

A Handbook for Students and Their Families 2019-2020

This publication summarizes many laws, policies, regulations, and practices that are important to Plymouth Public School students and their parents and guardians. It is not intended to be a complete directory of all laws and policies relating to students and parents. Federal and state laws, PPS policies, regulations, and practices at the system-wide and school building levels are subject to change.

The Plymouth Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, homelessness, genetic information, ancestry, status as a veteran or U.S. uniformed military service member, disability, or age in admission to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs, and activities, is in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.), The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (20 U.S.C. 6101 et seq.), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), MGL c.76 s.5, MGL c.151b, all regulations promulgated under those laws and all other applicable laws.

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School Calendar

BACK COVER

Message from the School Administration and the School Committee

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students:

The Administrators, Teachers, and Staff of the Plymouth Public Schools are pleased to welcome you. We are looking forward to working with you, our students and their families. Our goal is to help each student reach the high standards that have been established by our schools.

This **Handbook for Students and Their Families** will aid our students and their families as we work together to provide high-quality educational programs for all of our students. The handbook contains important information about our schools and can serve as a valuable reference for you. Please read the handbook and save it. You will want to use it for reference throughout the school year.

The **Handbook for Students and Their Families** is important because:

- It explains many of the policies and procedures that affect students.
- **Code of Conduct** explains how students should behave toward their teachers and their classmates and what happens when students do not meet these expectations.
- It describes the many ways that families can support their child's learning both at school and at home.
- It describes the rights of students and their families, for example:
 - the right to be treated equally regardless of race or disability,
 - the right to privacy regarding student records, and
 - it also advises parents and student about what to do if they think their rights have been violated.
- It gives helpful information on many topics including school cancellation, student transportation, attendance procedures, health services, and much more.
- It has helpful tools such as the Directory of the Plymouth Public Schools (inside front cover), a checklist for solving problems, educational resources for students and families and the school year calendar (inside back cover).

All of our policies and procedures have only one goal, which is to help every student to achieve high academic standards in a safe, respectful, and positive learning environment. Together, we can achieve that goal.

The Plymouth Public Schools' Vision Statement

The Plymouth Public Schools will be recognized nationally as an outstanding school district. Our goal is to graduate confident, critical thinkers, productive and creative lifelong learners, and socially responsible, engaged citizens capable of adapting to change in a technologically advanced and multicultural society.

Mission Statement

In partnership with parents and the community, the Plymouth Public Schools is committed to providing a comprehensive educational experience that is high quality, challenging, and enables each student to develop and maximize individual potential. Our schools foster a positive and collaborative environment, encourage and affirm academic achievement, personal excellence and inspire all students to make a positive contribution to society.

Core Beliefs

We believe that every student should become a (an):

- Effective Communicator
- Independent Thinker
- Problem Solver
- Responsible Citizen
- Self-Directed, Life-Long Learner
- Valuable Collaborator

Cancellation of Schools



Please do not call the Police Department, Fire Department, School Department, or radio/television stations.

"No School, All Schools, All Day" announcements are made on:

- Radio Stations: WPLM (99.1 FM), WBZ (1030 AM), WATD (95.9 FM), WRKO (680 AM), WQRC (99.9 FM)
- Television Stations: Channels 4, 5, 7, and 25 will be notified no later than 6:00 A.M.
- Automated Telephone Notification Service (if operational)
- District website – www.plymouth.k12.ma.us
- Official District Social Media Sites (www.facebook.com/PlymouthPublicSchoolsMA; <https://twitter.com/plymouthsch>)

Other "No School" announcements

In some instances, cancellations may be by:

- The school (s) within the school system
- Grade(s) within the school system
- Half day (or another part-time period)

The announcements for these situations will specifically state the school(s) and/or grade(s), and the type of cancellation.

Delayed Opening

- The school(s) of the school system so affected will be specifically noted.
- The delay will be specifically stated.

- School buses will be delayed in accordance with the delayed opening (for a two hour delayed opening, the buses will pick up the students two hours later than the normal pick up time).
- When there is a delayed opening, the morning Kindergarten sessions shall be canceled for that day.
- Dismissals on a delayed opening day will be at the regularly scheduled times.
- During the delay on the delayed opening day, the weather and other conditions will be re-examined to determine if school should be in session on that day. Parents/guardians should continue to monitor appropriate radio stations for a possible change to the closing of schools for the day.

Parents/Guardians, Please Note

All decisions relative to this issue are made with the safety and well-being of all students foremost in our minds.

However, due to the size and geographical differences of the area covered by our school system, you may feel that conditions in your area are not sufficiently safe to send your child to school on the day in question. Therefore, on days of questionable weather conditions when school is in session, parents/guardians are advised to use their discretion as to whether or not to send their children to school on that day (this would be considered an unexcused absence).

Family-School Partnership

Family involvement plays a key role in helping students succeed in school and in building a sense of pride in the school community. The Plymouth Public Schools (PPS) is committed to building strong partnerships among home, school, and community.

Here are some examples of activities that schools offer to engage families in student learning:

- individual parent-teacher conferences
- special events, such as Math and Literacy Nights
- opportunities to volunteer in classrooms, fundraising activities, and fun events
- opportunities to attend and participate in School Council and other Parent School Organizations

School Councils

At each public elementary, secondary and independent vocational school within the district there shall be a school council consisting of the school principal, who shall co-chair the council; parents of students attending the school who shall be selected by the parents of students attending such school who will be chosen in elections held by the local recognized parent-teacher organization under the direction of the principal. Parents shall have parity with professional personnel on the school councils; teachers who shall be selected by the teachers in such school; other persons, not parents or teachers of students at the school, and for schools containing any of the grades nine to twelve, at least one such student; provided, however, that not more than fifty percent of the council shall be non-school members.

The responsibility of the School Council is to assist the principal in:

- Adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide student performance standards
- Identifying the educational needs of students attending the school
- Reviewing the annual school building budget
- Formulating a school improvement plan

It is expected that for any school that contains grades nine through twelve, the Council shall review the student handbook each spring to consider changes in disciplinary policy to take effect for the following school year.

Other Groups for Parents

In addition to the School Council, the Plymouth Public Schools has groups for parents whose children have disabilities (Special Needs Parent Advisory Council) and whose children receive Title I services. Also, many of our schools have a PTA or HSA. These groups provide valuable resources and opportunities for children and families. We urge parents to become involved in both district-wide and school-based organizations. Contact your school and/or visit www.plymouth.k12.ma.us for information.



Please note: Reference in this handbook to the principal refers to the principal and/or his/her designee except in cases where specific statutes state otherwise.

Registration Process

Every student must have a completed Student Registration form to attend school along with:

1. Evidence of Immunization:

MA Department of Public Health regulations requires students to be vaccinated against polio, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B, and varicella. The MA Department of Public Health updates and distributes every year the most current childhood immunization recommendations and school requirements. (See MA Department of Public Health website http://www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/epii/imm/guidelines_sched/chiimm.pdf.) The school nurse will review your student's immunizations and health history at the time of registration. These immunizations are required for entry unless the parent/guardian wish to seek an exemption because of medical or religious reasons.

2. Proof of age for the student. A birth certificate or other similar document is sufficient.

3. Residency Verification

4. Contact information for a previous non-Plymouth Public School attended (if applicable).

5. Please see the Student Registration page on the Plymouth Public Schools website, www.plymouth.k12.ma.us, for all other necessary forms and enrollment information.

Students should be registered at their neighborhood school as early as possible. Most schools will hold informational meetings to provide information and guided tours of the school building. Please contact your neighborhood school for more information.

Families registering for the Plymouth Public Schools or submitting a change of address must demonstrate Plymouth residency by presenting one document from each of three categories in the following table: **All applicants must present at least one document from each column (A, B, and C) below. No document may be used twice as verification.**

A. Verification of Plymouth Address & School District	B. Verification of Current Residency At This Address	C. Verification of Identity
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<p><i>Dated within the past 60 days:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter from an approved government agency - Payroll Stub - Bank or credit card statement - Copy of Deed <u>OR</u> record of the most recent mortgage payment. - Copy of Lease <u>AND</u> record of most recent rent payment. - A legal affidavit from landlord affirming tenancy <u>AND</u> record of most recent rent payment. - Section 8 Agreement 	<p>A utility bill or work order dated within the past 60 days, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gas bill - Oil bill - Electric bill - Home telephone bill - Cable bill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Valid driver's license - Current vehicle registration - Valid Massachusetts photo identification card - Valid passport <p><i>Dated within the past year:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - W-2 Form - Excise (vehicle tax bill - Property tax bill <p><i>Dated within the past 60 days:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Letter from approved government agency - Payroll stub - Bank or credit card statement
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A Problem Solving Checklist

If you have a school-related problem, we want to help solve it. For the fastest resolution to your problem, please call the individuals or offices *in the order listed below*.

Issues Affecting Your Child's Learning

- ✓ Teacher(s)
- ✓ Guidance Counselor/Adjustment Counselor/School Psychologist
- ✓ School Administrator(s) or Curriculum Coordinator(s)
- ✓ Assistant Superintendent for Administration and Instruction

General School Issues

- ✓ School Administrator(s)
- ✓ Assistant Superintendent for Administration and Instruction
- ✓ Superintendent

Discipline/Safety

- ✓ Teacher
- ✓ School Administrator(s)
- ✓ Superintendent's Office

Transportation

- ✓ Routing or location of bus stops
 - o First Student Bus Company at 508-830-4144
 - o Business Manager at 508-830-4300
- ✓ Conduct on board buses – School Administrator(s)
- ✓ Transportation/Parking Fees – School Secretary
- ✓ Special Education Transportation – Special Education Office 508-830-4343

Special Education Issues

- ✓ Teacher/Special Educator
- ✓ School Team Chairperson/Department Head
- ✓ Elementary Department Head, 508-830-4320
- ✓ Director of Special Education, 508-830-4343

Attendance

In addition to meeting academic requirements, students/parent/guardian must meet state laws (MGL Chapter 76 Section 2 <http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/76-2.htm>) and Plymouth Public Schools' requirements for school attendance.

Excellent attendance and school success go hand in hand. The more often a student is absent even if the absence is unavoidable - the harder it is for the student to keep up with the class. Students with good attendance are more likely to be academically successful in school.

Students must bring in a note for each absence from school. The note must include the date(s) absent, the reason for the absence, a phone number for the parent or guardian, and the parent or guardian's signature. Please see the appropriate grade level appendices for more specific procedures.

Students are expected to be on time for school. Below is a chart that lists the official starting and ending times to our school days. Students arriving after these starting times will be considered tardy to school.

SCHOOLS	DOORS OPEN FOR STUDENTS	SCHOOL DAY BEGINS	SCHOOL DAY ENDS	BEGIN DISMISSAL	END DISMISSAL	HALF DAY DISMISSAL
High School 9-12	7:05	7:20	2:00	2:00	2:05	11:05
Middle 6-8	8:02	8:12	2:40	2:40	2:48	11:55
Elementary K-5	8:50	9:05	3:20	3:25	3:35	1:05
Preschool		9:15	11:45	AM Session		
		12:45	3:15	PM Session		

Excused Absences

Excused absences may include:

- an illness or injury that prevents the student from attending school. The illness or injury must be verified by a physician (parents/guardians have up to 5 days to send in a physician's note)
- a death in the immediate family (parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin) or other significant personal or family crisis
- suspension from school
- court appearances
- school sponsored field trips
- medical or psychological tests during the school day. The parent must show evidence (such as a note from the health center) that the tests could not be scheduled after school
- religious holidays
- juniors and seniors will be allowed three (3) documented college visits each year

What Is an Unexcused Absence?

Some parents think that any absence will be excused as long as the parent sends a note. *This is not true.* Here are a few examples of unexcused absences—even if the parent sends a note:

- repetitive and chronic absence due to illness or injury. In these cases, for the absence to be excused, the parent must submit a letter from a physician – within five (5) school days of the absence – verifying that the student was too sick or injured to go to school.
- the student needed to babysit
- cutting class
- family vacation
- extension of a religious or cultural holiday beyond the designated day or days on the school calendar
- attending driver's education classes for road practice during the school day



Students are responsible for making up the work they missed when they were absent.

Attendance Supervisor

Coordinating with school-based staff, the Plymouth Public School Supervisor of Attendance investigates attendance problems primarily outside the school environment. The supervisor works in the community, visits homes, and counsel students and their families. When necessary, the Supervisor of Attendance files and represents chronic cases in the Plymouth Juvenile Court.

Responsibility for Personal Property/Electronic Devices

Students are responsible for the care of all personal property.

The use of any personal electronic device is not permitted during school hours. Electronic devices may include, but are not limited to, CD or MP3 players, camera, iPods, cell phones (including photos/videos and all other applications), or video games. Any disturbance (including distribution of media) caused by these devices could result in disciplinary action. School officials are not responsible for loss or damage of such equipment. Due to safety concerns, laser pens are not permitted on buses or in school at any time and will result in confiscation and may result in further disciplinary action. Devices will only be returned to parent/guardian.

A teacher, coach, or administrator may authorize an exception to the above if the electronic device is to be used for educational purposes or during a bus ride to or from an event or field trip. The electronic device may be used only under the direct supervision of the staff member who authorizes its use.

The school does not have insurance that would cover theft or loss of personal property. This statement is inclusive of personal materials brought into school, on school grounds, on the school bus, or on school-related activities (e.g., field trips).

At the high school level, personal electronic devices may be in the possession of students during the school day. For educational purposes, a school staff member may allow usage of the electronic device in their classroom or instructional area at any time. The use of devices is allowed in certain common areas (i.e. cafeteria, halls, etc.). It is the students' responsibility to make themselves aware of where these areas exist within their building. It is important for students to remember that any disturbance (including distribution of media, cheating, inappropriate use of social media, etc.) caused by these devices could result in disciplinary action. School officials are not responsible for loss, theft, or damage to such equipment. Due to safety concerns, laser pens are not permitted on buses or in school at any time and will result in confiscation and may result in further disciplinary action. Devices will only be returned to students on the first offense and to the parent/guardian with any subsequent offenses.

Care of School Property

Students are responsible for the care of all school property (including lockers) issued and must pay for damaged or lost school property.

Students must take extreme care with personal items/cash and are encouraged to leave expensive personal items and/or large amounts of money at home. The school will not assume liability in the event of such loss.

Field Trips

Field trips are taken to enrich learning experiences. Students desiring to go on a field trip must supply written parent/guardian consent prior to the scheduled trip date and are subject to school rules and regulations while on the field trip. Students attending overnight field trips are subject to search of baggage and personal belongings.

