk that, without care and planning, appropriate boundaries may not be maintained between one's professional life and personal life, and between staff and students. Staff members must always be mindful of how they present themselves to the world online and otherwise.

Should a staff member *friend* a student on Facebook, subscribe to a student's Twitter account, regularly engage in email chat with a student, exchange text messages with students, or engage in other electronic communication, the district is concerned, and the staff member should be concerned, that such activities may undermine the staff member's authority to maintain discipline, may encourage inappropriate behaviors and may compromise the staff member's ability to remain reasonably objective in dealings with his/her students and the assessment of these students. As district staff, we should also be mindful of the risks posed to students' and others' rights of privacy and confidentiality, to other staff members, and to the district in the event of unreasonable or illegal breach of such rights, whether intentional or caused by a failure to exercise due care.

#### **3. Expectations of Staff**

With these concerns in mind, the district has adopted and will publish this Social Networking Policy so as to clearly inform the staff and others of the district's expectations and requirements concerning staff members' use of social networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, personal email accounts, text message features of cell phones, use of blogs, and other electronic or technologically based communication systems.

1. Before endeavoring to establish any social networking account, a staff member should carefully familiarize himself or herself with the features of any such account. For example, Facebook requires account holders to take specific steps to privatize the information they place online. Staff must educate themselves to these features of Facebook or any other social networking site selected. Staff will be held responsible should any information intended to be private become public due to ignorance of the features of the social network he/she has decided to use or his/her failure to properly use such features.
2. District staff must also know that any information intended to be shared privately with a recipient could be redistributed by such recipient, or become public due to the staff member's knowledge or consent. The same principles that apply to in-person or written communication must be applied to online and other electronic communication. In essence, nothing posted online or electronically communicated is ever truly private.
3. Employees of the district are required as a condition of employment to keep the boundary line between professional life and personal life clearly drawn. Despite the proliferation of social networking sites the district

maintains the expectation that its staff members will exercise the requisite forethought in all electronic communications to be sure that the aforementioned boundary line never becomes blurred.

For example, if the district does not maintain a web portal for communications with students and families and a staff member wishes to establish a Facebook account through which he or she will communicate, he or she should establish a Facebook identity that is separate from his/her personal Facebook identity. He/she must use his/her educational Facebook account, exclusively, to communicate with students and their families on matters directly related to education being provided by the district. The *friends* associated with such educational Facebook account should be limited to members of the educational community, such as administrators, teachers, students, and parents/guardians of such students. Staff members must reject *friend* requests from individuals who do not fit into any of these categories.

4. At all times, and in the use of any form of communication, staff members must maintain student privacy rights and the rights of employees and others to have their personal and medical information kept confidential. Information that is protected by law from disclosure to third parties shall not be communicated in a way that unreasonably exposes such information to access or retrieval by those third parties. (For example, no such information shall be sent online or by other electronic communication unless adequately encrypted.) By way of illustrative example only, a staff member shall not post confidential student information on the *wall*, the information section or any part of an educational Facebook account that may be accessible to another staff member's Facebook friends associated with that account. If a staff member wishes to communicate on matters directly related to education provided by the district privately with a student through the educational Facebook account, such communication shall be conveyed only through the private email/message feature of Facebook, so that only the student may view the message and respond to it.
5. As to any matter relating to education the district is providing a student, staff members are to communicate electronically with students and parents/guardians only through school-based resources, such as school-provided email or web portal accounts. Use of one's personal email account to discuss school business with students and parents/guardians is prohibited. It should be noted that when a staff member uses his/her personal email account the communication falls within the provisions of the Massachusetts Public Records Law as well as being subject to discovery in litigation in certain circumstances. As one consequence (among others), all the staff member's personal emails would have to be searched in the event of public records request, and in the event of ambiguity much of the staff member's personal communication could well become public. Such use of personal email also prevents the archiving of such messages through the district's automatic email archiving system and might well result in a staff member and/or the district having to conduct a very expensive and time consuming search in response to such a request.

Staff is also discouraged from using home telephones and personal cell phones to communicate with students and their families. The provisions in #5 above, except to the extent that a particular telephonic communication does not generate a written document, apply to telephonic communication as well. And staff members at all times must bear in mind that cellular telephones do not provide secure communication, but on the contrary are susceptible to being intercepted or inadvertently overheard by third parties at any time. No conversation relating to a confidential matter shall ever be conducted by cellular telephone except in case of an immediate emergency which precludes any other reasonable method of communication, and in the event of such an emergency communication the staff member shall prepare and submit to his or her immediate supervisor, without any avoidable delay whatsoever a written report detailing in full the need for and content of the communication.

