

AGAWAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS



CODE OF CONDUCT

K – 8

2011 – 2012

AGAWAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2011-2012 CALENDAR

www.agawampublicschools.org

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29*	30*	

19 Days

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

19 Days

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

18 Days

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21*	22*	23*	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

17 Days

JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

20 Days

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHTS

- Doering School – Sept. 14th
- Early Childhood Center – Oct. 5th
- Junior High School – Sept. 21st
- Senior High School – Sept. 15th
- Elementary Schools – Sept. 22nd

FEBRUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29			

16 Days

MARCH						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

22 Days

APRIL						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9*	10*	11*	12*	13*	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

15 Days

MAY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

22 Days

JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

12 Days

DISMISSAL TIMES/HALF DAY

- HS - 10:55 am JHS - 11:20 am
- DO - 11:50 am GR - 11:50 am
- PH - 12:20 pm CL - 12:20 pm
- RP - 12:20 pm ECC - 11:20 am

- = District Prof. Dev. (PD) Day/No School for Student
- = Half Day for Students
- = No School/Holiday Vacation

Students = 180 days
Teachers = 183 days
*Jewish Holidays

- ### SEPTEMBER
- 1st – Teachers’ Convocation/No School
 - 2nd – District PD/No School
 - 5th – Labor Day/No School
 - 6th – First Day of School (No Kindergarten)
 - 8th & 9th – Kindergarten & Preschool Orientation
 - 12th – First Day of Kindergarten & Preschool
 - 13th & 27th – School Committee

OCTOBER

- 10th – Columbus Day/No School
- 11th – No School/Primary Day
- 25th – School Committee

NOVEMBER

- 8th – District PD Day/No School (Election Day)
- 11th – Veteran’s Day/No School
- 23rd – District Half Day
- 24th & 25th – Thanksgiving Recess/No School
- 22nd – School Committee
- 29th – JH Night Parent Conferences
- 30th – DO Night Parent Conferences

DECEMBER

- 1st – HS Night Parent Conferences
- 8th – (PreK-6) Parent Conferences/Half Day for Students
- 8th – PD Half Day (7-12)/Half Day for Students
- 8th – Elem. Night Parent Conferences
- 23rd (half day) – Christmas Break/ Return Jan 3rd
- 13th – School Committee

JANUARY

- 1st – New Year’s Holiday/No School
- 3rd – School Reopens from Christmas Break
- 16th – Martin Luther King Day/No School
- 10th & 24th – School Committee

FEBRUARY

- 20th – 24th – Winter Vacation/No School
- 14th & 28th – School Committee

MARCH

- 7th – District PD/Half Day for Students
- 15th – JH Night Parent Conferences
- 14th – DO Night Parent Conferences
- 12th – HS Night Parent Conferences
- 22nd – Elem. Night Parent Conferences
- 13th & 27th – School Committee

APRIL

- 6th – Good Friday/No School
- 16th – 20th – Spring Vacation/No School
- 10th and 24th – School Committee

MAY

- 28th – Memorial Day/No School
- 8th and 22nd – School Committee

JUNE

- 18th – Last Day of School/Half Day
- 25th – Last Day of School/Half Day (Includes 5 Snow Days)
- 12th & 26th – School Committee

Note: Night Parent Conferences 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FORMS	I - XIII
SCHOOL DIRECTORY1 – 4
A MESSAGE FOR THE COMMUNITY	5
GENERAL/SAFETY INFORMATION	
Academic Freedom	6
Massachusetts State Regulations	6
Mission Statement of Agawam Public Schools.....	6
Philosophy.....	6
Educational Philosophy of the Agawam School Committee	6
Accreditation Statement	7
Expectations for Student Performance	7
Social Expectations	7
Expectations for School Performance	8
Directory Information Notice	8
Attendance Policy Grades 1 - 8	9
Reporting Requirements.....	10
Entrance Age	11
McKenny – Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act.....	11
Truancy/Supervisor of Attendance	11
School Choice	11
Chapter 76, Section 18	12
Safety and Security.....	12
Parent Observations in Classrooms	12
Student Welfare.....	13
Ski Club Helmet Use Policy.....	14
Skateboard / Rollerblade / Scooter Policy	14
Safety To and From School.....	14
Bicycles	14
Recess.....	14
School Bus Safety Program.....	15
Disciplinary Measures.....	16
Arrival of Students Not Transported by Bus	16
Emergency School Closing	16
Scheduled Closings	16
Corporal Punishment.....	16
School Lunches	16
School Insurance	17
Physical Education	17
Jewelry in Physical Education.....	17
Student Photographs.....	17
Emergency Plans	18
Fire Drills	18
Field Trips and Excursions.....	18
Telephones	19
Cell Phones and Portable Communications Devices	19
Lost and Found Articles	19
Confiscated Property	20
Parties.....	20
Animals in the Classroom	20
Alternative Educational Setting.....	20
Vocational-Technical Education	20
Moment of Silence and Student-Sponsored Prayer Club	21
Lockers/Desks/Computers – Searches of Students.....	21
Media Policy	21
Video Usage in Classrooms	21
Computer Services	22

COUNSELING SERVICES

Standardized Tests..... 23
Report Cards..... 24
Notices to Parents/Guardians 24
Back to School Night and Parent Conferences 25
Homework Policy..... 25
Instructional Support Team 25
Alternative Learning Program 25
Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance 25
Student Records – Access Rights and Confidentiality 25
Transferring Student Records..... 26
Destruction of Student Records 27
Distribution of Student Information to Parents 27
Non-Custodial Parents Rights 27
Caregiver Authorization Affidavit 28

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Division of Special Education – Parents’ Rights Brochure 29
Right to Receive Written Notice 31
Providing Your Written Consent 31
Observations of Special Education Programs..... 34
Disciplining Students with Special Needs 35
Problem Resolution Guidelines 35

SECTION 504

Parent’s and Student’s Rights Under Section 504 36
Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Notice of Rights Under Section 504 36
Grievances 37
Grievance Procedure 37

PUBLIC INFORMATION

An Act Further Protecting Children 38
Parent’s Right to Know 39
Parental Involvement and Support 39
School Volunteers 39
School Volunteer Procedures During Regular School Hours 39
In-School Volunteer Program During Regular School Hours 40
Civility Policy 42
Public Solicitations in the Schools 43
Public Complaints 43
Public Participation at School Committee Meetings 44
Student Publications 44
Supplementary Materials Selection and Adoption 45
Supplementary Materials Distribution..... 45
Instructional Materials..... 46
Teaching About Controversial Issues/Controversial Speakers 46
Public Complaints About the Curriculum or Instructional Materials 47

HEALTH

School Health Services Mission Statement 47
Medical Conditions 48
First Aid 48
Accident Reports 48
Physical Exams 49
Mandated Screening 49
Forms 49
Special Procedures 49
Nurses’ Office / Health Room Protocol 49
Head Lice 49
Injuries 50
Dismissals 50
Immunization Regulations 50

Children/Adolescents with HIV/AIDS:	
Guidelines for Attendance & Disclosure	50
Medication Procedures	50
Procedures for Resolving Questions Between School & Parents/Guardians	
Regarding Administration of Medications	52
Medication Emergency Plan	52
School District Wellness Program.....	52
Students with Life Threatening Allergies.....	55
Responsibilities of the Agawam School Department, School Personnel, Parents & Students	55
PHYSICAL RESTRAINT	
Physical Restraint Team.....	58
Grievance Procedure	59
Principal's Reporting Responsibilities with Regard to Physical Restraints	60
DISCIPLINE	
Relations with Police Authorities	61
Memorandum of Understanding.....	62
Goals/Philosophy of the Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy	64
Civil Rights and Safety Policy	64
School Officials are Not Bound by Criminal Law Standards.....	64
Discipline Policies.....	64
Firearms	65
Drug Free School Zones.....	65
Chemical Health Policy.....	65
Breath Alcohol Testing	66
Sexual Harassment, Bullying & Hazing Policy.....	67
Bullying Prevention & Intervention	71
Gang Activity / Secret Societies.....	72
School Related Teen Dating Violence.....	73
Expulsion of Students.....	74
Suspension and Expulsion Based on a Felony	74
Due Process Rights.....	75
Classroom.....	75
Halls	76
Vandalism	76
Student Dress Code	76
Discipline System.....	76
Suspendable Behaviors.....	77
Nature of Offense and Repeated Offenses	78
Suspension Effects	78
Academic Dishonesty.....	78
Electronic Devices.....	78
Procedures for Long Term Suspensions and Expulsions.....	78
Make-Up Work	79
Make-Up Work Due to Non-Illness/Vacations	79
Attendance / Tardiness / Dismissals.....	79
CONFIDENTIALITY	80
STUDENT RECORDS	80
ATHLETICS, CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	81

Agawam Public Schools



1305 Springfield Street Suite 1
Feeding Hills, MA 01030-2198

ALLISON LECLAIR, M.Ed.
Director of Curriculum & Instruction
(413) 821-0568

WILLIAM P. SAPELLI, C.A.G.S..
Interim Superintendent of Schools
(413) 821-0548
Fax (413) 789-1835
www.agawampublicschools.org

PATRICIA A. CAVANAUGH, S.F.O.
Director of Finance/Human Resources
(413) 821-0550

Form A

September

I _____ have read this handbook and will abide by the policies and rules as set forth in this handbook.

Thank you for reading this district handbook. Please sign below. This page must be returned to your homeroom teacher within 10 days of receipt.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Homeroom Number

Agawam Public Schools



1305 Springfield Street Suite 1
Feeding Hills, MA 01030-2198

ALLISON LECLAIR, M.Ed.
Director of Curriculum & Instruction
(413) 821-0568

WILLIAM P. SAPELLI, C.A.G.S.
Interim Superintendent of Schools
(413) 821-0548
Fax (413) 789-1835
www.agawampublicschools.org

PATRICIA A. CAVANAUGH, S.F.O.
Director of Finance/Human Resources
(413) 821-0550

September 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians/Students:

Effective July 1, 2002, Congress enacted a Federal Law entitled the, "No Child Left Behind Act of 2001."

Section 9528 of the Act provides armed forces recruiters with access to the name, address, and telephone listing of secondary students. A provision of the law states that "parents may request that a student's name, address, and telephone listing not be released without prior written parental consent, and the local education agency shall notify parents of the option to make a request and shall comply with any request."

If you **do not wish** for us to release this information, please fill out the form below and return it to your child's school.

Sincerely,

William P. Sapelli
Interim Superintendent of Schools

I, _____, the parent of _____

do not give permission for the Agawam Public Schools to release my child's name, address, and telephone listing to armed forces recruiters.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Student's Homeroom #: _____

"Put Children First"

OBSERVATION AGREEMENT

Parent observers in classrooms, and their designees, are required by law to maintain confidentiality of all information about students in the class. As an observer, you will have the opportunity to see students in a variety of interactions. By signing this statement, you are acknowledging your understanding of this confidentiality requirement.

I have read the Agawam Public Schools outline of procedures regarding “Parent Observations in Classrooms” and agree to fully abide by all terms therein.

I also agree to maintain strict confidentiality regarding information or observations about all students in the classroom where I am observing.

I further agree that the observation of the child is in no way an evaluation of staff performance.

(Parent or Designee Signature)

(Date)

* For the purposes herein, parent representative means an independent evaluator, educational consultant, or an individual who preferably holds certification or licensure from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in a field directly related to the child’s educational program.

OVERNIGHT FIELD TRIPS

Parent/Guardian Approval Form

Date _____

The students in _____ will be participating in a field trip to:

Destination: _____ City & State: _____

We plan to leave from _____ on _____ at _____
(Place) (Date) (Time)

and return to _____ on _____ at _____
(Place) (Date) (Time)

Teacher/Advisor Signature

General Information

If your child is participating in an overnight field trip, you will find attached to this letter a complete itinerary including all unsupervised time. Information concerning costs for each participant is also attached.

Reasonable efforts shall be taken to secure the safety and welfare of students on school-approved field trips, not only enroute, but also during stopover activities. The teachers, advisors, and administrators shall be responsible for seeing that responsible safety and welfare measures are taken. It shall be the responsibility of the person in charge of their trip to acquaint chaperones with their duties and responsibilities.

Please be advised that there may be times when your child is unsupervised. We expect that he/she will always act in a mature and responsible manner.

Inasmuch as the advisor and chaperone duties include attempting to safeguard the well-being of students on the trip, it is of paramount importance that students and parents agree that the student will abstain from the use, purchase, or possession of chemical intoxicants. The legal and personal jeopardy involved with the use of alcohol or other drugs is unacceptable, and it is essential that steps be taken to remove an offending student from the trip for a return to the home as quickly as possible. **To accomplish this end, we ask you, the parent or guardian, to read and sign the following agreement:**

I agree that, if my child/ward is found to be in possession of alcohol or any illegal or nonprescribed substance (including alcohol) or drug paraphernalia at any time on the field trip, that he/she will be removed immediately from the group and sent home. I also agree that, if the chaperones and/or any other party they consult with (such as hotel physician or convention nurse) determine that my child/ward is under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, he/she will be removed from the group and sent home.

At this point, the chaperones will call me or my designee, as given below, to arrange for an immediate return of my child/ward on the next available transportation to Agawam for which I agree to pre-pay a

ticket by telephone. My child/ward will be met in Agawam by me or by my designee and brought to my home or that of my designee. I will also be responsible for all losses, which may be incurred as a result of nonrefundable ticket prices and for any expenses incurred by the chaperone or his/her designee in escorting my child to the transportation.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Address: _____

Telephone #'s: _____ Home _____ Work _____ Cell _____

Designee's Name _____

Address: _____

Telephone #'s: _____ Home _____ Work _____ Cell _____

File: IJOA-E1

ALL SCHOOL RULES ARE IN EFFECT ON FIELD TRIPS.

PHOTOGRAPH / VIDEO RELEASE FORM

The Agawam Public Schools wish to use photograph(s) or video taken of you or your child. These images will be used to demonstrate Agawam's commitment to quality education.

Subject's name _____ School/Teacher _____

I am the parent/legal guardian of the child named above. I have read the statement of purpose for using my child's image.

- I Do** give permission to the Agawam Public Schools to use my child's image on videotape or photograph in the following ways. (Check all that apply)
 - in the school system
 - in district meetings
 - in town-wide meetings
 - outside the town in educational presentations
 - on the Internet/Website

- I Do Not** give permission to use my child's image in photograph or video.

(Signature of Parent or Guardian) _____ Date: _____

I am the subject named above and I am more than 18 years old. I have read the statement of purpose for using my image.

- I Do** give permission to the Agawam Public Schools to use my image on videotape or photograph in the following ways. (Check all that apply)
 - in the school system
 - in district meetings
 - in town-wide meetings
 - outside the town in educational presentations
 - on the Internet/Website

- I Do Not** give permission to use my image in photograph or video.

(Signature of Parent or Guardian) _____ Date: _____

INTERNET USE AGREEMENT

PLEASE READ THIS DOCUMENT CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING

Internet access is now available to administrators, teachers, and students of the Agawam Public Schools. We are very pleased to bring this access to the Agawam Public Schools with the vast and diverse resources offered both to teachers and students. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence in our schools by resource sharing, innovation and communication.

The Internet is an electronic highway connecting thousands of computers all over the world and millions of individual students and teachers have access to electronic mail, information and news, and access to many libraries.

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value. We firmly believe that the valuable information available on this worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may produce material not consistent with our goals.

Internet – Terms and Conditions

- Acceptable Use – to support research and education. Threatening or obscene materials are not acceptable.
- Privileges – Use of the Internet is a privilege not a right. Inappropriate use will result in cancellation of those privileges.
- Network Etiquette – be polite. Do not reveal personal information; E-mail is not guaranteed to be private. Do not disrupt network in any way. All accessed information is assumed to be private property.
- Use of this information is at your own risk. We deny all responsibility for accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.
- Security – Any user who becomes a security risk will be denied access.
- Vandalism – Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges.

I understand and will abide by the above Internet Use Agreement and stipulations listed under Computer Services in this handbook. I understand that any violation of the above regulations may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, and school disciplinary action will be taken.

_____ Yes, I grant permission _____ No, I do not grant permission

Parent's Signature

Student's Signature

NON-PARTICIPATION REQUEST FORM

As a parent you may NOT want your son/daughter to take part in certain lessons or units of instruction within the curriculum of the Agawam Public School System. In such a case, please notify the building principal in writing by completing the information requested on this page.

Kindly tear out the page and bring it to the principal.

I _____ do not want my son/daughter to take part in the following lesson titled:

_____.

I will be making an appointment to discuss this matter with you.

Sincerely,

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number - Work _____

Phone Number - Home _____

DATE ISSUED _____

**ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL
MAKE UP WORK DUE TO NON-ILLNESS/VACATIONS
Grade 7 - 8**

The absence of _____ from _____ to _____ is approved by the (parents), but not by the school. The reason for this absence is _____.

The burden of making up lost work rests with the student. Teachers are not to be expected to give extra help in making up this work. In general, major tests missed must be made up shortly after the return to school or a grade of “zero” will be assigned. Short daily quizzes may simply be omitted in determining the student’s grade for the marking period.

Teachers are not required to give out homework assignments prior to a family vacation.

Teachers will please INITIAL and DATE below.

English	_____	_____
Mathematics	_____	_____
Social Studies	_____	_____
Science	_____	_____
Language	_____	_____
Fam. Con. Sci/ T. Ed	_____	_____
Music	_____	_____
Art	_____	_____
Reading	_____	_____
Health	_____	_____
Homeroom Teacher	_____	_____

PARENT’S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

IMPORTANT: Homework assigned during this period of absence must be returned to the teacher on the day the student returns to school. Thank you.

PARENT/STUDENT CONSENT/RELEASE FROM & INDEMNITY AGREEMENT FOR LEAVE OF STUDENT FROM SCHOOL VOLUNTARY ATHLETIC ACTIVITY AND/OR SCHOOL EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITY AND/OR SCHOOL TRIP

I/we, the undersigned, parent, guardian(s)/legal representative(s) of _____, (Student), and the student do severally and individually hereby consent to his/her leave and travel from _____ (Designated school voluntary athletic activity/extra-curricular activity, and/or trip destination), on _____, to _____.

The particulars of the date, time, and departure of the student from the designated school activity/extra-curricular activity and/or trip destination location in this consent are as follows:

In consideration of the student being allowed to separate from the designated school voluntary athletics activity, extra-curricular activity, and/or school trip destination location, do for myself/ourselves and as parent/guardian of said minor, heirs, my agents, my representatives and on behalf of _____, do forever release, acquit, and discharge and covenant to hold harmless the said City of Agawam, its Public Schools and their employees, servants, and agents, as well as the Agawam School Committee, its former and current members, and its employees, servants, and agents from any and all actions, rights of action, causes of action, charges and/or claims in any way related to, arising from, and/or growing out of, directly or indirectly, all known or unknown personal injuries or property damage or death, which I/we may now or hereafter have as the parent(s)/guardian(s)/legal representative(s) of said minor, as well as any actions, rights of action, causes of action, charges and/or claims, which said minor has or hereafter may acquire, either before or after he/she reaches the age of majority, resulting from, relating to, or in any way connected to, his/her separation from the designated school voluntary athletics, extra-curricular activity, and/or trip destination location related to the City of Agawam, its Public Schools, and their employees, servants, and agents, as well as the Agawam School Committee, its former and current members and its employees, servants, and agents.

In addition, I/we as parent(s)/guardian(s)/legal representative(s) of said minor, agree to indemnify the City of Agawam, its Public Schools and their employees, servants, and agents, as well as the Agawam School Committee, its former and current members, and its employees, servants, and agents in the event that any action, charge, and/or claim is brought against the foregoing, which is in any way related to, arising from, and/or growing out of, directly or indirectly, my son/daughter's said separation from the designated school voluntary athletics, extra-curricular activity, and/or trip destination location related to the City of Agawam, its Public Schools, or its School Committee.

The signer(s) of this form state(s) that they have read it, understand its contents, and that participation by the student/pupil in said separation from the designated school voluntary athletics, extra-curricular activity, and/or trip destination location as particularly set forth herein, with full knowledge that said City of Agawam, its Public Schools, and School Committee will not be liable to anyone, including my child and me, for personal injuries and property damage my child or I may suffer related in any way to said separation from the designated school voluntary athletics, extra-curricular activity, and/or trip destination location.

Signature of Parent(s)/Guardian(s)/Legal Representative(s)

Date

Student Signature

Date

**STUDENT CABLE TELEVISION
PERMISSION FORM**

The Agawam Public Schools is producing a television show on the local cable channel. The Video Production class at the High School will be developing the show as part of their classroom activities. Parental permission is required for the video production class to include your child in the television show. Please select one of the following options:

Yes – I, being the parent or legal guardian, **consent** to the use of said minor’s image, name, likeness, picture(s), video and/or voice for use by the Agawam High School Video Production class for the purpose of the Agawam Public Schools cable television show.

No – I, being the parent or legal guardian, **do not consent** to the use of said minor’s image, name, likeness, picture(s), video and/or voice for use by the Agawam High School Video Production class for the purpose of the Agawam Public Schools cable television show.

If you have any questions regarding the television program, please contact Ann Flynn at aflynn@agawampublicschools.org.

CABLE TELEVISION PERMISSION FORM – Do you grant permission? Please Circle One
YES NO

Parent/guardian signature

Date

Parent/guardian signature

Date

**CLASSROOM WEBPAGE(S)
STUDENT PERMISSION FORM**

Agawam Public Schools’ teachers can have webpage(s) on the district website (www.agawampublicschools.org). Teachers use their webpage(s) to enhance the classroom experience. To make the webpage(s) more informative and enjoyable for students and parents, teachers would like to display pictures of student classroom activities as well as student classwork such as writing, artwork or quotations on their webpage(s). Pictures could be group or individual photographs. **No student names will be displayed with the photographs. First names only will be displayed on writing or artwork.** No last name, home address, or telephone number will appear with the work. A copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission will be posted on the webpage(s).

In order for your child to participate in the teacher’s classroom webpage(s), parental permission is required. Please select one of the following options:

Yes – I, being the parent or legal guardian, **consent** to the use of said minor’s image, photograph(s), and classwork on the above teacher’s classroom webpage(s) of the Agawam Public Schools’ website (www.agawampublicschools.org).

No – I, being the parent or legal guardian, **do not consent** to the use of said minor’s image, photograph(s), and classwork on the above teacher’s classroom webpage(s) of the Agawam Public Schools’ website (www.agawampublicschools.org).

If you have any questions regarding the Agawam Public Schools’ website, contact Ann Flynn at aflynn@agawampublicschools.org.

CLASSROOM WEBPAGE(S) PERMISSION FORM – Do you grant permission? Please Circle One
YES NO

Parent/guardian signature

Date

Parent/guardian signature

Date

AGAWAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Mayor Richard A. Cohen
Chairman

mayor@agawam.ma.us

Anthony Bonavita
anthonybonavita@hotmail.com
Roberta G. Doering
rjdoer@aol.com
Linda M. Galarneau
linda_galarneau@yahoo.com

Diane Juzba
DCJuzba@aol.com
Kathleen A. Mouneimneh
kathymou@comcast.net
Shelley Reed
desmreed@comcast.com

CENTRAL OFFICE

1305 Springfield Street
Feeding Hills, Massachusetts 01030
Central Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

www.agawampublicschools.org – Agawam Public Schools Website

INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

William P. Sapelli, C.A.G.S.
(413) 821-0548

wsapelli@agawampublicschools.org

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE/HUMAN RESOURCES

Miss Patricia A. Cavanaugh, S.F.O.
(413) 821-0550

pcavanaugh@agawampublicschools.org

DIRECTOR OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Allison LeClair, M.Ed.
(413) 821-0568

aleclair@agawampublicschools.org

INTERIM DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL SERVICES

April Rist, M.Ed.
(413) 821-0556

arist@agawampublicschools.org

SUPERVISOR OF SPECIAL SERVICES

(413) 821-0517

DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS, PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES

David Stratton, M.Ed.
(413) 821-0529

dstratton@agawampublicschools.org

DIRECTOR OF SCHOOL COUNSELING

Susan Schoenberger, M.Ed.
(413) 821-0524

sschoenberger@agawampublicschools.org

IT ADMINISTRATOR

Michael Feeley
(413) 821-0534

mfeeley@agawampublicschools.org

AGAWAM HIGH SCHOOL

760 Cooper Street
Agawam, Massachusetts 01001

(413) 821-0530 – Main Office
(413) 821-0532 – Main Office
(413) 821-0527 – Counseling Center
(413) 821-0536 – FAX Main Office
(413) 789-0341 – FAX Counseling Center

www.agawampublicschools.org – Agawam High School Website
High School Hours: 7:20 a.m. – 1:50 p.m.

AGAWAM HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Steven P. Lemanski, M.Ed., Principal (413) 821-0521
slemanski@agawampublicschools.org
Thomas E. Schnepf, M.Ed., Assistant Principal (413) 821-0531
tschnepf@agawampublicschools.org
Sheila Hoffman, M.Ed., Assistant Principal (413) 821-0523
shoffman@agawampublicschools.org
Susan Feyre, M.B.A., Assistant Principal (413) 821-0522
sfeyre@agawampublicschools.org

AGAWAM HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING CENTER

Alan R. Cohen (413) 821-0519 acohen@agawampublicschools.org	Jennifer LaPoint (413) 821-0511 jlapoint@agawampublicschools.org
Frank R. Meagher (413) 821-0525 fmeagher@agawampublicschools.org	Ralph Figy (413) 821-0533 rfigy@agawampublicschools.org
Susan Galereave (413) 821-0526 sgalereave@agawampublicschools.org	

SCHOOL NURSE

(413) 821-0504

Marianne Swenson

Mary Pasteris

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

Agawam Police Officer Mark Poggi

AGAWAM JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

1305 Springfield Street
Feeding Hills, Massachusetts 01030

(413) 821-0542 – Main Office
(413) 786-4240 – FAX Main Office
(413) 821-0566 – Counseling Center

www.agawampublicschools.org – Agawam Junior High School Website
Junior High School Hours: 7:53 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.

AGAWAM JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Norman C. Robbins, C.A.G.S., Principal (413) 821-0561
nrobbins@agawampublicschools.org
Michael Donovan, M.Ed., Assistant Principal (413) 821-0565
mdonovan@agawampublicschools.org

AGAWAM JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING CENTER

Marisa Cohen (413) 821-0545 mcohen@agawampublicschools.org	Patricia Burns (413) 821-0562 pburns@agawampublicschools.org
---	---

SCHOOL NURSE

Barbara Moriarty (413) 821-0544

ROBERTA G. DOERING SCHOOL

68 Main Street
Agawam, Massachusetts 01001

(413) 789-1400 ext. 448 – Main Office
(413) 789-7337 – FAX Main Office
(413) 789-1400 ext. 453 – Counseling Center

www.agawampublicschools.org – Roberta G. Doering School Website
Roberta G. Doering School Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.

ROBERTA G. DOERING SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Marc V. Costanzi, C.A.G.S., Principal (413) 789-1400 ext. 449

mcostanzi@agawampublicschools.org

Susan Federico, M.Ed., (413) 789-1400 ext. 450

sfederico@agawampublicschools.org

ROBERTA G. DOERING SCHOOL COUNSELING CENTER

Donna Mendonca (413) 789-1400 ext. 453

dmendonca@agawampublicschools.org

Dawn Winiarski (413) 789-1400 ext. 453

dwiniarski@agawampublicschools.org

SCHOOL NURSE

Ms. Denise Nostin, R.N. (413) 789-1400 ext. 452

CLIFFORD M. GRANGER SCHOOL

31 South Westfield Street
Feeding Hills, Massachusetts 01030

(413) 821-0580 – Main Office
(413) 821-0595 – FAX Main Office

www.agawampublicschools.org – Clifford M. Granger School Website
Granger School Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.