Food in Classrooms Policy

The Plymouth Public Schools (PPS) recognizes the increasing prevalence of life-threatening allergies (LTA's) in students and the high percentage of students who are overweight in our schools as indicated in the district's *Annual Student Health Statistics (2007-2010)*. The intention of this policy is to assure the safety of students with LTA's and to promote wellness and healthy eating habits in students during the school day. The school day is defined as the hours of the day that students attend school for their education program. This policy does not pertain to food brought in by students for personal consumption during established school snack times. Please see Plymouth Public Schools Policy 6.2, *Food In Classrooms*. If your child has food allergies, please be sure to notify your child's teacher and school nurse.

Food Services

Plymouth Public Schools offers a daily lunch for all students in grades K-12. Students are able to purchase lunch on a daily basis or students have the option of purchasing lunches in advance at a reduced rate. For menu information and pricing, please refer to our website listed below. In addition, school lunch information can be found in our local newspapers. Some schools offer a breakfast program. Contact your school for availability. A student may be entitled to free or reduced-price lunches based on a family's income. Applications are available throughout the school year at your school or at:
<http://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us/FamilySupportResources/LunchProgram/tabid/463/Default.aspx>

Fundraising Activities

The sponsor, including all parent organizations, must complete a "request for fundraising" form and submit the form to the building principal. The building principal and superintendent or his/her designee will approve or disapprove all requests for fundraising.

The School Committee will be notified of all fundraising activities approved by the building principal and superintendent or his/her designee.

It must be understood that no fundraising activity is to interfere with the educational instruction of the children. All activities are to be considered for their educational value and be void of any commercial overtones. **NOTE: See Policy 9.1 Fundraising Activities.**



No Door-To-Door Sales Or Solicitations Will Be Conducted By Any Students.

Health Care Services

Health care services are provided by registered nurses who are assisted in some offices by health aides. All health care services staff maintain certification in CPR and First Aid. A nurse leader supervises district-wide health office activities and ensures compliance with regulatory standards set by the Massachusetts Departments of Public Health (DPH) and Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). A school physician/consultant serves as an advisor to the health office staff. Our school nurses hold additional certification as a school nurse by the Department of Education.

Please help the school nurse care for your child by:

- updating the phone numbers on your child's emergency card so the school can always reach you
- letting the nurse know if your child has any chronic or acute illnesses
- communicating with the nurse directly if medication, health needs change or if they have been exposed to a communicable disease
- letting the nurse know if there is an event at home or in the family that may impact your child at school such as the death of a beloved pet, serious illness or death of a family member
- Please keep your child home from school if he/she has
- a temperature 100° F or above
- vomiting, diarrhea
- strep infections of any kind, ringworm, conjunctivitis, or impetigo. These are all contagious infections and must be treated with medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school
- rash of unknown origin—this may indicate many different things and should be checked by your healthcare provider
- pain should be taken seriously, especially in young children. Earaches, toothaches, and headaches should be evaluated
- not been fever-free for 24 hours without medication

If you have any questions, please call your school nurse and/or check with your healthcare provider.

We invite you to visit School Health Care Services at www.plymouth.k12.ma.us.com for more information and other health-related links.

Student Accident Insurance

The School Department provides school-time Student Accident Insurance coverage for all students attending Plymouth Public Schools. Student Accident coverage compensates for covered accident expenses resulting from participation in school supervised and sponsored activities. The School Department coverage also includes those students who are participating in extra-curricular activities, interscholastic sports, and intramural athletic events. Parents/guardians may wish to consider purchasing additional 24/7 accident coverage available from the district's insurance vendor. Applications are available each school year at the Principal's Office of each building.

Health Insurance

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts now requires all residents to have health insurance. If your child is without health insurance, Massachusetts has several plans that will provide uninsured children and families with affordable health care (restrictions may apply). If your child is without a health care provider, the school nurse can assist you. Please see your school nurse for more details.

Illness and First Aid

Assessment of student illness or injury occurring during school hours is a significant part of school health care services. Care is provided as needed in the health office of each school building. The school will make

every effort to reach the parent/guardian or emergency contact person named on the student's emergency card to notify them of any significant injuries or signs of illness that may require further observation, intervention, or follow-up with the student's health care provider. In the event of a medical emergency, local emergency medical services/ambulance may be activated. If a student is taken to the hospital, a school employee will stay with the student until the parent/guardian arrives.

Automated External Defibrillators (AED'S) are available in public areas of every school building and are accessible to the general public in the event of a cardiac emergency in the building when school is not in session. Please look for them when you visit your child's school. You may help save a life!

Screenings

Screenings are conducted by health services staff according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations.* If a student fails a screening, a parent/guardian notification letter is sent home requesting follow-up by the student's health care provider. Screenings are typically conducted early in the school year or upon request. If you do not want your child to be screened for any or all mandatory screenings, please make the request in writing and give it to your student's school nurse. A current physical exam must be on file in lieu of annual screenings.

Growth: Height and weight measurements are taken annually on students in grades 1, 4, 7 and 10. Body Mass Index (BMI) is calculated for each child as part of the screening process.

Vision and Hearing: Performed annually on students in grades pre-K to 5 and in grades 7 and 10.

Postural & Scoliosis: Performed annually on students in grades 5 through 9.

Physical Exams

- A physical exam is required upon entry for all students one year prior to school entry or within 30 days after school entry. An updated physical exam is required again in grades 3, 6 and 9.
- A current annual sports physical is required for participation in all school-sponsored athletic activities.

Please keep in mind that many health care providers need at least two weeks to copy records, particularly during the summer months.

Athletic and routine physical exam forms are available in the nurse's office and online at www.plymouth.k12.ma.us in the School Health Services section.

The Role of the School Nurse

The role of the professional school nurse is to facilitate health and wellness so each student has the opportunity for academic success. Responsibilities in this setting include the following:

Development of an Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP)

Please talk with the school nurse if your student has a specialized medical need or diagnosis, which must be assessed, managed and monitored during school hours such as asthma, a life-threatening allergy, diabetes, or seizure disorder. The nurse will meet with the parent/guardian to review medical information, health care provider's orders, and current evidence-based practice.

The IHCP is then reviewed and signed by the parent and physician (if necessary) and shared with appropriate school staff to ensure optimal integration of your child's health needs into the school setting.

Medication Administration

The school nurse will work with you and your child to ensure medications prescribed for administration during school hours are taken as directed. All prescription and over the counter medications (e.g. Tylenol, Advil, eye drops) are administered during school hours only by the registered nurse and when a current physician order and the parent/guardian consent are on file in the nurse's

office. Medications are dispensed from the nurse's office only. There are, however, special situations defined by state law, such as: for a field trip when the school nurse is able to delegate a prescription medication to the student's teacher when the parent/guardian is in agreement and after a 1:1 training with the school nurse and teacher has taken place; when a student may carry and administer his/her own medication (self-administration) due to a specific medical need such as asthma, diabetes, cystic fibrosis, and life-threatening allergy. Self-administration may also be determined by the school nurse and parent for other medications in accordance with the district's medication policy.

For all Medications:

- It is necessary for parent/guardian to bring all medications (no more than a 30 day supply) into the health office to discuss medication administration specifics and complete consent forms
- Once the consents have been completed, replacement medication may be delivered by the parent/guardian or another responsible adult
- Do not send medications into school with your child
- Medications must be in the original labeled pharmacy container, not a plastic bag
- Always let the school nurse know if the doctor has added or changed medication or the amount of medication the child is taking

Please ask your school nurse about medication administration and our policies; for more details, visit [https://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us/Domain/1910-~~www.plymouth.k12.ma.us~~ in the School Health Services section](https://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us/Domain/1910-www.plymouth.k12.ma.us in the School Health Services section).

Communicable Disease Control

According to Massachusetts state law, students must be properly immunized before they enter school. The Plymouth Public Schools require immunizations be up to date for entry into school and up to date as per Massachusetts Department of Public Health immunization standards. Parents/guardians are responsible for keeping immunizations current and informing the school nurse when their child has received additional immunizations.

For a complete listing of immunization requirements for each grade, please ask your school nurse or visit: [https://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us/Page/719-~~www.plymouth.k12.ma.us~~](https://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us/Page/719-www.plymouth.k12.ma.us</del).

Monitoring of infections and other diseases are important functions of the school nurse. The school nurse works with parents, administrators, school staff, and health care providers, local and regional Boards of Health, and other professionals to maintain a healthful environment. Upon recommendation by the school nurse to the building principal, students may be excluded from school if immunizations are not up to date or if a student has a communicable disease to prevent transmission of the disease in the school.

For example, if there is a chickenpox outbreak at school and your child does not have documentation of having had either chickenpox or the chickenpox vaccine, your child will not be allowed to go to school for a length of time specified by the MA Department of Public Health.

~~Although we encourage every child to have a health care provider, immunizations are offered free of charge at Partners Public Health Clinic, in Plymouth at Spaulding Outpatient Center, 1 Scobee Circle, 1st Floor. Please call 508-747-5924 for more information and hours.~~

Concussions / Head Injuries

Massachusetts passed concussion regulations in 2011, which mandate middle and high schools to have policies and procedures in the prevention, management, and return to academic and athletic activities for students who sustain a concussion. The purpose of these regulations is to facilitate students' recovery from a concussion and to prevent further injury that can occur if a student returns to academic and athletic activities before the concussion resolves. Medical evaluation and clearance are required for all students suspected of having a concussion prior to returning to academic or athletic activities. Students with

concussions may require temporary academic accommodations. If your child is having difficulty in school following a concussion, contact your health care provider immediately, and inform your school nurse. For more details and to access forms related to concussions, visit www.plymouth.k12.ma.us and go to the School Health Services link and then [the Sports injuries link to Family Resources/Forms](#).

Health Records

An individual health record (paper and computerized) is maintained for each student throughout his/her school career. The record contains medical information submitted to the nurse, such as physical exams, immunization records, and health history completed by the parent/guardian when the student entered the school system. Screening and visits to the health office during school hours are recorded. Parents/guardians are asked to communicate student health concerns and medical reports to the school nurse. Access to this record is restricted to school health office staff and other school staff on a need-to-know basis only, as determined by the school nurse. Parents/guardians may have access to the health record upon request.

The health record is transferred with the academic record when the student moves to another school or district. Graduating seniors are given their health record at the time of graduation, or the record may be picked up by the parent/guardian. Unclaimed health records are maintained at the school for a maximum of seven years after the student leaves the system.

Other Special Nursing Services

Services for Pregnant Students

A student's marital, maternal or parental status shall not affect that student's rights and privileges to receive a public education or to take part in any extracurricular activity offered by the school. Pregnant students are encouraged to continue in school in all instances.

The rights and privileges of the expectant mother to receive a public education shall not be affected. Nor shall the student's right to participate in any extracurricular activity offered by the school be affected unless the said activity is deemed to be hazardous to the health of the expectant mother or unborn child.

Policy for the Preparation and Distribution of Potassium Iodide in the Event of a Nuclear Emergency

Upon the recommendation of the MA Department of Public Health and the MA Emergency Management Agency, the Plymouth Public School District agreed to stockpile Potassium Iodide (KI) tablets for administration to students and employees in the event of a nuclear emergency during school hours.

Parent/guardian consent is required for the school nurse to administer KI. If the parent/guardian does not want their child to receive KI (replies "no" on the consent form) or does not return the KI consent form, the student will not be given KI in the event of a nuclear emergency.

KI consents are kept on file by the school nurse for the duration of the students' enrollment in the Plymouth School District unless the parent/guardian requests to complete a new consent form.

Parents/guardians of students entering or returning to the district will be asked to complete a KI consent form during their initial interview with the school nurse prior to the student starting classes.

The "Parent/Guardian Informed Consent Form" and more information about Potassium Iodide may be obtained in the nurse's office or online at www.plymouth.k12.ma.us or by visiting www.mass.gov/dph and select Programs, then select Radiation Control Program.

Personal Dress/Appearance

The Plymouth School District encourages students to dress for school in an appropriate manner, which reflects good grooming, self-confidence, and respect for the common good.

In matters concerning standards of dress for students, the following regulations are in effect:

- The primary responsibility for appropriate dress lies with the student and his/her parents or guardians. However, in the interest of maintaining the required school climate essential to meaningful teaching and learning, the principal may ban dress that is inappropriate due to health, safety, or a disruption of the educational process.

Standards for appropriate dress for students shall comply with the following guidelines:

- Dress must not be destructive of school property (e.g. footwear that scratch, discolor, or mark the floor such as skateboards, shoes with wheels (Heelys/Wheelies), or in-line/traditional roller skates). Slippers and shoes without soles are not allowed.
- Bare midriffs, see-through garments, halter-tops, lingerie-type items, low cut tops, tube tops, and muscle shirts are not to be worn in school. Skirts and/or shorts are to be at least mid-thigh in length. Pants must be at waist level at all times. Boxer short/underwear should not be visible.
- Obscene, profane or demeaning language or pictures on clothing and/or jewelry are not to be worn. In addition, pictures and language regarding illegal substances are also banned.
- Hats, bandanas, sweatshirt hoods, and other headgear are not considered appropriate attire inside a school building, and, as such, are not to be worn. Religious headwear is permitted, for example, yarmulkes and burkas.
- Coats and jackets designed for outside wear are not to be worn in school buildings and should be placed in lockers, coat closets, or other designated areas during the school day. Suit jackets, dress jackets, and blazers may be worn in school.

The principal and/or designee is authorized to have students change their clothing in school and/or send the offending students home to change their clothing.



Students wearing clothing deemed inappropriate for school use may be subject to disciplinary action.

Reporting Student Progress

Report Cards

Report Cards are designed as a tool to communicate with parents and students. Report cards are issued twice per year for Grade K students; three times per year for Grades 1-5; and quarterly for students in grades 6-12. In grades K-5, student progress is measured by the student's ability to attain the standards set forth for the grade level in the Massachusetts Frameworks. The standards-based report card reports the students' academic performance, effort, and social development based on Plymouth grade level standards and expectations. Standards-based report cards provide clear communication about how a student is performing against grade level standards. Social and emotional development and work habits are also included.

Please refer to the school calendar for the dates that report cards are issued.

Academic Progress Updates

Grade 6-12 students and their parents are encouraged to utilize the electronic grade book within the student information database for the most up to date record of academic progress. Teachers are required to update

“ASPEN” on a regular basis. Posted grades reflect your child’s current academic standing within the class. The district calendar will identify quarterly dates indicating term grades. If you do not have access to a computer, please contact the school for a paper update.

Parent – Teacher Conferences

Parents may contact the school to schedule a conference regarding their children’s progress at any time during the school year. Teachers may also request a conference with parents to discuss any concerns.

