disciplinary action shall be taken on anonymous complaints unless verified by clear and convincing evidence. All other complaints will be reviewed based on a preponderance of evidence standard.

3. *(Students and Adults)* Any school employee that has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of bullying, hazing, or intimidation shall immediately report it to the administration; each school shall document any prohibited incident that is reported and confirmed, and report all incidents of hazing, intimidation, bullying or cyber-bullying and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals, in accordance with state laws and regulations.
4. *(Students)* A good faith report from a staff member renders the staff member immune from discipline for making a report and is considered to have been made in the course of the staff member's employment for purposes of M.G.L. c. 258. School staff will be indemnified from any cause of action arising out of a good faith report of bullying or the district's subsequent actions or inaction in connection thereto.
5. *(Students)* If an instance of student to student bullying is reported to a staff member other than an administrator, the staff member must inform the assistant principal or the building principal.
6. *(Adults)* If the alleged bully is responsible for conducting an investigation, the Superintendent or Committee shall designate an alternative Coordinator, who is immediate Supervisor of the alleged bully.
7. *(Adults)* If a situation involving a charge of staff member to student bullying is brought to the attention of any staff member, the staff member should notify the building principal or the Title IX Coordinator.
8. *(Students)* In a situation involving a charge of student to staff member bullying the staff member should notify the building principal or Title IX Coordinator.
9. *(Adults)* In a situation involving a charge of staff member to staff member bullying the staff member should notify the building principal or the Title IX Coordinator.
10. *(Students and Adults)* Once a charge of bullying has been made, including charges of mental, emotional or physical bullying as well as threats to a person's safety or position in the school or work environment, the following course of action should be taken:

- The building principal should investigate the charge through discussions with the individuals involved.
- In situations involving allegations against a staff member, he/she should be informed of his/her rights to have a third party present at the time of the discussion.
- In situations involving students the principal should engage the appropriate classroom or special subject area teacher. Parents will be informed of the situation in incidences involving students.
- It is important that the situation be resolved as confidentially and as quickly as the circumstances permit.

11. After an investigation with the involved parties, if the building principal determines that disciplinary action must be taken, the following could occur:

- *(Students and Adults)* In instances involving student to student or student to staff member bullying, the student may be subject to discipline including but not limited to counseling, suspension, and in appropriate cases expulsion.
- *(Adults)* In instances involving staff member to student and staff member to staff member bullying, findings will be reported to the Superintendent of Schools for further action. Personnel action may also be initiated at this point, consistent with the applicable law and collective bargaining agreement.
- *(Students and Adults)* In all cases a referral to law enforcement will be considered by the principal or Superintendent based on the circumstances. School officials will coordinate with the Police Department to identify a police liaison for bullying cases.

The SBRSD Bullying Prevention Plan, as well as notification of updates, can be found in its entirety, on the district website at http://www.SBRSD.org and is subject to modifications by state legislation.

Gender Identity

On July 6, 2016, the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts enacted an Act relative to transgender anti-discrimination. The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of gender identity.
M.G.L. c. 272, §92A now mandates that admission to, and the full enjoyment of, a place of public accommodation or a portion thereof, may not be denied on the basis of a person's gender identity.
M.G.L. c. 76, §5 also prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity against students who attend public schools. Gender identity is defined as "a person's gender related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth..."
M.G.L. c. 4, §7

The Southern Berkshire Regional School District ("SBRSD") strives to provide a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment in which all students can thrive and succeed in its schools. The SBRSD prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity and is

committed to ensuring that all of its students have equal rights of access to and equal enjoyment of the School District's opportunities, courses of study, programs, advantages, and privileges.

Consistent with the statutory standard, the SBRSD will accept a student's assertion (or parent's in the case of young students not yet able to advocate for themselves) of his or her gender identity when there is "consistent and uniform assertion of the gender related identity, or any other evidence that the gender related identity is sincerely held as part of a person's core identity, provided, however, that gender-related identity shall not be asserted for any improper purpose." 603 CMR 26.01

The School District shall uphold the privacy and confidentiality of school records, including school health records related to gender identity. Transgender students (and parents) and school administrators should meet to discuss the students' access to restrooms, locker rooms, and changing areas. While each situation needs to be addressed individually, students may access school facilities that correspond to their gender identity.

In sum, in addition to prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender identity, transgender students (and parents) should contact and meet with their building principal to develop a plan that provides for the students' safety and comfort in the school environment.

All students and staff members shall report to the building principal, conduct that has the effect of marginalizing, stigmatizing, and excluding students, whether they are gender nonconforming or not.

Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against persons because of disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. The Act defines a person with a disability as:

1. Someone with a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities.
2. Someone with a record of such impairment; is regarded as having such impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligations under Section 504, the School District recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person falling under the provisions of Section 504 will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices in the school system.

Any student, parent, or guardian who believes that he/she has been discriminated against on the basis of disability, should contact the District 504 Coordinator, at (413) 229-8265.

No student, parent, or guardian will be subject to coercion, intimidation, interference, or retaliation for registering a complaint or for assisting in an investigation of any alleged violation of laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, or for advocating for rights protected under these laws.

The School District has specific responsibilities under the Act which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and, if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to provide regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet that student's educational needs in compliance with Section 504.

For concerns related to identification, evaluation, and placement regarding the SBRSD's system of procedural safeguards under Section 504, please contact the District 504 Coordinator.

Classroom Holiday Observances

The Southern Berkshire Regional School District recognizes and respects the cultural diversity that exists in the celebration of holidays. Based on these cultural and historical traditions, classroom activities may be scheduled. If any parent wishes to exclude his/her child from any such events, please notify the building principal in writing. An alternative activity will be provided.

Student Records Law

A. General Provisions: The student record contains all information concerning a student that is kept by the school district and which personally identifies the student; it consists of the temporary record and the transcript. For purposes of these procedures, custodial parent refers to a divorced or separated parent who has physical custody of the child, and the non-custodial parent is the parent who does not have physical custody of the child. Non-custodial parents may not be eligible to access their child's student record, or may have to follow certain procedures in order to access the student record. See Section C below.

The rights outlined below may be exercised by the custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) for a student under the age of 14 years, or jointly by the student and custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child over the age of 14 years. A student over the age of 14 is called "an eligible student." A student 18 years or older may, in writing, deny his custodial parent(s)/non-custodial parent(s) access to his/her student record, with the exception of transcripts, report cards and/or progress reports.

Each eligible student and custodial parent/guardian, except as limited herein for certain parents, has the right to see the student record for that student within ten (10) days of submitting a written request to see the records. Copies of any records may be obtained upon request and shall be provided within ten (10) days of the request. The District may charge for the cost of reproducing copies.

All cumulative records are kept in the school for which the student is placed. All cumulative records for out of district students are also kept in the school where the student would attend if he/she were in district. The student's record is available to authorized school personnel who work directly with the student, or administrative/clerical personnel who need to have access to records in order to carry out their responsibilities. The term "authorized school personnel" includes, but is not limited to, administrators, teachers, counselors, therapists, paraprofessionals, administrative office, staff and clerical personnel. Authorized school personnel included those employed by the District or under contract with the District as an independent contractor. Authorized school personnel do not need permission to see student records.
No information in the student's record is available to anyone outside the school system without written permission from the eligible student and/or parent and/or guardian, unless the requesting party is listed an exception as provided by the Student Records regulations. Exceptions to the requirement of written permission include, but are not limited to, a probation officer, court order, subpoena, where health or safety requires the disclosure of student information/records or upon transfer to another school district. However, eligible students and/or their parents/guardians will generally be notified before these records are released. A written release must be signed to have any part of the school record sent outside the school. This includes, but is not limited to prospective employers, other technical school, and colleges.

An eligible student and parent/guardian have the right to request to add relevant information to the student's record as well as the right to request removal of information believed to be untrue or incorrect.

B. Directory Information Notice: The Southern Berkshire Regional School District 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 at 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students".

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties under the following conditions.
  - School officials with legitimate educational interest; o Other schools to which a student is transferring; o Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes; o Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student; o Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school; o Accrediting organizations; o To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; o Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; o State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For addition information contact:
Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington D. C. 20202-5920

Parents of students and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information; such refusal must be in writing and made annually. In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent or student, or as otherwise allowed by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00 et seq. You are hereby notified that pursuant to this notification, the school system will provide requested directory information to military recruiters unless the parent or eligible student specifically directs otherwise, as required by the No Child Left Behind Act.
Any parent or student refusing to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed must file written notification to this effect with the principal on or before the 15th day of each September. In the event that a refusal is not filed, it is assumed that neither a parent of a student or eligible student objects to the release of the directory information designated.

C. Rights of Certain Divorced or Separated Parents: It is necessary for divorced parents to submit a copy of the custody agreement or order, and any subsequent changes made thereto, to the District so that District personnel may identify which of the parents has physical custody of the child. The non-custodial parent may access his/her child's record unless:

1. The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered for 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.
2. The parent has been denied visitation.
3. The parent's access to the student or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record.
4. There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

The District shall place in the student's record any documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a).