CLIFFORD M. GRANGER SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Cheryl Salomao, M.Ed., Principal (413) 821-0581

csalomao@agawampublicschools.org

SCHOOL NURSE

Pam Lynch (413) 821-0578

BENJAMIN J. PHELPS SCHOOL

689 Main Street
Agawam, Massachusetts 01001

(413) 821-0586 – Main Office
(413) 786-0497 – FAX Main Office

www.agawampublicschools.org – Benjamin J. Phelps School Website
Phelps School Hours: 9:05 a.m. – 3:25 p.m.

BENJAMIN J. PHELPS ADMINISTRATION

Teresa Urbanti, M.Ed., Principal (413) 821-0587

turbanti@agawampublicschools.org

SCHOOL NURSE

Susan Christian, RN, BSN (413) 821-9368

ROBINSON PARK SCHOOL

65 Begley Street
Agawam, Massachusetts 01001

(413) 821-0582 – Main Office
(413) 786-9793 – FAX Main Office

www.agawampublicschools.org – Robinson Park School Website
Robinson School Hours: 9:05 a.m. – 3:25 p.m.

ROBINSON PARK SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION
Cynthia J. Palazzi, M.Ed., Principal – (413) 821-0584
cpalazzi@agawampublicschools.org

SCHOOL NURSE
Kimberly Robinson, RN (413) 821-9373

JAMES CLARK SCHOOL

65 Oxford Street
Agawam, Massachusetts 01001

(413) 821-0571 – Main Office
(413) 821-0594 – FAX Main Office

www.agawampublicschools.org – James Clark School Website
Clark School Hours: 9:05 a.m. – 3:25 p.m.

JAMES CLARK SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION
Shelley Russell, M.Ed., Principal (413) 821-0576
srussell@agawampublicschools.org

SCHOOL NURSE
Kimberly Hall, RN (413) 821-0575

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

108 Perry Lane
Agawam, Massachusetts 01001

(413) 821-0597 – Main Office
(413) 821-0596 – FAX Main Office

www.agawampublicschools.org – Early Childhood Center Website
ECC Hours: 8:35 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. – 2:55 p.m.
No Friday Sessions

DIRECTOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS
Robin Fernandes, C.A.G.S. (413) 821-0598

NURSE
Rosemary Kratovil & Laurene Kittler (413) 821-0598

Agawam Public Schools



1305 Springfield Street Suite 1
Feeding Hills, MA 01030-2198

ALLISON LECLAIR, M.Ed.
Director of Curriculum & Instruction
(413) 821-0568

WILLIAM P. SAPELLI, C.A.G.S.
Interim Superintendent of Schools
(413) 821-0548
Fax (413) 789-1835
www.agawampublicschools.org

PATRICIA A. CAVANAUGH, S.F.O.
Director of Finance/Human Resources
(413) 821-0550

Dear Parents, Students, School, and Community Members:

One of the goals contained within the Agawam Public Schools' mission statement is to "provide students with a positive and safe learning environment." Therefore, all students, parents, and staff should expect an environment that is safe, secure, well maintained, and appropriate for effective learning.

The *Agawam Public Schools Student Policy Handbook*, in accordance with Chapter 71, Section 37H of the Massachusetts General Laws, contains Agawam School Committee policies and procedures, which clearly reinforce the pursuit of this goal. It is our expectation that all students will comply with these policies and procedures in order to foster an atmosphere of civility and respect. Moreover, it is our belief that compliance with these policies and procedures will encourage students to achieve their maximum potential, thereby becoming lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

PLEASE READ THIS HANDBOOK. It was prepared for you.

Yours in education,

William P. Sapelli
Interim Superintendent of Schools

"Put Children First"

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

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

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

File: IB

Legal Refs.: Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS STATE REGULATIONS

CHAPTER 622 and Title IX Agawam Public Schools conforms to the provisions of Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971 and Title IX which provides that

Each and every course of study offered should be open and available to students regardless of their race, sex, national origin, color, or religion.

The principal ... should regularly examine the system of access to each course of study, advantage and privilege provided within the school and should take any necessary affirmative action and adopt any necessary changes to insure that all obstacles to access for all students regardless of race, color, sex, religion, or national origin no matter how subtle or unintended are removed. Special care should be taken when information or evidence indicates the absence or the markedly disproportionate participation of students of either sex or of any racial, national or religious group present in the school, in any course of study, advantage or privilege offered by or through the school.

The principal ... should inform students in a manner certain to reach all students, of the existence of the law (Chapter 622)/Title IX and their implications. The principal should inform them that all courses of study, extra-curricular activities, and services offered by the school are available without regard to race, sex, color, national origin, or religion.

A local complaint procedure has been established and any such complaint should be addressed to: Chapter 622/Title IX District Coordinator; 1305 Springfield Street, Feeding Hills, MA 01030. Telephone (413) 821-0568

MISSION STATEMENT OF AGAWAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Agawam Public Schools will provide students with a safe and technologically advanced learning environment that fosters academic excellence to maximize student potential for life-long learning in a diverse world.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that all people deserve to be treated with respect and dignity and that our community is strengthened through diversity. Agawam Public Schools is committed to creating and maintaining an environment and community which:

- Is free from racism, sexism, homophobia and other prejudices.
- Is free from the weight of hate, discrimination and fear.
- Promotes and fosters physical and emotional safety.
- Fosters civil and respectful dialogue.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE AGAWAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Agawam School Committee believes that innovation and change in education – both content and methods – are necessary for meeting the needs of our youth as they face life before them.

We also believe that education is best achieved when students become involved in experiences meaningful to their lives in today's world. We believe that the educational process should develop a feeling of self-worth and accomplishment.

We believe that equal educational opportunity is the right of all children without regard to race, creed, color, or national origin and that all laws to this end should be followed promptly and effectively.

We further believe education should develop habits, attitudes, understanding, and skills necessary for a productive, satisfying life in civilized society. Each child should be helped to understand the duties and privileges of responsible citizenship as it relates to him or her as an individual and to the world community. We recognize the vast changes brought by increasing technology, population, and urbanization. We request the advice and support of the citizens of the community and especially the professional staff as we endeavor to develop the attitudes and abilities of our youth.

ACCREDITATION STATEMENT

Agawam High School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., a non-governmental, nationally recognized organization whose affiliated institutions include elementary schools through collegiate institutions offering post-graduate instruction.

Accreditation of any institution by the New England Association indicates that it meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of institutional quality periodically applied through a peer group review process. An accredited school or college is one which has available the necessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, is substantially doing so, and gives reasonable evidence that it will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Institutional integrity is also addressed through accreditation.

Accreditation by the New England Association is not partial but applies to the institution as a whole. As such, it is not a guarantee of the quality of every course or program offered, or the competence of individual graduates. Rather, it provides reasonable assurance about the quality of opportunities available to students who attend the institution.

Inquiries regarding the status of an institution's accreditation by the New England Association should be directed to the administrative staff of the school or college.

Individuals may also contact the Association:

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES
209 Burlington Street
Bedford, Massachusetts 01730-1433
(617) 271-0022

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT PERFORMANCE ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

Agawam Public School students will:

1. Read critically for a variety of purposes.
2. Write clearly and in a focused manner in order to express ideas accurately.
3. Speak clearly and in a focused manner in order to express ideas accurately.
4. Develop world language skills and achieve success at different levels of instruction.
5. Understand mathematical skills and apply them to human concerns and life experiences in an ever-changing global community.
6. Understand scientific and technological skills and apply them to human concerns and life experiences in an ever-changing global community.
7. Understand the concepts of good health for self and society.
8. Define a variety of art forms.
9. Become aware of the changing employment market by demonstrating skills and knowledge in career preparation.

SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS

Agawam Public School students will:

1. Respect peers, teachers, staff, and school property and use appropriate methods to resolve conflicts and disagreements.
2. Recognize and be accountable for following the rules and regulations governing the school and be aware of the availability for support services.
3. Be encouraged to become involved citizens in school, local, and global activities.

EXPECTATIONS FOR SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

Agawam Public School will:

1. Provide a constantly updated diverse curriculum, which includes opportunities for cross-curriculum learning supported by technology.
2. Provide academic, social, and career support services.
3. Promote positive public relations within the school and between the school and the community.
4. Acknowledge student and staff achievement.
5. Update and maintain equipment and learning materials.
6. Provide up-to-date library materials and a media center equipped with state-of-the-art technology.
7. Provide a safe, secure, and healthy environment.
8. Provide a schedule that allows sufficient time and sufficient place for school activities.
9. Provide sufficient faculty to implement student goals and expectations.
10. Provide teacher professional development to meet the changing needs of the school and its students.
11. Enforce discipline fairly and consistently.
12. Involve students in school governance.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION NOTICE

The Agawam Public Schools has designated certain information contained in the education records of its students as Directory Information for purposes of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the student records regulations at 603CMR 23.00 et. seq. The following information regarding students is considered Directory Information:

1. name;
2. address;
3. telephone number;
4. date and place of birth;
5. major field of study;
6. participation in officially recognized activities and sports;
7. weight and height of members of athletic teams;
8. dates of attendance;
9. degrees, honors and awards received; and
10. post-high school plans of the student
11. likeness of student

Directory Information may be disclosed for any purpose at the discretion of the school system, without the consent of the parent of a student or an eligible student. Parents of students and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation of any and all of the above information as Director Information. In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of the parent or student or as otherwise allowed by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00 et. seq. Effective January 8, 2002, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 ("the Act") requires public schools which receive federal funding to provide access to secondary school students' names, address, and telephone listings (published only) upon request by military recruiters or institutions of higher education. The Act further requires that Agawam notify parents of their right to oppose release of this information to military recruiters.

Any parent or student opposing release of this information to military recruiters and/or refusing to have any and all of the designated directory information disclosed, must file written notification to this effect with the principal on or before the 15th day of each September. Unless Agawam receives documentation of a parent's refusal by September 15th, Agawam will release the requested information to military recruiters. See Form B

File: JE-1

ATTENDANCE POLICY GRADES 1 – 8

The outside workplace is an environment that expects individuals to be punctual and demonstrate commitment. The Agawam Public Schools district Attendance Policy is dedicated to preparing students for both the workplace and life's environment. We encourage good school attendance, since only through regular attendance can a student take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered. We believe in a direct and positive correlation between good school attendance and academic success. Furthermore, attendance in school is mandated by Massachusetts General Laws, specifically Chapter 76 sections 1, 2, and 4.

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AGES

Massachusetts law establishes the state Board of Education as the agent, which determines mandatory and permissible school attendance ages, with exceptions listed. Generally, the State Board requires that all children be enrolled in school beginning in September of the calendar year in which they attain the age of 6 and that they attend school regularly until they reach age 16.

Under law, the School Committee of each city must enforce the school attendance of all children of compulsory school age residing therein. File: JCA/JG-1 Legal Refs: M.G.L., c. 76, § 1.

DUTY OF PARENT – SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OF CHILD – PUNISHABLE

Every person in control of a child shall cause him/her to attend school as therein required, and, if he/she fails to do so for 7 day sessions or 14 half-day sessions within any period of 6 months, he/she shall, on complaint by a supervisor of attendance, be punished by a fine of not more than twenty dollars. No physical or mental condition capable of correction, or rendering the child fit subject for special instruction at public charge in institutions other than public day schools, shall avail as a defense unless it appears that the defendant has employed all reasonable measures for the correction of the condition and the suitable instruction of the child. (Legal Ref.: M.G.L., c. 76 § 2)

INDUCING ABSENCES

Whoever induces or attempts to induce a minor to absent him/herself unlawfully from school, or unlawfully employs him/her or harbors a minor who, while school is in session, is absent unlawfully there from, shall be punished by a fine of not more than two hundred dollars (\$200.00). Legal Ref.: M.G.L., c. 76 § 4

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

It is expected that students will not be absent from school unless conditions or circumstances render them otherwise unable to attend. A student must be at school or at a school-related activity (e.g. field trip) for at least half (3 hours) of the school day in order to be counted as present.

For every instance of student absence, the parent/guardian must provide a written excuse upon the student's return to school. Parents/guardians are required to contact the school the morning of an illness and to notify the school in advance of any planned absences. This note must be signed by a parent/guardian and must include the exact dates of and reason for the absence. The note must arrive in the school office within 2 days of the absence or the absence will be considered unexcused. If the child is out for more than 5 days sequentially or 8 days cumulatively in a 30-day time period, a note from a doctor's office is required. Students may be eligible for a tutor if they have a medical excuse stating they will be absent for 14 or more days. Parents/guardians should contact their child's building principal. The school reserves the right to notes or statements from doctors. Using forged notes to obtain a copy of a Physician's Statements for Temporary Home Placement or making unauthorized telephone calls to clear absences will be cause for disciplinary action.

The following are legitimate reasons for absence from school:

- Personal illness of the student
- Bereavement
- Family or catastrophic emergency (e.g. flood, fire)
- Observation of religious holiday
- Necessary court appearance
- DCF placement
- DYS confinement
- Any other reason Administration deems appropriate

Students who exceed 24 absences in a school year may be considered for non-promotion. The intent of this policy is not to say that a certain number of absences are acceptable or allowable; rather, that sequential attendance is necessary. Days absent from school should be reserved for illness or emergency. Parent/guardians

are encouraged to make vacation plans that coincide with the scheduled school vacations. Family trips/vacations are considered unexcused absences.

Parents/guardians who support or enable a chronic pattern of unnecessary absences may be subject to agency or court action. The Director of Finance/Human Resources or building principal will file a report with the Department of Children and Family for educational neglect and/or file a "Failure to Cause" at Springfield Juvenile Court on said parent or guardian if warranted.

Students who appear in school or on school grounds while marked absent or dismissed from school are considered truant and trespassing. In addition, students absent without legal reason/parent knowledge are also truant. Students are not allowed to make up work if determined to be truant. Chronic truancy and excessive absenteeism will result in the Director of Finance/Human Resources or building principal filing a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) petition with the Springfield Juvenile Court.

Students who are absent from school will not be allowed to participate in any after school activity on the day of absence. In extenuating circumstances, the Administration has the discretion to override this provision of the policy.

Students whose absences exceed fifteen (15) consecutive or twenty (20) cumulative days shall receive written notice that they will be administratively withdrawn from the Agawam Public Schools on the twentieth (20th) consecutive or twenty-fifth (25th) cumulative day of nonattendance. This notice shall include a statement of their rights under state and federal law and be copied to the Department of Special Services. For students with disabilities, a Team Meeting invitation shall accompany this notice.

TARDIES

Every pupil who is not present in his/her class or homeroom at the start of opening session will be marked tardy. Tardy students need to report to the office. Parents/guardians must provide an excuse in person or by telephone followed by a written note to excuse the student's tardiness. The Principal may take appropriate disciplinary action if it is determined that a student has had excessive tardies, which have impacted the student's learning and education. In addition, the Department of Children and Family may be contacted for educational neglect.

DISMISSALS

No pupil shall be dismissed from school without a request from his or her parent/guardian in person or in writing. All dismissals shall be recorded. Students may not leave the building until the person receiving them has been properly identified (please provide a picture ID). The school nurse may dismiss students for illness with permission from the parent/guardian.

REVIEW/APPEAL

In cases where a student in grade 1 through 8 receives no credit or is not promoted as directed by this policy or whenever a student's total number of school absences exceeds 20 cumulative days in any school year, an automatic review will occur at the school level. A response by the Principal or his/her designee will be made in writing by the last day of school in June. The student or parent(s)/legal guardian(s) may appeal the decision on the school review level to the Superintendent of Schools. The appeal must be submitted in writing within ten (10) days of receipt of the review decision. The decision of the Superintendent of Schools is final and cannot be appealed to the School Committee.

STATE AGENCY CUSTODY

If a student under the care or custody of a state agency is absent for five (5) or more consecutive days, the Director of Finance/Human Resources or building principal shall contact the agency's educational liaison, case manager, or supervisor on the fifth (5th) day of nonattendance and every five (5) days thereafter regarding the student's absenteeism. The District shall keep a record of this contact.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

c. 71 § 37I states that:

"The school committee of each city, town or regional school district shall inform teachers, administrators, and other professional staff of reporting requirements for child abuse and neglect as specified in sections fifty-one A to fifty-one F, of chapter one hundred and nineteen."

ENTRANCE AGE

The State Board requires that children be permitted to enter kindergarten in September of the calendar year in which they reach age 5. It is our policy to:

1. Admit a child to kindergarten if he/she is five (5) years of age prior to September 1 of the school year in which he/she desires to enroll.
2. Admit a child to first grade if he/she is six (6) years of age prior to September 1 of the school year in which he/she desires to enroll.

Students who attend a kindergarten program in a public school system outside Agawam or who attend a kindergarten program approved by the Superintendent, may be allowed to enter first grade if Agawam school officials determine that it would be educationally appropriate. File: JEB Legal Ref.: M.G.L. 15:1G

MCKENNY – VENTO HOMELESS EDUCATION ASSISTANCE ACT

Every child without a permanent home has a right to an education.

If you live in a shelter, motel, vehicle, or campground; on the street; in an abandoned building, trailer, or other inadequate accommodations; or with friends or relatives because you cannot find or afford housing, then your child has certain rights and protections under the McKenney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act.

Your child has the right to:

- Access the same free and appropriate public education, including public preschool education, as provided to all other children.
- Remain in the school he/she attended before becoming homeless.
- Receive transportation to the school they attend before your family became homeless or the school they last attended if you or a guardian requests such transportation.
- Enroll in school without giving a permanent address. Schools cannot require proof of residency that might prevent or delay school enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes while the school arranges for the transfer of school and immunization records or any other documents required for enrollment.
- Enroll and attend classes in the school of your choice even while the school and you seek to resolve disputes over enrolling your child.
- Receive the same special programs and services, if needed, as provided to all other children.

If you have any questions, please call Miss Patricia Cavanaugh, Director of Finance/Human Resources at 821-0550.

TRUANCY/SUPERVISOR OF ATTENDANCE

Every person in control of a child shall cause him/her to attend school. (C. 76, Section 2)

Every school committee shall appoint, make regulations governing, and fix the compensation of one or more supervisors of attendance. (C. 76, Section 19)

The K – 12 Truancy Officer/Supervisor of Attendance as part of his/her duties shall utilize the Agawam Public Schools "Procedures to Follow to Address Attendance" established protocol.

SCHOOL CHOICE

The Agawam School Committee has voted to accept school choice applications for students interested in attending Agawam Public Schools under current Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, Section 12B. Applications will be accepted depending on current class size.

Applications for school choice may be obtained by contacting the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, 1305 Springfield Street, Feeding Hills, Massachusetts 01030, telephone number (413) 821-0551.

Applications for school choice will be accepted by the Director of Finance/Human Resources.

CHAPTER 76, SECTION 18

Notice required prior to student's withdrawal.

No student sixteen years of age or older shall be considered to have permanently left public school unless an administrator of the school which such student last attended has sent notice within a period of ten days from the student's fifteenth consecutive absence to the parent or guardian of such student in both the primary language of such parent or guardian and English, stating that such student and his parent or guardian may meet with the school committee or its designated representatives prior to the student permanently leaving school, within ten days after the sending of the notice. The time for meeting may be extended at the request of the parent or guardian and with consent of the school committee or its designated representatives, provided no extension shall be for longer than fourteen days. Such meeting shall be for the purpose of discussing the reasons for the student permanently leaving school and alternative educational or other placements.

The superintendent of every city, town, or regional school district shall annually report to the Department of Education the number of students sixteen years of age or older who have permanently left school, the reasons for such leaving and any alternative educational or other placement which each such student has taken.

The provisions of this section shall not apply to a student who has completed the regular course of education, or apply to a student whose absences have been excused, nor shall this section be construed to permanently exclude a student who wishes to resume his education. Added by St.1973, c.375; amended by St.1973, c.915.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- A. No person not being a student or employee of a school and not having a legitimate, specific reason for being there and not having written or oral permission from the school principal or his/her designee, shall remain in or about any school ground or any public property or way immediately adjacent there to during school hours.
- B. No person not being a student or employee of a school shall congregate or stand in or in front or in back or to the side of any school playground or, without written or oral permission from the school principal or his/her designee, shall use any school playground or facilities thereon during school hours.
- C. Persons shall not congregate or stand on any public way or public property, or in front or in back or to the side of any kindergarten, primary, elementary or secondary school with the purpose of annoying or molesting the students or employees thereof, or hinder, obstruct, prevent or disrupt the normal functions carried on therein, or prevent students or employees from entering or leaving the school.
- D. No person not being a student or employee of a school, while on school property or on public property adjacent to a school, shall distribute to students or throw, deposit, or discard any handbills, literature, brochures, or other papers or articles of any kind, unless such person has received written or oral permission from the school principal or his/her designee.
- E. No person shall post or affix handbills, posters, political signs, or articles of any kind promoting business or organizations to any building, tree, fence or other structure on school grounds without written or verbal permission from the school principal or designee.

PARENT OBSERVATIONS IN CLASSROOMS

The Agawam Public Schools believes parents are important partners in educating students and welcomes parental participation in determining a child's appropriate educational program. To that end, we open our classrooms to parents or a *parent representative who want to observe a child in the school setting.

The following procedures shall be followed when an observation is requested:

- 1. All requests to observe a child in school shall be responded to in a timely manner;
- 2. All observations must be scheduled through the building principal;
- 3. Observations during MCAS testing or the first or last several weeks of school are highly discouraged and will generally not be scheduled;

4. The parent and/or parent representative will discuss the purpose(s) of the observation with the principal prior to the observation being scheduled;
5. The observation will be scheduled at a mutually agreed-upon time and date after consultation with the classroom teacher(s);
6. The principal and parent/parent representative shall determine the parameters of the observation;
7. The duration and extent of the observation shall be determined on an individual basis;
8. The parent or parent representative must report to the school office (as do all visitors) as part of the School District's Safe Schools Program. The parent or parent representative will be directed to the classroom by the administration. The principal or his/her designee(s) may accompany the parent or parent representative during the observation;
9. The parent or parent representative must sign the attached Observation Agreement so that both the School District and classroom parents have assurance that information concerning other students' education remains in the classroom and is not discussed publicly;
10. The parent or parent representative may only observe a classroom in which the parent's child is enrolled and in attendance that day or in a specific program proposed by the School District for the child;
11. The parent or parent representative must be a silent observer at all times and not interrupt or disrupt the educational process in the classroom;
12. The parent or parent representative must refrain from using the observation to critique or evaluate teacher performance;
13. The parents or parent representative may schedule a time to meet with the teacher(s) or administrator(s). The principal or his/her designee(s) has a right to be present at all parent-teacher meetings;
14. The principal has the right to limit the number of parent observations in a school setting.

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

Parent observers in classrooms are required by Massachusetts state law to maintain confidentiality regarding all information about students in the class. As an observer you will have an opportunity to see the students in a variety of interactions. Parents will be asked to sign a confidentiality statement prior to observing classes in session. See Form C

File: KI

STUDENT WELFARE

Supervision of Students

School personnel assigned supervision are expected to act as reasonably prudent adults in providing for the safety of the students in their charge.

In keeping with this expected prudence, no teacher or other staff member will leave his/her assigned group unsupervised except as an arrangement has been made to take care of an emergency.

During school hours or while engaging in school-sponsored activities, students will be released only into the custody of parents or other persons authorized in writing by a parent or guardian.

Reporting to Authorities – Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

Any school official or employee shall report any suspected child abuse or neglect as required by M.G.L. Ch. 119, S 51A.

In accordance with the law, the District shall establish the necessary regulations and procedures to comply with the intent of the Act consistent with the District's responsibility to the students, parents, District personnel, and the community.

Student Safety

Instruction in courses in industrial arts, science, homemaking, art, physical education, health and safety will include and emphasize accident prevention.

Safety instruction will precede the use of materials and equipment by students in applicable units of work, and instructors will teach and enforce all safety rules set up for the particular courses. These include the wearing of protective eye devices in appropriate activities.

Safety on the Playground and Playing Field

The District shall provide safe play areas. Precautionary measures, which the District requires, shall include:

- A periodic inspection of the school's playground and playing fields by the principal of the school and others as may be deemed appropriate
- Instruction of students in the proper use of equipment
- Supervision of both organized and unorganized activity

File: JL

SKI CLUB HELMET USE POLICY

The Agawam Public Schools District believes that to ensure a higher level of safety for students who participate in school-sponsored ski clubs, students in grade levels 5 – 12 shall be required to wear ski helmets while attending all ski club events.

Because studies have shown that ski helmet use is effective in reducing the severity of head injuries resulting from skiing accidents, ski helmet use is a logical way to protect everyone who participates in the sport of skiing. Adherence to this policy will be monitored by ski club advisors.

File: EBA

REF.: National School Boards Association, NEPN Code: EBB

SKATEBOARD / ROLLERBLADE / SCOOTER POLICY

No one is allowed to roller-blade, roller-skate, scooter, or skateboard on school grounds at any time whether during or after school hours, including all outdoor and indoor recess periods (except for supervised physical education programs). For purposes of this ban, school grounds shall include all school buildings, parking lots, paths, playgrounds, and stairwells leading to school building entrances.

SAFETY TO AND FROM SCHOOL

The safety of children going to and from school is the joint responsibility of the school and the parents. Children are instructed in safety procedures by their principal and teachers, and parents should reinforce that instruction at home. The principal will tell students the safest walking route to school and the safest route to the school bus stop, and parents should be sure that their children know and follow these routes. The shortest route may not be the safest route. Children should be told to stop at the curb and look both ways for oncoming traffic before crossing the street. They should stay between the lines marking crosswalks and observe the signals of the crossing guards and traffic lights. Parents should be sure that their children leave home for school at times when crossing guards are stationed at intersections. Parents who pick up students in cars should not park in restricted zones. Students who travel by school bus should take directions from the bus driver/monitor while on the bus and when boarding or leaving the bus. They should take their seats promptly and remain seated. Students should never lean out bus windows or stick their arms out of the windows. Smoking, lighting matches and the use of drugs or alcohol are strictly prohibited on school buses.

BICYCLES

Bicycles which are ridden to school must be parked in the designated area. Helmets should be worn in accordance with the state regulations for bicycle safety. It is the rider's responsibility for securing the safety of the bicycle. Bicycles should not be left overnight or used during the school day. Parents must assume liability with regard to the use, loss, or damage to bicycles brought to school.

RECESS

Recess is a supervised activity at the elementary schools.

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM

The safety and welfare of student riders will be the first consideration in all matters pertaining to transportation. Safety precautions will include the following:

1. Children will be instructed as to the proper procedure for boarding and exiting from a school bus and in proper and safe conduct while aboard.
2. Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted at least twice a year to acquaint student riders with procedures in emergency situations.
3. All vehicles used to transport children will be inspected periodically for conformance with state and federal safety requirements.
4. Classroom instruction on school bus safety will be provided.
5. Written summary reports of accidents from the administration will be forwarded to all School Committee members within a reasonable period of time.
6. Remain in your seat while the bus is moving. Students are not to change seats while the bus is in motion. Conditions may require specific seating arrangements. These arrangements are to be made by the driver and/or the principal only.
7. Leave and enter the bus only at the front entrance door except in the case of emergency. Emergency exit drills will be conducted during the school year to acquaint children with the methods of exit in emergencies.
8. Shouting or excessive loud talking is prohibited.
9. Undesirable remarks that stir up adverse behavior directed to the driver or other students are not allowed.
10. Horseplay is not permitted. Students are not to yell, motion or discharge any objects that will distract or prove offensive to the driver or other motorists and/or pedestrians.
11. EATING (including beverages) and SMOKING are NOT PERMITTED on school buses.
12. Packages other than school materials will not be transported at any time.
13. Students are to remain seated at discharge points until the school bus has come to a complete stop. Leave quickly and orderly, one at a time.
14. Students must follow instructions given by the bus driver.
15. Damage to busses will not be tolerated. Students are responsible for damage to their seat and area during their trip. Any damage should be reported immediately to the driver.
16. Students entitled to transportation may ride only the bus assigned to and from school.
17. The Agawam School Committee reserves the right to refuse to transport any student who fails to observe rules and regulations or exhibits unacceptable conduct.