Safety and Emergencies

Student safety is our first priority

- **Keep Your Child’s Emergency Information Up to Date! Be sure the school has CURRENT information!**
- **Parent/guardian’s home, cell, and work telephone numbers**
- **Current address**
- **Current email address**
- **An emergency contact person with current phone number and address (if the parent can’t be reached)**
- **Health insurance information**
- **Call the school immediately if there are any changes!**

School Notification of Absences

Very rarely, a child may leave home in the morning but not arrive at school. Parents are expected to contact the school on the morning of an absence. The school will make every effort to phone your home if we do not hear from you. Additionally, there may be a rare occasion when a child may leave school but not return home. If your child does not arrive home as expected, please contact your school immediately.

Release of Students to Adults Other Than the Parent/Guardian

Plymouth Public Schools’ purpose for this policy is a child’s safety.

- 1.0 The Plymouth Public Schools will not allow anyone other than a child’s custodial parent/guardian to take the child away from school. If the custodial parent/guardian wants a relative, friend, former spouse, other adult or care provider to pick the child up at school, the custodial parent/guardian must give written permission in advance.
- 2.0 A Custodial Parent must immediately provide the principal’s office with any court orders regarding the custody of the student.
- 3.0 Students will not be released to a non-custodial parent, that is, a parent who does not have physical custody, without a written caregiver form signed by the custodial parent and a copy of the most recent court order.
- 4.0 If there is an agreement between the parents that the non-custodial parent will be picking up the student on a regular basis, the custodial parent must provide a caregiver form to the principal listing the time period or dates the arrangement will begin and end, and on what days the non-custodial parent will be picking up the child.

The non-custodial parent will be required to show a driver’s license or other government-issued photo identification prior to the child being released and will sign the Dismissal Log.

- 5.0 All written permissions will be retained on file and logged.

- 6.0 Plymouth Public Schools will not release a child on the basis of a telephone call or any form of electronic communication.
- 7.0 The individual must show government-issued photo identification before the school will release the student.
- 8.0 If a child is to be released to a parent/guardian, a verified designee, or any other person, the adult picking up the child must sign the Dismissal Log.
- 9.0 The custodial parent's written caregiver consent will remain valid for the current school year and will need to be renewed annually. Plymouth Public Schools will be entitled to rely on the documentation in the student file as to releasing the student.

Walkers

Parents who wish their students to walk home from school each day must give written permission at the start of the school year. Permission will be maintained on file in the main office. **NOTE: Students must be in Grade 4 or above in order to walk home without an adult or older sibling unless your child's school has additional restrictions.**

Bus Stop Drop-offs

A parent/guardian must be at the bus stop for all kindergarten, first and second-grade students. Otherwise, the student will not be dropped off and will be returned to the school.

When a Child Is Not Picked Up at School

If a child is not picked up at school, the principal will try to reach the parent or emergency contact person. In instances where no contact with a parent can be made it will be necessary for the principal to call the Plymouth Police Department or the Department of Children and Families to ensure the child's safety.

School Security

Students should not arrive at school prior to the official opening of the school day. Walkers should plan their trip to school accordingly, and parents/guardians who elect to drive their children to school should plan to remain with them until the front doors are opened. Remember, the schools do not provide adult supervision prior to the official opening of the school day.

All parents/guardians/visitors must enter the school through the main entrance and must report to the reception desk or the front office. Photo identification is required.

All parents/guardians/visitors will be given a pass if proceeding to any part of the building other than the front office.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to volunteer in our schools. Those who wish to volunteer must have on file at the school an approved CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information). Volunteers will report to the office each day and receive a nametag to wear while in the building.

The only students who are permitted to visit classes are those who intend to enroll in a Plymouth Public School. Prior to any visit, permission must be granted from the administration.

Any individual who is present in the school building, without permission, is trespassing and may be subject to prosecution. Any students in the school building without permission may be subject to disciplinary action as well as possible prosecution.

Fire Drills

During an evacuation, students are expected to exit quietly, remain with their teacher/class, and listen for instructions. When an "all clear" is sounded, students will be allowed to return to the school building.

Lockdown/Hold Passing-Stay in place

During a lockdown or "hold-passing/stay-in-place", students are expected to remain with their teacher/class and listen for instructions. **For a lockdown situation**, a police officer will release the class and allow students to resume their normal activities. **For a "stay in place" situation**, an announcement will be made to allow students to resume normal activities.

Child Abuse and Neglect

If school staff suspects that a student is being abused or neglected, they are required by law (Chapter 119, Section 51A) to report it to the MA Department of Children and Families (DCF).

MA law requires mandated reporters to immediately make an oral report to the Department of Children and Families when in their professional capacity they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under 18 years is suffering abuse or neglect. It is within the procedures of the Plymouth Public Schools that the mandated reporter also notifies any possible abuse or neglect of a child to his/her building principal.

The Plymouth Public Schools cooperates with DCF screenings and investigations. At times DCF workers may interview school staff or they may ask to interview students during the school day. A mandated reporter must disclose relevant information to DCF.

As a mandated reporter, the staff member is also required by law to file a written report to DCF within 48 hours after making the oral report.

It is critical to remember that only the Department of Children and Families can determine whether an actual case of abuse or neglect has occurred. For additional information on DCF Child Abuse or/Neglect procedures please call either 1-800-792-5200 or 508-732-6200.

Special Programs

Sheltered English Immersion Instruction

The Sheltered English Immersion Program is for students who do not speak English or whose native language is not English.

All families complete a Home Language Survey when they register their child for school. If the parent states, on that survey, that the student's home language is not English, the student will be asked to take a short test to determine his/her English language skills. The school department uses this test to determine eligibility for Sheltered English Immersion Instruction.

Plymouth Public Schools places students in sheltered English immersion classrooms, in which nearly all books and instructional materials are in English, with a modified curriculum and presentation designed for students who are learning the language based on the Massachusetts Department of Education frameworks and learning standards.

Teachers may use native languages for clarification and safety purposes.

An effective sheltered English immersion classroom is one where there are frequent opportunities for interaction and discussion between teacher and student and classmates. As per federal law, the Plymouth Public Schools assures that English language learners receive effective English language instruction and content instruction. Content and curriculum are appropriate to the age(s) and grade(s) of the students in the class. Instruction is appropriate to the student's level of English proficiency.

504 Accommodation Plan

A 504 Accommodation Plan is a legal document falling under the provisions of the American Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This is a civil rights law to protect people with disabilities by eliminating barriers and allowing full participation in education. A 504 Accommodation Plan is designed to articulate and implement a program of instructional services, including general classroom modifications, to assist students with disabilities. A 504 plan is not an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and is a regular education entitlement. In order for a student to qualify for a 504 Accommodation Plan, there are certain requirements that are set by the federal regulations. They include the following: Referral, Non-discriminatory Evaluation, Eligibility, Placement Procedures, Procedural Safeguards (Due Process), and the writing of the Individual Accommodation Plan. If a student is on an IEP it supersedes a Section 504 plan. It is unnecessary for a student on an IEP to receive a 504 Accommodation plan.

A student with disabilities is the same as “a handicapped person.” As defined under federal law, the definition is as follows:

- *Handicapped person means any person who (i) has a physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities (ii) has a record of such impairment, or (iii) is regarded as having such impairment.*

Special Education Services

Under Special Education Regulations (603 CMR 28.00), a student identified with a disability that impacts upon his or her education must be provided with a free, and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment that includes specially designed services and/or programs that meet his or her individualized educational needs. A student is entitled to special education services if he or she meets all three of the criteria listed below:

- The student has an identified disability
- The student is unable to progress effectively in the general education program without the provision of specially designed instruction
- The student requires specially designed instruction and/or services to make effective progress

Special education laws are grounded in six basic principles: parent and student participation; free and appropriate public education; appropriate evaluation; individualized education program (IEP); least restrictive environment; and procedural safeguards.

If you believe your child may be in need of special education services please contact the building principal or counselor to assist you with the process. State regulations governing the Special Education process and the “Notice of Procedural Safeguards” brochure are available in all schools for review. For more information about special education, please feel free to contact the Director of Special Education.

Alternative Education: Home and Hospital Instruction

The Plymouth Public Schools provides home and hospital tutoring to students who “in the judgment of their physician, should remain at home or in the hospital on a day or overnight basis, or any combination of both, for a period of at least fourteen school days in any school year.” Before a student can receive these services, a licensed physician must complete a state-required form. Forms are available at your child’s school or through the Office of Special Education or Student Support Services.

Students who have chronic illnesses or diseases may be eligible for Section 504 Plans, and in those instances, the 14-day requirement will be waived. With the exception of those students who have chronic, debilitating diseases or conditions, home or hospital tutoring is considered short-term (no longer than 60 days) and is not a replacement for regular attendance at school.

Alternative Education: Homeschooling

Parents who live in Plymouth and want to home school their children must apply to the Plymouth Public Schools Office of Student Support Services for approval. They must demonstrate that their home education proposal follows the Guidelines for Home Education in Massachusetts and the Plymouth Public School Home Alternative Education Policy. Students must remain in school until the home school plan is approved by the School Committee.

Curriculum Accommodation Plans (CAP)

For individual students who are experiencing difficulty in any area (e.g., academic, social/emotional, behavioral), school personnel may recommend the development of a Curriculum Accommodation Plan. The plan is designed to best coordinate appropriate services and support within the regular education program including, but not limited to, direct and systematic instruction in all academic areas as well as the provision of services to address the needs of children whose behavior may interfere with learning. Parents/guardians are notified of any meeting when a CAP may be developed for their children.

Remedial Services

Our schools offer various remedial services. Please contact your child’s school guidance counselor or school psychologist for eligibility requirements, types of services available and any other related information.

Other Support Services

Please contact your child’s school and visit www.plymouth.k12.ma.us for information concerning additional supports for students that may be available.

Transportation

MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION LAW: M.G.L.c.71, § 68 requires that school districts provide free transportation once daily to and from school for students in grades K through 6 who live two (2) or more miles from their assigned schools. The option of fee paid bus transportation is offered to K-6 students who live within the two-mile limit and for all grades 7-12 students. If your child qualifies for free or reduced-priced lunches then the transportation fee is waived regardless of your home distance from the school or your child’s grade-level. For route details and more fee information, please visit our school website.

Special Transportation

Special transportation services may be available for students with disabilities and with medical or physical conditions that prevent them from walking to school or to a bus stop. In those instances when there may be a temporary disability, original medical documentation providing the reason the child requires special needs transportation is required. For students with identified special needs, it is the special needs TEAM that determines whether or not the child requires special needs transportation.

Late Buses

At the secondary level, late buses will be available as a convenience for parents to provide students the opportunity to stay for extra help or to participate in extra-curricular activities. Utilizing these buses is a privilege, and all of the rules and regulations that apply to regular day buses will also be in effect.

Late buses will run at a pre-determined time that is later than the normal dismissal and will operate according to a building-based schedule. The routes will consolidate regular day routes, servicing the main roads in town, operating on a regional basis, with the intent that parents will be able to pick their student up at a location closer to their residence.

Agricultural/Vocational Tuition & Transportation

Plymouth students seeking admission to an out-of-district school with state-approved agricultural/vocational technical education programs (Chapter 74-Approved Programs not offered in Plymouth) should consult with their guidance counselor no later than February and must submit a *Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Education Nonresident Student Tuition Application* (www.doe.mass.edu/cte/admissions/nonres_app.pdf) to the Superintendent of Schools no later than April 1st. In addition, an application to Plymouth Vocational Technical Education must be submitted by March 1st.

If a student is planning to pursue an agricultural/vocational course of study, they are directed to make an application to Bristol County Agricultural High School.

There may be cases where the student may not have received notification of acceptance, rejection or waitlisting (unaccepted status) by April 1st from his/her home district or the out of district school to which he/she applied. However, the Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Education Nonresident Student Tuition Application still must have been received by the Superintendent of Plymouth Public Schools by April 1st. If the vocational agricultural program is not offered at the specific regional vocational-technical or agricultural school, the student may apply to a different Vocational/Agricultural (Chap. 74 approved) that does offer the specific program.

School Bus Procedures & Regulations

The ride to and from school is essentially an extension of the school itself. Improper conduct aboard the bus is to be treated as a school offense, subject to punishment at the discretion of school administration. This may well mean a denial of the privilege of transportation. Continued offenses are to be accepted as cause for a hearing before the Superintendent of Schools or their designee. In the interest of safety and well-being of all students being transported, students, parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and bus drivers must understand and practice the procedures/regulations, which follow:

The driver is in full charge of the bus and students therein. He or she shall have the right to assign students to specific seats within the bus and shall accept as his/her responsibility the obligation to report to the administration the names of any students who seriously misbehave. All buses will be monitored with audio/video cameras.

- There is to be no smoking aboard any bus at any time. This is a requirement of Massachusetts state law.
- Windows and doors are not to be opened or closed except with the permission of the bus driver. At no time are objects of any kind to be thrown within the bus or through an open window.
- Students must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before boarding or exiting. There is to be no moving about once the bus is in motion.
- Students who must cross the street to board the school bus are reminded to wait until the bus comes to a complete stop and the driver has turned on the flashing red lights. Students, then, are to look both ways to check for traffic before crossing the street to board the bus.

- Students exiting the bus who must cross the street to proceed home are to pass in front of the bus; stop; look both ways; then cross the street with caution. (Many drivers do not obey the "flashing school bus lights rule").

Improper language is not to be tolerated and shall be considered cause for a report to administration; shouting and/or screaming is not to be considered proper and is to be regarded as a cause for disciplinary action.

The following are to be considered infractions of rules during transport for which students may be reported and disciplinary action invoked: refusing to obey the driver, fighting, lighting matches or cigarette lighters, hanging out of a window, bothering others, or any other behavior which distracts the driver from the safe operation of the vehicle and jeopardizes the safety of all passengers.

Objects which may be considered a safety hazard (as determined by school administration), or any animals, are not to be brought on school buses at any time. Skateboards and in-line/traditional skates are not to be brought on school buses.

Students must be at their proper bus stops and on time according to the established schedule. They are to wait for the bus at a point designated by the bus driver and are to conduct themselves in a manner that causes no inconvenience to neighbors in the loading area. Students are to ride only on that bus to which they have been assigned.

Damage to the school bus should be considered the same as damage to any school property. Those who deface or otherwise destroy such property shall be held responsible for its repair or replacement and may be subject to discipline.

Students will not be allowed to transfer to another bus for social reasons (e.g. parties, after-school visits). A student may be allowed, at the discretion of building administration, to transfer to another bus for a daycare, babysitting, and emergency purposes only. This transfer is allowed provided that there is space available, and the drop-off point is on an existing bus route. The parent/guardian must send in a note of request to the building administration, including telephone numbers of persons to be contacted in case of emergency. Should space cease to exist, transportation will become the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Bus discipline forms will be used by the drivers and administrators, as needed.

Withdrawal from School

Any student who wishes to leave school should notify his/her counselor and the principal of such intentions. No student under the age of 18 will be allowed to withdraw from school without written authorization from his/her parent/guardian.