Non-Custodial Parent Access

In the case of a non-custodial parent who is eligible to access the student record, i.e., does not fit any of the four (4) categories under 1-4 above, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal. Upon receipt of the request, the principal and/or his/her designee shall immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non- custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth under 1-4 above.

When the student record is released to the non-custodial parent, the school will delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records will be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.

D. Amending Your Child's Record: A parent has the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant written material to the student's record. The parent should submit the additional information in writing to the principal with a written request that the information be added to the student record. A parent has the right to request in writing deletion or correction of any information contained in the student's record, except for information which was inserted into that record by the TEAM. Such information inserted by the TEAM shall not be subject to such a request until after the acceptance of the Individual Educational Plan (IEP), or, if the IEP is rejected, after the completion of the special education appeal process. Any deletion or amendment shall be made in accordance with the procedure described below:

1. If a parent is of the opinion that adding Information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in the student's record, the parent shall present the objection in writing and/or have the right to have a conference with the principal or his/her designee to make the objections known.
2. The principal or his/her designee shall within one week after the conference or receipt of the objection, if no conference was requested, render to such parent a decision in writing, stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the parent, the principal or designee shall promptly take such steps as may be necessary to put the decision into effect.
3. If the principal's decision is not satisfactory to the parent, the parent may file an appeal to the Superintendent. Such appeal shall be in writing and submitted to the Superintendent within five (5) business days of receipt of the principal's decision. The Superintendent shall render a written decision on the appeal within two (2) weeks of receipt of the written appeal.
4. If the Superintendent's decision is not satisfactory to the parent, the parent may appeal to the School Committee by filing a written appeal within five (5) business days of receipt of the Superintendent's decision. The School Committee shall conduct a hearing as required on the appeal as required by 603 CMR

E. Notice on Transfer to Other Schools: Pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(g), notice is hereby given to parents and eligible students that the District 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 consent of the parent or eligible student.

F. Destruction of Records: Notice is hereby given that the temporary record of a student will be destroyed no later than seven (7) years after that student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the school system. Temporary records are defined as, all information in a student record which is not contained in the transcript. Such information may include, standardized test results, extracurricular activities and evaluations by teachers, counselors, and other school staff. When the student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from school, and if the eligible student or the parent/guardian want the temporary record, they must request, in writing, prior to the last day of school, that the documents be provided to them. No additional notice, other than this Notice in the handbook, will be provided to the student or his parent/guardian of such destruction.

In addition, each year, the principal and/or teachers and/or other service providers may destroy the following documents that are considered part of the student's temporary record: disciplinary records (other than documentation of suspensions or expulsions or exclusions), any notes from the parent/guardian or other documents concerning absences, early dismissals, late arrivals, as well as examples of student work. If the eligible student or the parent/guardian want those records, they must request, in writing, prior to the last day of school that the documents be provided to them, rather than be destroyed. No additional notice, other than this Notice in the handbook, will be provided to the student or his parent/guardian of such destruction.

G. Display and Publication of Student Work: Notice is hereby given that there will be occasions when student work is seen and is on display within the school; for example, at open houses, exhibits, fairs, on bulletin boards, etc. Unless a parent/ guardian informs the District in writing, no later than September 15 of each school year, the District will assume that this display and publication of the student work is acceptable to the parent/guardian.

H. Complaint Procedure: In addition to the appeal procedure, above, a parent/guardian/eligible student may file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO) of the federal Department of Education. The FPCO has the authority to interpret and decide issues involving student records under FERPA.

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

Physical Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy

Physical restraint shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions have been deemed inappropriate, under the circumstances. The use of restraints on students in all publicly funded Massachusetts schools is governed by state regulation 603 CMR 46.00 that was revised by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and took effect on January 1, 2016. **Under the revised regulations, mechanical restraint, medication restraint, and seclusion shall be prohibited.**

Definitions

Mechanical Restraint: The use of any device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement. The term does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student that have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related services professional, and used for the specific and approved positioning or protective purposed for which such devices were designed. Examples of such devices include: adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance, or alignment to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports; vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle; restraints for medical immobilization; or orthopedically prescribed devices that permit a student to participate in activities without risk of harm.

Medication Restraint: Medication restraint shall mean the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior. Medication prescribed by a licensed physician and authorized by the parent for administration in the school setting is not medication restraint.

Seclusion: Seclusion shall mean the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving and does not include a time-out, which is behavioral strategy as defined in and permitted by CMR 603 46.02.

Time Out: Time-out shall mean a behavioral support strategy developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1) in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming.

During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.