Student Identification Cards on School Busses

Students in grades 7 – 8 are required to have identification cards issued by the school department in order to ride school buses. These cards must be shown to the driver upon entering the bus. If the driver so requests, the cards must be surrendered by the student. Such a request will be made only if a disciplinary problem exists. The card will be returned to the student through the principal's office when the student is again entitled to ride. If the driver turns in a card in the afternoon, the student will be allowed to ride to school the next morning pending an investigation by the principal of the complaint. Cards will be issued annually. Lost cards must be replaced before the student will be allowed to ride. There will be no charge for the first card, but a payment of \$1.00 will be required for replacement cards. Transferred-in students will be issued a temporary bus pass by the principal. Students leaving school for any reason are required to turn in their I.D. card. Cards will be prepared during the first week of school by the school department.

Reporting Misconduct and Disciplinary Procedures

1. Padded forms will be issued to each school bus driver. The forms will be provided by the school department to the school bus contractor.
2. When serious misbehavior occurs, the driver will complete the form in triplicate. It will then be turned in to the contractor or his/her representative who will review it and obtain any additional information required.
3. The contractor will send the form to the proper principal.
4. The principal or assistant principal will interview the child and complete the form and notify parents if necessary.
5. The form will then be returned to the contractor for distribution to the drivers.
6. The school messenger will be utilized to expedite the flow of forms. He/she will make a regular stop to pick up and return forms.
7. In cases of urgency or extreme behavioral problems and at the request of the contractor, the child may be suspended from riding privileges prior to a complete investigation. Such action may be accomplished by the principal or the Director of Finance/Human Resources and retain one copy.

8. All three copies of the forms shall be forwarded to the principal. He/she shall return one copy to the contractor, send one copy to the Director of Finance/Human Resources, and retain one copy.
9. Recognizing that speed is necessary to this process, all forms turned in one day will be completed by the principal no later than the next day. The contractor will be notified immediately when a child's riding privilege is withdrawn.

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

The penalty for an initial violation of bus rules will be a written warning. A second offense will result in a loss of riding privileges for a period of 5 school days. A third misconduct will result in loss of transportation for two weeks (10 days). Any further problems will result in loss of riding privileges for a minimum of 1 month.

Serious breaches of discipline such as fighting, abuse of the bus driver or other passengers, damage to the bus, or any other action constituting a threat to safety will result in immediate loss of riding privileges rather than a warning.

When a loss of riding privileges occurs, the student cannot ride the late bus. If loss of riding occurs as a result of misconduct on a late bus, day bussing will also be denied. File: EEAE

ARRIVAL OF STUDENTS NOT TRANSPORTED BY BUS

Agawam Public School students are encouraged to arrive reasonably close to the start of the school day as direct supervision is not available.

Students must be picked up or leave school grounds immediately upon dismissal. They must not be wandering in halls, lobbies or loitering on school grounds. Due to safety issues and the lack of direct supervision, loitering is not permitted.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

When severe weather conditions or other emergencies make it necessary to close or delay school, announcements will be made on television Channels 22 and 40, and on Radio Stations WHYN 560 AM, 93.1 FM, WMAS 1450 AM, and 94.7 FM.

SCHEDULED CLOSINGS

Please refer to the school calendar for school closings on holidays and for teacher professional development days. The dismissal times will be publicized through the media and are listed on the school calendar.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

State law provides that:

The power of the School Committee or of any teacher or other employee or agent of the committee to maintain discipline on school property shall not include the right to inflict corporal punishment upon any student. File: JKA Legal Ref.: M.G.L. 71:37G

SCHOOL LUNCHESES

The Agawam School System will operate a school lunch program in each school under the supervision of a supervisor of food services. Students will be permitted to bring their lunches from home and to purchase beverages and incidental items. File:EF

Free and reduced lunches are available for all students who qualify. At the elementary, middle and junior high, free or reduced lunch tickets are available in the office. At the high school, tickets will be distributed by the cafeteria staff Monday and/or Tuesday before school. Applications are sent home annually during the first week of school. New students and any students whose eligibility status changes during the school year may pick up an application in the principal's office. Lunch costs: \$2.00 at the elementary and middle schools and \$2.00 at the junior high and high schools.

- Students must purchase complete lunches.
- Students are responsible for keeping their area clean.

- All food must be consumed in the cafeteria.
- When weather permits, students are allowed to be in designated outdoor areas.
- Students in all other areas of the building and grounds will be considered out of bounds.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

The School Department, in cooperation with a local insurance agency, makes available insurance coverage for accidents which may occur at school, while attending school activities, or while traveling to and from school. Special 24-hour-a-day coverage is also available. Specific information about school insurance is distributed to all students during the first two weeks in September. To participate in the program, parents must complete the application and place the correct amount of money to cover the premium in the envelope. The sealed envelope is then returned to the school. Parents who do not wish to participate are asked to indicate this on the envelope and return it to the school.

The District does not assume any responsibility regarding service, claims, or other matters relating to the insurance program.

All students participating in competitive athletics shall be required to be covered by a medical insurance plan. File: JLA

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical Education is mandated per state regulations at all levels K - 12. It will be clearly understood that in all cases (except medical excuses and special programs), at the high school, a student must take and pass .5 credits of physical education in each of your four years in order to graduate. If a student at the high school fails physical education, arrangements must be made with your counselor to make up the deficiency and meet the requirement for graduation.

Students are excused from physical education for extended medical reasons only. This excuse must come from a doctor, a nurse practitioner, or a physician assistant and be presented to our school nurse. All students will participate in every physical education class. In the case of long-term medical excuse from PE, the discretion of the teacher will determine the work assignment, e.g., research paper or alternate assignment.

JEWELRY IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The wearing of jewelry in physical education classes creates a potential safety hazard. The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (M.I.A.A.) endorses game rules and regulations, which do not allow jewelry to be worn during athletic competition.

To ensure the safety of all students, the School Committee prohibits the wearing of jewelry in physical education classes for grades K – 12. REF: SCR-97-14 File: JICB

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS

Individual schools may arrange, in cooperation with either the school's parent organization, student council, designated Student Committee, or a Staff Committee, to take individual student and/or class group pictures. Awarding of the photographic services shall be conducted through bidding procedures.

Individual and/or class group pictures may be taken at the school facility and during the regular school day hours. The pictures shall be made available for purchase by students and/or parents on a voluntary basis. The building principal or his/her designee shall have final authority in authorizing the picture-taking program and will be responsible for overseeing the process.

Students may be required to have an individual picture taken for the cumulative file or identification purposes; however, no student shall be pressured or required to purchase photographs.

The purpose of the policy is to:

Enhance the safety of students through visual identification in an emergency situation.

Facilitate the social, educational, and administrative activities conducted in the school.

Provide a service to parents and students.

Allow the profits gained from the picture-taking program to be used by the sponsoring group and authorized by the building principal. File: JRD

EMERGENCY PLANS

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

The Superintendent will develop and maintain plans that meet the requirements of state law for preparedness in case of fire, civil emergencies, and natural disasters.

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

File: EBC

Cross Ref.: EBCD, Emergency Closings

FIRE DRILLS

To ensure that students and staff realize the importance of preparing for emergency action in case of fire, all employees and students shall be instructed in regard to their conduct during a fire drill. Personnel shall conform to these procedures which are based on state regulations:

1. The principal shall formulate a plan for the protection and evacuation of all persons in the event of fire which shall include alternate means of egress for all persons.
2. The principal shall see that each class instructor or supervisor receives proper instructions in the fire drill procedure for the room or area in which that person carries out his/her duties before assuming such duties.
3. Students shall be advised of the fire drill procedure and shall take part in a fire drill in conjunction with the fire department periodically throughout the school year.

Further, an up-to-date list of handicapped children shall be maintained and responsibility for their evacuation assigned to specific school personnel.

File: EBCB

Legal Ref.: Massachusetts Department of Safety Regulations,
Chapter 148, Sec. G-L, #16

FIELD TRIPS AND EXCURSIONS

Field trips designed to stimulate student interest and inquiry and provide opportunities for social growth and development are considered appropriate extensions of the classroom. To the extent that they provide the most effective means for accomplishing general curriculum objectives of the schools, field trips may be authorized by the building principal, subject to requirements established by the Agawam School Committee and/or the Superintendent.

To be educationally beneficial, a field trip requires thoughtful selection, careful advance preparation of the class, and opportunities for students to assimilate the experience during and at the conclusion of the trip. To this end, teachers and principals will be expected to consider the following factors in selection of field trips: (a) value of the activity to the particular class group(s); (b) relationship of the field trip activity to a particular aspect of classroom instruction; (c) suitability of the activity and distance traveled in terms of the age level; (d) mode and availability of transportation; and (e) cost.

Additionally, the Committee requires the following:

1. Each student who goes on a field trip must have written parental permission and a signed indemnity form on file.
2. School bus transportation may be used when arrangements can be made to do so without disrupting regular school bus schedules.

3. Enough supervision must be provided so that discipline on the trip is effective.
4. All extended (overnight) field trips must have a 30-day advance approval of the Committee.

Cross Refs: EEAE, Student Transportation in Private Vehicles
IGDD, Student Performances

File: IJOA-1 See Form D

TELEPHONES

Pay telephones are located in some school buildings. Only these phones may be used by students for personal business. However, at the high school, no phone passes will be issued during a class period. Students are discouraged from using office telephones.

CELL PHONES AND PORTABLE COMMUNICATION DEVICES

The School Committee recognizes that today's society is different from previous generations. Cell phones and portable communication devices (PCDs) play an important part in employee and student safety and communications. Cell phones and PCDs are defined as current and emerging technologies that are wireless units that send and/or receive electronic communications in an analog or digital data transmission. The possession or use of cell phones and PCDs are prescribed for employees and students as follows:

1. **Employees**
 - a. Employees of Agawam Public Schools are granted permission to possess and use cell phones and PCDs in the official job capacity consistent with their job description.
 - b. Employees who possess and use cell phones and PCDs in their official job functions will be provided a cell phone owned by the Agawam Public Schools. The use of these units is for school business only. Any personal calls may be charged against the employee if the call causes a financial charge to the district.
 - c. Designated employees who are issued school-owned cell phones should keep their phones on and charged during the school day and while conducting school business/events.
 - d. Employees who own a personal cell phone and/or PCD must ensure that the device does not ring or interrupt the academic classroom environment or the job performance of the employee. Employees must take pro-active steps to ensure that the cell phones do not ring during their instructional hours.
 - e. Administrators are required to have a school-issued cell phone on throughout school hours and events.
 - f. The School Committee may review employee phone call records and charges for any school-owned cell phone or PCD at any time.
 - g. Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions by the Superintendent.
2. **Students**
 - a. Students may possess and carry cell phones and PCDs; however, these units must be **turned off and not visible** during the academic school day to ensure that disruption and interference of the instructional and academic climate of the school do not occur.
 - b. Students may not use or operate cell phones or PCDs during the school day. The "school day" is defined as once the first hour starts and throughout the day until the last hour/bell is over. Additionally, school meetings, activities, events, and trips are defined as extensions of the school day.
 - c. The school administration may, in its sole discretion, grant exceptions for cell phones and PCD use based upon critical need and appropriate documentation.
 - d. Students may use their cell and PCDs before and/or after school.
 - e. Students who violate this policy may face disciplinary actions by the administration. Additionally, cell phones that are used during the day will be confiscated. Parents may pick up confiscated items after school.
 - f. Agawam Public Schools will not be liable for any property not picked up by parents within 48 hours of notification.

File: EGA

LOST AND FOUND ARTICLES

Articles found in the building or anywhere in the vicinity, which apparently have been lost, should be taken to the designated lost and found area immediately. Any student losing an article should inquire at the office.

CONFISCATED PROPERTY

Parents must pick up student property that has been confiscated by school administration or staff, due to infraction of discipline policies, within 48 hours from the school office. Agawam Public Schools will not be liable for any property not picked up by parents within 48 hours of notification.

PARTIES

Parties at which food is served will be allowed at the discretion of the principal.

ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM

Animals can be effective teaching aids, and the benefits of the human-animal bond are well established. However, animals in the classroom necessitate certain safeguards. Because diseases can be transmitted from animals to people, consideration should be given to potential health issues before bringing animals into the classroom.

The following criteria shall be met prior to bringing an animal into the classroom:

- Clear parent/guardian notification guidelines and safety protocols will be in place before allowing animals in the classroom.
- Classroom pets or visiting animals must be in good health.
- Pets or visiting animals shall have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected), and the animal is suitable for contact with children.
- Teaching staff will supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children about safe behavior when in close proximity to animals.
- School nurse will be notified, prior to pet or visiting animals entering the school, to make sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to that animal.

No wild animal, no matter how tame, will be brought into a classroom except under the direct supervision of a qualified animal care professional. No reptiles will be allowed as classroom pets because of the risk of salmonella infection.

Parents, students, and teachers must make a written request to the building principal one (1) week prior to the animal visit. The principal will give final approval for all animal visits.

File: IMG

REF: Mass. Dept. of Public Health 2007, Comprehensive School Health Manual, Ch. 8
NAEYC Accreditation Criteria for Health Standards, 5.C.05

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL SETTING

The school administration and designated staff may discuss alternative educational placements with a student and his/her parent(s) or guardian(s).

VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL EDUCATION

All regular and special vocational-technical education students who currently attend an out-of-district, vocational-technical school shall be allowed to complete their education at the out-of-district vocational-technical school, and the Agawam Public Schools shall continue to pay their tuition and transportation.

All high school regular and special education students who desire to receive a vocational-technical education through the Agawam Public Schools may attend the vocational-technical exploratory education program at the LPVEC, and the Agawam Public Schools shall pay their tuition and transportation.

Agawam Public Schools shall not pay tuition and transportation costs for high school regular and special educations who choose to attend an out-of-district, vocational-technical school unless the program is not offered at the LPVEC.

File: IHAJ

REF.: M.G.L. Chapter 74, March 18, 2004

MOMENT OF SILENCE AND STUDENT-SPONSORED PRAYER CLUB

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 1A states that a period of silence not to exceed one minute in duration shall be observed for personal thoughts. The parent – not the school – can direct the student, and the student can use this period for silent prayer, meditation, deep personal thoughts or other reflections. The Equal Access Act allows students in secondary schools to have access to non-school-sponsored speech, including religious speech. Thus, student sponsored prayer clubs, etc., are allowable in the secondary schools as long as they are student and not school-sponsored. Details or examples of what is allowable may be obtained from the Superintendent's office.

LOCKERS/DESKS/COMPUTERS – SEARCHES OF STUDENTS

Students may be issued lockers, with or without private combinations, desks, computers, etc., at the opening of school or thereafter. Students should have no expectation of privacy in their school lockers, desks, computers, etc. Lockers, desks, and computers are for the use of students but remain the property of the Agawam Public Schools.

Students are advised that school administrators to insure cleanliness, safety, and adherence to federal, state, and local laws and regulations may inspect their lockers, desks, computers, etc., without notice.

The legality of a search of a student, his/her clothing and/or possessions depends simply on the reasonableness, under all circumstances, of the search (According to *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* 469 U.S 325 1985). The search by a school official is "justified at its inception" when there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that a student or students has violated or is violating the laws or rules of the school." Secondly, that "such a search will be permissible in its scope when the measure adopted are reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction." (USSC)

MEDIA POLICY

Videotaping, filming, and photographing of students by members of outside media, shall have the prior authorized consent of the building principal and the participating employees. If any student is to be videotaped, filmed, or photographed, prior written consent shall be obtained from the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) via the student Code of Conduct.

Administrative Implementation Procedures:

1. Negatives, photographs, videotape or film and the soundtrack thereof produced by the school district shall be its exclusive property unless other prior written agreements are made.
2. The building principals must approve all photographing, videotaping, and filming in advance for their school.
3. The student Code of Conduct book shall state that permission is granted for filming, taping, photographing, and videotaping – unless the parent notifies the school and denies permission. A student list of "denied media access by parents" will be kept at each school. Lists will be checked prior to any media release.
4. Films/videotapes/photographs of school district productions or events shall not be duplicated, distributed, or sold without the prior consent of the building principal.

Agawam Junior/High School utilizes closed-circuit television/video for the security of their campuses.

See [Form E.K.I](#)

VIDEO USAGE IN CLASSROOMS

It is the policy of the Agawam Public Schools to provide the following directions for video use in the education of students:

I. VIDEO USAGE

- A. The primary use of videos is for instructional purposes. By law, any video that does not include "public performance rights" (something the Agawam Public Schools purchased exclusively for classroom use) must comply with the "fair use" provision of copyright law as outlined in the attachment to this policy statement. This requires that videos:

1. Be used with students in “face-to-face” instruction with the teacher.
2. Be correlated to the Agawam Public Schools Curriculum Guides.
3. Be shown in a normal instructional setting.

II. VIDEO RATINGS

- A. Grades PreK – 4:
Elementary schools may only show “G” rated videos to students in Grades PreK – 4.
- B. Grades 5 & 6:
Roberta G. Doering School may only show the following:
1. “G” and “PG” videos to students in Grades 5 & 6.
(PG movies may be shown to fifth and sixth grade students only with prior approval by the building Principal.) Parent/Guardian notification of potential PG video viewing will be included in the student handbook. Any parent/guardian who does not wish his or her child to view PG-rated videos should follow the procedure outlined in the student handbook.
- C. Grades 7 & 8:
Agawam Junior High School may show the following:
1. “G” and “PG” rated videos
 2. “PG-13” rated videos with approval of the building Principal
Parent/Guardian notification of potential PG-13 video viewing will be included in the student handbook. Any parent/guardian who does not wish his or her child to view PG-13 videos should contact the building Principal as outlined in the student handbook.
- D. Grades 9 – 12:
Agawam High School may show the following:
1. “G”, “PG”, and “PG-13” videos

III. VIDEO SOURCES

- A. Any video from a school district catalog media center may be shown to students. (Grade level recommendations shall be observed.)
- B. All videos legally purchased by the school media centers may be shown if approved for purchase by a building Principal.
- C. Commercially rented videos carry individual restrictions and may not be shown.
- D. Privately-owned videos may not be shown unless approved by the building Principal.

IV. EFFECTIVE VIDEO UTILIZATION

- A. All videos must be previewed by the teacher before showing.
- B. Sound instructional principles that maximize instructional time should always be employed (e.g. show only relevant clips, inform student of the instructional purposes, stop & start video to integrate other instructional activities, use pre/post questions, discussions, and assessment, etc.).
- C. Use of close-captioning where applicable and available.

File: IJNDA

SOURCE: National School Board Association

U.S. Copyright Law, Title 17, U.S. Code– Fair Use, section 107 through 118

COMPUTER SERVICES

Agawam Public School District provide students and staff with a service called Network. The Network is a computer service which includes the use of computers, servers, and the Internet.

Learning is enhanced through technology’s possibilities. Students and teachers have opportunities to gather information, communicate with people all over the world, and create their own products. However, some of the Network’s systems may contain offensive material. Even though it is impossible to have control over all of the information on the Network, Agawam Public School District has in place several ways to help prevent access to inappropriate materials and to provide for a positive, productive educational experience.

Agawam Public School District shall:

- Provide students with the understanding and skills needed to use computer network services in an appropriate manner.
- Attempt to filter out inappropriate material on the network.
- Attempt to supervise and monitor students while on the network.

Acceptable use of the Network:

The Network is designed to be used as a tool to assist with the instructional objectives of the Agawam Public School District. Students and staff shall use the Network efficiently to minimize interference with others.

Prohibited uses of the Network include, but are not limited to:

- Sending, receiving, displaying, or accessing defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, harassing, or illegal materials.
- Any attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, the Network, or any of the agencies or other computer network services that are connected to the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.
- Any attempt to sell or offer for sale any goods or services or controlled substances or drugs that could be construed as a commercial enterprise.
- Redistribution of a copyrighted program or copyrighted material without the express written permission of the owner or authorized person or as provided by the fair use exception. This includes uploading and downloading of materials.
- Revealing personal information of others or themselves, such as home address, phone number, etc.
- Logging-into the system using another's account.
- Leaving an account open or unattended.

Agawam Public School District rights and responsibilities:

- Agawam Public School District reserves the right to monitor all activity on the Network.
- Agawam Public School District reserves the right to deny access of the Network to any individual
- Security on the Network is a high priority. Network management shall establish procedures, which will maximize the computer system security. Agawam Public School District will sign addendum located in the back of book.
- Opinions, advice, services and all other information expressed by students, staff, information providers, service providers, or other third party personnel on the Network provided by Agawam Public School District are those of the individual and do not represent the position of the Schools.
- Agawam Public School District staff will not be responsible for network security, Internet security, service interruption, loss of information, inaccurate information, privacy of files, or access controversial material.
- Any violation of Agawam Public School District's Terms of Computer Services may result in restricted network access.
- Agawam Public School District's code of conduct and disciplinary measures referenced in this handbook are applicable to the Terms of Computer Services. See Form F

STANDARDIZED TESTS

Students in all grades are required by law to take the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Test. Students must pass both the ELA and Math sections of the test in order to graduate.

MCAS TESTING

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System is mandated by the Education Reform Act of 1993. The Agawam Public Schools must abide by this mandate. Students who refuse to participate in MCAS testing, or who refuse to follow directions while taking the test, resulting in a "failing" score, will be subject to short-term suspension based upon their "willful disregard to express or implied directions by a teacher, administrator or staff member." Students are reminded that the failing test scores resulting from their refusal to participate in or comply with the directions of the MCAS result in a disservice to their fellow students. These failing scores lower a school's overall performance rating; a lowered rating may result in the school being found to be "underperforming." Such a finding has potentially serious consequences such as funding cuts and/or loss of local control.

At the high school level

Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test – October

College Board Scholastic Aptitude Test and Achievement Tests – Oct, Nov, Mar, and May

Advanced Placement Tests – May

The ACT may be taken at other schools – See your counselor for more information on the ACT.

College Board Examinations are given on alternate dates at other schools in the area. Request this information in the Counseling Center.

Each spring, all students participate in the statewide MCAS testing.

At the beginning and the end of each semester, all Grade 5 & 6 students are given one of the following:

- a. Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test
- b. Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test

These tests are given to determine each student’s reading level at the beginning of the semester and to measure progress at the end of the semester.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards at the Middle, Junior and Senior High Schools are issued four times during the school year. The passing mark is D- and the honors grade is B-. Grades are to be interpreted as follows:

95 – 100	A	70 – 72	C-
90 – 94	A-	67 – 69	D+
87 – 89	B+	66	D
83 – 86	B	65	D-
80 – 82	B-	55 – 64	F+
77 – 79	C+	0 – 54	F
73 – 76	C		

At the elementary level, grades K, 1st, and 2nd report cards are issued 3 times during the school year. Achievement and performance codes are to be interpreted as follows:

Achievement Codes

E = Exceeds grade level expectations independently

M = Meets grade level expectations

P = Progressing toward grade level expectations with support

I = Insufficient progress toward grade level expectations

At the elementary level, grades 3 and 4, the following achievement and performance codes apply:

A = Student at this level exceeds grade level expectations

B = Student at this level meets grade level expectations independently

C = Student at this level meets grade level expectations with support

D = Student at this level needs more practice and experience to meet grade level expectations

F = Student at this level fails to meet grade level expectations

Performance Codes

1 = Excels

2 = Satisfactory

3 = Inconsistent

* = Area of Concern

NOTICES TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents/guardians of students will receive **progress reports** on their sons/daughters academic status from each subject teacher during the middle of each term. Teachers, counselors, and administrators will welcome the opportunity to discuss students’ work with parents/guardians after such notices have been issued or at any other time. These notices are to be signed and returned to school not later than one week after being issued.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT AND PARENT CONFERENCES

Back to School Night and parent conferences are held at all schools. These dates are listed on the school district calendar.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is a vital part of a child's school experience. Its primary purpose is to give students time to practice skills learned in class. This extension of learning time also helps students develop responsibility, time management skills, and self-confidence. It also helps promote parent/guardian-child interaction and strengthen home/school communication.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT TEAM

The IST in each building meets and discusses individual students who are not experiencing success in the general education setting. The goal of the Instructional Support Team is to assist all children to be successful within the general education setting without special education support.

Concerned parents/guardians are encouraged to contact building administrator.

ALTERNATIVE LEARNING PROGRAM

A special program is provided for students in grades 1 through 12 with serious school adjustment problems. Classes providing carefully structured individual programs are offered upon the recommendation of a special education evaluation team.

EXCLUSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Denial of Admission

Denial of admission means the withholding of the privilege of enrolling in a school of the District.

The following shall be the grounds for denial of admission to school or diversion to an appropriate alternative program:

Graduation from the twelfth grade of any school or receipt of any document evidencing completion of the equivalent of a secondary curriculum;

Failure to meet the requirements of age, by a student who has reached the age of six years at a time after the beginning of the school year, as fixed by the school committee as provided in Massachusetts General Laws;

Having been expelled during the same school year from this district or any district in the Commonwealth;

Not being a resident of the District and the District has opted not to participate in the School Choice Law;

Failure to comply with the provisions of the Massachusetts School Entry Immunization Law.

Legal Refs.: M.G.L. 71:37h; 76:12; 76:12A; 76:12B
603 cm 26:00

STUDENT RECORDS – ACCESS RIGHTS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

General information about the student record:

The student record consists of your child's transcript and temporary record that includes, among other things, records pertaining to your child's special education eligibility or program. You have several rights relating to your child's student record. You and, under certain circumstances, your child, have a right to inspect and review any and all records relating to your child which are collected, maintained or used by the school district. If your child's record includes information regarding another child you have a right to inspect and review only the information relating to your child. The school district will only limit your access to the student record if the school district has received a legal document that limits your authority in this regard (for example, a divorce or custody decree that limits your access to information about your child). All of the rights associated with the student record are contained in the Massachusetts Student Record Regulations. Those regulations can be found at 603 C.M.R. 23.00 or by requesting a copy of the regulations from the Department of Education. The

following summary of information is provided to assist you in attaining a general understanding of the Student Record Regulations.

Your child's rights of access:

Students who are 14 years of age or in the ninth grade have all the rights that parents have under the Student Record Regulations. If a student is from 14 through 17 years of age or has entered the ninth grade, both the student and his or her parent, or either one acting alone, may exercise these rights. Once a student turns 18, the rights accorded parents under the Student Records Regulations become those of the student. However, the parent may continue to exercise these rights unless the student makes a written request to the school principal or superintendent of schools to prevent the parent from doing so. Should the child make such a request, the parent will still retain the right to examine his or her child's record.

Review of the student record:

If you ask to review your child's records, the school must allow you access to those records without any unnecessary delay and in any event, no later than two consecutive school working days after your request, unless you agree to a longer period of time. Your right to inspect and review your child's student record includes the right to do so before any meeting regarding an IEP or due process hearing relating to the identification, evaluation or placement of your child. Your right to inspect and review your child's student record includes the right to:

- a. Obtain copies of any information contained in the student record upon request. The school district may charge a reasonable copying fee, not to exceed the costs of reproduction, as long as the fee does not effectively prevent you from exercising your right to inspect and review the record. The school district may not charge a fee to search for or retrieve information relating to special education.
- b. Meet with professionally qualified school personnel upon request and have any of the contents of the student record interpreted.
- c. Have your representative inspect, review and interpret your child's record with your specific, written informed consent.

Access to the student record:

The school district is required to keep a record of parties who have obtained access to your child's student record, in whole or in part. You have the right to review this record log. Unless student record information is to be deleted or released, the log requirement does not apply to school personnel whose teaching, counseling, clerical or administrative responsibilities require access to your child's student record. Upon your request, the school district must inform you about the types and locations of student record information for your child.