If a student is under 16, he/she may not withdraw from school. If a student is 16-17, he/she must have parent/guardian permission. If a student is 18 or over, he/she may withdraw from school.

It is our goal to conduct an exit meeting with any student who withdraws or transfers from a school in order to clearly determine the reason for withdrawal or transfer. The purpose of this meeting is to provide the student and parent with information on any options available to finish school, including the ability to return to high school.

Work Permits

Any person under the age of 18 must obtain a work permit from their school whenever he/she obtains a position for the first time or makes a change in employment. Consult with the school regarding the appropriate time and location.



The Code of Conduct

The Plymouth Public Schools believe that good school discipline promotes equal educational opportunity and a safe and effective educational environment.

Students need a safe and orderly environment in which to learn. Students have the responsibility to behave appropriately. Students may not disrupt the educational process, endanger or deprive others of their rights to an education.

Fair and reasonable procedures will be followed to assure students of their rights. Students must recognize that to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, it is necessary for school officials to exercise reasonable authority.

Code of Conduct

Don't Miss Out on School Privileges!

Students have the opportunity to participate in many special school functions and activities, such as field trips, celebrations, performances, class days, proms, and graduation ceremonies, among others. Participation in such activities is a privilege to be earned—not a “right.” By violating level-based rules, the Code of Conduct, or by engaging in illegal or illicit activities outside of school, a student may lose these privileges. The principal has the authority to limit or deny a student’s participation in special functions and activities.

Attitude-Behavior and Language

Students are expected to be respectful and courteous to everybody at all times while on school grounds, on the school bus, and during school-related activities.

Rules:

1. Students are expected to obey any reasonable request made by a staff member.
2. Students are expected to use proper language (no rude, profane, or obscene language) in school at all times.
3. Students are to be respectful towards fellow students, staff members, or guests.



Students are not to commit any act, which places the health or safety of the students and staff in jeopardy.

Cafeteria

To make the cafeteria a pleasant and safe place for everyone, we expect responsible behavior.

Rules:

1. Students must enter in an orderly manner.
2. Students are expected to be courteous and respectful at all times.
3. Students must not touch the food or belongings of others.
4. When finished with lunch, students will dispose of garbage and wait until dismissal.
5. Students must leave table areas clean.
6. Students are to use accepted table manners and etiquette.

7. Students must remain seated unless given permission to do otherwise.
8. Students may not take food or beverages of any kind into the hallway.
9. Students must receive permission from one of the supervising teachers and/or aides to leave the cafeteria
10. Students will be dismissed by signal at the end of lunch and are to proceed to the next assigned class in an orderly manner.
11. Students need to form an orderly line when making any cafeteria purchase.

Denial of Transportation

The Plymouth Public Schools considers the school bus to be “an extension of the classroom.” We have the same standards of behavior on the school bus as we do in school. For example, students should remain in their seats; and they should not hang out of windows, push or fight with other students, throw things, or try to distract the driver.

Students who violate the Code of Conduct while on the bus may be disciplined and may be denied transportation. Some school buses are equipped with video cameras. The videotapes may be used as evidence in disciplining students who misbehave on the bus.

Due Process

A student involved in disciplinary action is entitled to due process, which includes notice and an opportunity to be heard. At school disciplinary hearings, a student is entitled to present his/her position relative to the incident leading to disciplinary action. For serious disciplinary infractions where long-term suspension or expulsion may be contemplated, a student may present documentary or testimonial evidence at a hearing before the Principal, Superintendent or School Committee and may also privately retain the services of an attorney to assist in the presentation of the student’s position.

False Fire/Bomb Alarm and/or Tampering with Fire Equipment

A student found responsible for a false fire alarm, including a bomb scare, or tampering with fire equipment will be suspended from school, with a mandatory parent/guardian conference with a building administrator (which may lead to further disciplinary action up to and including possible expulsion from school). In addition, the school will notify the Plymouth Police Department of any such incident.

Fighting

The nature of the school is such that fighting anywhere within the school boundaries (hallways, classrooms, school grounds, or any other part of the school) is not allowed.

Fighting is so dangerous and disruptive that suspension is needed as a consequence to discourage it from being considered as a solution.

Public Displays of Affection

Public displays of affection are inappropriate in school and will not be tolerated. Please refer to the handbook section on Sexual Harassment for more information.

Suspension/Expulsion

Suspension General Information

Suspension involves the exclusion of a student from school and/or school-sponsored activities. As administered by the Plymouth Public Schools, suspension shall include: (1) the removal of a student from class; (2) in-school suspension for part or all of the school day; (3) removal of the student from the school building or balance of the school day (if the student's parent or guardian can be contacted); and (4) continued exclusion of the student from school, school grounds, or attendance or participation in school-sponsored activities until the period of suspension has been completed and the student has been readmitted to school. Written notification of the charge(s) in advance of the hearing will be provided in the parent/student’s primary language. Suspensions are excused absences from school. Students will be

provided with make-up work for out of school suspension and given specific deadlines to submit work and make-up assessments.

Suspension of 10 Days or Less

The procedural rights to which all students in the Plymouth Public Schools are entitled as part of the "due process" is as follows:

For the violation of any school rule or regulation, which is grounds for suspension, the following shall occur:

1. Any student faced with a suspension must be given an informal hearing in the form of a conference between the student and the principal or his/her designee. The student shall be informed of the reason for the conference and shall be given the opportunity to present his or her side of the story. The student shall be given a decision within a reasonable amount of time.
2. Prior to putting a suspension into effect, the principal or his/her designee shall make a reasonable effort to telephone and inform the student's parent /guardian of the impending suspension; this shall include attempts to contact the parent or guardian at home and at work. Parents may contact the principal or his or her designee for additional information regarding the suspension prior to a re-admittal conference.
3. Within 48 hours of the informal hearing referred to above, the principal or his/her, designee shall mail a notice to the parent or guardian of the suspended student and shall provide notification to the Superintendent of Schools and the Attendance Officer. The notice shall contain:
 - a. the reason for the suspension;
 - b. the description of the school rule(s) or regulation(s) violated by the student;
 - c. a statement of the effective date and duration of the suspension.
4. The parent or guardian shall be requested to attend a student re-admittal conference with the principal or his/her designee as soon as possible after the date of suspension. At the principal's discretion, the re-admittal conference may be held by telephone. Conditions for the student's reentry to school shall be outlined at this re-admittal conference.

Suspensions of More Than 10 Days

A more formal hearing is held in any instance where a suspension in excess of 10 days might occur, including instances where a 10-day or less suspension may be extended beyond 10 days. At such a hearing, the student shall be afforded the following additional procedural rights:

1. written notification of the charge(s) in advance of the hearing will be provided in the parent/student's primary language;
2. an opportunity to present a defense;
3. representation by counsel at the student's own expense;
4. a written decision (in English and the parent/student's primary language) stating the basis of any suspension, the effective date, and duration of such suspension, and the right to appeal the suspension. This written decision shall become part of the student's record.

As in the case of a suspension of 10 days or less, a re-admittal conference must be held.

Expulsion from School (beyond M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H ½)

Except for expulsions pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H 1/2, in any instance, when a student's principal believes that expulsion proceedings should be initiated, the principal shall refer the student to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee for a hearing. The purpose of the hearing is to determine whether the student should be referred to the School Committee for expulsion proceedings and/or whether the Superintendent shall impose additional disciplinary penalties. The student shall have the same procedural due process rights at the hearing before the Superintendent of Schools as he or she has at a hearing in which a suspension in excess of 10 days might occur.

A student may be expelled by the School Committee if:

1. his or her continued presence in school represents a danger to the physical safety of others; or
2. his or her conduct constitutes a continual and substantial threat to or disruption of the educational process, and all other appropriate disciplinary alternatives have been tried and deemed unworkable; or
3. he or she commits an act or acts, so heinous as to threaten to disrupt the educational process despite the student's prior record or behavior.

An expulsion hearing before the School Committee can be initiated solely upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools. Any student who the Superintendent has recommended be expelled shall receive written notification of the charge(s) in advance of the hearing before the School Committee. The student may be represented by counsel (at their expense) at the hearing and shall have an opportunity to present evidence and witnesses. The School Committee may decide to suspend, rather than expel, the student.

Offenses for Suspension or Expulsion

The Code of Conduct says a student MAY be suspended or expelled for serious offenses, including:

- possessing a firearm;
- use of a dangerous weapon or object in a threatening manner;
- assault and battery on school staff resulting in physical injury;
- sexual assault;
- selling or distributing a controlled substance (including illegal drugs), or possessing a controlled substance with intent to sell or distribute it;
- assault and battery on school staff or another person—this means harming, attempting to harm, or threatening to harm another person, with or without a weapon or dangerous object;
- possession/use of a controlled substance, alcohol, or any kind of intoxicant;
- bringing a weapon or weapon facsimile to school;
- possession/use of tobacco products;
- threatening another person with a mock gun or a dangerous object;
- setting or attempting to set a fire, possession of the incendiary device(s);
- damaging or stealing private or school property (or threatening to do so);
- making a bomb threat or pulling/reporting a false fire alarm;
- violating the civil rights of others including, but not limited to using racial or ethnic slurs;
- obscene behavior including, but not limited to gestures, drawings, and language;
- harassment/stalking/bullying;
- sexually harassing another person;
- physical altercation;
- verbal abuse/profanity;
- breaking the rules for acceptable use of e-mail and the Internet;
- disrupting school or classroom activity, including unauthorized use of cell phones;
- insubordination/refusing to follow a reasonable request;
- tampering with school records;
- cheating/plagiarism;
- cutting detention;
- leaving the school without permission or cutting class(es).

In certain circumstances, a student may be indefinitely suspended or expelled for conduct unrelated to school or school activities, such as when the student is charged with or convicted of a felony and the principal determines the student's continued presence would disrupt the school.



NOTE: The list above is meant as a guide only. Any incident deemed inappropriate by the principal or designee may result in a suspension or expulsion.

School-Wide Educational Services Plan

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

During the period of long-term suspension or expulsion, the Principal must ensure that the student has the opportunity to access educational services in order to continue to make academic progress. This opportunity includes the ability to make up assignments, homework, quizzes, exams, papers, and projects in order to earn credits missed. The options for the provision of educational services will be outlined in the school-wide education service plan. The Principal or designee will provide the student and the parent or guardian with a list of alternative education services offered by the school district. The district default option for long-term suspension is a blended independent study and tutoring program tailored to the individual student's needs.

- Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, makeup assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.
- Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.
- Each school has a process for developing school-wide education service plans for education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days. Each plan is individualized to the needs of each student and is developed in collaboration with the guidance department, special education department, and classroom teachers, as applicable. Students and their parents will be noticed of the process for developing and arranging such services at the time of suspension/expulsion. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under M.G.L c69 SS1D and 1F.

The Plymouth Public Schools has a specific school-wide education plan. Based on the student needs, this plan will be modified accordingly. Please see below for more details:

- Coordination of workflow between student and teacher
- Access to online coursework if already enrolled in an online course
- Tutoring
- Additional services may be available on an individual basis

At the secondary level, this process will be facilitated by the school guidance counselor in conjunction with the building administration. At the elementary school level, a school administrator, school psychologist or school adjustment counselor will act as a facilitator.

Students with Disabilities

The Code of Conduct applies to all students with the exception of those students whose IEP's or 504 plans modify the code of conduct. There is a specific procedure, however, for disciplining students with disabilities. Your child's school can give you a copy of this document upon request. This procedure is also included in the "Notice of Procedural Safeguards" brochure that you receive with your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

In general, if a student with disabilities has violated the school's disciplinary code, the school may suspend or remove the student from his or her current educational placement for no more than 10 consecutive school days in any school year.

If a student with disabilities possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; carries a weapon to school or a school function; or inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event, the school district may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days. If a student has been placed in an interim alternative education setting as a result of disciplinary action, the student may remain in the interim setting for a period not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, the student will return to the previously agreed-upon educational placement unless the parent or the district has initiated a hearing on the disciplinary action that the district took and a hearing officer orders another placement, or the parent and the school agree to another placement.

Any time the school wishes to remove a student with disabilities from his or her current educational placement for more than 10 consecutive school days in any school year, or if a student is removed for disciplinary reasons for more than a total of 10 days in any school year when a pattern of removal is occurring, this is a "change of placement." A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal special education law. These include the following:

1. Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, the school district must convene a Team meeting to develop a plan for conducting a functional behavioral assessment that will be used as the basis for developing specific strategies to address the student's problematic behavior. If a behavioral intervention plan has been previously developed, the Team will review it to make sure it is being implemented appropriately and will modify it if necessary.
2. Prior to any disciplinary removal, that constitutes a change in placement; the school district must inform the parent that the law requires that the school district considers whether or not the behavior that forms the basis for the student's disciplinary removal is related to his or her disability. This is called a "manifestation determination." Remember that you, as the parent, always have the right to participate as a member of the group of people making this determination.

Students Not Yet Determined to Be Eligible

If prior to the disciplinary action, a district has knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the district makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:

- a) The parent had expressed concern in writing; or
- b) The parent had requested an evaluation; or
- c) District staff had expressed directly to the Special Education Director or other supervisory personnel specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

Consideration of Whether the Behavior Is a Manifestation of the Student's Disability

The law provides that the school district and the parent, along with relevant Team members, must consider all evaluation information, observational information, the student's IEP/504 accommodation plan, and placement; and must determine whether the student's behavior that prompted disciplinary removal was a

manifestation of his or her disability. The behavior is considered a manifestation of the student's disability if the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability, or was a direct result of the school district's failure to implement his or her IEP/504 accommodation plan.

If the manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary behavior was related to the student's disability then the student may not be removed from the current educational placement (except in the case of weapon or drug possession or use, or serious bodily injury to another) until the Team develops a new IEP/504 accommodation plan and decides upon a new placement and the parent consents to that new IEP/504 accommodation plan and placement, or a Hearing Officer orders a removal from the current educational placement to another placement.

If the manifestation determination is that the behavior was not related to the student's disability, then the school may suspend or otherwise discipline the student according to the school's code of student conduct, except that for any period of removal exceeding 10 days the school district must provide the student with educational services that allow the student to continue to make educational progress. The school district must determine the educational services necessary and the manner and location for providing those services. Please note that the guidelines the previous section (**students not yet determined to be eligible**) may also apply in this instance.

In the Case of a Disagreement with the Team's Determination

If the parent disagrees with the Team's decision on the "manifestation determination" or with the decision relating to placement of the student in an interim alternative education setting or any other disciplinary action, the parent has the right to appeal the Team's decision by requesting an expedited due process hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA).