An ***inclusionary*** time-out is when the student is removed from positive reinforcement or full participation in classroom activities while remaining in the classroom.

An ***exclusionary*** time-out occurs when there is a complete visible or physical separation of the student from the rest of the class or learning environment.

An ***exclusionary*** time-out may only last for 30 minutes. For any *exclusionary* time-out that may last longer than 30 minutes, programs must seek approval from the principal for the continued use of time-out. During an *exclusionary* time-out a school counselor or other behavioral support professional should be immediately available to, supporting, and continuously monitoring the student.

Physical Restraint: Defined as direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement and does not include brief physical contact to promote student safety or a physical escort without the use of force for the purpose of guiding or inducing a student to walk to a safe location. A person administering a physical restraint shall use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm. All physical restraints must be terminated as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others, the student indicates that they cannot breathe, or is observed to be in severe distress.
Only school personnel who have received training pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(2) or 603 CMR 46.04(3) shall administer physical restraint on students. The staff member who administered the restraint shall verbally inform the principal of the restraint as soon as possible and by written report no later than the next school working day. The principal or his/her designee shall verbally inform the student's parent/guardian of the restraint within 24 hours of the event and shall notify the parent by written report within three school working days of the restraint either by email or by regular mail postmarked no later than three school working days of the restraint. When a physical restraint has resulted in an injury to student or program staff member, the program shall send a copy of the written report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) by regular mail postmarked no later than three school working days of the restraint. The District will report data regarding the use of physical restraints to DESE annually in a form and manner directed by DESE.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHEARA)

Under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHEARA), School Districts are required to provide notification of the following: The Southern Berkshire Regional School District participates in a cycle of updating school asbestos inspections and management plans on a three-year cycle. Asbestos Management plans have been developed for all schools, which have asbestos containing building materials (ACBM) present. These plans are available and accessible to the public in the main office of each school as well as the Hampden- Wilbraham Regional School District's Central Office.

Use of Pesticides on School Property

Pesticides shall not be sprayed, released, deposited, or applied indoors while children are on the property of a school, day care center or school age child care program, except for those pesticides listed in section 6F.

Pesticides shall not be sprayed, released, deposited, or applied on the outdoor property of s school, day care center or school age child care program while children are located in, on, or adjacent to the area of the pesticide application.

1. Whenever pesticides are to be sprayed, released, deposited, or applied outdoors at a school, day care center or school age child care program, the school administration, day care center operator, or school age child care program operator shall ensure that employees, pupils, or supervised children and their parents or guardians receive standard notification, as defined in section 2, at least two working days before pesticides are sprayed, released, deposited or applied, provided that such spraying, release, deposit or application of pesticides shall not commence prior to approximate dates set forth on the standard written notification, and shall not conclude more than 72 hours after such approximate dates.
2. Such notification policy shall apply at all times except during periods when classes are not scheduled for at least five consecutive days after spraying, release, deposit, or application or when day care or school age child care facilities are not scheduled to be open for at least five consecutive days after the spraying, release, deposit, or application.
3. Information to be included in the standard written notification shall be provided to the school administration, day care center operator, or school age child care program operator by the certified commercial applicator, certified private applicator, or licensed applicator, or the contractor, employers or employees responsible for carrying out the pesticide spraying, release, deposit, or application. Larval mosquito control applications using pesticides classified as category four pesticides by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, as applied by mosquito control projects under chapter 252, are exempt from the notification requirements of this section. This section shall not apply to any use of an anti-microbial as defined in section 2.
   Legal Reference: Massachusetts Pesticide Control Act (M. G. L. c 132B §6C).

New Policy on Children and Families Protection Act Standard Written Notification Requirements

The Children and Families Protection Act currently requires that schools send standard written notification home to parents and employees at least two (2) working days before an outdoor pesticide application is to take place. A full notification includes the following three parts: *Consumer Information Bulletin; Department Notification Form; and, Chemical Fact Sheet.*

In the past, it was the Department's interpretation that schools must send all parents hard copies of the above information, in order to comply with the standard written notification requirements. This notification method is costly to schools and did not take advantage of current electronic communication technology. With these issues in mind, the Department now has the following policy permitting schools to provide Standard Written Notification to parents via electronic means as an option to providing such notices in hard copy format.

It is the Department's policy to permit schools the following options for providing standard written notification to parents via electronic means. The following are examples of electronic standard written notification that the Department would find acceptable under this policy.