Changing information in the student record:

You have the right to add information, comments, data or any other relevant written material to the student record. You have the right to make a written request that the school district delete or amend information contained in the student record and/or to have a conference with the principal or designee to make your objection known. You have a right to a written decision on your request within a week of your conference with the principal or from the date the school receives your written objection if there is no conference. You may appeal to the superintendent of schools if the school district does not agree with your position. You also have a right to include in your child's student record a statement commenting on the decision or setting forth your reason for disagreement with the content of the record. Any such statement must be maintained by the school district as part of your child's student record as long as the record or contested portion of the record is kept by the school district.

TRANSFERRING STUDENT RECORDS

When a student transfers to another school district or to a private or parochial school, authorized school personnel of the school to which a student transfers shall have access to the student transfer card mandated by M.G.L. c.76 s.13 without the consent of the eligible student or parent. Such authorized school personnel shall also have access to the transferring student's transcript, health record, and, if the student has been evaluated under Chapter 766, the educational plan and assessments pertinent to it. A release of information form for these records will be sent to the eligible student or parent. These records will be transferred unless the eligible student or parent, within 10 weekdays, responds requesting that some or all of these records **not** be transferred. Other parts of the student records may be released to the school to which a student transfers only with the consent of the eligible student or parent in accordance with 603 CMR. 23.07. (4).

Schools may not exclude a new student because they have not received his or her completed school records from his/her community.

DESTRUCTION OF STUDENT RECORDS

The following notice is directed to graduating students and students who leave the system at other times. Eligible students or parents may obtain copies of their records by notifying the appropriate school prior to leaving the system. Temporary records will be destroyed within seven years after the student leaves the school system. Temporary records may include standardized test results; class rank; school-sponsored extracurricular activities; and evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons as well as other similar information. The transcript is not a temporary record and includes only the minimum information necessary to reflect the student's education progress. This information includes name, address, course titles, grades, credits, and grade level completed. The transcript is kept by the school system for at least sixty years after the student leaves the system.

Situations where the school will maintain records of a student's temporary record for more than five years after the student has left the school system are any records that are the subject of an audit investigation which are kept until the investigation is complete. Reporting and Documentation Requirements Regulations requires that each local school district maintain school registers, pupil census, IEPs, and other documentation to support data reported to the Department of Education on the annual End-of-Year Pupil and Financial Report for seven years after its submission. In addition, where school health personnel administer immunizations to students, the health records of such students should be maintained in accordance with applicable medical record requirements. The records of students enrolled before February 1975 are not subject to the regulations. In keeping with the intent of 603 CMR 23.06, however, the time limit for destruction of the record should probably be not less than sixty years for a transcript and not more than five years for the temporary record.

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT INFORMATION TO PARENTS

Parents shall be eligible for the receipt of the following information in a timely and appropriate manner if the parent is otherwise deemed eligible for receipt of student information:

1. Report cards and progress reports;
2. Results of intelligence and achievement tests;
3. Notification of enrollment in a transitional bilingual program;
4. Notification of absences; notification of illnesses;
5. Notification of detention, suspension or expulsion; and
6. Notification of permanent withdrawal from school.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS RIGHTS

As required by G.L. Ch: 71, Sec. 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Department of Education Regulations. The school district will follow the law and the regulations developed by the Massachusetts Department of Education to standardize the process by which public schools provide student records to parents who do not have physical custody of their children ("non-custodial parents").

As required by M.G.L. c.71, § 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

- (a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless the school or district has been given documentation that:
 1. The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
 2. The parent has been denied visitation, or
 3. The parent's access to the student or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record.
 4. There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

- (b) The school shall place in the student’s record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent’s access to the student’s record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07 (5)(a).
- (c) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal.
- (d) Upon receipt of the request, the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by **certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent** that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07 (5) (a).
- (e) The school must delete the electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.
- (f) Upon receipt of a court order which prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

File: KBBA

SOURCE: MASC - Revised January 25, 2007

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:34D; 71:34F; 71:34H

603 CMR 23.07 (5) Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents

20 U.S.C. §1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

CAREGIVER AUTHORIZATION AFFIDAVIT

Effective as of April 14, 2009, Massachusetts adopted a new law permitting parents to designate a “caregiver,” who will have a concurrent right, with the parent or other legal custodians, to make educational decisions. This new law cannot be used to:

- Circumvent state or federal law solely for the purpose of attendance at a particular school;
- Confer rights to persons who have lost their decision making rights by a court of law; or
- Remove, or relinquish the parent’s or other legal custodian’s rights.

If a parent or other legal custodian decides to appoint a caregiver, that caregiver will have the right to stand in for the parent or other legal custodian with respect to educational policies, obtain educational records, represent parent or other legal custodian in “enrollment, disciplinary, curricular, special education or other education matters, signing permission slips for school activities, and any other decision that facilitates the minor’s education experience.” The parent or other legal custodian retains the right to make educational decisions and has an overriding vote if the parent or other legal custodian disagrees with the designated caregiver.

File: JR

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. Chapter 201F

CAREGIVER AUTHORIZATION AFFIDAVIT FORM

Effective as of April 14, 2009, Massachusetts adopted a new law permitting parents to designate a “caregiver,” who will have a concurrent right, with the parent, to make educational decisions. This form, signed by one of a child’s parents or other legal custodians, allows a third party (caregiver) to make medical and educational decisions on behalf of the child without having custody of the child. **The child must be living with the caregiver.**

This Form of the Affidavit is approved by M.G.L. Chapter 201F and is appropriate for use without modification. Once on file, the Form needs to be updated at least every 2 years. A properly executed Affidavit will require two (2) witnesses (none of which are the named Caregiver), and a notary.

File: JR-F

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. Chapter 201F

**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, DIVISION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION –
PARENTS’ RIGHTS BROCHURE (SPECIAL EDUCATION)**

Dear Parents:

Your child has been referred for or is currently receiving special education services to provide for his or her individual educational needs. This brochure is designed to assist you in understanding the special education process and your rights.

The requirements regarding special education are based on state and federal law. The relevant laws are the following:

State Law: The state special education law, popularly known as “Chapter 766” after the session law number under which it was passed in 1972, is contained in the Massachusetts General Laws (GL) at Chapter 71B. The regulations implementing the statute are found in the Code of Massachusetts Regulations (CMR) at 603 CMR Section 28.00.

Federal Law: The federal special education law is known as “IDEA” (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). The statute is located in the United States Code at 20 U.S.C. § 1400. In 1997, Congress reauthorized the IDEA and the amended statute is popularly referred to as “IDEA-97”. The implementing regulations for IDEA are found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) at Chapter 34, Section 300.

The federal and state special education laws are grounded upon six basic principles:

1. Parent & Student Participation
2. Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
3. Appropriate Evaluation
4. Individualized Education Program (IEP)
5. Least Restrictive Environment
6. Procedural Safeguards

In the following section of this document, each of the principle is described:

1. Parent & Student Participation – The law provides for many opportunities for parents to be involved in the planning and discussions concerning their child’s special education needs, including as an integral member of the team that discusses eligibility, services, and placement of students. You are entitled to have Team meetings held at a time and place mutually convenient to you and to other members of the Team. If your child is 14 years of age or older, the district must invite your child to attend Team meetings; if your child is younger than age 14, you may invite your child to Team meetings if you decide it is in his or her best interests. If you are unable to participate in a Team meeting, the district is required to use other methods (such as phone conferencing or other meeting opportunities) to ensure that you have the opportunity to participate in the discussion even if you cannot be present. Parents have rights to consent to or reject proposals for their child’s education and to receive information in understandable written form. As the student grows older, he or she begins to have rights to participate in the Team process and in planning for transition to adult life. Additionally, the law entitles students of any age who are receiving special education to participate in the general education program of the school, including participation in school-wide or state-wide assessment programs.

The law does not speak directly to your responsibilities as a parent, but the opportunities that the law provides for your participation are intended to promote a dialogue between you and the school district on behalf of your child. You are expected to share information about your child and the school district is expected to attend to the information you provide and the concerns you present. It is important to emphasize that special education is most successful when it is viewed as an ongoing partnership with all parties having a strong interest in providing the best possible education for the student. Although as a parent you have many rights, it is important to remember that the relationship you build with the school district may endure for many years and a positive, cooperative relationship on the part of both parents and school district personnel is most likely to result in maximum benefit to the student.

2. FAPE – Under federal law, students who are eligible for special education are entitled to FREE, APPROPRIATE, PUBLIC EDUCATION – This concept is known as “FAPE”. Massachusetts

interprets FAPE to mean that students eligible for special education are entitled to a free, public education that provides for the student's maximum possible development in the least restrictive environment (see also organizing principle #5, below).

3. Appropriate Evaluation – A student must receive a complete and comprehensive evaluation to determine if the student has a disability and is eligible for special education and, if eligible, to assist in determining appropriate special education and related services that may be necessary. Additionally, the law provides for periodic reevaluations to ensure that the student is benefiting from and continues to require special education. Your consent will always be required prior to these evaluations.

In Massachusetts, in order to be found eligible for special education, a student must demonstrate the presence of a disability (autism; developmental delay; intellectual, sensory, neurological, emotional, communication, physical, or health impairment; or specific learning disability) that prevents the student from making effective progress in education and requires specially designed instruction or related services in order to access the general curriculum. An initial evaluation to determine eligibility will seek sufficient evaluative information in order to make a firm determination that considers all of these factors.

Although the state testing program, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) is an evaluation, it is not a part of the evaluation conducted to determine if the student requires special education. The special education law provides protections to ensure that every student with disabilities is included in state or district-wide testing to ensure that the educational needs of students with disabilities are considered in a systemic way. Therefore, your permission is not required for your son/daughter to participate in MCAS or any other state or district-wide tests. However, during the Team meeting held to develop your child's Individualized Education Program (see #4 below on IEP), you and the other Team members will discuss the best way for your child to participate in the MCAS and note this on your child's IEP.

4. IEP – The law provides that the Team develops an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) in written form to describe the programs and services that are needed and that they will be provided when a student has been determined to be eligible for special education. Your permission will always be requested before any IEP services are provided.
5. Least Restrictive Environment – This principle, known as “LRE”, means that, if possible, a student who needs special education services should receive those services in the general education environment, with students who do not have special needs. Further, LRE means that removal from the general education environment should only occur if the nature or severity of the student's special education needs are such that education in general education classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. IDEA-97 strengthened this principle even more by saying that no child should be removed from the general education classroom just because of needed modifications in the curriculum. This means that the Team is strongly obligated to consider how your child can be supported in the general education classroom before even considering serving your child in any other setting.
6. Procedural Safeguards - Finally, the law provides a number of procedural safeguards to ensure that parents' and students' rights are preserved, that information is provided on a timely basis, and that services are delivered appropriately. Parents have considerable rights to agree or disagree with proposals of the school district and also have the right to make proposals themselves.

The remainder of this brochure is designed to provide specific detail on the various procedural safeguards of the law.

You are not obligated to read this material, nor are you obligated to exercise one or more of these rights. However, it may be helpful for you to understand the scope of the safeguards available to you. It is our hope that you will use this brochure to help you understand the law, your rights, your responsibilities, and the responsibilities of the school district. No exercise of procedural safeguards, however, substitutes for a positive partnership with the school district.

RIGHT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN NOTICE

You have a right to receive written notice within a reasonable time before the school district proposes or refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation or educational placement of your child or the provision of FAPE to your child. This means that written notice must be provided in the following specific circumstances:

- When the school district proposes an initial evaluation or reevaluation.
- When the school district proposes a new or amended IEP.
- When the school district proposes a change in placement.
- When a student is suspended for more than ten consecutive days in any school year.
- When the school district proposes termination of special education services.
- When the school district refuses to change a previously accepted IEP or placement.
- When the school district refuses to conduct an assessment at your request.
- When the school district refuses to provide a service you have requested that is not on your child's IEP, or otherwise refuses a request you have made related to the provision of special education to your child.

The written notice must include:

- (a) A full explanation of the procedural safeguards available to you under federal special education law (as provided by this brochure);
- (b) A description of the action proposed or refused by the school district which includes:
 1. An explanation of why the action is proposed or refused;
 2. A description of any options the school district considered and an explanation of why those options were rejected;
 3. A description of each evaluation procedure test or record used as a basis for the action proposed or refused;
 4. A description of any other factor relevant to the school district's decision.

The notice must be written in simple and commonly understood words and must be in both English and the primary language of the home. Any interpreter used must be fluent in the primary language of the home. When you or your child are unable to read in any language or are blind or deaf, the notice must be made orally, in Braille, in sign language or in writing, whichever is appropriate. If the school district provides you notice orally or in some other mode of communication that is not written language (such as sign language) the school district must keep written documentation that it has provided you notice in such a manner; of the content of such notice; and of the steps taken to ensure that you understand the content of the notice.

PROVIDING YOUR WRITTEN CONSENT

The school district must obtain your written consent before evaluating your child or before providing your child with special education and related services according to an IEP. Specifically, this means that your consent is required before the school district may conduct an initial evaluation or reevaluation of your child and prior to the initial provision of special education and related services to your child and for any subsequent IEP and placement. Once you have consented to an initial placement in a special education program, if you refuse to provide consent to any subsequent actions related to special education, the school district cannot use your refusal to consent as a basis to deny you or your child any other service, benefit or activity to which you or your child may be entitled. "Consent" means that:

- (a) You have been fully informed of all information relevant to the activity for which your consent is sought in your native language or other mode of communication; and
- (b) You understand and agree in writing to the carrying out of the activity for which your consent is sought; and
- (c) The consent form used by the district describes the activity for which consent is sought and lists the records (if any) which will be released and to whom; and
- (d) You understand that it is your voluntary choice to give consent and you may revoke your consent at any time. If you revoke your consent, from that point forward the district must cease the activity to which you had previously consented.

If you refuse your consent:

In most cases your refusal to consent will be fully honored. However, to protect the rights of your child, the law requires the school district to consider the effect of your refusal on the education of your child. At any point after your child is first placed in a special education program, if a school district believes your refusal to consent

would deny your child a free appropriate public education (FAPE), the school district must take steps to ensure that FAPE is provided. Such steps may include mediation and/or initiation of a due process hearing as described later in this brochure to resolve the dispute. The school district cannot request a hearing to dispute your refusal to consent to the initial evaluation or initial placement of your child in special education.

Rights associated with consent:

- You have a right to accept or reject a finding of no special needs or a proposed IEP in whole or in part, or to meet with school representatives to discuss the IEP during a thirty-day period following receipt of the proposed IEP.
- If you accept part of the proposed IEP, the part you accept must be implemented immediately.
- You have a right to accept or reject the placement proposed to deliver the services on the IEP.
- At least a year in advance of the time when your child would graduate from high school, you have a right to discuss your child's proposed high school graduation and the anticipated termination of your child's special education services with school officials. In addition, you have a right to accept or reject that portion of an IEP that proposes graduation, and a right to request mediation or a hearing before the Bureau of Special Education Appeals on the issue of graduation.
- If, at the time that your child is scheduled for a reevaluation (usually every three years), the school district recommends that additional evaluation is necessary and asks for your consent to that recommendation, you may refuse that recommendation and request a full or partial reevaluation.

Your Responsibility of Provide Notice to the School District if You Place Your Child in a Private School

Under some circumstances, you may decide that the public school district is not providing an appropriate education for your child (see organizing principle #2, FAPE, above) and you may decide to remove your child from the public school system and place him or her in a private school. If you choose to do this and want the public school district to pay the private school tuition, you are required to notify the school district before you remove your child. You must give this notice either at an IEP meeting or in written form at least 10 business days before you remove your child from the public school program. You must tell the public school why you disagree with the IEP and program that the public school has proposed or provided for your child, and you must state your intention to remove your child and enroll him or her in a private school. If the school asks to evaluate your child prior to removing him or her from the public school program, you must make your child available for such evaluation.

Giving notice to the school district is only the first step in receiving public funding if you remove your child from the public school program. Following such removal, you must prove at a due process hearing that the school district program failed or is unable to provide your child with FAPE in a timely manner and that the private school can provide your child with an appropriate education. If you complete both steps and are successful in proving your case, the Bureau of Special Education Appeals hearing officer may require the school district to use public funds to pay for your child's private school placement.

Right to Independent Education Evaluation (IEE)

When you pay for an IEE:

If you disagree with the school district's evaluation of your child, you have a right to seek an IEE. Parents may seek an IEE at private expense at any time. Upon your request, the public school district must provide you with a list of persons who conduct IEEs in your area of Massachusetts, although you are not limited to using evaluators from that list:

Circumstances under which the school district may pay for the costs of evaluation:

The state regulations require school districts to finance IEEs for low-income families and to share the costs of IEEs for middle-income families. If your child is eligible for free or reduced cost lunch, then, at your request, the school district will pay for an IEE that is equivalent to the types of assessments done by the school district. If your child does not qualify for a reduced cost lunch, he or she may still be eligible for school district funding, either in whole or in part, depending on your family income. The school district will ask for income information and some validating documentation. Sharing financial information with the school district is completely voluntary on your part. If you choose to share such information, the school district must tell you promptly whether or not you are eligible for full or partial funding of an IEE. Your right to a publicly funded IEE through this income eligibility process will extend for 16 months from the date of the school district's evaluation with which you disagree.

Circumstances under which the school district may pay for the costs of evaluation:

If you request an IEE paid for by the school district and you are not income eligible or do not wish to use the income-eligibility process, you should notify the school district in writing of your request without undue delay and either agree to pay for the IEE or initiate a hearing with the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) to show that the school district evaluation was not comprehensive and appropriate. If the BSEA agrees with the school district, then the district is not obligated to provide public funds for an IEE. Any IEE that is paid for with public funds must abide by state requirements relating to qualifications of the evaluator and the rates charged for the evaluation.

Consideration of results of IEEs:

If you arrange for an IEE (regardless of whether it is paid for with private funds or public funds) and have the results sent to the school district, the school district must convene a Team meeting within ten school working days of receipt of the evaluation information to consider the evaluation and what, if any, changes should be made to the student's IEP based on the evaluation.

Complaints, Mediations and Due Process Hearings

Complaints or concerns about whether the district is following special education requirements:

The Department of Education encourages you to first attempt to resolve the matter with local school district officials. Contact your school Principal, your Administrator of Special Education, or your Superintendent to ask for assistance. In some cases, however, you may feel that you need to go outside the district. The Massachusetts Department of Education has a "Problem Resolution System" where you can file complaints or ask for a resolution of a dispute about compliance with a law or regulation. You can contact the Department directly at (781) 338-3700 to file such a complaint. The Department will send you written information and will request a written statement of the problem if you wish the Department to intervene. If you sent written information requesting a resolution of your problem, the Department will ensure it is investigated and will send you a letter of its determination within sixty (60) calendar days of receiving your written request. The address for the Department of Education Problem Resolution System is:

Program Quality Assurance Services
Problem Resolution System
Massachusetts Department of Education
350 Main Street
Malden, MA 02148-5023

Mediation services or hearings:

You have a right to request mediation or a due process hearing conducted by the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA), whenever there is a dispute between you and your child's school district over the identification, evaluation, placement, proposed IEP, the manner of implementation of the IEP, the provision of a free appropriate public education, or the procedural protections of state or federal law for your child. You may obtain a list of free or low-cost attorneys and advocates to assist you by calling the BSEA at (781) 338-6400.

The school district also has the right to request mediation or a hearing held by the BSEA for the same reasons, except that it cannot request a hearing to dispute your refusal to consent to the initial evaluation or placement of your child in special education.

Information about mediation:

Mediation may be requested by either the parent or school district. Mediation is a voluntary, informal process, conducted under the direction of a BSEA mediator, which is designed to assist you and your school district in reaching an agreement regarding the issue in dispute. If you reach an agreement, it will be written down as a mediation agreement. If no agreement is reached, you may still request a hearing. If you wish to schedule a mediation, or wish more information about mediation, you may call a Department mediator at (781) 338-6400.

Information about mediation:

A parent or school district may request a hearing by sending a written request to the following address:

Bureau of Special Education Appeals
Department of Education
350 Main Street
Malden, MA 02148-5023

The hearing request should contain the names and addresses of: the parents or guardians and child, the school district's representatives and any attorneys or advocates involved, as well as a short statement of the reason why

the hearing request. When you request a hearing, the BSEA will provide you with a list of free or low-cost attorneys and advocates. The BSEA will also send detailed information about your rights and responsibilities in regard to the requested hearing.

OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

1. Parents' request to observe their child(ren), current program, or a potential placement must be made at least five (5) days in advance with the Special Education Director or designee and Principal.
2. The Special Education Director or designee shall contact the parent(s) for initial scheduling conversation within five (5) days of receipt of the parents' request.
3. When a parent requests an observation of a special needs student or program, the Special Education Director or designee will seek approval from the Director of Special Education and the building principal before it is processed. Such approval may only be withheld for those reasons outline within law and DESE regulation.
4. The Principal will work with the classroom teacher and the observer to set up the specifics of the observation (including, but not limited to, scheduling and placement of the observer in the classroom).
5. The number, frequency, and duration of observation periods will be determined on an individual student basis in accordance with law and regulation. The start and end time of observation periods and a schedule of observation periods will be stated in advance. In order to minimize classroom or student disruption, the length of individual observation periods may be limited.
6. If the observer is not the parent, the parent must sign a release for the individual to observe.
7. The number of observers at any one time may be limited.
8. The observer will be informed that he/she is not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom. If his/her presence presents a problem, he/she will be asked to leave. This notice is particularly important, since the presence of parents can influence both the performance of their child(ren) and those of others.
9. The observer will be asked to submit his/her report of the observation to the Educational Team Facilitator at least 3 days in advance of any follow-up TEAM meeting.
10. The observer will be informed that he/she is there to evaluate the appropriateness of a specific educational program to meet the needs of an individual child. He/she is not there to evaluate a teacher's ability to perform his or her contractual job duties.
11. The observer will be instructed regarding the disclosure of confidential or personally identifiable information relating to other children. Staff must be mindful of removing materials which may be part of students' records from plain view.
12. A school administrator or designee also will observe at the same time and take notes as to what is observed, paying particular attention to note anything that is non-typical concerning the period. This observation summary will be placed in the student's file and provided to the parent(s) at least 3 days in advance to any follow-up TEAM meeting.
13. The parent or parent representative must sign the attached Observation Agreement so that both the School District and classroom parents have assurance that information concerning other students' education remains in the classroom and is not discussed publicly.

OBSERVATION AGREEMENT

Parent observers in classrooms, and their designees, are required by law to maintain confidentiality of all information about students in the class. As an observer, you will have the opportunity to see students in a variety of interactions. By signing this statement, you are acknowledging your understanding of this confidentiality requirement.

I have read the Agawam Public Schools outline of procedures regarding "Parent Observations in Classrooms" and agree to fully abide by all terms therein.

I also agree to maintain strict confidentiality regarding information or observations about all students in the classroom where I am observing.

I further agree that the observation of the child is in no way an evaluation of staff performance.

(Parent or Designee Signature)

(Date)

File: IHBA

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. Chapter 71B:3
Mass. Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2009-2 dated January 8, 2009

CROSS REF.: KI, Visitors to Schools

DISCIPLINING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. Special Education laws require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation team to have special needs and whose program is described in an Individualized Educational Plan (I.E.P.) The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of special needs students:

1. The I.E.P. for every special needs student will indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code or if the student's handicapping condition requires a modification. Any modification will be described in the I.E.P.
2. The principal (or designee) will notify the special education office of the suspendable offense of a special needs student and a record will be kept of such notices.
3. When it is known that the suspension(s) of a special needs student will accumulate to ten days in a school year, a review of the I.E.P. will be held to determine the appropriateness of the student's placement or program. The team will make a finding as to the relationship between the student's misconduct and his/her handicapping condition and will either:
 - a. Design a modified program for the student;
 - b. Write an amendment to provide for the delivery of needed modifications of the I.E.P. relative to discipline code expectations. In addition, the Department of Education will be notified as required by law, requesting approval of the alternative plan to be followed.

AGAWAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROBLEM RESOLUTION GUIDELINES

In order to foster and promote a cooperative, informal, and expeditious resolution of problems or concerns regarding an eligible student's education program, parents are strongly encouraged to follow the following jointly developed guidelines:

1. Communicate your concern(s) with your child's teacher(s) and/or related service provider(s). Often a problem may be a misunderstanding and can be effectively addressed through clarification. Teachers and/or related service providers are encouraged to respond to oral or written communications in a reasonably prompt manner (within two (2) school days, except for unusual circumstances);
2. If your concern is not answered or resolved at the teachers/related service providers level, communicate directly with your child's IEP Contact Person/Education TEAM Facilitator. The Contact Person/ETF shall review and respond to your concern in writing within three (3) school days;
3. If your concern is not resolved by the Contact Person/ETF shall review and respond to your concern in writing within three (3) school days;
4. If the problem continues, you should state your concern(s) directly to the Director of Special Education. The Director shall review your concern(s) with appropriate school personnel and respond to you in writing within five (5) school days;
5. If the problem still exists, you should contact the Contact Person/ETF and request that your child's TEAM reconvene to address your concern(s). Please also inform the Contact Person/ETF if you will be bringing an advocate and/or attorney to the TEAM. The Contact Person/ETF will forward a notice to you within two (2)

school days and schedule the TEAM meeting within ten (10) school days or at a mutually convenient time; and

6. If the problem is not resolved at the TEAM level, you may exercise your parental rights by filing (1) a complaint with the Department of Education's Problem Resolution System, (2) a Request of Mediation with the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA), (3) a Request for Hearing with the BSEA; or (4) a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights.

Copies of forms for complaints or requests for hearing/mediation are available at the Special Education Office, or you may contact the Department of Education, Program Quality Assurance at (781) 338-3795, Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) at (781) 338-6400, or the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) at (617) 223-9662.

PARENT'S AND STUDENT'S RIGHTS UNDER SECTION 504, TITLES II, IV, VI, IX AND THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

It is the policy of the Agawam Public Schools to comply with all applicable provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as well as those contained in Title II, Title IV, Title VI, Title IX, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. These Acts prohibit discrimination against persons with a handicap in any program which receives federal funding. A person with a handicap is defined as one who:

- has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- has a record of such impairment; or
- is regarded as having such impairment.

The Agawam Public Schools recognizes its responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices involving both students and staff. No discrimination against anyone who falls under the provisions of Section 504 will knowingly be permitted in any program or practice of the Agawam Public Schools. Accordingly, the Agawam Public Schools acknowledges that it has specific responsibilities to identify such handicapped persons, to evaluate such persons, and, if they are eligible under Section 504, to provide them with reasonable accommodations to the appropriate educational services.

Any student, parent or legal guardian who believes that he or she has been discriminated against on the basis of a handicap should immediately file a written complaint with the Student Services Supervisor of the Agawam Public Schools, who will then investigate the complaint.

No student, parent, or legal guardian who has filed such a complaint will be subject to coercion, intimidation, interference, or retaliation for registering a complaint or assisting in the investigation of the complaint.

PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) NOTICE OF RIGHTS UNDER SECTION 504

You have the right to:

1. Have your child take part in, and receive benefits from public education programs without discrimination based on his/her handicapping condition(s).
2. Have the school district advise you of your rights under the Federal law;
3. Receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation, or placement of your child;
4. Have your child receive a free, appropriate public education. This includes the right to be educated with non-handicapped students to the maximum extent appropriate. It also includes the right to have the school district make reasonable accommodations to allow your child an equal opportunity to participate in school and school-related activities;
5. Have your child educated in facilities and receive services comparable to those provided to non-handicapped students;
6. Have evaluation, educational, and placement decisions based upon a variety of sources by persons who know the student, the evaluation data, and placement options;
7. Have transportation provided to and from an alternative placement setting at no greater cost to you than would be incurred if the student were placed in a program operated by the district;
8. Have your child be given an equal opportunity to participate in non-academic and extracurricular activities offered by the district;
9. Examine all relevant records relating to decisions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, educational program and placement;
10. Obtain copies of educational records at a reasonable cost unless the fee would effectively deny you access to the records;
11. Receive a response from the school district to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's records;

12. Request amendment of your child's educational records if there is a reasonable cause to believe that they are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy rights of your child. If the school district refuses this request for amendment, it shall notify you within a reasonable time, and advise you of the right to a hearing;
13. File a grievance;
14. Request mediation or an impartial due process hearing related to decisions or actions regarding your child's identification, evaluation, education program, or placement. You and the student may take part in the hearing and have an attorney represent you. Hearing and mediation requests may be made to: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education Appeals, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5023. Phone – (781) 338-3000;
15. Appeal to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), Region 1, John W. McCormack, Post Office and Court House Square, Room 222, Boston, MA 02700. Phone (617) 223- 9662.