6. If a staff member were to inadvertently convey a school-related message to a student or parent/guardian on the staff member's private account, the staff member must save such email to his/her school email account or print and save a paper copy of such email and file it in the appropriate school file, and maintain its confidentiality as he/she would any other document concerning that student. Any document created or received by a public employee in his or her capacity as such is subject to Commonwealth and federal laws regarding retention and disclosure except as specifically exempted under the public records law, as well as to discovery by court order in certain circumstances.
7. No matter what medium of communication a staff member selects, he/she should adhere to appropriate staff member/student boundaries. Staff members are role models, not students' friends. District employees are expected to always conduct themselves in accordance with this understanding.

8. This policy is not intended to infringe upon a staff member's right to speak publicly on matters of public concern, or to communicate with fellow members of their union on workplace issues, so long as such communication adheres to appropriate time, place, and manner restrictions and does not interfere with the performance of your job duties. However, when district employees speak via social networking sites or tools on matters concerning work, they speak as employees and not as citizens, and certain restrictions apply to their freedom of expression. Those restrictions are intended to preserve student safety and confidentiality, and to maintain an employee's status as a staff member who should: (a) command and receive the respect of students, (b) be able to maintain order and discipline in the classroom, and (c) remain objective with respect to their students.
9. The district has, expressly reserves, and in any situation it deems appropriate will exercise: (a) the requisite authority to monitor all communications which arise out of or in connection with one's position as an employee, including all such referenced above in the manner permitted by law; and (b) its right to take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including discharge from employment, due to inappropriate behavior, such as failure to adhere to the standards and limitations set forth in this policy, including by way of example only, any such which undermines an employee's authority or ability to instruct or maintain control and discipline of students, compromises his/her objectivity, or is harmful to a student's safety or best interest. The district also reserves the right to advise appropriate legal officials of any violation of law. Employees should also be mindful at all times that any inappropriate communication may give rise to liability for oneself (e.g. for defamation or unreasonable invasion of privacy) and that the district could be sued in connection with same and thus incur costs of defense and other possible loss and expense. Any staff member who becomes aware of a violation of this policy should immediately notify his or her immediate supervisor of same.
10. Staff members should not access their private Facebook or other social networking accounts using school district computer resources.
11. When communicating as an employee of the district, or concerning any subject matter which falls, or which a person could reasonably perceive as falling, within the ambit of one's duties as such an employee, one must be aware that a reader may assume that he or she speaks for the district or may judge the quality of the education provided by the district based thereon. Therefore, all communications in any such circumstance must be professional at all times and must not reflect negatively on the services which the district provides any student nor communicate any information which the employee knows, or with reasonable care should know, is inaccurate.
12. In the use of a Facebook account or other social networking site or blog, a district employee may not, without express permission from the superintendent of schools or his/her designee, use the school's logo, likeness, or any school photograph or other property belonging to the school, nor, in violation of the law, post or include any material protected by copyright or trademark. In no event shall a district employee include in any communication or posting on such an account or site, information which would allow a third party to ascertain information about a student which might place the student at risk. By way of example only, this would include a student's photograph with identifying information such as address, telephone number, birth date, school that the student attends, etc.

(No reference to Facebook herein is intended to limit application of the policy's provisions to use of that program. All online, electronic, or computerized means of communication are subject to this policy. Given the rapid pace of technological change it is not possible to identify all proprietary or commonly named or identified means of such communications, so this policy is to be broadly construed in such a way as to effectuate the purposes expressed in Section 2 above and expressed in or reasonable to be inferred from other sections of the policy.)

Proposed for Amendment: First reading, June 25, 2014  
Second reading and amended: July 16, 2014

Adopted September 14, 2011

## DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

### **Policy Student Technology Acceptable Use**

**IJNDBA**

The purpose of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District's Student Technology Acceptable Use Policy is to provide guidelines for using district technology resources while complying with the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act and other district policies, as well as all federal and state laws. It is the responsibility of the students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) to read and fully understand the rules outlined in this Acceptable Use Policy.

In addition, "technology resources", "computers", "network infrastructure", and "cloud computing" all refer to any and all equipment, services, or online resources, in whole or in part, owned, maintained, installed, or operated by or contained within the buildings or managed by the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District.

All students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) are required to return a signed copy of the accompanying Agreement Form before students will be allowed to access Dudley-Charlton Regional School District technology resources.