How Parents Can Help

As a parent, you can help your child obey the rules and help keep the school safe by:

- reading the school handbook with your child;
- sharing the responsibility for the behavior of your child in school, at school-sponsored activities, and on the way to and from school;
- preparing your child to take responsibility for attending school and for his or her own behavior;
- fostering in your child positive attitudes toward himself or herself, others, the school, and the community;
- communicating with school staff about your child;
- attending individual or group conferences;
- recognizing that school staff has the right to enforce the policies of the Plymouth School Committee;
- behaving in a civil and non-disruptive manner when visiting the school; and
- being sure your child brings to school only those things that are appropriate in a school setting.



Policies, Laws, and Regulations

Policies, Laws, Regulations

Acceptable Use Policy: Internet Safety and Student Technology (AUP)

Plymouth Public Schools provides Internet access for educational purposes for their students, ensuring that students develop global communication and 21st-century skills.

Plymouth Public Schools filters the Internet in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). The combination of the filter, appropriate student use, and teacher supervision ensures safe access to the Internet. However, we still cannot guarantee that your child will not find material on the Internet that may be considered objectionable. Student use of the network is restricted to educational purposes only. Personal electronic devices are subject to the same restrictions.

1.0 District Responsibilities

- 1.1 The Coordinator of Educational Technology and Instructional Media (CETIM) and Technology Systems Engineer will oversee access to the network and will establish processes for the following: authorization for software installation; back up and archiving of databases; virus protection; and compliance with.
- 1.2 The Principal or designee will maintain records of Student Handbook Signature Pages acknowledging the rules and regulations of this AUP, and be responsible for enforcing the Technology AUP.
- 1.3 When using the Internet for class activities, teachers will make every attempt to preview and select material appropriate to the students and relevant to the course objectives. Teachers will provide guidelines and resources to assist their students in developing the necessary critical thinking skills to access online information.

2.0 Access to the System

- 2.1 The Technology AUP will govern all utilization of the network. Student use of the system will also be governed by applicable sections of the Plymouth School Committee Policy Handbook and the Student Handbook.
- 2.2 Students will have access to the Internet through the District's networked computers.
- 2.3 Students will have access to software tools and second generation and subsequent generations of the World Wide Web that allow students to collaborate and share online. Students will be educated about appropriate behavior, including cyberbullying awareness and response (See Plymouth Public Schools Anti-Bullying Policy 6.15), instant messaging, inappropriate texting and interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms.
- 2.4 Students should not use the following during classroom instruction without authorization:
 - Social Networking
 - Chat Rooms
 - Personal Wireless Devices

3.0 District Limitation of Liability

- 3.1 Plymouth Public Schools makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through its network will be error-free or without defect. The district will not be responsible for any damages users may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service, or personal physical, psychological, or monetary damages. The district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system.

The district will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations arising through the use of the system.

4.0 Due Process

- 4.1 When using the network, the user agrees to take full responsibility for his or her actions. The Plymouth Public Schools will not be held liable for the actions of anyone connecting to the Internet through this network. Therefore, all users shall assume full liability, legal, financial, or otherwise, for their use of the network.
- 4.2 Violations of the Technology AUP can carry serious consequences and could result in the immediate suspension of the user's privileges. Further disciplinary action may be taken by the Administration of the Plymouth Public Schools and/or Town, County, State or Federal authorities. Disciplinary actions will be tailored to meet specific concerns related to the violation. These disciplinary actions may include suspension or expulsion.
- 4.3 Any question or allegations concerning adherence to the Technology AUP should be brought to the attention of the CEITM.

5.0 Search and Seizure

- 5.1 The network is the property of the school department and its storage systems are therefore subject to inspection by the administration at any time. System users have a limited privacy expectation in the contents of their personal files on the network.
- 5.2 An individual search will be conducted if there is a suspicion that a user has violated the AUP, the law or the disciplinary code. The nature of the investigation will be in the context of the nature of the alleged violation.

6.0 Unacceptable Use

The user of the Plymouth Public Schools Internet connection and network becomes an extension of the Plymouth Public Schools and is expected to abide by the rules set forth in the Student Handbook where applicable. Inappropriate behavior will not be allowed. The user will not use computers / Internet for any purpose that is inconsistent with the educational purpose intended, such as, but not limited to:

- using obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language
- engaging in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks
- knowingly or recklessly posting false or defamatory information about a person or organization or posting information that could cause damage or disruption. This includes, but is not limited to, the posting of broadcast messages or other actions that cause congestion of the network or interfere with the work of others.
- installing unauthorized software or downloading unauthorized software from a remote location or joining listserves or newsgroups without the express permission of instructional staff.
- attempting to go beyond his or her authorized access, making deliberate attempts to disrupt system performance or destroy data (by spreading computer viruses or by any other means), or engaging in other illegal activities.
- disseminating passwords, codes, access telephone numbers, or account numbers to unauthorized persons.
- using the network to access or send material that is profane or obscene (e.g., pornography), that advocates illegal acts, or that advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (e.g., hate literature).
- changing in any way the configuration of a computer or network without permission of instructional staff.
- damaging or vandalizing computers, computer systems or networks.
- trespassing in other's folders, work or files or using another's password.
- intentionally wasting resources, such as paper, ink cartridges, ribbons, storage space, diskettes, etc.

- using computers /the Internet to play non-educational games or other non-academic activities.
- participating in any type of teleconferencing or chat without permission of instructional staff.
- using e-mail without instructional staff permission/supervision.
- The network may not be used for personal and commercial purposes, such as, but not limited to, offering or purchasing goods and/or services for personal use.

7.0 Safety

The safety of the Internet user is of utmost concern. Personal safety for the user means never giving out personal information such as home addresses or telephone numbers for the user or others. Users will not agree to meet with someone they have met online without parent/guardian approval and participation. Users will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employees any message they receive that is inappropriate or that makes them feel uncomfortable.

8.0 Web Publishing

The Plymouth Public Schools website is designed to provide a portal to enable communication among teachers, students, staff, administration and the community, both local and global. Material posted on the District's web site must reflect the high educational standards of the Plymouth Public Schools.

To ensure the safety of our students and the accuracy and security of district information the guidelines and procedures listed below must be followed:

8.1 No student's personal information, such as SIMS (Student Information Management Systems) data, last name, home address, and telephone number may be posted on the web site. Students must submit a signed permission form from their parent/guardian granting permission to post the student's work or picture.

8.2 Requests to post material on the Plymouth Public Schools' Web site must have prior approval of the Principal or designee.

8.3 Student directory information may not be published.

8.4 The creator of a homepage on the District's network is responsible for ensuring that the information contained therein is of the highest editorial standards (spelling, punctuation, grammar, style, etc.). The information should be factually accurate and current. If errors are observed, the CETIM or designated school page editor should be contacted to make the necessary corrections.

* It should be noted that the Plymouth Public Schools name or logo may not be used on a personal web page without permission of the Superintendent.

9.0 Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

Existing copyright law will govern the use of material accessed through the network. The user will not plagiarize works found on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were yours. All copyrighted material used must have the express written permission of the person or organization that owns the copyright.

Student Google Apps for Education Acknowledgement

The Plymouth Public Schools has chosen Google Apps for Education as an integrated communication and collaboration solution. It is available 24/7 from any Internet-connected device. This suite of applications allows students to create, edit, collaborate, peer review, store, and share files between students and teachers.

Google Apps for Education is configured as a self-contained environment maintained by Google and managed by the Plymouth Public Schools Technology Department.

In our efforts to prepare students for a global society, Google Apps provides 21st Century tools, allowing teachers more resources to effectively integrate technology into the curriculum for collaborative teaching and learning.

In Plymouth Public Schools, Google Apps for Education accounts are available for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12. Email capability is enabled for students in Grade 7 through Grade 12. This district-created student email account is subject to the Acceptable Use Policy. These accounts will be used at school and home for school-related projects and accounts.

The effective and proper use of email communication and the use of web-based collaborative tools by students in part of the Department of Education and Secondary Education Instructional Technology Frameworks.

All users should treat electronically stored information in their account as confidential and private. Users of student email are prohibited from accessing files and information other than their own.

Access to and use of student email is considered a privilege. The District maintains the right to immediately withdraw the access and use of student email when there is a reason to believe that a violation of District policies or of the law have occurred.

Students are assigned a Google Apps for Education account by the Technology Department. A student can be opted out of participating in the Google Apps program. Requests for opt-out must be submitted in writing to the main office of your student's school. The decision to opt out of the Google Apps program may have academic implications. Parents/guardians are encouraged to consult their student's teacher to discuss this.

Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment of 2008

The Plymouth Public Schools meets individual student needs in accordance with the American Disabilities Act Amendment Act of 2008, which prohibits the discriminatory assignment of students with disabilities to segregated classes or facilities based solely on the student's disability.

The Americans with Disabilities Act parallels Section 504 with regard to public schools. The law was amended in 2008 and has added additional language for which students may meet qualifications.

The law defines a major life activity to include, but not limited to:

Caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, working, and non-volitional bodily functions.

Additional amendments in the law prohibit the use of mitigating measures in evaluating whether a person has a disability.

Students in public schools may not be excluded from eligibility because of the use of prescribed medication or other measures, such as, but not limited to medical supplies, equipment or appliances; low vision devices (which do not include eyeglasses or contact lenses) prosthetics, hearing aids and cochlear implants or other implantable hearing devices; mobility devices; oxygen therapy equipment and supplies; use of assistive technology; reasonable accommodations or auxiliary aids or services; and learned behavioral or adaptive neurological modifications.

ADAAA 2008, provides that major bodily functions include, but are not limited to functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions. This list is not exhaustive.

A temporary impairment does not constitute a disability for purposes of eligibility unless its severity is such that it results in a substantial limitation of one or more major life activities for an extended period of time.

An impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active.

For further information regarding these laws, contact your child's guidance counselor or school psychologist (elementary) or the Director of Pupil Personnel Services at 508-830-4343.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) of 1986

The Plymouth Public Schools complies with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) of 1986. For further information, please refer to the Principal's Office or the homepage of the Plymouth Public Schools website at www.plymouth.k12.ma.us.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The Plymouth Public Schools is committed to a safe educational environment for all individuals free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. It is the policy of the Plymouth Public Schools to prohibit harassment, intimidation, and bullying by any means, including but not limited to electronic, written, oral or physical acts, either direct or indirect, when such acts physically harm or psychologically distress a student/s and or property, substantially interfere with a student's education, threaten overall educational environment or well-being of a person/s and/or substantially disrupt the operation of school.

DEFINITIONS

1.0 Bullying is defined as behavior toward another person that is willful, repetitive, and hurtful resulting in an imbalance of power between the bully and the target. Target refers to the victim, or victims, intended or unintended. Bullying is further defined as unwanted purposeful written, verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior, including but not limited to any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing words or gestures, by an adult or student, that has the potential to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment or cause long term damage; cause

discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation, is carried out repeatedly and is often characterized by an imbalance of power.

Bullying may involve, but is not limited to:

- Slurs
- Rumors or spreading of falsehoods
- Jokes
- Drawings
- Innuendos
- Demeaning comments
- Pranks
- Gestures
- Physical attacks
- Threats of verbal/written
- Unwanted teasing
- Stalking
- Cyberstalking
- Cyberbullying
- Theft
- Sexual, religious, or racial harassment
- Public humiliation
- Social exclusion

2.0 Harassment for the purpose of this policy means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of technology, computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against another individual or individuals that:

- 2.1 places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;
- 2.2 interferes with an individual's educational or work performance;
- 2.3 negatively impacts an individual's emotional or mental well-being; or
- 2.4 substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school.

For matters concerning harassment of a sexual nature, please refer to the Plymouth Public Schools Student Sexual Harassment policy (6.8)

- 3.0 Cyberstalking means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at or about a specific person or group, causing emotional distress.
- 4.0 Cyberbullying is defined as the willful and repeated harassment and intimidation of a person or group through the use of digital or any other communication technologies.
- 5.0 Bullying, Cyberbullying, and/or Harassment also encompass:
 - 5.1 retaliation against an individual or individuals for asserting or alleging an act of bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
 - 5.2 retaliation also includes reporting untrue acts of bullying, harassment, or discrimination
 - 5.3 Incitement or coercion with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to an individual or individuals by:
- 6.0 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, and Discrimination (hereinafter referred to as bullying, as defined in Section A, for the purpose of this Policy) also encompass, but are not limited to, unwanted harm towards an individual or individuals in regard to their real or perceived: sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability (physical, mental, or educational), socio-economic background, ancestry, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, linguistic preference, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or social/family background or being viewed as different in its education programs or admissions to education programs and therefore prohibits bullying of an individual or individuals by any School Committee member, District employee, consultant, contractor, agent, visitor, volunteer, student, or other person in the school or outside the school at school-sponsored events, on school buses, and at training facilities or training programs sponsored by the District.

EDUCATION/DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

- 1.0 The Plymouth Public Schools expects individuals to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity and demonstrated capabilities with proper regard for the rights and welfare of others.
- 2.0 All administrators, faculty, and staff in collaboration with parents, students, and community members, will incorporate systematic methods for students and staff recognition through positive reinforcement for good conduct, self-discipline, good citizenship, and academic success.
- 3.0 All administrators, faculty, and staff in collaboration with parents, students, and community members, will collaborate with district departments to promote academic success, enhance resiliency, build developmental assets, and promote protective factors within each school. Additionally, students and staff will be given the skills, training, and tools needed to create the foundation for preventing, identifying, investigating and intervening when issues of bullying arise.

- 4.0 School and community will collaborate to provide the dissemination and support of violence prevention curriculums to students, their families, and school staff. This collaboration will make effective use of available school district and community resources to deliver a foundation of violence prevention to all students. Opportunities will be provided to encourage parents to participate in prevention efforts with their children in meaningful and relevant ways that address the academic, social, and health needs of their children.

COMPLAINT AND RESOLUTION PROCESS

- 1.0 In keeping with the Superintendent's administrative guidelines and procedures for the implementation of this policy, at the beginning of each school year, the school principal or designee shall provide awareness of this policy, as well as the process for reporting incidents, investigation and appeal, to students, school staff, parents, or other persons responsible for the welfare of a pupil through appropriate references in the Handbook, Faculty Handbook, the school website and other reasonable means.
- 2.0 Any member of the Plymouth Public Schools community who believes he/she is a victim of bullying is strongly encouraged to report the incident to a school official.
- 3.0 At each school designees will be responsible for receiving oral or written complaints alleging violations of this policy. All faculty and staff are required and must report, in writing, any allegations of bullying or violations of this policy to the designee and or appropriate administrator. Failure to report will result in action(s) or discipline. Any other members of the school community who have credible information that an act of bullying has taken place must file a report of bullying. In events whereby administration is part of a complaint, reports should be brought to the attention of the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources.
- 4.0 The resolution, all interviews, and interventions that take place and the corresponding dates shall be documented in writing and/or noted in the district specified data collection system. Information pertaining to such complaints will only be shared with those that have direct involvement in the resolution process.
- 5.0 The Plymouth Public Schools requires the principal and/or the principal's designee to be responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy. In so doing, the principal and/or the principal's designee shall conduct a prompt, thorough, and complete investigation of each alleged incident. The investigation is to be completed within three school days after a report or complaint is made.