The person in this district who is responsible for assuring compliance with Section 504, Titles II, IV, VI, IX and the Americans with Disabilities Act is the Section 504, Titles II, IV, VI, IX, and Americans with Disabilities Act District Coordinator:

Allison LeClair
 Director of Curriculum & Instruction
 1305 Springfield Street
 Feeding Hills, Massachusetts 01030

GRIEVANCES

The Agawam Public Schools has established an internal procedure in order to provide for prompt and equitable resolutions of complaints alleging any action prohibited by the United States Department of Justice regulations implementing Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Title II of the ADA regulations largely reinforces Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This procedure is also to be followed when lodging complaints involving alleged violations of Title IV, Title VI and Title IX.

Title II states, in part, that “no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of such disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in programs or activities” sponsored by a public entity.

Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Acts provides that no person shall on the ground of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participating in any program receiving federal financial assistance.

Section 901(a) of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits any educational program or activity from discriminating on the basis of sex.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects the rights of individuals with disabilities within the work and school setting. Section 504 is a federal civil rights statute.

Section 601 of Title IV prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

(Note: Complaints that do not allege discriminatory conduct should be directed to the building principal.)

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A. DEFINITIONS

A “Grievance” is a complaint made pursuant to, and arising out of, the Agawam Public Schools obligations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title II, Title IV, VI, Title IX, and the ADA.

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

B. PURPOSE

The purpose of this grievance procedure is to secure prompt and equitable solutions to grievances which may, from time to time, arise pursuant to Section 504, Title II, Title IV, Title IX, and the ADA.

C. GENERAL

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

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

Forms for filing grievances will be provided upon request by the Agawam Public Schools' Section 504, Title II, Title IC, Title IX and ADA District Coordinator whose address appears above.

D. PROCEDURE

When the aggrieved party is a student or student's parent/guardian:

1. The aggrieved party should complete the Grievance Form and return it to the Section 504 School Coordinator of the school building in which the alleged grievance occurred. The complaint should be filed within fifteen (15) days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation. (Allegations of discrimination occurring before this grievance procedure was in place will be considered on a case-by-case basis). Assistance will be provided, upon request, to enable an individual to complete the Grievance Form and pursue the grievance process.
2. Within ten (10) school days after receiving the grievance, the Section 504 School Coordinator shall meet with the aggrieved party in an effort to resolve the grievance. This investigation into the complaint is contemplated to be thorough, but informal, in nature. All interested persons and their representatives, if any, shall be afforded an opportunity to be heard and to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. If the grievance is not resolved, it will be forwarded to the Section 504 District Coordinator.
3. Within thirty (30) school days of receipt of an unresolved grievance, the Section 504 District Coordinator will conduct a hearing to determine what, if any, action shall be taken in response to the grievance. The hearing shall be held at a time and place mutually convenient to all parties. The hearing procedure will follow appropriate due process procedures, including:
 - a. The opportunity for the aggrieved party to present the grievance in any suitable manner;
 - b. The right of the aggrieved party to an impartial hearing officer;
 - c. the right of the aggrieved party to be represented by counsel or an advocate at the aggrieved party's expense (the aggrieved party should notify the Section 504 District Coordinator if he/she will be represented by counsel);
 - d. The right of the aggrieved party to a prompt decision.
4. A written determination of the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, shall be issued by the Section 504 District Coordinator and forwarded to the complainant no later than fifteen (15) working days after its filing. The determination of the validity of the complaint and the description of the resolution will be provided in an alternate format, upon request, if needed for effective communication.
5. The complainant can request a reconsideration of the case in instances where he or she is dissatisfied with the resolution. The request for reconsideration should be made within fifteen (15) working days following receipt of the written determination to the Superintendent of the Agawam Public Schools.
6. The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution for the complaint filed hereunder shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of an ADA complaint with the responsible federal department or agency. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.
7. These rules shall be construed to protect the substantive rights of the interested persons to meet appropriate due process standards and to assure that the Agawam Public Schools comply with the ADA and implementing regulations.
8. Copies of all resolutions and findings made under this procedure shall be filed with the Superintendent's Office of the Agawam Public Schools.

**CHAPTER 385 OF THE ACTS OF 2002
AN ACT FURTHER PROTECTING CHILDREN**

Section 38R. The school committee and superintendent of any city, town or regional school district and the principal, by whatever title the position be known, of a public or accredited private school of any city, town or regional school district shall have access to and shall obtain all available criminal offender record information from the criminal history systems board of any current or prospective employee or volunteer of the school department, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, including any individual who regularly

provides school related transportation to children. Such school committee, superintendent or principal shall periodically, but not less than every 3 years, obtain all available criminal offender record information from the criminal history systems board on all such employees and volunteers during their term of employment or volunteer service. Said school committee, superintendent or principal shall also have access to all criminal offender record information of any subcontractor or laborer commissioned by the school committee of any city, town or regional school district to perform work on school grounds, and who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children.

“Direct and unmonitored contact with children” means contact with a child when no other CORI cleared employee of the school or district is present. A person having only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact with children in commonly used areas of the school grounds, such as hallways, shall not be considered to have the potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children. These excluded areas do not include bathrooms and other isolated areas (not commonly utilized and separated by sight or sound from other staff) that are accessible to students.

PARENT’S RIGHT TO KNOW

Under federal legislation, the No Child Left Behind Act, parents have a right to request and receive information regarding the professional qualifications of the student’s classroom teacher including; (a) whether the teacher is state certified; (b) whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional certificate; and (c) the baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate degree major or certification. Inquires can be made at the child’s school and will be responded to by the Office of the Director of Finance/Human Resources.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT

The Agawam Public Schools encourage the participation of parents/guardians in their child’s education process. Academic achievement requires the combined efforts of the school and home.

To assist parents/guardians in monitoring the student’s progress, parents will receive progress reports in October, December, March and May. Mid-term reports will be sent home as needed. All Agawam Schools schedule a Back to School Night early in the school year. Conferences will be held twice yearly. Parents seeking more information can consult with their child’s teacher by requesting additional conferences.

Parents/guardians, who wish to visit their child’s classes, should contact the school’s principal to arrange for a visitation date.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in the following organizations:

Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO)
School Improvement Council
School Volunteers

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

The Agawam School Committee encourages volunteers in the schools. Parents, business representatives, senior citizens, and other community volunteers are recognized as important sources of support and expertise to enhance the instructional program and vital communication links with the community. All volunteers are required to submit to a criminal records check (C.O.R.I.) in accordance with Commonwealth of Massachusetts regulations and school committee policy. The volunteer program will be coordinated in cooperation with building administrators.

File: IJOC

SOURCE: MASC Policy

LEGAL REF.: MGL Chapter 71, 83R, Chapter 6, section 1721

CROSS REF.: Policy ADDA, C.O.R.I. Check Policy

SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES DURING REGULAR SCHOOL HOURS

Use of Volunteers:

Volunteer work will include, but not be limited to, duties such as reading to students, individualized student/parent tutorial services, categorizing library books and materials, painting projects and/or assisting with coaching responsibilities.

Authorizing a volunteer to perform certain duties is viewed as a supplement to school services. Professional and non-professional staff will never be removed from service or laid off as a result of volunteer use.

Authorization Procedures:

1. The specific duties of the volunteer will be communicated by the individual building principal in collaboration with the classroom teacher.
2. Volunteers are considered extensions of the staff and will conduct themselves in a professional manner.
3. Each volunteer will be assigned to a specified staff member.
4. Records on volunteer hours will be kept by the building administrators.
5. Volunteers must complete the application process and CORI review every 3 years. No volunteers will be permitted to work until the application process and accompanying approvals have been completed.
6. School volunteers will be required to review and adhere to all school committee policies as set forth in the Personnel Policy Handbook. School volunteers should access this handbook at www.agawampublicschools.org and should sign and return the acknowledgement form to the building principal.
7. Removal of a volunteer may be effected upon recommendation of the school administrator to the Superintendent of Schools.

File: IJOC-R

IN-SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROGRAM DURING REGULAR SCHOOL HOURS

Agawam Public Schools values the work of parent volunteers and acknowledges the contributions that volunteers make to our schools. The following is a list of terms and conditions, professional responsibilities, and confidentiality guidelines for volunteers in our schools:

Terms and Conditions:

1. As an Agawam Public Schools volunteer, I understand that I need to attend an orientation session with a Principal or his/her designee.
2. As an Agawam Public Schools volunteer, I will be subject to the direction and control of a building Principal or his/her designee.
3. I will check in at the school office upon arrival and wear my visitor pass at all times when I am providing volunteer services.
4. I WILL NOT contact parents, guardians, or emergency contact persons under any circumstances while volunteering in the Agawam Public Schools unless directed to do so by a Principal or his/her designee.
5. I will conduct myself in a friendly, courteous manner and not show partiality toward any student and will remain neutral in my speech and actions with respect to religion, culture, and politics at all times while I am engaged in volunteer activities with students.
6. As a volunteer, I understand that I have been authorized by the principal to act as a "school official" subject to the directions and control of the school administrators and teachers. In this capacity, I may, under limited circumstances, have access to student and school information in connection with my authorized duties. Student information can include all records, files, documents, and other materials that contain personally identifiable information about any student, as well as the personally identifiable information itself.
7. I WILL NOT discuss with others, while serving as a volunteer or when no longer in a volunteer role, the content of any specific student information, or will I disclose student information **that may reasonably be considered confidential**.
8. While in control or possession of student information and while handling, distributing, organizing, mailing, or filing student information, I understand and agree that I must protect this information from being viewed or obtained by non-authorized individuals.
9. I understand and agree that questions about any student must be directed to an Agawam Public Schools employee who is authorized to provide information regarding that student. As a volunteer, I understand and agree that I should state that I am not authorized to provide information regarding any student.

10. I must report any breach or suspected breach in confidentiality of student information immediately upon my discovery thereof to the building Principal or his/her designee. I understand and agree that my failure to maintain the confidentiality of student information and personally identifiable information to which I am given access may disqualify me from further service as a volunteer for the Agawam Public Schools.
11. As an Agawam Public Schools volunteer, I understand that if my attitude and/or performance could be detrimental to the operation, function, and well being of the school, pupils, or personnel therein, I may be dismissed.

Professional Responsibilities:

1. When you are volunteering in our schools, you are considered a professional member of the school community and are expected to conduct yourself in a friendly and professional manner with students, staff, other volunteers, and visitors to our schools.
2. When you are in one of our schools, you are there to perform a specific job as outlined by the teacher/staff member who has solicited your services.
3. Upon arrival to a school, you must sign in at the office, leave your keys with the school secretary, and wear your visitor's pass at all time while in the building.
4. When you volunteer at one of our schools, you are limited to the parts of the building that are necessary for you to complete your assigned task. You are not to wander the halls, visit your child's classroom or classroom teacher, visit the teacher's room, or leave the building and later return without checking in and out at the office.
5. DO NOT let any person into the school building while children are in attendance even if you know that person and/or the business he/she is here to conduct. All visitors must be "buzzed in" by the school secretary.
6. You shall refrain from using foul or inappropriate language at all times while on school grounds.
7. You shall dress respectfully keeping in mind the impressionable age of students at our schools.
8. You shall refrain from making disparaging remarks about students, staff, administration, or school/public officials while volunteering in our schools.
9. You shall refrain from using the internet while in our schools unless you have been directed to perform a specific task by the teacher/staff member who has solicited your services, in which case your use of the internet is limited to the specific task.

Confidentiality:

The guidelines for the legal and ethical behavior of school professionals are based on the following principles:

1. Each person has the right to be treated with respect, dignity, and integrity.
2. Confidentiality is a professional and ethical responsibility to respect an individual's right to control personal information and access to it.
3. School professionals have a responsibility to act in the best interests of students when making decisions to divulge confidential information.

As a volunteer, you are expected to adhere to the following guidelines as they relate to confidentiality:

1. Student information is considered confidential under the law. Such information includes student work, test scores, report cards, IEPs and files containing information about an identifiable student and his/her academic standing. If you have seen any information in any student record through your volunteer work, you are under no circumstances allowed to share that information with anyone at anytime.
2. You are not to discuss information learned about a child while volunteering with his/her parent.
3. As a volunteer, you may see or overhear interactions between students, between staff and students, or between staff members. Anything you may see or overhear is considered confidential and should not be discussed with another person.
4. If you see or overhear an interaction between student, between staff and students, or between staff members that causes you concern for the welfare of the students or a staff member, you must immediately report it to the building Principal or the staff member who solicited your services.

I have read the above In-School Volunteer Program During Regular School Hours policy and have been given the opportunity to ask questions to ensure that I understand it and agree to abide by the policy's terms and conditions.

Volunteer Name (Please Print)

Signature

Date

Principal's Signature

Date

File: IJOC-E

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

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

1. Expected Level of Behavior:
 - District personnel will treat parents and other members of the public with courtesy and respect.
 - Parents and other visitors will treat teachers, administrators, and other District employees with courtesy and respect.
2. Unacceptable and Disruptive Behavior:
 - Using loud or offensive language, swearing, cursing, or displays of temper;
 - Threatening to do physical harm to a teacher, school administrator, school employee, or student;
 - Abusive, threatening, or obscene letters, e-mail, or voice mail messages;
 - Any other behavior that disrupts the orderly operation of a school, classroom, and/or administrative functions.
3. Parent Recourse:

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

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

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

Should an individual persist in violating the terms of this policy, the District may limit and restrict the methods of communication which may be used by said individual. Such restrictions shall not apply in the event of actual emergencies or regulatory functions such as TEAM meetings or disciplinary hearings.

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

Authority to Deal with Persons who are Verbally Abusive:

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

PUBLIC SOLICITATIONS IN THE SCHOOLS

The Agawam School Committee will place limits on commercial activities and fund-raising activities in the schools for the following reasons:

1. The school system will provide students, parents, and employees some measure of protection from exploitation by commercial and charitable fund-raising organizations by determining those that are appropriate for the school system.
2. Commercial and fund-raising activities will be conducted during the non-instructional time of the school day.

The Superintendent or his/her designee, including principals and directors, may allow occasional commercial or fund-raising activities related to the objectives of the schools with the following exceptions:

1. No direct solicitation of students or employees may take place without school committee permission.
2. No general or class distribution of commercial or fund-raising literature may take place without the approval of the Director of Finance/Human Resources.

PTO groups and groups representing school system employees will be considered “school groups” and will be governed by the committee’s policy on staff solicitations. Groups not representing the school system such as a Booster Club will be governed by the same policy and thus considered a “school group.” No employee of the school system will conduct any solicitation of his/her business during the school day.

File: KHA

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 44:53A

CROSS REF: GBEB, Staff Gifts and Solicitations
 JJE, Student Fund-Raising Activities
 JP, Student Gifts and Solicitations
 KHB, Advertising in the Schools
 KJC, Booster Organizations

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Although members of the community will not be denied the right to bring their complaints to the committee, they will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the committee. Exceptions will be made when the complaints concern committee actions or committee operations only.

The committee believes that complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible and that the professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the committee. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline or learning materials will be as follows:

1. Teacher
2. School building administrator
3. Director of Finance/Human Resources
4. School Committee

If a complaint, which was presented to the committee and referred back through the proper channels, is adjusted before it comes back to the School Committee, a report of the disposition of the matter will be made to the committee and then placed in the official files.

Matters referred to the Assistant Superintendent and/or School Committee must be in writing and should be specific in terms of the action desired.

The committee expects the professional staff to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complainant.

Legal Ref.: 603 CMR 26:09 and 26.10

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Committee desires citizens of the Agawam School System to attend its sessions so that they may become better acquainted with the operation and programs of the schools and that the Committee may have an opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public. All official meetings of the Committee shall be open to the press and public as provided in the Open Meeting Law.

In order to insure that persons who wish to appear before the Committee may be heard, 15 minutes will be set aside prior to the beginning of all regularly scheduled committee meetings.

Anyone wishing to speak before the committee either as an individual or as a spokesperson for a group may do so subject to the following:

1. Any individual desiring to speak shall give his/her name, address, and the group (if any) that is represented to the chairperson prior to the meeting.
2. The presentation should be as brief as possible. Normally, a speaker will be limited to five minutes.
3. If the individual's concern is with the operation, programs, or decisions of the schools – that individual must clearly demonstrate (before any remarks are offered) that he/she has attempted to settle the concern at the teacher/administrator level prior to addressing the Committee.

The Committee vests in its Chairperson or other presiding officer, authority to terminate the remarks of any individual when they do not adhere to the rules established above.

Persons appearing before the Committee are reminded, as a point of information, that members of the Committee are without authority to act independently as individuals in official matters. A dialogue between Committee members and individuals, through the Chairperson, may take place.

The following statement is to be read at each meeting prior to speak time:

“In accordance with Agawam School Committee Policy BDDH, the next 15 minutes will be devoted to CITIZENS’ SPEAK TIME. Anyone wishing to address the Committee may do so. Please be reminded that the Agawam School committee is a policy-making board and that concerns dealing with teach/administrative decisions should have been thoroughly discussed at that level prior to your appearance tonight. With that in mind, who would like to speak first?”

File: KDB-1

Cross Ref.: BD, Agawam School Committee Meetings
BDDB/BDDC, Agenda Format/Preparation and Dissemination

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Students will enjoy the constitutional rights of freedom of expression. They will have the right to express their views in speech, writing, or through any other medium or form of expression within limitations comparable to those imposed on all citizens but specifically designed for children and youth in a school setting.

The School Committee will encourage student publications not only because they offer an educational activity through which students gain experience in reporting, writing, editing, and understanding responsible journalism, but also because they provide an opportunity for students to express their views.

All student publication will be expected to comply with the rules for responsible journalism. This means that libelous statements, unfounded charges and accusations, obscenity, defamation of persons false statements, material advocating racial or religious prejudice, hatred, violence, the breaking of laws and school regulations, or materials designed to disrupt the educational process will not be permitted.

The Superintendent will establish guidelines that are in keeping with the above and provide for the review of the content of all student publications prior to the distribution.

Review of content prior to publication is not censorship, but part of the educational process as this concerns student publications. It can be pointed out to students, as it frequently is to journalists, that a publisher (in this case, the school system) enjoys freedom to determine what it will and will not publish.

Distribution of Literature

Students have a right to the distribution of literature on school grounds and in school buildings, except that the principal may prohibit the distribution in school buildings of a specific issue or publication if it does not comply with rules for responsible journalism. No literature may be distributed unless a copy is submitted to the principal in advance.

The time, place, and manner of distribution of literature will be reasonably regulated by the principal.

File: JICE

Legal Ref.: M.G.L. 71:82

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

Commercial organizations offer many materials for use by teachers in the classroom. Some of these materials are of high educational value with little or no advertising emphasis. Other materials are primarily advertising and have only limited educational value. In general, supplementary printed materials from commercial, political, religious, or other non-school source, should have the approval of the Principal, subject to final approval by the Superintendent of Schools before being used in the schools. This approval may be given to materials which are of obvious educational quality, which supplement and enrich text and reference book materials for definite school courses, which are timely and up-to-date, and which promote American democratic ideals and moral values.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS DISTRIBUTION

Distribution of Printed Matter Other Than School Publications

Approval

The material to be distributed will be submitted to the principal or assistant principal at least one day in advance, or earlier if the materials is so unusual as to require submission to the office of the Superintendent of Schools.

Unacceptable Material

- a. So-called "hate" literature that scurrilously attacks ethnic, religious or any racial group.
- b. Any material that promotes hostility, disorder, or violence.
- c. Any material that proselytizes a particular religious belief.
- d. Materials designed for commercial purposes – advertising a product or service for sale or rent.
- e. Any material that is libelous invades the rights of others or inhibits the functioning of school.
- f. Material which in any part promotes, favors, or opposes the candidacy of any candidate for election, or the adoption of any bond issue proposal, or any public question submitted at any general, municipal, or school election. This prohibition will not apply on any Election Day or special election when school is being used as a polling place.

Places

Distribution will be made in a place within the school or on school grounds as designated by the school principal.

Time

One-half hour before school and/or fifteen minutes after the close of school.

Littering

The individuals distributing the materials will remove all distributed items discarded in school or on school grounds.

Appeal

Individuals denied approval by the principal may appeal such action by contacting the superintendent of schools.

Distribution of Special Aids (Non-Printed Materials)

Non-printed materials such as models, cuts, films, slides, pictures, charts and exhibits of an educational nature shall be submitted to the building principal for approval in accordance with the same procedures and guidelines as print materials.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS*Selection Procedures*

Responsibility for the selection of instructional materials rests with the Building Principal and the Director of Curriculum & Instruction subject to approval of the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent seeks the recommendations of professionally trained personnel who know the courses of study, the methods of teaching, and the individual differences of the students. The School Committee retains the responsibility of the final approval.

Selection of materials will be accomplished cooperatively by teachers, curriculum supervisors, librarians, and/or administrators in the following manner:

- a) The librarian shall periodically request teachers to make suggestions for library/media center acquisitions. In addition, the librarian shall publicize the fact that suggestions for acquisitions may be made throughout the year.
- b) The librarian and curriculum supervisors should consult curriculum guides and new course descriptions in order to keep the instructional materials up to date.
- c) The library media center shall take into consideration suggestion from students for purchase of instructional materials, magazines, and newspapers.
- d) Whenever teachers, librarians, curriculum supervisors, and/or administrators before purchase will preview possible non-print materials.
- e) It is suggested that whenever appropriate, materials that have been used in individual courses be evaluated by teachers and students as a guide to further selection.
- f) All requisition must have the approval of the principal and appropriately the curriculum supervisor and/or librarian.

In all cases, materials (both print and non-print) purchases will be selected according to the following criteria.

- 1) The representation of various points of view on controversial subjects in curriculum.
- 2) The relationship of the materials to the goals and the objectives of the curriculum and/or the interests of the students for whom they are intended.
- 3) The quality of the materials to implement the philosophy of the school, the various departments and the philosophy stated in the clarification of this document.
- 4) Review media using any standard selection tool of the various discipline or general guides such as the following book list: Paperback Book Guide, New York Times Book Review, and School Library Journal.

Legal Refs.: M.G.L. 71-48; 71-49; 71-50

Adopted: Date of Manual Adoption

Revised: December 2, 2002

TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

An important goal of the schools is to help prepare students for intelligent and conscientious participation as citizens in our democratic society. One step toward meeting this goal is to introduce students to reasoning and dispassionate approaches to the analysis of contemporary social and political issues. To insure that these issues can be examined in an atmosphere as free from emotion and prejudice as the times permit, the School Committee establishes the following guidelines for discussion of controversial issues in the schools.

Teacher-Planned Classroom Discussions

1. Controversial issues selected by teachers for classroom discussion must relate directly to the objectives and content of courses approved by the School Committee for inclusion in the curriculum.
2. The teachers' right to introduce controversial issues in classroom presentations does not include the right of advocacy. Teachers must refrain from using their positions to express partisan points of view.
3. The approach to discussion of these issues in the classroom must be objective and scholarly with minimum emphasis on opinion and maximum emphasis on intelligent analysis.
4. Teachers must ensure that the reasoned arguments of all sides of an issue are given equal presentation and emphasis in classroom discussions.
5. Teachers may invite visitors from outside the schools to give presentations on controversial issues when the visitors offer qualifications and resources not available in the schools. All visitors are to be guided by the standards of language usage that prevail in the classrooms and by the standards of scholarly inquiry set forth above. Whenever possible, teachers who invite visitors to present one side of an issue will also invite visitors to present the other side(s).
6. In all cases teachers must obtain from the appropriate principal permission to invite visitors for classroom presentations. Permission must be requested at least 48 hours before the scheduled time of presentation. See Form G File: IMB

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM OR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The Agawam School Committee, though it is ultimately responsible for all curriculum and instructional materials (including library books), recognizes the need and right of students to free access to many different types of books and materials. It also recognizes the right of the professional staff to select books and other materials supportive of the school system's educational philosophy and goals.

Criticism of a book or other materials used in the schools may be expected from time to time. In such instances:

1. If a parent requests that his/her own child not read a given book, the teacher and/or school administrator should resolve the situation, perhaps by arranging for use of alternative material meeting essentially the same instructional purpose. This does not apply however, to basic program texts and materials that the School Committee has adopted.
2. The School Committee will not permit any individual or group to exercise censorship over instructional materials and library collections but recognizes that at times a reevaluation of certain material may be desirable. Should an individual or group ask to have any book or other material withdrawn from school use:
 - a. The person who objects to the book or other material will be asked to sign a complaint on a standard form on which he will document his/her complaint.
 - b. Following receipt of the formal complaint, the Assistant Superintendent will provide for a reevaluation of the material in question. He/She will arrange for the appointment of a review committee from among the faculty to consider the complaint.
 - c. The Assistant Superintendent will review the complaint and the Review Committee's reevaluation and will render a decision in the matter. Should the decision be unsatisfactory to the complainant, he/she may appeal it to the School Committee.

In summary, the School Committee assumes final responsibility for all books and instructional materials it makes available to students; it holds its professional staff accountable for their proper selection. It recognizes rights of individual parents with respect to controversial materials used by their own children; it will provide for the reevaluate of materials in library collections upon formal request. On the other hand, students' right to learn and the freedom of teachers to teach will be respected.

File: KEC
 Legal Ref.: 603 CMR 26.09 and 26.10
 Cross Refs.: Instructional Materials
 IJJ, Selection and Adoption of Textbooks
 IJL, Selection and Adoption of Library Materials

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Agawam Public Schools is to promote *Achievement and Accountability* in all endeavors as we educate life-long learners in our community.

The mission of the Agawam Public Schools' Health Services Department is to enhance the education process by maximizing the health and well-being of the school-age children and adolescents physically, intellectually, socially, and emotionally. An optimum level of health is basic to effective learning.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Any student who has a physical, emotional, or medical problem, which could affect the student's educational progress, **must** have on file in the principal's and/or nurse's office in the student's school a document from the student's attending physician explaining the nature of the student's condition and any limitations that can/may affect the student's education. The student and the attending physician in cooperation with the school staff will regularly develop an appropriate educational plan while the student is attending school or if it is agreed that the student should no longer attend school regularly.

If the student's attending physician determines that a student should no longer attend school regularly because of a physical, emotional, or medical problem, a note from the student's physician **is required** in order for the student to return to school. Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible, that health counseling services, as well as instruction are offered, that return to school is encouraged, and that every opportunity to complete the school year is provided.

File: JIE

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:84

FIRST AID

The school attempts to provide a safe environment. If an accident or sudden illness occurs, school personnel will administer first aid and, if warranted, call the school physician.

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

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

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

File: EBB

Legal Refs.: M.G.L. 71:55A; 71:56

Cross Ref.: JLC, Student Health Services and Requirements
EBBB, Accident Reports

ACCIDENT REPORTS

Accidents to students are to be reported immediately in order to assure that all necessary procedures are followed in relation to insurance coverage claims and safety. Reports of serious accidents involving pupils or members of the school staff should be telephoned as soon as possible by the principal to the Director of Finance/Human Resources.

The law requires that every employer keep a record of all injuries of students. Any injury, no matter how slight, must be reported to the insurance carrier in order to comply with the law.