Amendments and modifications to this policy may be approved by the school committee from time to time and will be posted for viewing.

### **I. Introduction**

This Acceptable Use Policy shall serve as a statement on the appropriate use of any and all technology resources available to students of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District including, but not limited to, district owned computers, tablets, printers, network infrastructure, district provided websites, cloud computing technologies, and Internet access. It is the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District's goal to promote educational excellence with the assistance of these technology resources.

District technology resources have been established for limited educational purposes, which are defined as classroom activities, research projects directly related to classroom assignments, career and professional development and high quality self-improvement activities of an educational nature. District technology resources have not been established as a public access service or a public forum. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District has the right to place reasonable restrictions on material that is accessed or posted while using district technology resources. It is presumed that students will honor this agreement they and their parent(s)/guardian(s) have signed. The district is not responsible for the actions of students who violate them beyond the clarification of standards outlined in this policy. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District reserves the right to monitor all activity on the district electronic network. Students and parent(s)/guardian(s) by signing an acknowledgement that they have read this policy and using district resources covered by the same, or allowing their child or a child for whom they serve as guardian to do so, agree to indemnify the district for any and all damage, loss and expense that is caused by student's inappropriate use of district technology resources.

### **II. General Unacceptable Behavior**

Students are expected to follow the same rules, good manners, and common sense guidelines that are used with other daily school activities, as well as the law, in the use of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District technology resources. While utilizing district technology resources, unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Students will not knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization.
- Students will not use speech that is inappropriate in an educational setting or violates district rules.
- Students will not abuse network resources by participating in types of use which would cause congestion of the network or interfere with the work of others.
- Students will not display, access or send offensive messages or pictures.
- Students will not use the district technology resources for commercial purposes. Students will not offer, provide, or purchase products or services through this network.
- Students will not use the district technology resources for gambling.
- Students will not attempt to access non-instructional district systems, such as student information systems or business systems.
- Students will not use district technology resources to threaten other students, district employees or any other person, or cause a disruption to the educational program.
- Students will not use the district technology resources to send or post electronic messages that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, or damaging to another's reputation.
- Students will not use the district technology resources in a manner that would violate any U.S. or state law. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening material and spreading of computer viruses.
- Students will not attempt to harm, modify or destroy data of another user.
- Students will not engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
- Students will not use the district technology resources to harass or bully another person. Students must also be familiar with and abide by all other district policies concerning bullying, including cyberbullying.

### **III. Responsibilities and Expectations**

#### **A. Internet Access**

The Internet is provided to students as an educational resource and it is the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District's intention that the use of the Internet be for that purpose and not for personal use. Internet access provides a vast array of immediately accessible, invaluable resources. Along with this substantial educational benefit comes the potential to access online resources that include information or material that lacks educational value and can be inaccurate, controversial, objectionable, offensive, defamatory and even illegal.

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District does not condone the access or use of inappropriate materials at any time and prohibits the use of the district technology resources to access such material. The district filters the content of many of these inappropriate resources, but there is always the possibility that inappropriate material may be accessible.

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District utilizes content filters designed to block access to certain websites and filter content as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act. The district is aware that not all inappropriate information can be filtered and the district will make an effort to correct any known gaps in the filtering of information. To the extent practical, content filtering measures shall be used to block or filter websites, other forms of electronic communications, and access to inappropriate information. Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, filtering as to minors per 47 U.S.C. § 254(h)(5)(B) shall be applied to visual depictions of:

- "Obscene" material as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 1460
- "Child pornography", as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 2256; and
- Material deemed "harmful to minors" as defined in § 254(h)(7)(G) or any successor to same.

The district may enable filtering for additional websites and materials that are not within the district's educational curriculum. This may include any website that does not contribute to educational pursuits. The content filtering measures may be temporarily bypassed when requested by school administrators only for bona fide research by an adult or other lawful purpose. Only the district IT Director or his/her



designee will have the authority to modify content filters, and the decision as to any such modification lies in the sound discretion of such Director. Inadvertently blocked websites that conform to the policies stated in this Acceptable Use Policy may be unblocked by the district IT Department after a thorough review.

District technology resources may not be used to access material that is profane, obscene, pornographic, advocates illegal acts, advocates violence or discrimination towards other people. If a user mistakenly accesses inappropriate information, he/she should immediately notify a teacher or administrator in order to be protected against a claim of intentional policy violation. Parent(s) or guardian(s) of students should provide guidance and instruction to their children regarding material that would be considered inappropriate. Any website or electronic communication that is inappropriate should be promptly disclosed to a teacher or administrator.