Education Reform Act of 1993, M.G.L. c.71, § 37H

The superintendent of every school district shall publish the district's policies pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students. Said policies shall prohibit the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, the school facilities or on school grounds or on school buses by any individual, including school personnel. Copies of these policies shall be provided to any person upon request and without cost by the principal of every school within the district.

Each school district's policies pertaining to the conduct of students shall include the following: disciplinary proceedings, including procedures assuring due process; standards and procedures for suspension and expulsion of students; procedures pertaining to discipline of students with special needs; standards and procedures to assure school building security and safety of students and school personnel; and the disciplinary measures to be taken in cases involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, the use of force, vandalism, or violations of other student's civil rights. Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop codes, shall be filed with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for informational purposes only.

In each school building containing grades nine to twelve, inclusive, the principal, in consultation with the school council, shall prepare and distribute to each student a handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to

the conduct of students. The school council shall review the student handbook each spring to consider changes in disciplinary policy to take effect in September of the following school year, but may consider policy changes at any time. The annual review shall cover all areas of student conduct, including but not limited to those outlined in this section.

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provision:

- a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- b) Any student, who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at a said hearing before the principal. *After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).*
- d) (d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has a right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination or whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
- e) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If the student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of a school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion. *Added by St. 1972, 467 amended by St. 1973, c.430, s.5; St. 1987, c285; St1989, c603; St1992, c.133, s.430; St. 1993, c71, s.26; St. 1993. c380,s.1; St1994, c.51*

Education Reform Act of 1993, M.G.L. c.71, § 37H1/2

Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter sixty-six:

- 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 presence in school would have a substantially detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of this right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendars of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his

behalf and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternative educational program for the student.

The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such a 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 the adjudication of 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 substantially detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.
- 3) The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to the student. *Added by St. 1993, c380, s2.*

M.G.L. c.71, § 37H3/4

Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$ Amends G.L. c. 71 by adding a new section that addresses all suspensions and expulsions for reasons other than those covered in section 37H (dangerous weapons, controlled substances, and assaults on education staff) and section 37H $\frac{1}{2}$ (felony complaint). Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$, directs school decision makers at student disciplinary meetings or hearings to 1) exercise discretion in deciding consequences for the student; 2) consider ways to reengage the student in the learning process, and 3) avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been tried.

Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$, requires that districts provide 1) written notice to the student and parent or guardian of the reasons for suspension or expulsion in English and the primary language spoken in the home of the student, and 2) the opportunity for the student to meet with the principal or headmaster to discuss the reasons for suspension or expulsion, before the suspension or expulsion takes effect. The principal or headmaster must also make reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in the meeting with the student.

Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$ further defines the process that school officials must follow under if the decision is made after the meeting to suspend or expel the student, including notice of the student's appeal rights, if applicable, and the appeal process. Suspensions or expulsions under section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$ are limited to 90 school days. Furthermore, the principal or headmaster must notify the superintendent in writing of the out-of-school suspension of any student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3, the alleged misconduct, and the reasons for the out-of-school suspension, before the suspension takes effect.

Students must be provided an opportunity to make academic progress while suspended or expelled. Section 37 H3/4 amends sections 37H and 37H1/2 to require districts and charter schools to continue to provide educational services to any student suspended or expelled under these sections, requires principals and headmasters to create a "school-wide education service plan" for all students who are suspended or expelled for more than 10 consecutive school days, whether in or out of school, so that students have an opportunity to make academic progress. Education service plans may include but are not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, Saturday school, and online or distance learning. Students who are suspended from school for 10 or fewer consecutive school days, whether in or out of school, must be provided an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension, to make up assignments, and earn credits missed. If a student moves to another district during a period of suspension or expulsion, the new district must either admit the student or provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or exclusion. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has published regulations to implement the law which are set out in 603 CMR 53.00 and can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr53.html>

Harassment

Criminal Harassment; Punishment

CRIMINAL HARASSMENT – MISDEMEANOR

(a) Whoever willfully and maliciously engages in a knowing pattern of conduct or series of acts over a period of time directed at a specific person, which seriously alarms that person and would cause a reasonable person to suffer substantial emotional distress, shall be guilty of the crime of criminal harassment and shall be punished by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than two and one-half years or by a fine of not more than \$1,000, or by both such fine and imprisonment. Such conduct or acts described in this paragraph shall include, but not be limited to, conduct or acts conducted by mail or by use of a telephonic or telecommunication device including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications or facsimile communications.

CRIMINAL HARASSMENT – SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT - FELONY

(b) Whoever, after having been convicted of the crime of criminal harassment, commits a second or subsequent such crime, or whoever commits the crime of criminal harassment having previously been convicted of a violation of Section 43, shall be punished by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than two and one-half years or by imprisonment in the state prison for not more than ten years.

Harassment Complaint Procedure

If a student feels he/she has been subject to harassment on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, handicap or sexual preference, he/she may complain to the principal of his/her school. It is the policy of Plymouth Public Schools to deal with these complaints at the individual school level whenever possible. However, if a satisfactory resolution cannot be achieved, a student may file a written complaint with the Superintendent of Schools and/or his/her designee. The Superintendent and/or his/her designee will respond in writing within 30 days. If the individual is not satisfied with the response, he/she may take the complaint to Massachusetts Department of Education, Program Quality Assurance, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5023 or other appropriate federal or state agency.

Student Sexual Harassment

1.0 POLICY

- 1.1 In keeping with State and Federal statutes, it is the policy of the Plymouth Public Schools to provide a learning and working atmosphere free from sexual harassment and all other types of harassment for students using the facilities.

- 1.2 It is a violation of this policy for any student using the facilities to engage in or condone sexual harassment.
- 1.3 It is the responsibility of every student using the facilities to not engage in acts of sexual harassment and to be aware of and comply with the applicable policies and procedures of this school district regarding sexual harassment.
- 1.4 Any student using the facilities who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment may file a verbal and/or written complaint and will receive prompt and appropriate handling of said complaint. Further, all reasonable efforts shall be made to inform only those with a "need to know" of the complaint. In most cases, complete confidentiality cannot be maintained as, at a minimum, the alleged victim, the alleged harasser, and any witnesses will be interviewed.
- 1.5 Complaint Manager means the person(s) who is responsible for directing the investigation of verbal and/or written complaints alleging noncompliance with this policy. The building principal or chief administrator(s) shall be designated as Complaint Manager for all students in all buildings. The office address and telephone number of the Complaint Manager shall be posted prominently in a visible location in the main office of each School Department building.
- 1.6 The designated Complaint Manager shall be responsible for assisting students using the facilities seeking guidance or support in addressing matters relating to sexual harassment or inappropriate behavior of a sexual nature.
- 1.7 It is the policy of the Plymouth Public Schools to objectively collect the facts related to all claims of sexual harassment of which it becomes aware, whether or not a victim files a verbal and/or written complaint, to determine whether or not an investigation is warranted. Prior to any investigation, the Complaint Manager must notify the District Attorney of the alleged sexual harassment complaint.

2.0

DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 Sexual Harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal, written or physical conduct of a sexual nature that takes place under any of the following circumstances:
 - 2.1.1 When submission to such conduct is made, explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of employment, instruction or participation in school activities or programs;
 - 2.1.2 When submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used by the offender as the basis for making personal or career or academic decisions affecting the individual;
 - 2.1.3 When such conduct has the effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's work or responsibilities or learning;
 - 2.1.4 When such conduct has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or learning environment;
 - 2.1.5 When retaliation is taken against students using public facilities for complaining about the behaviors described above; or
 - 2.1.6 When such conduct is welcomed but unlawful.
- 2.2 Examples of sexual harassment include but are not limited to:
 - 2.2.1 Verbal harassment, such as derogatory comments, jokes, slurs or remarks/questions of a sexual nature;
 - 2.2.2 Physical harassment, such as unnecessary or offensive touching;
 - 2.2.3 Visual harassment, such as derogatory or offensive posters, cards, cartoons, graffiti, drawings, looks or gestures;

- 2.2.4 Using electronic media to communicate in the manner described in paragraph 2.2.3 above.
- 2.3 The victim is encouraged to make it clear to the alleged harasser that the behavior is bothering him or her if he or she can comfortably do so.

3.0 STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

3.1 Student Filing

- 3.1.1 Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment may file a verbal and/or written complaint with any administrator, teacher, guidance counselor or nurse in the school.
 - 3.1.1.1 If the original complaint is verbal, the complaining party shall be asked to put the complaint in writing. Assistance and an appropriate form will be provided if needed.
 - 3.1.1.2 The written complaint shall include the following: the name of the alleged offender, the date, the location of the offense, a description in as much detail as possible of the incident(s) including any statement made by either party or a list of all known witnesses. The written complaint should then be forwarded to the building principal or chief building administrator.
 - 3.1.1.3 If the complaining party does not put the complaint in writing, the individual receiving the verbal complaint will request and record in his or her writing the following: the name of the alleged offender, the date, the location of the offense, a description in as much detail as possible of the incident(s) including any statement made by either party, and a list of all known witnesses. The written report of the complaint should then be forwarded to the building principal or chief building administrator.
 - 3.1.1.4 The building principal or chief administrator, upon receiving any written complaint or written report of a verbal complaint, must forward same in confidence to the Superintendent or his/her designee with the date the document was received and the name of the person or persons filing the document.
 - 3.1.1.5 Retaliation against the complainant, witness, or person who participates in an investigation, shall not be tolerated.
 - 3.1.1.6 Upon the determination that no investigation is warranted, the legal guardian(s) of the complainant and the alleged offender(s) will be notified by the Complaint Manager of the allegation and that an investigation will not be conducted.
 - 3.1.1.7 Upon determination that an investigation is warranted, the District Attorney's office will be notified of the sexual harassment complaint. The District Attorney's office then advises the Complaint Manager as to whether or not the District Attorney's office will be involved. At the same time, the District Attorney's office will also advise the Complaint Manager as to which other agencies should be contacted, e. g., Plymouth Police Department, Massachusetts Department of Social Services, etc. Immediately thereupon, the legal guardian(s) of the complainant and offender will be advised of the complaint and all agencies that may have been contacted.

3.2 Student Investigation

- 3.2.1 Verbal and/or written complaints filed pursuant to this policy shall be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the Complaint Manager or the individual designated by the Complaint Manager.
- 3.2.2 The investigation shall be completed within thirty school days after the verbal and/or written complaint is filed, and after a review with the site-based managers, a written recommendation will be forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools.
- 3.2.3 Upon completion of the investigation, the Complaint Manager shall prepare a written report of the investigation which will include the following: (1) The date(s) of the alleged incident(s); (2) The name of the complainant; (3) The name of the offender(s); (4) A summary of all the allegations; (5) The names of all potential witnesses; (6) A summary of the steps taken to complete the investigation; (7) A summary of all witness statements (with copies of the actual statements attached); (8) A listing of any physical evidence available; (9) A factual summary of all the evidence that either supports or refutes the allegations of sexual harassment; (10) Conclusion or recommendations; and (11) The date of the written report of the investigation.
- 3.2.4 The Superintendent may take action on the written recommendation of the Complaint Manager or he or she may conduct his or her own investigation into the charges.
- 3.2.5 Such an investigation must be completed within thirty working days of receipt by the Superintendent.
- 3.2.6 In certain cases, it may be necessary to extend the time for completing an investigation. Extensions would require the permission of the Superintendent in cases involving the Complaint Manager and of the School Committee in cases involving the Superintendent. In such cases, the Complaint Manager will inform the victim and the alleged harasser of the extension and the reasons for the extension.
- 3.2.7 The principal will take such action(s) as necessary and, if needed, to protect the alleged victim and other students consistent with the requirements of the school handbook.

3.3 Disposition

- 3.3.1 Evidence that a student(s) has committed an act of sexual harassment may warrant disciplinary action which may include suspension and/or exclusion by the Plymouth School Committee.

Hazing Law and Policy

Hazing as defined in Chapter 269 under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is prohibited in the Plymouth Public Schools.

M.G.L. Chapter 269; Section 17 Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined

Whoever is the principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one hundred days, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in Sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or another

person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. (Added by St. 1985, c.536)

M.G.L. Chapter 269: Section 18 Failure to report hazing

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars. (Added by St. 1985, c.536; Amended by St. 1987, c.665)

M.G.L. Chapter 269: Section 19 Copy of secs. 17-19; issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; report

Statement of Compliance and Discipline Policy Required

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

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

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

Any person(s) found engaged in hazing may be subject to suspension or exclusion dependent upon the seriousness of the hazing offense.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act 2002

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 McKinney-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 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 need assistance in enrolling your child into school contact: Director of Student Support Services at 508-224-5086.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed into law on December 10, 2015, reauthorized the most recent reauthorization of ESEA, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). The ESSA plan advances the Commonwealth's vision of increasing equity and excellence for all students in Massachusetts, particularly disadvantaged and high need students. Massachusetts' strategies align closely to ESSA's priority areas: academic standards that help students become ready for post-secondary education and employment; world-class academic assessments that enable educators to identify and provide support for schools and districts; ensuring effective educators; and supporting all aspects of our students' lives.

Our ESSA plan is designed to strengthen the quality and breadth of the instructional program our students experience, especially for English language learners, students receiving special education services, and students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. This focus includes special attention to:

- Enhancing literacy skills in the elementary grades
- Enhancing mathematics skills in the middle grades
- Providing multiple high-quality pathways to educational and career opportunities after secondary school

For more information regarding ESSA, please refer to the Department of Elementary and Secondary website: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/titlei/essa/>

Nondiscrimination

1.0 The Plymouth Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, homelessness, genetic information, ancestry, status as a veteran or U.S. uniformed military service member, disability, or age in admission to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs, and activities. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against their complaint should be registered with the Title IX non-discrimination compliance officer(s). This commitment to the community is affirmed in the following statements of School Committee intent to:

- 1.1 Promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the state and federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
- 1.2 Encourage positive experiences in human values for children and youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic groups.
- 1.3 Support a more integrated society and to enlist the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.

- 1.4 Use all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and reduce the grievances of individuals and groups.
 - 1.5 Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school system, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society.
 - 1.6 Ensure the continual process of reviewing policies and practices of this school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.
- 2.0 The Plymouth School Committee's policy of nondiscrimination and all other pertinent Federal and State laws will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; and will apply to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, homelessness, or disability.

Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability

- 1.0 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its accompanying regulations and amendments apply to all school systems receiving federal funds. Under this act the Plymouth Public Schools:
 - 1.1 May not discriminate against qualified handicapped persons in any aspect of school employment solely on the basis of handicap.
 - 1.2 Shall make facilities, programs, and activities accessible, usable, and open to qualified handicapped persons.
 - 1.3 Shall provide appropriate education at elementary and secondary levels, including non-academic and extracurricular services and activities, to qualified handicapped persons.
 - 1.4 May not exclude any qualified handicapped person solely on the basis of handicap from participation in any preschool education or daycare program or activity or any adult education or vocational program or activity.
 - 1.5 Shall provide each qualified handicapped person with the same health, welfare, and other social services that are provided others.
- 2.0 The Plymouth Public Schools receives federal financial assistance and must comply with the above requirements. Additionally, the School Committee believes that:
 - 2.1 Discrimination against a qualified handicapped person solely on the basis of handicap is unfair, and
 - 2.2 To the extent possible, qualified handicapped persons should be included in all aspects of the school community.

Accordingly, employees of this school system will comply with the above requirements of the law and policy statements of this Committee and all other pertinent Federal and State laws to ensure non-discrimination on the basis of handicap.

The Plymouth Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, genetic information, ancestry, status as a veteran or U.S. uniformed military service member, disability, or age in admission to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs, and activities.

Procedure for Filing Complaints Related to Discrimination

If a student feels he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, genetic information, ancestry, or disability, he/she may complain to the principal of his/her school or to the School Committee through the Superintendent of Schools. It is the policy of the Plymouth Public Schools

to deal with discrimination complaints at the individual school level whenever possible. However, if a satisfactory resolution cannot be achieved, a student may file a written complaint with the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall respond in writing within 30 days. If the individual is not satisfied with the response, he/she may take the complaint to the Massachusetts Department of Education, Program of Quality Assurance.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

The Plymouth Public Schools in keeping with the regulations set out in the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment requires notification to student, parents, and/or students under the following conditions:

- Instructional materials are made available for inspection by parents if those materials will be used in connection with a federal U.S. Department of Education or another publicly funded survey, analysis, or evaluation in which their children participate; and

That schools obtain prior written parental consent before minor students are required to participate in any U.S. Department of Education or another publicly funded survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
 2. Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
 3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, or ministers;
 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
 8. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).
- The right of parents to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for students. This term does not include academic tests or academic assessments.
 - The right to prior knowledge and consent if the school district administers physical examinations or screenings. This does not include hearing, vision, or scoliosis screening.
 - The right to prior knowledge of the school district's collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or selling, or otherwise providing the information to others for that purpose.
 - The right to inspect, upon request, any instrument used in the collection of personal information.

The Plymouth Public Schools will notify parents, guardians, and/or eligible students the specific or approximate dates during the school year if and when these activities are scheduled. Such notification will be provided through specific notices, newsletters, and/or the Plymouth Public Schools website.

The federal requirement is not intended to preempt applicable provisions of state law that require parental notification. The law does not apply to any physical examination or screening that is permitted or required by state law, including such examinations or screenings without parental notification. The requirements of PPRA do not apply to a survey administered to a student in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The requirements under PPRA do not supersede any of the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support

The Plymouth Public Schools ("the District") seeks to ensure that every student is free from the use of physical restraint that is inconsistent with the requirements of 603 C.M.R. 46.00. Physical restraint is an emergency measure of last resort. It may be administered only when necessary to protect a student and/or school community member from assault or imminent, serious physical harm. When, based on this standard, physical restraint is necessary, staff will strive to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint. The District will annually review its Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures, provide it to all District staff, and make it available to parents of enrolled students.

Audio and Video Surveillance on School Buses

Video cameras may be used on Plymouth Public School buses and transportation vehicles (collectively referred to hereinafter as a "bus" or "buses") to monitor student behavior. Audio recordings in conjunction with video recordings may also be captured.

The Superintendent or his/her designee will ensure that there is a sign prominently displayed on the school buses informing the occupants of the school buses that such video and audio recordings are occurring.

Recordings -The District will retain copies of the video and audio recordings until they are erased in the regular course of business, which may be accomplished by either deletion or copying over with a new recording.

Viewings of recordings must be expressly authorized by the Superintendent and are limited to the Superintendent, Superintendent designee, Director of Transportation, School Principal or Director of Special Education or other individual authorized by the Superintendent.

Parents of a student against whom a recording is being used as part of a disciplinary proceeding will be permitted to view and listen to the recording in the presence of school administration. No other individuals shall be entitled to view or listen to the recording without the authorization of the Superintendent.

Generally, the audio or video recording of a student on a bus is not a student record. In the event an audio or video recording is used as part of a student discipline proceeding, such recording may become part of a student's educational record. If an audio or video recording does become part of a student's educational record, state and federal laws governing educational records shall apply.

Search and Seizure

The Plymouth Public Schools recognizes and respects the privacy of its students in their persons and belongings. However, the school administration and staff must maintain a proper, safe, and secure educational environment where learning can take place. Possession of contraband in violation of the law or of school rules is prohibited on school premises. Such items include, but are not limited to, cigarettes, drugs (without a proper prescription), weapons, and other items that pose a danger to the safety of the school community or which would disturb or disrupt the process of education.

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to search an individual student or group of students and to seize contraband items. Where the school principal, or his/her designee, has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student has violated, or is violating, either the law or rules of the school, the suspected student or students may be searched for evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or rules of the school. Searches of students, book bags, purses, clothing, and other containers, and of student lockers may be conducted when appropriate. When the principal, or his/her designee, has reason to believe that contraband items are present on school premises, locker inspections may take place without notice to students.

A student's right to possession of a locker, or lockers, is nonexclusive as against the school and its officials. Students are hereby put on notice that they should not keep personal items in their lockers if they do not wish them to be discovered by school personnel during a locker inspection conducted in accordance with the provisions of this section. Contraband items discovered during any such inspection will be seized.

In addition, at various times throughout the school year, school administrators may use dogs trained to detect contraband to conduct random searches for contraband in student lockers, other common areas of school buildings, and vehicles parked on school grounds. A qualified and authorized trainer and a school administrator or designee shall accompany each dog. If a dog indicates that contraband is present on school property, school administrators can conduct a further search.

Any contraband items discovered and seized during an inspection or search conducted under the provisions of this section may be turned over to the police when the possession of such items may constitute a violation of any state or federal law. In all cases where illicit drugs or weapons are discovered as a result of inspections or searches conducted in accordance with the provisions of this section, the police will be contacted and any and all items will be turned over to the police department.

If there are any questions regarding whether a particular item may be brought to school, please ask the principal.

Sex Education (MGL Ch. 71 §32A)

Schools are required by law to notify parents/guardians about any classes that will be held on human sexual education or sexual issues. The notice must tell the parent/guardian how he/she can review the content and materials of the classes.

While parents/guardians do not have to give permission for their children to take sex education classes, parents do have the right to exempt their children from such classes. **Please read and return the sign-off page entitled "Commonwealth of Massachusetts: An Act Relative to Sex Education" to your building principal.**

Special Needs Policy

It is the policy of the Plymouth Public Schools to provide a free and appropriate public education for all children in the school district within the legal parameters of federal and state law recognizing that children with special needs require modifications, accommodations, and interventions in the provision of their individualized educational programs.

The Plymouth Public Schools will ensure that children with special needs are afforded the opportunity to be educated with peers and have access to an appropriate curriculum and to the same opportunities in co-curricular activities to the extent possible. It is the goal of the district to ensure that children with special needs have those services, interventions, modifications, and accommodations that they are entitled to under both the federal and state statutes and regulations.

The Plymouth Public Schools will conduct an annual evaluation of its programs and supports. In addition, the Special Education Department will provide an annual update to the School Committee highlighting its programs and the success of its services.

Student Record Regulations and Confidentiality

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

The right to inspect and review the student's education records within a reasonable amount of time but not to exceed 45 days from the day the district receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should

submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask the Plymouth Public Schools to amend a record they want to be changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Committee; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

The parent/guardian has the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

**Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920**

FERPA requires that the Plymouth Public Schools, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, the Plymouth Public Schools may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Plymouth Public Schools to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's, guardian's, and/or student's prior consent.

Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require school districts receiving federal funds to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories - names, addresses, and telephone listings – unless parents, guardians, and/or students have advised the school district that they do not want their information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want the Plymouth Public Schools to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the school district in writing by September 15th of each school year. The Plymouth Public Schools has designated the following information as directory information:

1. Student's name
2. Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
3. Address
4. Telephone listing
5. Weight and height of members of athletic teams
6. Electronic mail address
7. Photograph
8. Degrees, honors, and awards received
9. Date and place of birth
10. Major field of study
11. Dates of attendance
12. Grade level and the most recent school attended

Massachusetts Student Records Regulation

State regulations governing student records are briefly summarized below. These regulations are available at each public school and the superintendent's office for review. Parents may access the student records regulations through the Massachusetts Department of Education website.

A student's record consists of his or her school transcript and a temporary record. The temporary record includes all information, which is organized on the basis of the student's name, is relevant to the educational needs of the student and is kept by the school. A student's parent or guardian or an eligible student (who is 14 years old or has entered the ninth grade), has the right to inspect all portions of the student's record upon written request to the principal. The record must be made available to the parent, guardian, or eligible student not later than ten consecutive workdays after the request is made, unless the parent or guardian, or eligible student consents to a delay. The parent, guardian, or eligible student may request copies of any part of the record. A fee may be charged for the cost of copying.

Confidentiality of Records

No individual or organization other than the parent, guardian, eligible student, or school personnel working directly with the student is allowed access to a student's record without the specific written consent of the parent, guardian, or eligible student except in limited instances as specified by the state or federal regulations governing student records.

Amendment or Deletion of Records

The parent, guardian, or eligible student has the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written material to the student's record. In addition, the parent, guardian, or eligible student has the right to request that information contained in the record be amended or deleted except for information inserted in the record by a special needs or Section 504 evaluation. The parent, guardian, or eligible student has a right to a conference with the school principal for the purpose of the information contained in the school record. Within a week after such a conference, the principal must render a decision in writing on the objection. If the parent, guardian or eligible student is not satisfied with the principal's decision, he or she may appeal such decision to the Superintendent of Schools and ultimately, to the school committee.

Destruction of Records

A student's temporary record shall be destroyed no later than seven years after the student leaves the school system. The school system may offer the student, parent, or guardian the temporary record upon graduation or leaving school as long as the student, parent, or guardian acknowledges and accepts the temporary record by written consent. A student's transcript may be destroyed no sooner than 60 years after the student leaves the school system. A school principal or his or her designee may destroy misleading, outdated or irrelevant information contained in the temporary record during the time the student is enrolled in the school district, provided the parent, guardian, or eligible student has been notified in writing and given the opportunity to inspect and copy any of the information prior to destruction.

All parents/guardians of children in the Plymouth Schools have the right of inspection of their children's records in accordance with [M.G.L Chapter 71, Section 34D](#), and [M.G.L Chapter 71, Section 34E](#). Also, a student, eighteen years of age or older, has the right of access to all records relative to him/her in accordance with M.G.L. Ch.71, Sections 34D, 34E.

M.G.L. Chapter 71, specifies detailed procedures that govern access to student records by parents who do not have physical custody of their children. For more information, please contact the principal.

Courtesy and the need for maintenance of order suggest that anyone interested in exercising the above right make his/her request in writing for an appointment with the principal so that possible questions may be answered.

Non-custodial Parent Access to Student Records

The Massachusetts Board of Education has amended Student Records Regulations concerning access to student records by non-custodial parents. As set forth in the amended regulation, 603 CMR 23.07(5), non-custodial parents are eligible to obtain access to their children's student records *unless* the school or district has been given documentation that:

- 1.1 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
- 1.2 The parent has been denied visitation, or
- 1.3 The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
- 1.4 There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

Tobacco Use Policy

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H of the Education Reform Act of 1993, the use of any tobacco products (and/or paraphernalia) within the school buildings, the school facilities, on the school grounds or on school buses and at all school functions regardless of location by any individual, including students, school and/or non-school personnel, shall be prohibited.

Use and/or Possession of Alcoholic Beverages or Drugs

Including Over-the-Counter Drugs/Inhalants and "Look-Alike Drugs"

The Plymouth Schools have recognized the importance of maintaining a workplace, which is drug and alcohol-free to enhance the welfare of employees and students. A federal law, The Drug-Free Workplace Act, requires the Plymouth Schools to certify that they maintain drug-free a workplace as a condition of receiving federal grants and contracts. The requirements of this law give the Plymouth Schools the opportunity to reaffirm the following policy and their commitment to a workplace free of drugs and alcohol.

It is the policy of the Plymouth Schools to maintain an alcohol-free and drug-free workplace. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of controlled substances or alcohol is prohibited while on duty or on school department property. Any violations of this policy will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including immediate suspension and dismissal.

Over-the-counter drugs/items may be such items as caffeine pills, breath sprays, inhalants, or cough syrups with alcohol content, aspirin, etc. No such over-the-counter drugs are allowed in school except under the supervision of the school nurse.

Look-alike drugs are just that and generally sold as such. These substances are not allowed in school at all.

Procedures to be taken when a student is found or suspected (due to manifested behavior) of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol:

- 1.0 A student suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol and no contraband found. (In instances of manifested behavior suggesting that a student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the student shall be escorted to the nurse's office where the condition will be attended to and action taken as described.)
 - 1.1 A student sent home under parental/guardian supervision.
 - 1.2 Conference with parent/guardian to determine facts and determine the outcome.
 - 1.3 Counselor assists in identifying programs available to help the student and family if the outcome of the conference finds student under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- 2.0 Use of Controlled Substance, Over-the-Counter Drug/Item, Look-Alike Drug, and/or Alcoholic Beverage.
 - 2.1 First Offense
 - 2.1.1 Notification of parent/guardian.
 - 2.1.2 Suspension of five (5) or more school days.
 - 2.1.3 Notification of police (only for controlled substance or alcohol). Mandatory conference with parent/guardian and building administrator, which may lead to further disciplinary action including expulsion.
 - 2.1.4 Counselor assists in identifying programs available to help student and family.
 - 2.2 Second Offense
 - 2.2.1 Notification of parent/guardian.
 - 2.2.2 Suspension of five (5) or more school days.
 - 2.2.3 Notification of police (only for controlled substance or alcohol). Mandatory conference with parent/guardian and principal, which may lead to further disciplinary action including expulsion.
- 3.0 Possession of a Controlled Substance, Over-the-Counter Drug/Item, Look-Alike Drug and/or Alcoholic Beverage
 - 3.1 First Offense
 - 3.1.1 Notification of parent/guardian.
 - 3.1.2 Suspension of five (5) or more school days.
 - 3.1.3 Notification of police (only for controlled substance or alcohol).
 - 3.1.4 Mandatory conference with parent/guardian and building administrator, which may result in further disciplinary action including expulsion.
 - 3.1.5 Counselor assists in identifying programs available to help student and family.
 - 3.2 Second Offense
 - 3.2.1 Notification of parent/guardian.
 - 3.2.2 Suspension of five (5) or more school days.
 - 3.2.3 Notification of police (only for controlled substance or alcohol).
 - 3.2.4 Mandatory conference with parent/guardian and principal, which may result in further disciplinary action including expulsion.
- 4.0 Distribution of and/or Sale of a Controlled Substance, Look-Alike, Over-the-Counter Drug/Item, and/or Alcoholic Beverage
 - 4.1 Notification of parent/guardian.
 - 4.2 Suspension of five (5) or more school days.
 - 4.3 Notification of police.