The responsibility for filing reports rests with the injured student or with the teacher of an injured student. Reports should flow through normal administrative channels to the Assistant Superintendent. File: EBBB

PHYSICAL EXAMS

1. Physical examination of students is required every three (3) to four (4) years, usually in grades K, 4, 7, 10, and for new enterers. We encourage parents/guardians to have this exam completed by the student's Primary Care Provider when parents/guardians receive physical exam notices. Physical examination by a private health care provider is required **prior to entering pre-school program in Agawam Public Schools**. Noncompliance will result in exclusion from school until requirements are met.
2. Every candidate for a school athletic team will present the signed consent of parent or guardian in order to participate on a squad and will, with the signed consent of parent or guardian, be thoroughly examined to determine physical fitness. The school physician will examine athletes, except when a family wishes to have the examination done by their own doctor at their own expense. A written report stating the fitness of the student to participate signed by the physician will be sent to the school principal. (JLCA)

MANDATED SCREENING

1. Postural screening will be administered to students yearly in grades 5 through 9. No parental permission is required for this screening. (JLCA)
2. The school nurse performs the following mandated state screenings for all students annually: vision, hearing, height and weight. (JLCA)

FORMS

1. It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) to complete necessary health forms such as Emergency Procedure Cards and Health Histories.
2. The school must have the proper information to contact parent(s)/legal guardian(s) in the event of an illness or accident involving their child. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) should make arrangements to transport their child home when ill.

SPECIAL PROCEDURES

A written order from a physician or licensed health care provider and written parental permission is required prior to initiating any special procedure on any student for that school year.

NURSES' OFFICE/HEALTH ROOM PROTOCOL

1. All students need a pass to be seen in the Health Room.
2. Students will be served on a triage basis of severity of illness or injury.
3. Except for emergency first aid and preliminary assessment of illness or injury, treatment is the responsibility of the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).
4. When a student transfers to another school or school system, upon receipt of a signed "Release of Information: Form from the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), the health record may be sent with other school records. The nurse places the health record in a sealed envelope that is clearly labeled to the school nurse of the receiving school. Otherwise, the health record shall be sent directly to the school nurse of the receiving school.
5. In cases of communicable disease and febrile illness, the school nurse has the authority to exclude students under guidelines of the Department of Public Health. Readmission will be dependent upon compliance with the above guidelines. Parents/guardians should cooperate in preventing the spread of contagious disease by keeping children at home during the most contagious stages of illness and in the presence of rash, skin eruptions or other deviations from normal health. When in doubt, the family physician should be consulted.

HEAD LICE

Parents/Guardians are urged to spot-check their child's head for the presence of lice or eggs. Positive findings must be reported to the school nurse immediately. Family physician should be consulted concerning treatment.

Students should not be sent to school until free of lice or eggs (nits). Periodic spot checks of students will be made throughout the year by the school nurses in the grammar schools only.

INJURIES

Students must immediately report an injury to the teacher in whose room the injury occurred. The student then sees the school nurse who begins the injury report, sends it to the teacher/witness for completion of the description of the injury.

DISMISSALS

In case of illness a student should report to the nurse. Any call regarding dismissal for illness should come from the nurse's office. Parents or their designee's which are named on the emergency card are responsible for transporting a sick student from the building.

IMMUNIZATION REGULATIONS

Under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 75-15 A:

"No child shall be admitted to school except upon presentation of a licensed health care provider's certificate that the child has been successfully immunized against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, mumps, rubella, and poliomyelitis. Any child born on or after January 1, 1992, must also present proof of having received the Hepatitis B series. Beginning in September, 1995, all children in grades kindergarten through grade 12 must show proof of a second MMR vaccine." Pre-schoolers must show proof of H Influenza immunizations in addition to other immunizations noted above.

The only exception to these requirements will be made on receipt of a written statement from a doctor that immunization would not be in the best interests of the child; or the students' parent or guardian stating that vaccination or immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the student or parent. (JLCB)

CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS WITH HIV/AIDS IN SCHOOL SETTING: GUIDELINES FOR ATTENDANCE AND DISCLOSURE

Information gathered by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and similarly, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, states that, except in rare circumstances, a student with AIDS or HIV infection poses no risk of transmission of HIV infection through the kind of casual contact which occurs in a school setting. Therefore, a student with AIDS or HIV infection has the same right to attend school and participate in school programs as any other student.

1. A student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) are not obliged to disclose the student's HIV/AIDS status with school personnel.
2. There are benefits to informing the school nurse or physician of a student's health condition but further disclosure of a student's HIV status by the school nurse or physician to other personnel requires the specific, informed, written consent of the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s).
3. If a health care provider (such as a school nurse or school physician) discloses a student's AIDS/HIV status, without specific, informed, written consent, that provider and/or facility has violated Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 111, Section 70F, and may be subject to a civil suit brought by the student or the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s).
4. Under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 112, Section 12F, minors may consent to HIV testing in certain circumstances. This law mandates strict confidentiality. If an adolescent student has sought such testing independent of parental consent, that student has a right to full confidentiality of the test results, and any disclosure of this information would require the STUDENT'S specific, informed, written consent.
5. Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 214, Section 1B, prohibits the unwarranted invasion of a person's privacy. Therefore, any school staff member, having heard of a student's HIV/AIDS status, is advised to refrain from discussing any HIV/AIDS related information regarding that student unless he/she has been given specific, informed, written consent to do so.

MEDICATION PROCEDURES

As a rule, medication is not given in school. In most cases, pupils who are on prolonged medication can have the dosage adjusted by their health care provider so that the routine time for taking the medication will come before or after school hours. When it is absolutely necessary that a dose of medication – prescription and/or over-the-

counter medications – be given during school hours, the Agawam Public Schools will cooperate in the *administration of medication* when the following regulations have been met:

The registered nurse will act according to the following guidelines:

1. Before medications (including non-prescription medication) are given to a student, the parent or guardian must present to the school nurse a written physician's order for the medication and the authorization of the parent or guardian for the medication to be given. The authorization form will be filed with the student's medical file.
2. The physician's orders for any medication to be administered will specify in writing the condition for which the drug is being given, name and amount of the medication, time of administration, any relative side effects to be noted, length of time during which the medication shall be administered. Medication to be given on a long-term basis must be reconfirmed with the prescribing physician each school year.
3. The health care person is responsible for obtaining any additional information regarding the medication or for contacting the physician if there is any questions concerning the appropriateness of administering the medication at school.
4. Any medication to be given during school hours must be delivered directly to the health care person or building principal by the parent/guardian or a responsible adult.
5. The medication must be delivered in and dispensed from the original container, which has been properly labeled from the pharmacy. The label should contain name of patient, name and strength of medication, name of physician, date of original prescription, and directions for administering the medication.
6. No more than one month's supply of prescribed medication should be kept at school.
7. All prescription medication shall be stored in a securely locked area. Medication requiring refrigeration will be so stored.
8. At the end of the school year unused medication will be picked up by the parent/guardian or responsible adult or disposed of by the school nurse. If a drug is disposed of, notation should be made of the date of the discard. The parent or responsible adult who picks up the medication will sign the medication sheet, which will be filed in the student record.
9. Please note that field trip permission slips now have a space for medication administration. The parent must take the time to complete it, contact the school nurse, and make the necessary arrangements with your pharmacy for an appropriately labeled bottle to accompany your child on the field trip.
10. At the time the medication is prescribed by the physician, please inquire as to whether hours of administration of the medicine may be planned for before or after school hours.

**TOWN OF AGAWAM
HEALTH DEPARTMENT / SCHOOL NURSE DIVISION**

DATE _____

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We would like to inform you of the policies that have been put in place to ensure the health and safety of children needing medicines during the school day.

Our school district requires that the following forms must be on file in your child's health record before we begin to give any medicine at school:

1. Signed consent by the parent or guardian to give the medicine. Please complete the enclosed consent form and give it to your school nurse.
2. Signed medication order. The written medication order form should be taken to your child's licensed prescriber (your child's physician, nurse practitioner, etc.) for completion and returned to the school nurse. This order must be renewed as needed and at the beginning of each academic year.

Medicines should be delivered to the school in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container by you or a responsible adult whom you designate. Please ask your pharmacy to provide separate bottles for school and home. No more than a thirty day supply of the medicine should be delivered to the school.

When your child needs a medicine to be given during the school day, please act quickly to follow these policies so we may begin to give the medicine as soon as possible. ANY UNUSED MEDICATION MUST BE PICKED UP BY PARENT OR GUARDIAN, OR IT WILL BE DISCARDED.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

School Nurse

Telephone

PLEASE NOTE – PHYSICIAN ORDERS AND PARENT CONSENT ARE RENEWABLE YEARLY. See Form H

PROCEDURES FOR RESOLVING QUESTIONS BETWEEN SCHOOL AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS REGARDING ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS

If a question or dispute involving the administration of medication arises between the parent/guardian or a student and the nurse, every effort should be made by both parties to resolve the disagreement. If this is not possible, the following procedures will be followed:

LEVEL 2: A conference involving the parent/guardian, the student (if appropriate), and the head nurse, the school nurse and the school physician will take place. If at this point the dispute remains unresolved, the parent/guardian may proceed to the next level.

LEVEL 3: A conference involving the parent/guardian, the student (if appropriate), and the head nurse, and the Assistant Superintendent will occur. At the end of this conference, after a careful consideration of all the factual information presented, the Assistant Superintendent will be responsible for the final determination of the dispute.

MEDICATION EMERGENCY PLAN

A medication emergency shall be defined as any severe or untoward response or reaction to either self-administered or personnel-administered drug or any other medication, whether prescribed or not. When such an immediate situation is discovered, the student should be brought to the health room (if possible) and the health professional for that school should be notified. C.P.R. and First Aid should be performed if appropriate. If the individual seems to be having a severe reaction manifested by the sudden appearance of a general body rash, breathing difficulties, severe pallor, or unresponsiveness, indicating a state of shock, then the ambulance should be called and the student transported to Baystate Medical Center Emergency Ward.

If the substance or drug is identifiable, personnel attending the student should make every effort to bring that substance to the emergency ward with the student. Nursing personnel in each school will be responsible in determining the use of oxygen, and/or other emergency drugs in treating the acutely ill student.

Notification of emergency will include parent/guardian, physician of record or school physician if necessary. A Medication Error report form will be completed and attached to the student's health record. A copy will be sent to Miss Cavanaugh, Director of Finance/Human Resources and to the Food and Drug Administration if appropriate.

SCHOOL DISTRICT WELLNESS PROGRAM

Federal Law (PL 108.265, Section 204) requires all schools to develop a local wellness policy and establish a plan for measuring the implementation of the policy. Children need access to healthful foods and educational content and experiences that promote wellness. Good health fosters student attendance and educational success. Obesity rates and chronic diseases continue to increase and challenge maximum academic performance. Participation in vigorous physical activity, quality physical education, nutrition education, and balanced food choices foster life long health habits leading to long healthy lives.

The purpose of this policy is to insure that each student is provided ongoing opportunities designed to maximize the prospect that the student will make positive decisions throughout life. Health education provides critical content for students to develop and demonstrate health-related knowledge, attitudes, and practices. Physical education and regular physical activity is an integral part of the total education of students, which contributes to the physical development of the individual through promotion and appreciation of physical fitness. School food services will provide students with a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of the students.

I. Nutrition Education, Physical Activity, Physical Education, and Wellness Promotion

A. Nutrition Education

- Nutrition instruction will be taught as a standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect health (MGL Chapter 71, Section 1)
- Nutrition instruction will be developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant
- Nutrition instruction will contain Food Pyramid Guidelines, caloric balance, and media literacy.
- Nutrition educators will collaborate with the food service staff to strengthen and expand instruction.

B. Physical Activity

- Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated daily at the elementary and middle school levels, weather permitting.
- Physical activities programs, such as intramurals (K-8), before and after school programs, extra-curricular activities, and interscholastic sports are available before and after school hours for all levels.
- Physical activity during the school day will not be used as punishment (e.g., running laps, pushups) nor shall physical activity be restricted for disciplinary reasons unless related to violations that occur during the physical activity periods.

C. Physical Education

- Physical education shall be taught as a required subject in grades K-12 for all students (MGL Chapter 71, Section 3).
- Physical education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher.
- Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity will not be substituted for physical education class.
- Physical education should be taught to students throughout the school year to provide the maximum activity exposure and instructional continuity.
- Physical education instruction will incorporate *NASPE's Quality Physical Education Guidelines* including opportunity to learn, meaningful content, and appropriate instruction.
- The physical education program should match the Massachusetts Department of Education's Health Curriculum Framework and the National Standards for Physical Education (NASPE).

D. Wellness Promotion

- Instruction in health education shall be taught as a standards-based program and incorporate the Massachusetts Department of Education's Health Curriculum Framework standards (MGL Chapter 71, Section 1).
- The health education program should match the Massachusetts Department of Education's Health Curriculum Framework and the National Health Education Standards.

II. All Foods Available on School Campus (during the day)

A. Beverages

- Low fat milk is offered for consumption during all lunches (as required by the Massachusetts Department of Education).
- In the elementary schools, only 100% juices or water in 8 oz. containers or less will be offered for sale on an "A LA CARTE" basis.
- In the middle school, only 100% juices or water in 12 oz. containers or less will be offered for sale on an "A LA CARTE" basis.
- In the junior and senior high schools, the school lunch department will provide a variety of beverage choices to students, such as water, flavored waters, carbonated waters with no sugar added, 100% juice, carbonated juice products containing 100% juice, sports drinks, and/or juice drinks. No more than 50% of the vending/A LA CARTE section will be soft drinks. Beverages

in 12 oz. containers or less will be offered. Assorted low fat milks and waters will be sold in any size, limited to 20 oz. units. NOTE: The emphasis will be on offering milk, water, and 100% juice products.

B. Other Foods

- Nutritious and appealing foods such as fruits, vegetables, low and non-fat dairy products, and whole grain products will be available whenever food is sold or offered on the school campus during the school day.
- “A LA CARTE SNACKS” offered for sale to students during the school day will comply with the USDA regulations and will meet the *Massachusetts Action for Healthy Kids Guidelines*.
- In the junior and senior high schools, the school lunch department will provide a variety of choices to students. A minimum of 50% of the “A LA CARTE” snack items will represent the required standards. The percentage of foods meeting these parameters may be increased at any time when the individual school or entire district is prepared to make changes to their “A LA CARTE” product profile.
- NOTE: The emphasis will be to increase the availability of appealing, nutritious foods while minimizing the availability of high-caloric/low-nutrient counterparts.

Snacks may be brought from home for children’s own consumption. However, some classrooms may need to restrict some types of recess snacks due to specific allergies that classmates or staff may have such as peanut allergies. Parents are encouraged to send healthy snacks that will provide the “fuel” for effective learning. Foods of high nutritional value will naturally have a significant amount of at least one of the following: calcium, vitamin C, Vitamin A, iron, or fiber.

- For any school-wide celebrations, only wrapped, store-bought foods, with ingredients listed on the labels may be sent in. Any product, including candy, that does come in must be pre-packaged and labeled with ingredients Peanut/Tree Nut Free. However, candy is not encouraged as a snack or reward.
- Staff members are expected to follow the same procedures for any food they bring in to share with their classes or allow other students to bring in and share.
- No fundraising activities or school store sales involving food will occur during the school day.
- Any corporate sponsor or corporate partnerships shall meet all previously stated guidelines and shall not compromise the Agawam Public Schools *School District Wellness Program*.

III. School Meals

- A. Reimbursable school meals must meet, at a minimum, the regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to subsections (a) and (b) of Section 10 of the *Child Nutrition Act* (ACT U.S.C. 1779) and sections 9 (f) (l) and 17 (a) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758 (f) (l) 1766 (a), the USDA Nutritional Standards, and the American Dietary Guidelines.
- B. Menus will be prepared and foods will be served to incorporate variety, appeal, taste, and safety to ensure high-quality meals.
- C. Nutritional meal data shall be available.
- D. Meal times and scheduling
 - Lunch periods shall be scheduled as near the middle of the school day as possible.
- E. Environment
 - Facility design should be given priority in dining facility renovations and new construction. Creative, innovative construction should be applied to minimize noise level within the eating area. The eating environment should be located such that there is convenient access to hand-washing facilities before meals. The food service area design should minimize the time students are waiting in line.

IV. Evaluation of the Local Wellness Policy

- A. The Superintendent or his/her designee will be charged with the operational responsibility for ensuring that the schools meet the local wellness policy.
- B. The Health Education Department will administer the Youth Risk Behavior Survey yearly to students in grades 6 – 11. This data will be used to modify and improve instructional content to meet the changing needs of the student body.
- C. The Health Advisory Council will meet to review and make revision recommendations to the Wellness Policy.

V. Local Wellness Policy Committee

The school district will establish a wellness committee that consists of at least one (1) parent, student, nurse, school foods service representative, school committee member, school administrator, member of the public, and other community members as appropriate. If available, a qualified, credentialed nutrition professional will be a member of the wellness committee. The school committee designates the following individual(s) as wellness program coordinator(s): Superintendent of Schools. Only employees of the district who are members of the wellness committee may serve as wellness program coordinators. Wellness coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will be in charge of implementation and evaluation of this policy.

The following individuals participated in the development of this local wellness policy: Superintendent of Schools; Food Service Director; Director of Athletics, Physical Education, and Students Services; School Committee member; school nurse; high school principal; elementary principal; health education teacher; physical education teacher; physical therapist/trainer; high school student; and parent.

File: ADF

STUDENTS WITH LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES

The Agawam Public Schools recognizes that an increasing number of its students have life-threatening allergies (L.T.A.s). However, the Agawam Public Schools cannot guarantee to provide an allergen-free environment for all students with life-threatening allergies, nor prevent any harm to students in emergencies. The district's goal is to minimize the risk of exposure to food allergens that pose a threat to those students, educate the community, and maintain and regularly update a system-wide protocol for responding to their needs.

This protocol will address how the Agawam Public Schools will identify students with LTAs, train faculty and staff, and prepare for emergencies. To the best of its ability, the Agawam Public Schools will provide annual training for faculty and staff in the areas of:

- Common allergens that cause life-threatening allergies such as foods, medications, latex, and stinging insects
- Signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction
- Steps to take in the event of an allergic reaction emergency
- Correct use of an Epi-Pen

Note: Agawam Public Schools will endeavor to avoid any foods with peanut/tree-nut contents being served in the elementary, middle, junior, or senior high schools. It is important to note that the ingredients in many food products may be changed by the manufacturer without specific notice or indication of such change. While food service personnel should routinely recheck products for known food allergens, not all such situations may be detected. Food served may contain peanut/tree-nut by-products or may have been made in a plant that produces peanut/tree-nut products.

Agawam Public Schools will not be responsible for monitoring food from homes. However, Agawam Public Schools will endeavor to control packaged food products made available to children.

File: JLCCB

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AGAWAM SCHOOL DEPARTMENT, SCHOOL PERSONNEL, PARENTS, & STUDENTS

I. Responsibilities of the Agawam School Department:

- Create a system wide emergency plan for addressing life-threatening allergies
- Provide annual training to staff in the areas of common allergens that cause life-threatening allergies
- Identify signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction
- Outline steps to take in the event of an allergic reaction emergency
- Create a system wide "No food trading/ utensil sharing policy"
- Maintain a system wide "No eating food or drinking beverages on the school bus"

- Purchase Epi-Pens for nurses' office, main school, cafeteria, and physical education emergency kit at each school.

II. Responsibility of the School Nurse:

- Prior to the first day of school, send a letter to all PreK – 12 parents/guardians encouraging them to notify the school if their child/children have any life-threatening allergies. In the letter, be sure to state that a signed letter from the child's physician/allergist is needed to verify that the student has life-threatening allergies.
- The letter must also list the allergens that the child is allergic to and the course of treatment that is required in case of allergic reaction.
- Arrange to meet with parent/guardian of student with LTA to develop an Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Action Plan for the student. During meeting, encourage the use of MEDIC-ALERT bracelets and other methods of identification for the student.
- Maintain updated AAP/HCPs in the nurse's office.
- Discuss with parents about providing the nurse's office with Epi-Pens and/or other medications as prescribed.
- Encourage parent/guardian to stress the importance of having their child/children (age appropriate) carry an Epi-Pen with them at all times.
- Inform your school's Administrative staff about student with life-threatening allergies.
- Send a "Student Allergy Identification List" of students who have life-threatening allergies to teachers, coaches, and the cafeteria manager.
- Send updated list of students with LTAs to teachers/coaches/cafeteria manager throughout the school year.
- Nurses will wear NON LATEX GLOVES.
- Provide list of students with LTAs to the Athletic Director and Athletic Trainer.

III. Responsibility of Teacher:

- The "Student Allergy Identification List" should be kept in a prominent and accessible place for substitute teachers such as the Teacher's Plan Book.
- Participate in annual training.
- In the event of an emergency with a LTA, contact principal and school nurse immediately.
- In the event of an allergic reaction (where there is no known allergic history), the school nurse should be called and the school's Emergency Response Plan activated. The emergency medical services should be called immediately.
- Healthy snacks to be encouraged at all times. All snacks for celebrations must be pre-packaged with ingredient label and checked for allergens prior to consumption (ingredient lists frequently change, so every product needs to be checked). Pencils, sticker, etc. are fun treats that can be shared or distributed.
- Any product, including candy, that does come in must be pre-packaged and labeled with ingredients Peanut/Tree Nut Free. However, candy is not encouraged as a snack or reward.
- If a product is noted to contain peanut/tree nuts, the item is to be sent to the nurse who will make parent contact.

IV. Responsibility of Parent/Guardian:

- Inform the school nurse of your child's allergies prior to the opening of school or immediately after a diagnosis.
- Arrange for a meeting with the school nurse to develop an Allergy Action Plan/Health Care Plan for the student and provide for the nurse a signed letter from the child's physician/allergist verifying that the child has life-threatening allergies. Provide letter from child's physician listing the allergens that the child is allergic to and the course of treatment that is required in case of an allergic reaction. Medical orders from physician must be included.
- Provide school nurse with enough up-to-date medications including Epi-Pens, if required.
- Complete all required medication forms along with current emergency contact names and telephone numbers,
- Provide a MEDIC-ALERT identification bracelet for your child.
- Encourage your child to wash his/her hands before eating.
- Teach your child to read ingredient labels (age appropriate).
- Require your child to carry an Epi-Pen on his/her person (age appropriate).
- Communicate immediately any symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- Encourage your child NOT TO SHARE snacks, lunches, drinks, or utensils.

- Notify school if child no longer has allergies. Again, a signed letter from the child's physician/allergist is required.
- Provide your child with a bag lunch.
- Provide your child with a safe snack for their consumption during classroom celebrations.
- Support the Wellness Policy by promoting healthy food and snack choices brought to school.

V. Responsibility of Student as Communicated by Parent:

- Take responsibility for avoiding known allergens.
- Do not share snacks, lunches, beverages, or utensils.
- Wash hands before eating.
- Learn to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- Communicate immediately when symptoms appear.
- Carry an Epi-Pen at all times (age appropriate).

VI. Responsibility of School Principal:

To the extent possible, the principal of each school shall be responsible for the following:

- In conjunction with nurses, provide in-service training and education for staff regarding life-threatening allergies, symptoms, risk reduction procedures, and emergency procedures including demonstration on how to use the Epi-pen.
- The protocol that explains Life Threatening Allergies and the application of the protocol at the school concerning Life Threatening Allergies will be discussed at Kindergarten orientation.
- Post the school's emergency protocol on LTAs in appropriate locations.
- Notify staff about the locations of Epi-pens in the school.
- A contingency plan will be in place and understood by all staff and students in the event the nurse is not in her/his office or in the building. Call 911.
- Communicate policy to all students/families annually through student handbooks, school websites, and newsletters.
- Assure that the Wellness Policy & Students with Life-Threatening Allergies Policy are considered in the planning of school activities.
- Monitor overall compliance of teachers, staff, and student groups with the Wellness Policy.
- Work with individual School Councils and PTO's to establish specifics with regard to classroom & school-wide celebrations that meet the expectations of the Wellness & Life Threatening Allergy Policies.

VII. Responsibility of Food Service Personnel:

- All food service staff will participate in annual training in August for students with life-threatening allergies. Annual training will include following sound food handling practices to prevent allergic reactions and will ensure staff is prepared to take appropriate emergency action if necessary.
- All kitchen staff and food handlers will wear non-latex gloves.
- The Director of Food Services and all cafeteria managers will routinely read and recheck food labels for potential food allergens.
- The Director of Food Services will provide monthly copies of the lunch menu to staff and parents.
- All cafeteria tables in schools will be cleaned and sanitized before and after lunch periods.
- A peanut-free table will be established in all school cafeterias and will be designated by a universal symbol.
- The Director of Food Services and all cafeteria managers will continue to work with students, parents, school nurses, and other school personnel to ensure that they understand what the food contains and to promote allergy safety.

VIII. Responsibilities of Staff in Charge of Conducting Before/After School Programs:

- The Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan will be available for parents to copy to give to those who assume responsibility for their child/children in the school-sponsored before and after school daycare program.

X. Responsibilities of School Transportation Services:

- Provide functioning emergency communication devices (e.g. cell phones, two-way radios, etc.) on each school bus.
- Maintain a policy of no food eating on the school bus.
- Communicate the policy to all drivers at the start of each school year.

XI. Responsibilities of Athletic Director:

- Communicate the policy to all coaches at the start of each year.
- Communicate the policy to all athletic-affiliated organizations.

File: JLCCB-R

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT TEAM

There is established at each school site, within the Agawam Public Schools, a building-based Restraint Team consisting of trained school personnel. The purpose of said restraint team is to formulate safety and security plans within each school in order to ensure and promote a safe and secure school environment.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Education has issued specific regulations concerning the use of physical restraint on students at publicly-funded elementary and secondary education programs, found at 603 CMR 46.00 et seq. These regulations apply to all students, including regular education students, collaborative students, and students with disabilities. The Agawam School Committee, the Superintendent of Schools, and all Agawam Public School administrators are committed to ensuring that the use of physical restraint on Agawam students strictly adheres to these regulations.

Pursuant to the regulations, school personnel will use physical restraint with two goals in mind, and only after other less intrusive methods have been attempted or considered:

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

In accordance with state and federal law, nothing in the regulations precludes school personnel from implementing physical restraint contained in an agreed-upon Behavioral Intervention Plan. A Behavioral Intervention Plan is the result of a Functional Behavioral Assessment and may be found in an Individual Educational Program, Section 504 / Accommodational Plan, or on its own. A Behavioral Intervention Plan requires informed written consent by the student's parent/legal guardian.

It should also be noted that nothing in the regulations precludes a teacher or other staff member from using reasonable force to protect students, themselves, or other persons from assault or imminent, serious physical harm.

Definitions:

1. **Physical restraint** may be defined as “the use of bodily force to limit a student’s freedom of movement.”
2. **Extended restraint** may be defined as a physical restraint which lasts for more than twenty (20) minutes.
3. **Physical escort** may be defined as “touching or holding a students without the use of force for the purpose of directing the student.” Physical escort is not physical restraint.
4. **Types of restraints** can include, but are not limited to, the use of a mechanical device to restrict movement of the entire body or portions thereof; placing a student in seclusion without access to school staff; or the administration of medication. The use of seclusion restraint is prohibited in the Agawam Public Schools. The use of “time-outs” where a staff member is present or assessable by the student does not constitute seclusion restraint. The type of physical restraint used is dependent upon the special training of staff members in specific kinds of such restraints. Chemical restraint may not be used without the explicit authorization of a physician including a signed release form from the parent/guardian approving its use.