Under no circumstances should students attempt to access websites that are blocked by district content filters by attempting to bypass the filters using various methods including, but not limited to, proxy services, VPN connections or other software. If a student feels that a website should not be blocked they should ask a teacher or administrator to submit a request through the district IT department's help desk system to have the website reviewed.

## **B. Dudley-Charlton Regional School District Equipment**

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District supplies technology resources and equipment to its students for educational purposes. Use of these resources or equipment for recreational, personal, commercial, or other non-educational purposes is strictly forbidden. Students and their parent(s)/guardian(s) shall bear full responsibility and liability, whether legal, financial, or otherwise, for a student's actions when using the district's equipment.

In addition, students will not intentionally cause any adverse effect upon or performance of any equipment or network, including, but not limited to, intentional damage, deleting another person's files, storing unnecessarily large files (such as music, pictures or videos), installation of unauthorized software, or any other action that would cause failure or deteriorated use of the district's equipment.

Students are required to immediately notify a teacher or administrator if they have identified a possible security problem so the appropriate measures can be taking by the district IT department to rectify the situation. Students should not go looking for security problems, because this may be construed as an attempt to gain access to restricted district technology resources. Students must not attempt to gain unauthorized access to any portion of the district electronic network. This includes attempting to log in through school personnel accounts. These actions are illegal, even if only for the purposes of "browsing". Students must not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means. These actions are also illegal.

## **C. Personal Devices**

Students are allowed to connect "Personal" devices including laptops, tablets and cell phones to the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District's "Guest" wireless networks, provided the devices are used as an educational resource and all activities conform to this acceptable use policy. "Personal" devices are defined as any device not owned by the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District. Should students decide to bring in "Personal" devices, they do so at their own risk. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged "Personal" devices. Students should understand the district IT Department will provide no technical support or assistance for "Personal" devices. This includes, but is not limited to, wireless connectivity issues, virus/malware infections, loss of data, hardware and software issues. Students should understand that all "Guest" wireless network traffic is filtered, logged and monitored. Students should also understand that unauthorized use of resources through this access may give rise to a claim for damages and/or be a criminal offense. Connecting "Personal" devices to "non-guest" wired or wireless networks is not allowed. Students must abide by all district and school rules and policies while using a "Personal" device on school premises.

## **IV. Privilege**

The use of Dudley-Charlton Regional School District technology resources is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, the district offers no guarantee of availability of any technology resource or equipment. The use of any or all technology resources or equipment may be revoked, either temporarily or permanently, for any reason outlined in this Acceptable Use Policy or for other, good cause.

## **V. Intentional Violations**

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District is aware that violations of this policy may occur under circumstances where the student is involuntarily routed to websites containing inappropriate information or material. Upon arriving at such websites, it is the responsibility of the student to immediately exit such site as quickly as possible and report the situation to a district staff member so that appropriate steps can be taken to prevent further inadvertent and unintentional violations of this policy. Accordingly, disciplinary action under this policy shall only result from a knowing or intentional violation of this policy.

Notwithstanding, the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District reserves the right to discipline any student for a violation of this policy where it is apparent that the student knew, or should have known, that a violation of this policy was likely to occur as a result of the action, or inaction, of the student in question.

## **VI. Disciplinary Actions**

Student violation of this Acceptable Use Policy and/or other Dudley-Charlton Regional School District policies shall result in, but is not limited to, one or more of the following:

- Restriction, suspension or revocation of network access and device privileges
- Suspension or expulsion from school
- Referral to the appropriate legal authorities for possible criminal prosecution
- Civil liability

The district will cooperate fully with local, state and federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activity conducted through the use of the district's technology resources. In the event there is a claim that a user has violated this policy in using the technology resources, he/she will be provided with a written notice of the suspected violation and an opportunity to present an explanation before an administrator.

## **VII. Privacy**

Students have no right of privacy with regard to their use of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District's technology resources, which includes but is not limited to, district computers, network, websites and Internet access. The district retains ownership and possessory control of its technology resources. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District does not guarantee, and students should not have any expectation of confidentiality, privacy, security or ownership of the content of any information accessed, sent, received, created or stored thereon. All students should realize that electronic communications and other information sent through the Internet are accessible by third parties, specifically the Internet Service Provider, as well as the fact that "deleting" material may not permanently remove it from the system.