- 4.4 Mandatory conference with parent/guardian and principal, which may result in expulsion.
- 5.0 Paraphernalia used in a drug activity shall be considered contraband and will be confiscated. If found in the possession of a student, it will result in:
 - 5.1 Notification of parent/guardian
 - 5.2 Suspension of five (5) or more school days
 - 5.3 Notification of police

Use of and/or Possession of Dangerous Objects

Objects or substances, which, by their nature or misuse, constitute a threat to the safety of students, are forbidden. These objects include, but are not limited to, toy weapons or other facsimiles.

Students in possession of such objects may be subject to a suspension of five (5) school days or more and, at the discretion of the building principal, a Central Office hearing, which may result in further disciplinary action up to and including a possible exclusion hearing.

Actions which may cause injury to oneself, another student and/or staff member may be subject to a suspension of one (1) to five (5) school days and, at the discretion of the building principal, a Central Office hearing, which may result in further disciplinary action up to and including a possible exclusion hearing.

Management of Students with Head Injuries & Concussions

The purpose of this policy is to assure that any student who sustains a concussion or head injury is managed properly. Plymouth Public Schools recognizes the importance of educating students, parents/guardians, athletic staff, teachers, guidance counselors, school nurse educators, and designated others to recognize signs and symptoms of a concussion or head injury; and to respond appropriately to facilitate prevention, management, and safe return to academic and athletic activities in students with a concussion or head injury.

- 1.0 In accordance with Massachusetts state law and MA Department of Public Health (DPH) regulations related to Head Injuries and Concussions In Extracurricular Athletic Activities, the Plymouth Public Schools shall provide standardized procedures in regards to the prevention, management, and return to academic and athletic activities in middle and high school students who incur a head injury while involved in extracurricular athletic activities. This law also applies to students in the High School Marching Band. This policy and all related procedures are in compliance with Massachusetts General Law and MA DPH regulations. Out of concern for any student suffering from a concussion/head injury, this policy will apply to all middle and high school students who sustain a concussion/head injury, regardless of whether the injury occurred related to extracurricular athletic or marching band activities.

- 1.1 The Athletic Director or designated individual in each school will be responsible for the implementation of this policy and related procedures.

- 1.2 At the high school level, a Concussion Team consisting of the Athletic Director, Certified Athletic Trainer, Guidance Counselor, and School Nurse Educator will assume responsibility for the implementation of procedures associated with this policy.

- 1.3 At the middle school level, a Concussion Team consisting of the designated Athletic Director, Guidance Counselor, and School Nurse Educator will assume responsibility for the implementation of procedures associated with this policy.

- 1.4 Communication with all involved individuals is paramount to the successful management of students with head injuries. Plymouth Public Schools will maintain open communications between staff, students, parents, healthcare providers, and others involved in order to optimize recovery for students with head injuries to return to health and succeed in their education.

- 2.0 At the elementary school level, Plymouth School Health Nurses will assess, monitor, and manage elementary students with concussions in collaboration with the student's health care provider in regards to physical activity and academics. 3.0 Review and revision of this policy shall occur as needed, and at least every two years.
- 3.0 Review and revision of this policy shall occur as needed, and at least every two years.



Signature Page & Summaries

The Plymouth Public Schools is required to collect signatures to ascertain that parents, guardians, and students have read and understood the following:

1. *Content of the Student Handbook (including Media Release, Directory Information, and Transfer of Records)*
2. *Information concerning an Act Relative to Sex Education (M.G.L. Ch. 71 §32A)*

The Plymouth Public Schools is required to obtain parent/guardian permission pursuant to the following:

1. *Student Internet Safety & Technology Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)*

To assist you, please refer to the following summaries.



Please, be sure to complete and return the signature page to your child's school no later than one week after the receipt of the Student Handbook

Pictures, Names, Student Work, or Quotes in the Media

Sometimes media (such as newspaper, television, radio, or cable) reporters or photographers would like to be involved in activities in the schools. Having a picture or student work in the paper for participating in a program is usually acceptable to parents, but occasionally, for legal reasons, it is not prudent. **If you do not wish your child's name or school work to be used or picture to be taken for the media, you must notify the school in writing on the back of the Signature Page.**

Directory Information Notice

The Plymouth 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 Record Regulations, 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

The following information regarding students is considered directory information: name; address; telephone number; date and place of birth; major field of study; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; dates of attendance; degrees, **honors, and awards received**; and post-high school plans of the student.

Directory information may be disclosed for any purpose in the School System's discretion, without the consent of a parent/guardian of a student or an eligible student. Parents/guardians and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information. In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent/guardian or eligible student, or otherwise allowed by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

Any parent/guardian or student refusing to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed must file written notification to this effect with the school's principal no later than one week following the receipt of this handbook. This notification is part of the signature page.

In the event a refusal is not filed, it is assumed that neither parent/guardian nor eligible student objects to the release of directory information.

Notice on Transfer of Records to another School

Pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07 (g), notice is hereby given that the Plymouth Public Schools forwards the complete school record of a transferring student to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Such transfer of records takes place without the consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student.

An Act Relative to Sex Education (M.G.L. Ch. 71 §32A)

Parent Notification

The Health Education and Science programs of Plymouth Public Schools contain comprehensive PreK-12 curricula. The goal of the program is to help students acquire appropriate content background to develop life skills or problem-solving, communication, and decision-making abilities to prepare for a healthy and productive future.

The Health Education and Science programs have been designed by our professional staff, using their own research-based programs as well as programs developed by the Massachusetts Department of Education, the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society, the American Red Cross, Operation Lifesaver, and other health and science education resources.

Sexuality education is part of the comprehensive Health Education program. In grades PreK/Kindergarten to grade 5, the following units contain sexuality topics: personal safety/safety, growth and development, and disease.

Within the Science program, learning standards for K-4 are lessons, which include topics dealing with characteristics of all organisms. These topics include growth, development, reproduction, and

death. The students will also observe that plants and animals have different structures, which serve different functions in growth, survival, and reproduction.

During health and science classes, student questions will be answered factually and in an age-appropriate manner. Each student's privacy will be respected, and no one will be required to answer questions or reveal personal information. Material is presented factually.

Under Massachusetts law and the Plymouth School Committee policy, you may exempt your child from any portion of a curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. If you would like to exempt your child from a particular class, please send the request in writing.

The Director of Health Education and the Coordinator of Science are available to meet with you to review curriculum and materials. To review these materials, please call to make an appointment.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that your child has a positive and educationally enriching experience this school year. If you have any questions regarding the exemption process for the Health and Science Programs, please call your school's principal.

To exempt your child from any portion of the health and/or science curriculum that primarily involves sexual education or human sexuality issues, you must notify the school in writing on the back of the Signature Page.

Acceptable Use Policy (AUP): Student Technology

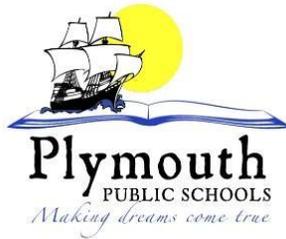
A signature releases the Plymouth Public Schools, its personnel, and any institutions with which it is affiliated, from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from a student's use of, or inability to use, the Plymouth Public Schools Data Network, including, but not limited to claims that may arise from the unauthorized use of the system to purchase products or services.

The parent/guardian agrees to instruct his/her child regarding any restrictions against accessing material that is in addition to the restrictions set forth in the AUP

Military Recruitment/Institutes of Higher Education

According to the provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), schools are now required to provide student directory information (**secondary school student name**, address, and telephone number) upon request to military recruiters and/or institutions of higher education.

Any parent/guardian who does not want this information released to these third parties must file written notification to this effect with the school's principal no later than one week following the receipt of this handbook. This notification should be written on the back of the Signature Page.



SIGNATURE PAGES
FOR STUDENTS AND PARENT(S) / GUARDIAN(S)

Student Information

First Name: _____ *Middle Name:* _____ *Last Name:* _____

Date of Birth: _____ *Grade:* _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Below, please check the boxes that apply, sign all pages, as well as the LIABILITY RELEASE FORM for the 2019-2020 SY and return all pages to the school.

An Act Relative to Sex Education

A. I acknowledge that I have read the information concerning Parent Notification of An Act Relative to Sex Education M.G.L. Ch. 71 §32A.

YES

NO

B. My child may participate in any portion of the health and/or science curriculum that primarily involves sexual education or human sexuality issues.

YES (Unrestricted)

NO (Restricted)

Information Released to a Third-Party Mailing Service

My child's name and address may be released for the purpose of receiving Charter Public School recruitment information.

- YES (Unrestricted)
- NO (Restricted)

Pictures/Student Work in the Media

My child's picture or school work may be taken for the media or used in school district publications including yearbook pictures submitted to the newspaper.

- YES (Unrestricted)
- NO (Restricted)

-

Directory Information Notice

The school district may release my child's directory information to publish items such as yearbooks, graduation announcements, newsletters, and honor roll announcements without having to get written consent for each use of student information.

- YES (Unrestricted)
- NO (Restricted)

Student Technology Acceptable Use Policy

I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the provisions of the Acceptable Use Policy.

- YES
- NO

Student Handbook

I acknowledge that I have read and have discussed the preceding rules and regulations of this STUDENT HANDBOOK with my child.

- YES
- NO

Student Signature: _____	Date: _____
Parent/Guardian Signature: _____	Date: _____



Plymouth Public Schools

Administration Building
11 Lincoln Street
Plymouth, MA 02360

Telephone: 508-830-4300

Fax: 508-746-1873

Web: www.plymouth.k12.ma.us

GARY E. MAESTAS, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

CHRISTOPHER S. CAMPBELL, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent
Administration and Instruction

PATRICIA FRY
Assistant Superintendent
Human Resources

GARY L. COSTIN, RS.B.A.
School Business Administrator

Liability Release Form ~ 2019-2020

As a result of a recent school district insurance review, our insurance carrier has recommended that all participants in school sponsored activities that occur outside of the regular classroom have a signed waiver on file. Students will be unable to participate in such activities if a signed Liability Release Form is not on file.

I, the undersigned _____ of _____, my child or ward,
Parent, guardian, etc. Student's name (first and last)
a minor, do hereby consent to my child's participation in voluntary athletic or recreation programs, field trips, or school sponsored activities of the Town or Public School of Plymouth.

I also agree to forever release the Town or Public School of Plymouth, the School Committee, and all their employees, agents, board members, volunteers and any and all individuals and organizations assisting or participating in voluntary athletic or recreation programs, field trips, or school sponsored activities of the Town or Public Schools ("the Releasees") from any and all claims, rights of action and causes of action that may have arisen in the past, or may arise in the future, directly or indirectly, from personal injuries to my child or property damage resulting from my child's participation in the Town or Public School of Plymouth voluntary athletic or recreation programs, field trips, or school sponsored activities.

I also promise, to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Releasees against any and all legal claims and proceedings of any description that may have been asserted in the past, or may be asserted in the future, directly or indirectly, arising from personal injuries to my child or property damage resulting from my child's participation in the Town or Public School of Plymouth voluntary athletic or recreation programs, field trips, or school sponsored activities.

I further affirm that I have read this Consent and Release Form and that I understand the contents of this Form. I understand that my child's participation in these programs is voluntary and that my child and I are free to choose not to participate in said programs. By signing this Form, I affirm that I have decided to allow my child to participate in the Town or Public School's athletic or recreation programs, field trips, or school sponsored activities with full knowledge that the Releasees will not be liable to anyone for personal injuries and property damage my child or I may suffer in voluntary Town or Public School athletic or recreation programs, field trips, or school sponsored activities.

Parent Signature: _____

Parent Printed Name: _____
(Please print)

Parent or Guardian of: _____
(Please print)

Grade: _____ School: _____

Date: _____

2019–2020 Statewide Testing Schedule MCAS AND ACCESS

ELA Composition Sessions A and B	November
ELA Reading Comprehension Sessions 1 & 2	November
ELA Reading Comprehension Session 3	November
Mathematics Session 1	November
Mathematics Session 1	November
Access for ELLS Test Sessions K-12	Jan – Feb
MCAS Biology Sessions 1 & 2	Feb -
MCAS Biology Last Date Regular Make-Up Testing	Feb
MCAS ELA Composition Retest Sessions A & B	Feb
MCAS ELA Reading & Math Retests	March -
MCAS ELA Reading & Math Last Date Regular Make-Up Testing	March
MCAS Grade 10 ELA Composition & Reading Tests	March -
MCAS ELA Composition Make-Up Sessions A & B	April
MCAS ELA Last Date Regular Make-Up Testing	April
MCAS EPP Mathematics Testing	April – May
MCAS EPP Mathematics Last Date Regular Make-Up Testing	April -May
MCAS Math Grade 10 Sessions 1 & 2	May -
MCAS Math Grade 10 Last Date Regular Make-Up Testing	May
MCAS HS STE Tests:	June
MCAS HS STE Last Date Regular Make-Up Testing	March

***Please note: In addition to meeting their coursework and attendance requirements, students must pass the high school MCAS in ELA (English Language Arts), Mathematics, and Science in order to graduate.**

PSAT/SAT Information

The Plymouth Public Schools is committed to helping all students prepare for post-secondary education and ensuring that they have access to these opportunities. The district offers college readiness assessments to all high school students at every grade level (Grade 9 - ReadStep; Grades 10 and 11 - PSAT; Grade 12 - SAT). These assessments are offered in October during the school day. Students are encouraged to take the SAT Reasoning Test in the spring of their junior year and the fall of their senior year. Generally, the SAT Subject Tests are taken upon completion of specific courses, but guidance should be consulted. Please contact the Guidance Office or www.collegeboard.com for registration information. Registration is handled directly through the Educational Testing Service (in N.J.).

ACT registration information can be found at www.act.org

2019 – 2020 School Calendar (to be inserted when complete)