When Physical Restraint Is Used

1. Physical restraint may be used when non-physical interventions have been attempted without success or when it is apparent that they would not be effective. It may only be used when a student’s behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to self and/or others or when otherwise outlined in a Behavioral Intervention Plan.
2. Physical restraint is limited to the use of such reasonable force as may be necessary to protect a student or other persons from assault or imminent, serious physical harm.
3. Unless specifically indicated in an agreed-upon Behavioral Intervention Plan, physical restraint may not be used as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a refusal to comply with a school rule

or staff directive, or verbal threats which do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm. Physical restraint may never be used as a means of punishment.

4. A school staff member who uses a physical restraint on a student must use the safest method available which is most appropriate to the situation at hand, and the method for which that staff member has been trained. Staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations and/or behavior intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint upon an individual student.
5. No physical restraint may be used which prevents a student from speaking or breathing, and must be used in such a way as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during the restraint, the student demonstrates significant physical distress, the restraint shall be removed immediately.
6. A physical restraint must be discontinued as soon as possible when it has been determined that a student no longer poses a risk of harm to self or others.
7. Following the use of a physical restraint, the building principal or a designated program staff member will meet with the student to address the behavior which prompted the restraint, and will also review the incident with the staff members who were involved and determine whether follow-up is needed for students who may have witnessed the incident.
8. Physical restraint regulations do not prohibit any individual from reporting a crime committed by a student to local law enforcement or other state agencies. Law enforcement officers, school security staff, or judicial authorities are not prohibited by this regulation from the exercise of their responsibilities, which may include the physical detainment of a student or other person alleged to have committed a crime or who poses a security risk. In addition, an individual who is a mandated reporter under M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A is not prohibited by this policy from complying with their responsibility to report neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency.
9. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to voluntarily notify their child's IEP Team, Section 504 team, or building principal of all medications their child takes on an ongoing basis. Failure to do so will likely hamper the ability of school personnel to de-escalate problem behaviors.

Students with Disabilities:

Restraints which are administered to students pursuant to their Individualized Education Programs, Section 504 Accommodation Plans, or other plans developed in accordance with state and federal law, and which has been agreed upon by both the school and the parent/guardian, shall be deemed to meet the requirements of 603 CMR 46.00. The limitations on chemical, mechanical, and seclusion restraints as specified above continues to apply to students with disabilities, as do the above reporting requirements.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The Agawam Public Schools has established an internal procedure in order to provide for prompt and equitable resolutions of complaints regarding the administration of physical restraints.

Definitions:

A "Grievance" is a complaint made pursuant to, and arising out of, the Agawam Public Schools obligations to comply with state regulations regarding the use of physical restraints.

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

Purpose:

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

General:

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

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

Forms for filing grievances will be provided upon request by building principals or the Assistant Superintendent, Agawam Public Schools, 1305 Springfield Street, Feeding Hills, MA 01030.

Procedure:

1. The aggrieved party should complete the Grievance Form and return it to the building principal or his/her designee at the school building in which the alleged grievance occurred. The complaint should be filed within fifteen (15) days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation. Assistance will be provided, upon request, to enable an individual to complete the Grievance Form and pursue the grievance process.
2. Within (10) school days after receiving the grievance, the building principal or his/her designee shall meet with the aggrieved party in an effort to resolve the grievance. This investigation into the complaint is contemplated to be thorough, but informal, in nature. All interested persons and their representatives, if any, shall be afforded an opportunity to be heard and to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. If the grievance is not resolved, it will be forwarded to the Assistant Superintendent.
3. Within thirty (30) school days of receipt of an unresolved grievance, the Assistant Superintendent will conduct a hearing to determine what, if any, action shall be taken in response to the grievance. The hearing shall be held at a time and place mutually convenient to all parties. The hearing procedure will follow appropriate due process procedures, including:
 - a. The opportunity for the aggrieved party to present the grievance in any suitable manner;
 - b. The right of the aggrieved party to an impartial hearing officer;
 - c. The right of the aggrieved party to be represented by counsel or an advocate at the aggrieved party's expense;
 - d. The right of the aggrieved party to a prompt decision.Parents/legal guardians should provide advance notice to the Assistant Superintendent that they will be represented by counsel or an advocate at the grievance hearing. Failure to provide such notice will likely result in a postponement of the hearing.
4. A written determination of the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, shall be issued by the Assistant Superintendent and forwarded to the complainant no later than fifteen (15) working days after the hearing. The determination of the validity of the complaint and the description of the resolution will be provided in an alternate format, upon request, if needed for effective communication.
5. The complainant can request a reconsideration of the case in instances where he or she is dissatisfied with the resolution. The request for reconsideration should be made within fifteen (15) working days following receipt of the written determination to the Superintendent of Agawam Public Schools.
6. The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution for the complaint filed hereunder shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of an ADA, Section 504 or other complaint with the responsible federal department or agency. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.
7. These rules shall be construed to protect the substantive rights of the interested persons to meet appropriate due process standards and to assure that the Agawam Public Schools comply with 603 CMR 46.00.
8. Copies of all resolutions and findings made under this procedure shall be filed with the Superintendent's office of the Agawam Public Schools.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES WITH REGARD TO PHYSICAL RESTRAINTS

Report only when a restraint lasts longer than five minutes or results in injury to a student or staff member.

1. The principal or his/her designee shall maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint (such records shall be made available for review by the DOE).

When a restraint meets reporting criteria.

1. **ALL RESTRAINTS:** The staff member who administered the restraint shall verbally inform the principal ASAP, and by written report no later than the next school working day. The written report (APS Physical Restraint Policy – Physical Restraint Report) shall be provided to the principal or his/her designee (if the principal administered the restraint, the principal shall prepare the report).
2. **INJURY AND/OR FIVE MINUTE OR MORE RESTRAINT:** The principal or his/her designee shall verbally inform the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) ASAP, and by written report (APS Physical Restraint Policy – Physical Restraint Report) no later than three school working days following the use of such restraint (if the school provides school related information in another language other than English, the report shall be provided in that language).
3. **SERIOUS INJURY AND/OR TWENTY MINUTE OR MORE RESTRAINT:** The school, within five school working days of the reported restraint, provide to the DOE a copy of the written report (APS Physical

Restraint Policy – Physical Restraint Report) and a copy of the record of physical restraints maintained by the program administrator for the thirty day period prior to the date of the report restraint.

4. A parent(s)/guardian(s) may voluntarily waive the reporting requirements as stated above for restraints that do not result in serious injury to the student or staff and do not constitute extended restraint.

File: JKB

RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES

Cooperation with law enforcement agencies is essential for the protection of students, for maintaining a safe environment in the Agawam Schools, and for safeguarding all school property.

Relationships between the schools and officials of law enforcement agencies in investigative matters concerning students will take into consideration the respective roles of the schools and law enforcement agencies in assisting and protecting the interests of the community, and ensuring the rights of all concerned.

The School Committee also recognizes the potential enrichment that law enforcement agencies can make in the educational program.

Efforts should be made to develop and maintain a healthy attitude toward law enforcement agencies and personnel to promote better understanding and communication. File: KLG

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

The Agawam Public Schools

And

The Agawam Police Department

Collaborative Agreement for Safe Schools

The Agawam Public Schools and the Agawam Police Department have coordinated a response to violent criminal acts, serious delinquent behavior, and improper alcohol and drug use which occur on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events. This agreement, which was signed by the Mayor, Superintendent of Schools, and the Police Chief, is designed:

- To ensure a safe and secure school environment for all students;
- To foster a “no tolerance” attitude regarding the illegal use of drugs, alcohol, weapons, and violence; and
- To provide teachers and parents with confidence that there is a consistent, cooperative effort by appropriate officials to prevent crime in Agawam Schools.

The prerogative to impose discipline for infractions of school rules and policies continues to be the sole responsibility of school officials. Schools, police, prosecutors, probation officers, and social service professionals must share information so that the Criminal Justice System can prioritize prosecution of those cases involving individuals likely to pose a threat to the community, and identify other children in the court system who are in need of support services. The following are the major objectives of the collaboration:

- To provide a system of prompt reporting to law enforcement of any violent criminal acts or serious delinquent behavior;
- To implement a court team approach for sharing information regarding the behavior and background of students appearing before the court system and to coordinate responses to criminal/delinquent behavior;

Procedures of Collaborative Agreement

A. The Superintendent of Schools and the school principals are responsible for reporting acts. The Police Chief shall designate an officer to coordinate all reported acts. A mandatory reportable act shall include:

1. A serious incident of assaultive behavior, destruction of property, or theft;
2. Violation of a restraining order;
3. Possession of a firearm or other illegal weapon;
4. Illegal possession, actual or constructive, of what is reasonably believed to be a controlled substance as defined by state law;
5. The sale or distribution of a drug, which is believed to be a controlled substance under state law.

A discretionary reportable act includes:

1. Any student’s violation of a state criminal statute which warrants reporting but is not as serious as a mandatory reportable act; and

2. Finding any student, regardless of age, who is reasonably believed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- B. Any teacher or other school employee who has reasonable grounds to believe that a student has committed a mandatory reportable act or a discretionary reportable act, as defined above, shall report the student to the Principal/Assistant Principal or Superintendent.
- C. The Principal/Assistant Principal or Superintendent shall inform the student and his/her parent/guardian of the nature of the offense and that certain offenses must be reported to the police. The Principal/Assistant Principal or Superintendent may offer the student the opportunity to respond to the report.
- D. The Principal/Assistant Principal or Superintendent shall in the case of a mandatory reportable act notify the police of the incident and the existence of any physical evidence and, in compliance with General Laws, chapter 71, section 37L, will report any incident involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises, in writing, to the Chief of Police.
- E. Any incident, which involves the possibility of serious physical injury, should be reported immediately to the Police Department by calling 911 and notifying the Department that it is an emergency school incident. The dispatch will then notify the Youth Aid Bureau or the Detective Bureau for immediate response and investigation.
- F. In a non-emergency situation, where there is no threat of serious physical harm, the crime/delinquent behavior should be reported to the School Resource Officers, which will investigate the incident.
- G. It is often necessary that school personnel cooperate further with police and the District Attorney's Office after a complaint is made; this may require giving a statement to police and, on occasion, testifying in Court.
- H. School personnel are permitted to search a student's clothing, personal possessions, motor vehicle, or locker at the direction of the Principal/Assistant Principal or Superintendent if there is a reasonable basis for believing that the student is concealing material the possession of which is prohibited by federal, state, or local law, or by the School Handbook.
- I. The Principal/Assistant Principal or Superintendent shall inform students in writing at the beginning of each school year of this practice. The Principal/Assistant Principal or Superintendent, police shall respond in cases of mandatory reportable acts and may respond in other cases.
- J. Upon notification from the Principal/Assistant Principal or Superintendent should keep a record of such searches, detailing time, place, reasons, and witnesses.
- K. Non-students involved in such behavior occurring on school premises or a school sponsored event are also to be reported pursuant to this agreement.

The District Attorney's Office, the Juvenile Court Department, the Agawam Police Department, and the Agawam School Department are committed to safe schools. The immediate reporting, prompt investigation, and speedy prosecution of serious criminal conduct will help to provide the secure environment, which each student deserves and will send Agawam students and their families/guardians an appropriate message that criminal behavior will not be tolerated.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Between

**The Agawam Public Schools, Agawam Police Department, and
The Hampden County District Attorney**

The Agawam Public Schools, the Agawam Police Department, and the Hampden County District Attorney agree to work together to ensure a safe and secure school environment for all students, to foster a zero tolerance attitude regarding the illegal use of drugs, alcohol, weapons, or violence and to provide parents, teachers and other staff with confidence that there is a consistent, cooperative effort by appropriate officials to prevent crime in the Agawam Public School System.

The parties agree to share information about criminal or delinquent behavior in order to implement Ch. 71:37H, 37H-1/2, 37L, and to protect the school community from criminal acts.

This Memorandum of Understanding is intended to facilitate the professional, lawful, and confidential exchange of information consistent with the rights and responsibilities of students, parents, teachers, administrators, and law enforcement officials.

It is understood by the parties that it remains the sole prerogative of school officials to impose discipline for infractions of school rules and policies.

It is understood that school officials are not agents of the police or the District Attorney and that the District Attorney and the police are not agents of school officials.

THEREFORE, the parties agree to share information as set forth herein:

1. The police and/or the District Attorney shall notify the Superintendent whenever a student:
 - A. Has been charged or convicted of a felony offense,
 - B. Has been charged or convicted as a youthful offender,
 - C. Has been charged or convicted of delinquency where the underlying offense is a felony
2. The District Attorney shall notify the Superintendent whenever a student has been charged with or convicted of a felony (as set forth above), if a principal requests information regarding a specific student whose continued presence at school may have a substantial, detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school under Ch. 71:37H-1/2.
3. The District Attorney shall notify the Superintendent whenever a transfer student has been charged with or convicted of a felony (as set forth above) if the Superintendent requests such information in order to assess the background of the transfer student pursuant to Ch. 71:37L.
4. If the police or the District Attorney have notified the Superintendent of a pending felony charge or conviction, the Superintendent may request additional, relevant information including summary police reports and statements of students. Before these materials are provided, the names of victims and witnesses not necessary for the safety of the school must be redacted. Further, the materials must be transmitted and stored in a secure manner to maintain the confidentiality required by law.
5. The Superintendent and all principals who are to receive this information shall be CORI certified.
6. The Superintendent agrees to notify the Police Department whenever:
 - A. A student has violated the no tolerance discipline code,
 - B. A student has committed an act required to be reported under Ch. 71:37L or any other provision of law.

DAILY POLICE LOG

The Agawam Police Department will provide to the Superintendent a copy of the daily police arrest log. The School Department shall review the log to determine if any students are involved and to consider whether or not additional information regarding such incidents is necessary to protect the school community.

SCHOOL SAFETY

The undersigned agencies have a common responsibility to deter and prevent violence and delinquent conduct, which poses a threat to the Agawam Public School community. Immediate communication between the parties is essential to discharging this responsibility. Therefore, the School Department agrees to notify the Police Department immediately whenever any conduct poses a threat to schools, neighborhoods, or the community. The Police Department will notify the Superintendent whenever it is aware of any conduct which poses an imminent threat to students, teachers, or the school community.

SCHOOL SAFETY MEETINGS

To allow the undersigned to discuss and assess specific events or particular individuals, whose conduct may pose a threat to the safety of the school community, the District Attorney may conduct a safety meeting. These meetings will address general safety issues, specific safety problems, the conduct of specific individuals, and planning for appropriate action to address legitimate safety concerns.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding shall prohibit law enforcement or school officials from taking any and all appropriate action to prevent violence or to address conduct, which poses an imminent danger to students, administrators, or other individuals.

Anyone who willfully requests, obtains or seeks to obtain, confidential information under false pretenses or who willfully communicates or seeks to communicate such information except in accord with this Memorandum of Understanding may be subject to criminal prosecution.

This Agreement shall be in effect from May 1, 2010 through April 30, 2011 when it will be reviewed and either continued in effect, amended or voided. The parties at any time may alter or amend this Memorandum by their mutual agreement.

GOALS/PHILOSOPHY OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

The purpose of the Agawam Public Schools is to enable students to become educated to their potential and to prepare them to become contributing and responsible members of their community. Therefore, reasonable disciplinary measures which limit a student's participation in public education should only be used when a student does not respect the rights of classmates, staff or other persons in the educational system or demonstrates an inability or unwillingness to abide by school regulations and policies.

In applying reasonable disciplinary measures, administrators and staff are encouraged to use their expertise and knowledge of individual students in light of the facts and circumstances accompanying the acts or incidents in question.

In an effort to improve a student's behavior, administrators may, at their discretion, assign additional requirements beyond an exclusion from school, including, but not limited to, oral or written apologies, community service in the school the student attends, meetings with specific personnel, specific assessment, tests and evaluations by school or private agency, and attendance and cooperation with outside treatment programs.

Two major goals of this Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy are to encourage accountability for one's behavior and to assist students in recognizing the important decisions that must be made in learning to become independent and productive members of a democratic society.

CIVIL RIGHTS AND SAFETY POLICY

It is the policy of the Agawam Public Schools to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all students without distinction based on race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, or sexual orientation. Discrimination, sexual and bias-motivated harassment, and violations of civil rights disrupt the educational process and will not be tolerated. It shall be a violation of this policy for any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel to engage in sexual or bias-related harassment (referred to as "wrongful harassment") or violate the civil rights of any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel. Conduct amounting to hate crime is a particularly serious infraction that will result in referral to law enforcement agencies. Schools will act to investigate all complaints, either formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual or bias-related harassment or violation of civil rights and will take appropriate action against any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel found to have violated this policy. Commitment to Prevention the Agawam Public Schools are committed to prevention, remediation, and accurate reporting of bias incidents and civil rights violations, to the end that all students can enjoy the advantages of a safe and tolerant learning environment where individual differences are respected. All reported incidences shall be reported to Allison LeClair, Director of Curriculum and Instruction and 504 Coordinator.

SCHOOL OFFICIALS ARE NOT BOUND BY CRIMINAL LAW STANDARDS

In *Doe v. School Superintendent of Worcester*, 421 Mass. 117 (1995), the Court stated that:

1. There is no sound basis, absent a specific legislative mandate, to import into a school setting a standard required by the criminal law.
2. Consistency in punishment is an acceptable method for a school system to deal with a problem even if it is a method which might be deemed harsh or imprudent in certain cases.
3. Schools are charged with the daunting task of educating children from diverse backgrounds, with diverse abilities, needs and problems.
4. If effective education is to be possible, school authorities must provide and maintain a safe learning environment.
5. Educators of necessity have broad authority to maintain order, discipline and safety; the exercise of such authority must be left to their sound discretion since so many variables are inherently involved.
6. They are to do this in an increasingly complex and violent world, whose difficulties permeate the classroom.

DISCIPLINE POLICIES

- A. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including but not limited to a gun, knife, laser pointer, BB gun, or airgun, will be suspended and may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- B. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored events, including athletic games:

1. Under the influence of or in possession of a controlled substance as defined in General Laws, Chapter 94C, including but not limited to marijuana, cocaine and heroin, or
 2. Engaging in the sale, distribution, or exchange of a controlled substance as defined in General Laws, Chapter 94C, including but not limited to marijuana, cocaine, or heroin, or
 3. Under the influence of, in possession of, or having consumed any alcoholic beverage,
 4. Engaging in the sale, distribution, or exchange of any alcoholic beverage will be suspended and may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- C. Any student who assaults or threatens a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, will be suspended and may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- D. Any student who is involved in arson, the assault and battery of another student, dangerous threats to another student, bomb threats, false fire alarms or other dangerous behavior on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, will be suspended or may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal with the approval of the school committee.
- E. Any student who is charged with a violation of any of the above shall be notified of an opportunity for a hearing. In cases of expulsion, the student may also have representation and the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.
- F. Police will be notified in all cases.

Statutory Protections – Gun Free School Act 20 U.S.C. § 8921(B)(1)

A mandatory minimum of a one year expulsion when a student has brought a firearm onto school property will be enforced.

FIREARMS

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 269, Section 10, states in part the following:

“Whoever, not being a law enforcement officer, and notwithstanding any license obtained by him/her, carries on his/her person a firearm as hereinafter defined, loaded or unloaded or other dangerous weapon in any building or on the grounds of any elementary or secondary school, without the written authorization of the board or officer in charge of such elementary or secondary school, shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both. For the purpose of this paragraph “firearm” shall mean any pistol, revolver, rifle or smoothbore arm from which a shot, bullet or pellet can be discharged by whatever means.” M.G.L. c.269, § 10(j).

Any officer in charge of an elementary or secondary school, or any faculty member or administrative officer of an elementary or secondary school, failing to report violations of this paragraph shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and punished by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars.

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DRUG FREE SCHOOL ZONES**

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 94C, Section 325, any person who violates the provisions of the law pertaining to the unauthorized manufacturing, distribution, dispensing or possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance while in or on, or within one thousand feet of the real property comprising a public or private elementary, vocational, or secondary school, whether or not in session, shall be punished by a term of imprisonment in the state prison for not less than two and one-half nor more than fifteen (15) years or by imprisonment in a jail or house of correction for not less than two or more than two and one-half years. No sentence imposed under the provisions of this section shall be for less than a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment of two (2) years. A fine of not less than one thousand nor more than ten thousand dollars may be imposed but not in lieu of the mandatory minimum two (2) year term of imprisonment as established herein.

Lack of knowledge of school boundaries shall not be a defense to any person who violates the provisions of this section.

CHEMICAL HEALTH POLICY

The Agawam School Committee recognizes that the use of drugs/alcohol illegally and/or inappropriately constitutes a hazard to the positive development of students, and that the welfare of certain students is being compromised by drugs/alcohol-related problems. Accordingly, the School Committee shall attempt to clarify

through this policy and the accompanying administrative rules the rights and responsibilities of the principals, teachers, students, and parents in dealing with the complex legal, social, educational, and emotional conditions associated with drug/alcohol use and abuse.

At the same time, the School Committee shall attempt to make clear the different forms of actions, which depending upon the severity of a drug/alcohol-related incident, must be taken and those which shall be left to the discretion of the principal, teachers, and students.

While the School Committee cannot and shall not allow the sale, use, or possession of illegal drugs/alcohol on school property, the School Committee strongly desires to demonstrate its abiding concern for the welfare of an individual student and the general welfare of the school population by offering expert, continued, and supportive advice and counsel to its students.

In cases where a student violates this policy by the use of drugs/alcohol illegally or is involved in the sale, possession, or exchange of drugs/alcohol within the school or within the school boundaries and/or at school-sponsored events/activities, the student will be disciplined in accordance with the School Committee approved policy governing student drug/alcohol abuse.

In order to ensure safety, a search of a student's person may include the use of a breathalyzer when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is under the influence of and/or in possession of alcohol or a controlled substance. The refusal of a student to participate in the breathalyzer may lead to disciplinary penalty equal to the offense of which the student is suspected.

If the student tests positive, the student will be disciplined according to the discipline policies outlined in the Agawam Public Schools *Code of Conduct Handbook* for students. **If the student is found to be in possession** of alcohol or a controlled substance, the student will be disciplined according to the discipline policies outlined in the Agawam Public Schools *Code of Conduct Handbook* for students.

In addition, under M.G.L. c.71, sect.37H, any student found in possession of illegal controlled substances is subject to possible long-term suspension or expulsion, and in the discretion of the principal, a hearing pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, sect. 37H will be conducted. Consequences could include expulsion from school, suspension, community service to the school, meeting with an outside agency, and/or an assessment done by an outside agency with a plan of action (such as an in-patient or out-patient treatment program) submitted to the school.

Because supportive action by the parents/guardians is crucial to the success of any counseling, the parents/guardians will be encouraged to contact the principal if they are concerned about their child's possible drug/alcohol related behavior, and the principal will encourage the parents/guardians to become involved in any aspect of drug/alcohol counseling deemed desirable.

File: JICH

BREATH ALCOHOL TESTING

Alcohol use by a student is illegal and poses a serious threat not only to his/her own well-being, but also to the well-being of the entire school community. Alcohol use will not be tolerated during school hours, on school property, or at any school-sponsored activity or event during or after school hours. Students who violate the school policy on use, possession, sales, or distribution will be subject to disciplinary action as set forth in the student handbook.

When determining possible alcohol use or intoxication by a student during the school day or at a school-related function, the safety of the student is the primary concern. Therefore, in order to promote a safe environment for our students and their guests at school sponsored and/or school committee authorized activities and events, the school administration is authorized to employ the use of both "passive" and/or "active" alcohol detection devices.

Procedures During the Normal School Day or at School-Sponsored Events:

1. School staff and/or school resource officer may determine possible student alcohol use without the aid of a breath alcohol testing device by observing one or more of the following indicators:
 - Slurred speech
 - Unsteady gait
 - Impaired motor control

- Flushed face
 - Smell of intoxicating liquor on breath, clothing, or person
 - Vomiting
2. If the staff and/or school resource officer determines that a student is intoxicated or has used alcohol based on one or more of the above indicators:
 - Parent/Guardian will be notified and requested to take the student home.
 - Emergency help will be called if student is assessed to be at risk for alcohol poisoning or in need of medical assistance.
 - The police may be called to take the student into protective custody.
 - Disciplinary action will be taken as indicated in the Code of Conduct Student Handbook and may result in suspension.
 3. If a student is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or is suspected of having consumed alcohol, the school administrator or school safety officer may administer a Breathalyzer or Passive Alcohol Screener (PAS) test. The test will be administered in privacy in the presence of two (2) staff members.
 4. The administrator and/or school resource officer will check the calibration of the breath alcohol testing devices according to their instructions for use.
 - If test is **positive** (.01BAC), the student may request a maximum of two additional tests taken **at least** 2 minutes apart. If these additional tests are positive, the following will occur:
 - a. Parent/Guardian will be notified and requested to take student home.
 - b. Emergency help will be called if student is assessed to be at risk for alcohol poisoning or in need of medical assistance.
 - c. Disciplinary action will be taken as indicated in the Code of Conduct Student Handbook.
 - If the test is **negative**:
 - a. The student will be allowed to resume activity if the staff member does not suspect the use of other drugs.
 - b. His/her parents/guardians will be notified that the Breathalyzer or PAS was administered.
 5. If a student who is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or who is suspected of having consumed alcohol refuses to take a Breathalyzer or PAS Test the school resource officer will be notified and:
 - The administrator or school resource officer will notify parents/guardians to pick up the student and will detain the student until the parent's/guardian's arrival.
 - The administrator may consider the refusal and all other evidence to determine whether or not the student is intoxicated or has consumed alcohol and may discipline the student in accordance with the Code of Conduct Student Handbook.
 6. If any student suspected of intoxication leaves the scene against the school official's request:
 - The police department will be contacted immediately.
 - The parent/guardian will be notified.
 - Disciplinary action for insubordination will be taken as indicated in the Code of Conduct Student Handbook.
 7. Student athletes:

Students representing Agawam High School athletic teams are held to a high standard of conduct. The conduct of these student athletes is governed not only by rules established by the MIAA, but also those established in the Agawam High School Code of Conduct Student Handbook. Therefore, if a student athlete tests positive on a Breathalyzer or PAS test during the screening at a dance, prom, and/or celebration, the student's name will be given to the Athletic Director who will consider this as evidence that the student has consumed. The Athletic Director may then remove the student from the team.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, BULLYING, & HAZING POLICY

I. Policy:

- A. It is the policy of the Agawam Public Schools to provide a learning and working atmosphere for students, employees, and visitors free from sexual harassment, bullying, hazing, and intimidation. These terms are referenced herein as “harassment.” Such action may occur on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or for any other reason.
- B. It is a violation of this policy for any administrator, teacher, or other employee, or any student to engage in or condone harassment in school or to fail to report or otherwise take reasonable corrective measures when they become aware of an incident of harassment.
- C. This policy is not designed or intended to limit the school’s authority to take disciplinary action or take remedial action when such harassment occurs out of school but has a nexus to school, or is disruptive to an employee’s or student’s work or participation in school-related activities.

Reports of cyber bullying by electronic or other means, occurring in or out of school will be reviewed and, when a nexus to work or school exists, will result in discipline. Parents of students alleged to have engaged in cyber harassment will be invited to attend a meeting at which the activity, words, or images subject to the complaint will be reviewed. A student disciplined for cyber bullying will not be re-admitted to the regular school program until his or her parent(s) attend such meeting.

- D. It is the responsibility of every employee, student, and parent to recognize acts of harassment and take every action necessary to ensure that the applicable policies and procedures of this school district are implemented.
- 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 prompt and appropriate handling of the complaint. Further, all reasonable efforts shall be made to maintain the confidentiality and protect the privacy of all parties, but proper enforcement of this policy may require disclosure of any or all information received.
- F. The Building Principal/Designee shall be responsible for assisting employees and students seeking guidance or support in addressing matters relating to any form of harassment.