The district networked technology resources are maintained and managed by the district IT Department in such a way as to insure its availability and reliability in performing the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District educational mission. Students are advised that a system administrator or other authorized district staff member may, at any time, without advance notice, monitor, access, modify, remove, review, retrieve and/or disclose the subject, content and appropriateness of any and all information stored or transmitted on district technology resources, including information that may have been deleted but still exists on the system.

## **Children's Online Privacy Protection Act**

Congress enacted the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, 15 U.S.C. § 6501, et seq. in 1998. This required the Federal Trade Commission to issue and enforce regulations concerning children's online privacy. The Commission's

original Rule became effective on April 21, 2000. The Commission issued an amended Rule on December 19, 2012 that became effective on July 1, 2013.

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District works diligently to comply with the requirements of the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. The district does not collect student personal information or transmit such information directly to online entities for the purpose of creating web based accounts. In cases of web based account creation, the district will use an internal school district identification number to represent each student user.

### **VIII. Liability**

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District makes no warranty of any kind, whether express or implied, for the technology services it is providing. While the district will make reasonable efforts to preserve data, the responsibility for it lies with the student. The district will not be held responsible for any damages students may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data. The district will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the unauthorized use of the system. The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District specifically denies and disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its technology resources. All students must fully understand that the use of any information obtained through the Internet is at their own risk.

### **IX. Complaints**

Should any concerns arise regarding violations of this policy, the school principal or appropriate district Administrator shall document all complaints in writing and shall conduct an investigation of the complaint and report any disciplinary action taken.

### **X. Enforcement**

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District uses technology protection measures (such as web content filters, firewalls, etc.) to filter or block Internet access to some websites that are not in accordance with district policy. Logs created by any technology device can be used for the purposes of detection, identification, and enforcement of any part of this policy, as well as any other lawful purpose.

First Reading: June 11, 2014

Second Reading & Adopted: June 25, 2014



# Dudley-Charlton Regional School District

## Student Technology Acceptable Use Policy Agreement Form

**All students are required to return a signed copy of this form prior to using any Dudley-Charlton Regional School District technology resources.**

1. I acknowledge that I have received, read, and fully understood the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District's Technology Acceptable Use Policy and that I agree to abide by the policies within.
2. I fully understand that use of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District's "technology resources", including, but not limited to, district owned, tablets, printers, network, district provided websites, cloud computing technologies, and Internet access are provided for educational purposes only.
3. I understand that any violation of the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District's Technology Acceptable Use Policy may result in the restriction, suspension or cancellation of access privileges and may result in other disciplinary action, civil liability or criminal prosecution by the appropriate authorities.
4. I understand that if I choose to bring in "Personal" devices, I do so at my own risk. I understand the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged "Personal" devices. I also understand the district IT Department will provide no technical support or assistance for "Personal" devices.
5. Amendments and modifications to this policy may be approved by the School Committee from time to time and will be posted for viewing.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name:(please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name:(please print) \_\_\_\_\_

**HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT 2021-2022**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In an effort to reduce the amount of paper used, the Middle School Handbook is located on the district website (www.dcrsd.org). We are asking that, together with your child, you review the handbook and then sign the portion below and return it to the child's homeroom teacher.

**Please complete the form below and return it to the school by September 10 of that current school year.**

STUDENT NAME (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understand the contents of the Middle School Handbook.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian:**

I have read and discussed the contents of the 2021-2022 Middle School Handbook with my child.

**Media Release:**

My child's likeness and name may be used in print and/or electronic media for news and/or articles related to Dudley Middle School or Charlton Middle School.

\_\_\_\_\_ YES                      \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ I do not have internet access and request a paper copy of the student handbook. Please send home a copy of the Middle School Handbook. Once I have reviewed it, I will sign and return this form.

## Parent Notification Law - Health Curriculum

### Sample Email Request for Sex Ed Curriculum and Resources

Dear \_\_\_\_\_, *(Address the letter to the health teacher, health coordinator, principal, or superintendent.)*

I understand that according to the [MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education](#) I have a right to view sex education curricula per the [MA General Law Chapter 71, Section 32A](#).

Please send me the following information regarding sex education at \_\_\_\_\_ *(Insert the name of school):*

1. The grade or grades that sex education is taught.
2. The title, edition, and publisher for all books, videos, pamphlets, web-based materials, or other curricula involving human sexual education or human sexuality issues.
3. The names of all individuals and organizations, other than district employees, who have made presentations involving the subjects of sex, sexuality, or bullying to students at the school from August 2017 to present.

Please forward the information I have requested electronically or advise me whom I must contact to coordinate a time to come to the school to review the materials.

Sincerely,

*Sign your name*