II. Procedures:

A. Definitions – Sexual Harassment Prohibited:

“Sexual Harassment” means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal, written, electronically transmitted, or physical conduct of a sexual nature including, but not limited to, unwelcome comments, touching, written notes, pictures/cartoons, or other inappropriate conduct such as leering, whistling, brushing up against the body, commenting on sexual activity or body parts, or other activity referred to by the Model MCAD policy prohibiting such behavior. Harassment has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or learning environment that takes place under any of the following circumstances:

- 1. When submission to such conduct is made, explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of employment, instruction, or participation in school activities or programs;
- 2. When submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used by the offender as the basis for making personal or academic decisions affecting the individual subjected to sexual advances;
- 3. When such conduct has the effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual’s work, attendance at school, or participation in academic or curricular activities, or;
- 4. When such conduct has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

B. Definitions – Bullying Prohibited:

Bullying may take a variety of forms. It is unacceptable in a school or work environment. As a result, no student or employee shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber bullying in any public educational institute:

1. "Bullying and cyber bullying," means unwelcome written, electronic, verbal or physical acts, or gestures where a student or employee feels coerced, intimidated, harassed, or threatened and under the circumstances (1) may cause a reasonable person to suffer physical or emotional harm to a student or employee, (2) may cause damage to another student's or employee's property, or (3) may cause a disruptive or hostile school environment. The behavior must interfere with an employee's ability to perform his or her duties or with a student's academic performance or ability to learn, or interfere with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from services, activities, or privileges:
 - a. that are being offered through the school district; or
 - b. during any education program or activity; or
 - c. while in school, on school equipment or property, in school vehicles, on school buses, at designated school bus stops, at school-sponsored activities, at school-sanctioned events; or
2. 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.
3. As used in this section, "electronic communication" means any communication through an electronic device including a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager.

C. Definitions – Hazing Prohibited:

The term "hazing" shall mean any conduct or method of initiation, even if consented to, into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person.

1. Such conduct shall include, but is not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance or any brutal treatment or forced physical activity, which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.
2. Whoever know that another person is the victim of hazing and is at the scene of such activity, shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such activity to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such behavior shall be subject to discipline.

D. Guidelines for Investigating Harassment Claims:

In school systems, harassment may take many forms and cross many lines. The situation may be an instance of staff member-to-staff member, staff member-to-student, student-to-staff member, or student-to-student. Guidelines for dealing with any charge of harassment are as follows:

1. 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.
2. 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. 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 clear and convincing evidence. All other complaints will be reviewed based on a preponderance of evidence standard.
3. Any school employee who has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of harassment, bullying, or intimidation shall immediately report it to the administration; each school shall document any prohibited incident that is reported and confirmed, and report all incidents of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber bullying and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals to the Superintendent's office as they occur.
4. A good faith report from a staff member renders the staff member immune from discipline for making a report and is considered to have been made in the course of the staff member's employment for purposes of M.G.L. c. 258. As a result, the school district shall indemnify staff

members from any cause of action arising out of a good faith report of harassment or the district's subsequent actions or inaction in connection thereto.

5. If an instance of student-to-student harassment is reported to a staff member other than an administrator, the staff member must inform the Assistant Principal or the Building Principal.
6. If a situation involving a charge of staff member-to-student harassment is brought to the attention of any staff member, the staff member should notify the Building Principal or Assistant Superintendent immediately.
7. In a situation involving a charge of student-to-staff member sexual harassment, the staff member should notify the Building Principal or Assistant Principal.
8. In a situation involving a charge of staff member-to-staff member harassment, the staff member should notify the Building Principal or the Assistant Superintendent.
9. Once a charge of harassment has been made, including charges of mental, emotional, or physical harassment, as well as threats to a person's safety or position in the school or work environment, the following course of action should be taken:
 - a. The Building Principal should investigate the charge through discussions with the individuals involved. In situations involving allegations against a staff member, he/she should be informed of his/her rights to have a third party present at the time of the discussion. In situations involving students, the Principal should engage the appropriate classroom or special subject area teacher. Parents will be informed of the situation and invited to participate in resolution discussions. It is important that the situation be resolved as confidentially and as quickly as the circumstances permit.
 - b. If the harasser and the victim are willing to discuss the matter at a resolution meeting in the presence of the Principal/designee or Assistant Superintendent, a supportive faculty member and/or parent should be included in the discussion. During this discussion, the offending behavior should be described by the victim and administration, a request for a change in behavior should be made, and a promise should be made that the described behavior will stop. 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 meeting will result in appropriate discipline.
10. If after a resolution meeting with the involved parties, the Building Principal determines that further disciplinary action must be taken, the following could occur:
 - a. In instances involving student-to-student or student-to-staff member harassment, the student may be subject to discipline including, but not limited to, counseling, suspension, and, in appropriate cases, expulsion.
 - b. 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 may also be initiated at this point, consistent with the applicable law and collective bargaining agreement.
 - c. In all cases, a referral to law enforcement will be considered by the Principal or Superintendent based on the circumstances. School officials will coordinate with the Police Department to identify a police liaison for harassment cases.

11. Retaliation:

Retaliation in any form against any person who has made or filed a complaint relating to harassment is forbidden. If it occurs, it could be considered grounds for dismissal of staff personnel and/or removal from the educational setting for a student. A referral to law enforcement may be made.

12. Confidentiality:

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

For further information about these guidelines or help with sexual harassment problems or any other form of harassment, consult:

Harassment Coordinator, Agawam Public Schools

If the alleged harasser is responsible for conducting an investigation, the Superintendent or Committee shall designate an alternative Harassment Coordinator, who is:

LEGAL REF.: Title VII of the 1964 Civil Right Act, Section 703
Title IX of the 1972 U.S. Civil Rights Act
Chapter 151C, Massachusetts General Laws
M.G.L. Chapter 76 § 5

File: JBA

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed an Act Relative to Bullying in Schools. This new law prohibits bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to addressing bullying incidents. Parts of the law (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O) that are important for students and parents or guardians to know are described below.

These requirements will be included in the school's or district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("the Plan"), which must be finalized no later than December 31, 2010. The Plan will include the requirements of the new law, and also information about the policies and procedures that the school or school district will follow to prevent bullying and retaliation, or to respond to it when it occurs. In developing the Plan, schools and districts must consult with school and local community members, including parents and guardians.

The school or district will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for all students in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

It is important to remember that preschool and elementary students are developing social skills and the abilities to follow school related expectations. Students at the PreKindergarten to fourth grade levels are provided strategies and curriculum supports that aide in the development of these skills. The information below is provided across all grade levels in the district.

Definitions

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying includes cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings.

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

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation is directed.

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

Prohibition Against Bullying

Bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds,
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds,
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place on or off school grounds,
- at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by a school district or school (for example, on a computer or over the Internet),
- at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic device, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

Reporting Bullying

Anyone, including a parent or guardian, student, or school staff member, can report bullying or retaliation. Reports can be made in writing or orally to the principal or another staff member, or reports may be made anonymously. Please make all reports to

the Principal of your child’s school

or to the school official identified in the Plan as responsible for receiving such reports,

Allison LeClair, Assistant Superintendent, (413) 821-0568
aleclair@agawampublicschools.org

or

Patricia Cavanaugh, Director of Finance/Human Resources
pcavanaugh@agawampublicschools.org (413) 821-0550

or both.

School staff members must report immediately to the principal or his/her designee if they witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation. Staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessionals.

When the school principal or his/her designee receives a report, he or she shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the school principal or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he or she shall (i) notify the parents or guardians of the target, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; (ii) notify the parents or guardians of a aggressor; (iii) take appropriate disciplinary action; and (iv) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v).

GANG ACTIVITY / SECRET SOCIETIES

The goal of the Agawam School Committee is to keep district schools and students free from the threats or harmful influence of any gang. For purposes of this policy, gang is defined as any group, secret society, organization or association that advocates drug use, violence, ethnic intimidation, or disruptive or illegal behavior. The principal or his/her designee shall maintain supervision of school premises to deter intimidation of students and confrontations between members of different gangs.

The Superintendent shall establish open lines of communication with local law enforcement agencies so as to share information and provide mutual support in this effort within appropriate legal guidelines.

The Superintendent shall provide in-service training to help staff members identify gangs and gang symbols, recognize early manifestations of disruptive activities, and respond appropriately. Staff members shall be informed about conflict management techniques and alerted to intervention measures and community resources which may help students.

Symbols

The School Committee finds that gang symbols are inherently disruptive to the educational process, and therefore prohibits the presence of any insignia, apparel, jewelry, accessory, notebook or other school supply, or manner of grooming which by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute denotes membership in gangs. The School Committee further prohibits any demonstration of gang membership through the use of hand gestures, graffiti, or printed materials. This policy shall be applied by the principal or his/her designee as the need for it arises individual school sites. A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

Prevention Education

The School Committee realizes that students may become involved in gangs without understanding the consequences of such membership. Early intervention is a key component of efforts to break the cycle of such memberships. Therefore, gang violence prevention information shall be made available in the elementary, middle, and high schools as appropriate.

Secret Societies

Fraternities, sororities and/or secret societies shall not receive District or building recognition in any manner.

A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

SCHOOL RELATED TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

The Agawam Public Schools is dedicated to providing an atmosphere free from actual or threatened psychological, physical, or sexual abuse, including teen dating violence. The District believes that education plays a critical role in establishing healthy relationships for its students. Agawam's comprehensive health curriculum for grades K – 12 includes instruction on establishing safe, non-violent relationships.

It is the policy of the Agawam Public School that teen dating violence related to school, including school-sponsored activities, shall not be tolerated.

FILING A COMPLAINT OF TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

Complaints of teen dating violence related to school, including school-sponsored activities, may be filed verbally or in writing by a victim, student, faculty/staff member or a parent. The complaint may relate to verbal, nonverbal, written, physical or sexual behaviors which are observed, reported, or experienced. The complaint should be filed with the Building Principal, but if the victim is more comfortable talking with another staff member, that staff member must report the incident to the Building Principal. It is important to note that, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws chapter 209A, school staff are required by law to report to the Department of Social Services if they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 is suffering serious physical, emotional abuse or neglect, or sexual abuse, including rape and indecent assault and battery.

When a complaint related to school, including school-sponsored activities, is received, the Building Principal or his/her designee will initiate an immediate investigation of the allegations. It will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality, and will include private interviews with the victim and/or person filing the complaint. The person alleged to have committed the behavior will also be interviewed separately. Upon completion of the report, both parties will be informed of the results by the Building Principal.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

When it is determined that inappropriate behaviors have occurred related to school or school-sponsored activities, disciplinary and corrective action will occur. The range of disciplinary and corrective action may

include one or more of the following: apology to the victim; mandatory counseling; detention; short-term suspension; long-term suspension; or recommendation for expulsion.

RESTRAINING ORDERS

It is the responsibility of the student to inform the Building Principal if he or she has obtained a restraining order against an individual. Once the Building Principal is notified of the restraining order, he or she, or his/her designee, may meet with the student and his/her parents to review the order and its implications. An appropriate safety plan will be developed in collaboration with the school psychologist, counselor, and faculty. The Building Principal or his/her designee may also meet with the defendant to review the terms of the order, the expectations concerning appropriate behavior, and the consequences for violation of the order. Violation of a restraining order is a criminal offense, and must be reported to the police.

EXPULSION OF STUDENTS

Expulsion is the exclusion of a student from school either permanently or for the remainder of the school year. School principals are authorized to expel students in certain situations occurring with the jurisdiction of the school. These situations include but may not be limited to:

- Possession, use or distribution of illegal or controlled substances;
- Possession, use or distribution of alcohol;
- Use, possession of, or domain over, a dangerous weapon;
- Assault of a staff member
- When continued presence in school represents a danger to the physical safety of others;
- When conduct constitutes a continual, material and substantial disruption of the educational process and all other appropriate disciplinary alternatives have been tried and deemed unworkable.

Appeal to the Superintendent:

Upon receipt of written notice of a request for appeal within ten (10) days of notification of expulsion, the Superintendent shall schedule a hearing at which the student may be represented by counsel (at the student's expense) and present oral and written testimony or his/her behalf. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section. The superintendent may modify the expulsion of a student on a case-by-case basis. The superintendent shall render a written decision in the dominant home language. Such ruling will be the final decision of the school district.

Other expulsion situation: (pending School Committee approval)

Based on the nature, extent and severity of any of the above offenses, the building principal and the superintendent may recommend that the School Committee act to expel the student under the provisions of Mass. General Laws Ch. 76 sec. 17. Prior to making a recommendation for expulsion, the principal shall assess whether a referral for Chapter 766 should be initiated.

Admission of expelled students:

When a student is expelled under the provisions of these sections, no school or school district within the Commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If an expelled student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request, and shall receive, from the superintendent of the school from which the student was expelled, a written statement of the reasons for the student's expulsion.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION BASED ON A FELONY (Massachusetts General Laws, Chap. 380, Section 2; Amendment 1 to Section 37H)

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

provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

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

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

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

When a student is expelled, no school or school district within the Commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reason for said expulsion.

DUE PROCESS RIGHTS

In situations involving discipline or other consequential action, the Agawam Public School district acknowledges its responsibility to afford students due process and timely resolution to proceedings, as mandated by state and federal statute and the regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. For all actions students have the right to be informed of the charges or issues, be given an opportunity to respond, and be apprised of the outcome and any applicable appeal procedures. The specific responsibility of the district regarding due process is dependent upon the action under consideration by the district in any given situation. The district supports the efforts of students and parents/guardians in directing student specific programmatic or procedural concerns to appropriate staff throughout the system. (Goss vs. Lopez 419 U.S. 1975)

CLASSROOM

Classroom expectations are articulated as well as presented to all students in written form within the Agawam Public School System. At the elementary and middle school levels, parents may request a written copy of classroom expectations from their son/daughter's school. At the junior high school and high school levels, a written copy of classroom expectations will be sent home with the students. Students are to return such forms to their schools, signed by both the student and the parent/guardian, within ten days of the start of the school year.

HALLS

You are expected to pass in the hallways in an orderly fashion. There will be no running in the halls. Avoid loitering because it leads to tardiness. Excessive displays of affection in the halls or in the classrooms are considered inappropriate behavior.

VANDALISM

All persons are urged by the Agawam School Committee to report any incidents of vandalism to school property and the name(s) of the person(s) believed to be responsible. The Superintendent will report to the police any incidents of vandalism.

The Superintendent or designee will obtain an estimate of the cost of needed repairs or replacement when appropriate. The Committee will make full effort to collect payment for damages caused by vandalism.

The Superintendent is authorized to sign a criminal complaint and to press charges against vandals. File: ECAC

STUDENT DRESS CODE

Agawam Public Schools strives to provide an environment focused on instruction and learning. Appropriate student dress has a positive impact on student learning, student behavior, and the overall educational environment.

All students are required to be dressed in a manner that does not interfere with the health, safety, and welfare of themselves or other students. Students' dress should be appropriate for a working environment and conducive to learning as interpreted by the school building administration. Clothing and grooming habits should not be detrimental to students' health and safety and should be weather appropriate.

Dress that distracts/disrupts the educational process and the mission of the school is prohibited. Students may not dress in scantily clad attire such as halter-tops, excessively short skirts, half or mesh shirts, or shirts that expose the midriff area. Students may wear loose fitting shorts, but bathing suits and short shorts are prohibited. Tank tops should not be low cut or excessively open.

To ensure student safety, appropriate footwear must be worn and should not damage floors. Outdoor apparel (jackets, coats, and hats) will be stored in lockers and classrooms during the school day except in unusual circumstances. Apparel that carries offensive or violent messages is not allowed. Accessories that create a danger to self or others are not allowed.

Students are not permitted to wear hats, bandannas, or other head coverings in school. Exemptions will be granted for students who need to wear a head covering because of accepted religious practices or who have a specific medical need as validated by the nurse.

In addition, clothing or accessories found to be disruptive or distracting to the educational process or which has affected the safety of students will be determined a violation of the dress code by the school administration. If a student's attire is in violation of this code, the student will be required to change attire.

The parents/guardians of students who are not appropriately dressed will be notified and asked to bring an acceptable change of clothes to school.

File: JICA

DISCIPLINE SYSTEM

The Agawam School District discipline system is based on many factors. It is reflective of the combined effort of the administration, faculty, student government, school council and others. It is also reflective of national and state reform movements that emphasize the importance of safe schools. The fundamental purpose of the discipline system is to insist that student behavior be based on respect and responsibility.

**SUSPENDABLE BEHAVIORS
INTERNAL/ EXTERNAL SUSPENSION GUIDELINES**

Internal suspension may be assigned by an administrator as an alternative to out-of-school suspension. Parents/guardians are notified. Students assigned to internal suspension are isolated from their peers for the duration of their assignment. During internal suspension, students will work on school related assignments.

1. SMOKING/POSSESSION OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Massachusetts State Law Chapter 71, Section 2A prohibits the use of tobacco products in the public schools or on school grounds. **No minor may possess a tobacco product on school property within the Town of Agawam.** The Agawam Board of Health, pursuant to the authority granted under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 111, Section 31, adopted the above regulation to protect the public health of the community.)

2. Truancy
3. Use or possession of fireworks, stink bombs, animal scents, etc.
4. Use of matches, lighters, etc.
5. Theft/possession of personal or school property
6. Tampering with fire extinguishers
7. Initiation of a food fight
8. Participation in food throwing
9. Possession of drug paraphernalia
10. Possession of drugs/alcohol
11. Distribution of drugs/alcohol
12. Under the influence of drugs/alcohol/misuse of inhalants, glue, etc.
13. Vandalism/graffiti: defacing or damaging school property including computers and their record files and systems
14. Inappropriate use of school computer
15. Profanity or vulgarity directed at school staff
16. Gambling
17. Use of racial, religious, ethnic slurs or symbols that demean others / harassment such as repeated name calling / bullying
18. Unexcused absence from an internal suspension assignment
19. Defiance of the authority of school administrators and teachers
20. Wearing of hats/head coverings of any kind and the like
21. Refusal to identify oneself to a staff member
22. Failure to sign in upon arrival to school
23. Forgery of a pass/ID parking sticker
24. Negligent use of a laser pointer
25. Out of bounds
26. Inciting a disturbance/fight/riot
27. Verbal confrontation
28. Proven dishonesty
29. Littering on school property (i.e.; cafeteria, hallways, grounds)
30. Inappropriate dress and/or grooming
31. Physical confrontation with another student
32. Sexual harassment
33. Inappropriate classroom/lunchroom behavior
34. Inappropriate classroom behavior when supervised by a substitute teacher
35. Use of electronic device in school (not limited to cell phones, CD players, headphones, & beepers)
36. Student refusal to participate in MCAS testing
37. Frivolous complaints
38. Selling, bartering, and/or trading things in school is strictly prohibited
39. Threats to commit a crime (bodily injury) through student drawings
40. Possession of a hoax device or hoax substance
41. Threats causing evacuation or disruption of school
42. False reports of a firearm, bomb, or any weapon or property capable of causing damage
43. Motor vehicle violations (AHS)
44. Verbal or written threats to kill or harm an individual or group of individuals

The Agawam Public Schools administration reserves the authority to suspend for other behavioral circumstances not listed.

NATURE OF OFFENSE AND REPEATED OFFENSES

Levels of discipline for specified offenses are provided as minimum guidelines to insure that every student is aware of the potential consequences of actions which violate the discipline policies of the Agawam Public Schools. In determining the level of discipline in each case, the principal may in his/her sole discretion impose the minimum level of discipline provided for in these discipline policies, or he/she may impose greater discipline, including but not limited to, more detentions, a longer suspension, the imposition of a discipline contract and/or expulsion from the school or school district.

SUSPENSION EFFECTS

A conference with the student, a parent or guardian, and an administrator may be arranged after the student has been externally suspended. It may occur during the period of the suspension or when the student returns to school from the suspension. If the period of the student's suspension exceeds three school days, the administration will arrange for assignments to be sent home to the student. Students are responsible for making up all work missed during the suspension period within a week of their return to school.

During the period of suspension a student may not take part in any extra-curricular activities or school functions nor be in the building or on the grounds during the school day.

Parents/guardians will be notified of their child's internal or external suspension by mail and, in certain circumstances, by telephone.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Instances of academic dishonesty such as copying homework, cheating on papers and exams, or plagiarism will result in student's receiving a zero grade on that school project.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Possession and use of electronic devices such as beepers, cell phones, and CD headphones, will be subject to confiscation and disciplinary action. The administration strongly discourages students from bringing these items to school since they are of no educational value.

PROCEDURES FOR LONG TERM SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS

The building principal is responsible for providing the student and parent:

1. Written notice, in the dominant language of the home, of the charges affecting the suspension/expulsion and of the right to a formal hearing before the principal, as well as the right to be represented by counsel or other advocate of choice (at the student's expense);
2. Adequate time to prepare for the hearing;
3. Access to documented evidence before the hearing;
4. The right to present evidence and/or witnesses;
5. The right to question the district's witnesses except when there is information indicating that doing so may put said witnesses at risk of harm;
6. A prompt decision, written in the dominant language of the home, including specific grounds for the decision and any reasonable conditions which must be met to ensure the student's return. The letter will include the student's right to appeal to the superintendent within (10) days from the date of the receipt of the notification of the suspension/expulsion.

The principal will notify the superintendent in writing. The superintendent will in turn inform the school committee, without identifying the student, of the facts and circumstances surrounding the suspension/expulsion.

Long Term Suspension: Definition

Long term suspension is the removal of a student from his/her educational program for more than (10) consecutive school days but no more than forty-five (45) consecutive school days.

Expulsion definition

Expulsion is the exclusion of a student from school either permanently or for the remainder of the school year.

Appeal to Superintendent

1. Upon receiving written notice of a request for an appeal within ten (10) days of the notification of expulsion, the superintendent shall schedule a hearing at which time the student may be represented by counsel (at the student's expense) and present oral and written testimony on his/her behalf.
2. The superintendent shall render a written decision in the dominant language of the home. Such ruling will be the final decision of the school district.

MAKE-UP WORK

Students will have one day for each day of legitimate absence to arrange for make-up work with teachers. Make-up work will be made available to students while on suspension in accordance with Massachusetts State Law.

MAKE-UP WORK DUE TO NON-ILLNESS/VACATIONS

Parents and students are reminded that Massachusetts Law requires compulsory attendance for students. We strongly discourage family vacations when school is in session. In addition to compromising the attendance law, family vacations interrupt the educational process of each course in ways that make-up work cannot reverse.

1. The parent(s) will contact the school in advance of the planned vacation.
2. The parent(s) and school will discuss the duration of the absence, the procedure for students to follow for completion of their work upon their return and the date such work is due to the teacher(s). (The principal will share this information with the teacher(s) involved. However, the teacher(s) will not be obligated to initiate arrangements with the student.)

The student will be held responsible for making specific arrangements with teacher(s) for assignments. Work will be made available to students upon their return from an absence from school. Teachers are not required to give out homework assignments prior to a family vacation. All work will be offered to the student for full value credit upon the return of the student to class. See [Form I](#)

ATTENDANCE / TARDINESS / DISMISSALS

The Agawam Public School System is committed to providing quality education to all students. As reflected by the philosophy of the Agawam School committee and the community, education is a key factor for success and can only be achieved through regular class attendance, student participation and academic achievement. All students will be given subject expectations and classroom procedure statements by their teachers. The expectation sheets will describe the subject curriculum to be covered and the grading system which will include a participation assessment which is contingent upon attendance. Constant monitoring of attendance will take place each class period.

Long-term illness: A doctor's note is mandatory. A student will be provided with a home tutor. If the student qualifies for a tutor, he/she will not lose credit.

Tardiness to school/class: Students arriving after the tardy bell must report directly to their first period class. After first period a tardy student must sign in at the office. A student who fails to sign into school will be assigned one internal suspension. Students that report to the office tardy must present upon arrival their picture identification card. If a student does not have his/her identification card, that student will receive a detention.

At Agawam Junior High School

When a student is tardy three times within four weeks of school, he/she will be assigned a detention.

Class absence reports (slips): At the high school a student, upon receiving a copy of an Absence Report (slip), is notified of a questioned absence. It is the student's responsibility to clear the absence with the teacher in question within twenty-four hours of the absence. This must be accomplished on the student's own time, not class time. If the absence is not cleared, it will be assumed that the student skipped. Penalties will be imposed as indicated in the Student Guide.

Dismissals from school: At the high school, all dismissals must be written on the proper form available in the school offices. These forms must be properly filled out and signed by a parent or guardian. All dismissal requests must be presented to the appropriate administrator before the tardy bell and processed in the office prior

to the beginning of school. A dismissed student must sign out in the office and sign in again if he/she returns the same day. Evidence must be presented verifying the need for the dismissal.

Such as:	Medical appointment	appointment card
	Driver's license or learner's permit	proper phone number to validate
	Court appointment	court appointment letter
	Bereavement	number to verify
	Scholarship or college interview	letter of verification

Those without a license must be picked up by a parent or guardian in the office. At the high school, appropriate dismissal forms are available.

At the elementary level, no student will be excused into the custody of any parents not properly identified.

In the event of illness, report to the nurse for a dismissal slip, and then bring the dismissal slip to the office so the dismissal will be recorded. If the nurse is not in the building, permission must be obtained in the office. For illness, a student may not leave school without permission; to do so is considered truancy. Telephone dismissals will be allowed only in emergency situations and an administrator must approve a dismissal in an exceptional circumstance.

Attendance and participation in extracurricular activities: A student must be present at least one half-day immediately preceding an extracurricular activity in order to participate in that activity.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any action taken by the Agawam Public Schools in the application of this Disciplinary Policy shall be documented in the student's temporary cumulative record. Disclosure of this information without the prior written consent of the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and the student if he or she is sixteen (16) or older is prohibited except as allowed by law.

STUDENT RECORDS

Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and students are guaranteed the right to inspect as well as seek addition to or deletion from all records which are kept or requested to be kept by the School Department concerning individual students. These records include the student's transcript and any other recorded information is identified by the student's name. A signed log is kept in each cumulative record for all students.

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Sections 34D and 34F, and regulations promulgated thereunder, no third party, other than authorized school or Department of Education personnel, shall have access to information in or from a student record without the specific informed consent of the eligible student or the parent(s)/legal guardian(s).

Upon receipt of a Court Order or lawfully issued subpoena, or upon receipt of a request from a court or the Department of Youth Services for information regarding a student, the school, prior to compliance, shall notify the eligible student or parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of the Order, subpoena or request in such reasonable time the he/she may seek to have the process quashed.

Except for certain limited and specifically defined individuals, i.e., certain court officers, health officials and authorized school personnel, no individual or agency may have access to school records of the students without "the specific informed consent" of the student or his/her parent(s)/legal guardian(s). This means that if a parent(s)/legal guardian(s) or student wishes transcripts or records forwarded to school, colleges, or prospective employers, a written release must be delivered to the Principal of the school or appropriate custodian of the student's school records.

In the case of the student, fourteen through seventeen (14-17) years of age, or of one who has entered the ninth grade, both the student and his/her parent(s)/legal guardian(s), or either one acting separately, shall exercise these rights. Any student eighteen (18) years of age or older may exercise these rights alone.

ATHLETICS, CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The Agawam School Committee believes that student activities are a vital part of the total educational program and should be used as a means for developing wholesome attitudes and good human relations and knowledge and skills. Students are encouraged to become involved in at least one activity. File: JJ

PARENTAL/STUDENT CONSENT, RELEASE FROM LIABILITY AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

Before any student can participate in voluntary extra-curricular activities including athletic programs, the student and his/her parent(s), guardian(s), or legal representative(s) must sign and date a copy of the Parental/Student Consent, Release from Liability and Indemnity Agreement, which is identified as School Committee Policy JJIR-F. Students who have attained the age of 18 years must sign and date a copy of this form without the signature(s) of parents(s), guardian(s), or legal representative(s). The completely signed and dated copy of the Release and Indemnity form shall be kept by the building principal or athletic director. File: JJIR See Form J