Options of Notification

Option A: Schools may elect to send a letter home at the beginning of the school year that would provide an opportunity for parents to choose whether they wish to receive notification via hard copy or email format. Should parents choose to receive the notification via email, language in the letter shall make clear that it is the parents responsibility to routinely check their email and notify the school when their email address changes. The letter shall be issued every year and be maintained by the school for five (5) years, along with the IPM plan. The letter shall also be provided to parents of any new or transfer students after registration at the school. Email notification of pesticide applications shall include the three parts as outlined above. The schools must ensure that the notification is sent out in a manner so that it can be viewed at least two (2) working days prior to the pesticide application.

Option B: Schools may elect to use reverse 911 (community notification systems), to notify parents of an outdoor pesticide application. The reverse 911 call shall be made at least two (2) working days prior to the application and direct parents to the school's website; whereby, interested parties may view copies of the standard written notification. The website shall post the three parts as outlined above. Should parents not have the capability to view the notification on the website the school shall make a hard copy available.

Option C: Schools may elect to call parents individually to notify them that an outside pesticide application is going to take place. The call shall be made at least two

(2) working days prior to the application and direct parents to the school's website; whereby, interested parties may view copies of the standard written notification. The website shall post the three parts as outlined above. Should parents not have the capability to view the notification on the website the school shall make a hard copy available.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The Southern Berkshire Regional School District, the Sheffield Police Department, agree to develop and coordinate their response to violent, delinquent, or criminal acts by students, including possession or use of weapons and alcohol and other drug use, that occur on school premises, school buses, or at school-related events.
Please refer to the district website at http://www.SBRSD.org to view the MOU in its entirety.

Disciplinary Action by Administrators

In addition to excluding a student from his/her school program by means of internal or external short-term and long-term suspensions, administrators have the right to institute alternative disciplinary measures, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Restitution.
2. School-based community service.
3. Referral for and/or participation in counseling.
4. Referral for a risk assessment.
5. Letters of apology.
6. Suspension of driving privileges on school property.
7. Creation of a discipline contract/safety plan.
8. Random testing for illegal drugs, controlled substances, and/or alcohol.
9. Exclusion or restriction from activities that happen during or beyond the school day.

Administrators may also order a change in placement of any student to an interim alternative educational setting for up to forty-five (45) days if the student violates any of the grounds for short-term or long-term suspension. The principal or his/her designee may also request to meet with a student who has been assigned short-term or long-term suspension or who has been assigned to an interim alternative educational setting for forty-five (45) days prior to the student's re-entry into his/her regular school. At that time, the student shall provide the principal or his/her designee with any documents which may require a conditional re-entry plan, such as written proof of participation in a drug counseling program.
Legally, a 45-day student may return to their original placement at the end of the 45 days.

Student Suspension and Expulsion Law

Notice of Suspension: Section 37H ¾

Section 53.06

1. Except as provided in 603 CMR 53.07, a principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity to be heard and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing.
2. The principal shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English. The notice shall include:
   a. The disciplinary offense;
   b. The basis for the charge;
   c. The potential length of the student's suspension;
   d. The opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
   e. The date, time, and location of the hearing;
   f. The right of the student and the student's parent to interpret services at the hearing if needed to participate;
   g. If the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal:
      i. The rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08 (3)(b); and
      ii. The right to appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent.
3. The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.
4. Written notice to the parent may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, and email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and parent.

Emergency Removal: Section 37H ¾

Section 53.07

1. Nothing in these regulations shall prevent a principal from removing a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or
   property, or materially disrupts the order of the school. The temporary removal shall not exceed five (5) school days, which shall include the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall:

a. Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters set forth in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
b. Provide written notice to the student and parent as provided in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
c. Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with 603 CMR 53.08(3) and provide the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the five (5) school days, unless an extension of time is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.
2. A principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

Reference Massachusetts General Law, M.G.L. c. 222. A copy of the full regulations can be found on the district website at http://www.SBRSD.org .

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71 § 37H, (a copy of which is provided below), a student may be subject to expulsion from the school or the school district for:

- Possession of a dangerous weapon or controlled substance, on school premises or at school sponsored or school related events.
- Assaulting a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other school staff on school premises or school sponsored or school related events.

If a student is charged with violating any of the above, s/he shall receive written notice and an opportunity to a hearing before the school principal and/or the school principal's designee. The student may have representation and present evidence and witnesses. The school principal has the discretion to suspend rather than expel the charged student. If a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district in the Commonwealth is required to admit or provide educational services to said student. If the student applies for admission in another school district, the Superintendent at the school district where the student is applying may request a written statement from the Superintendent of the district where the expulsion occurred that includes the reasons for the expulsion.

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71 § 37H ½, (a copy of which is provided below), if a criminal or delinquency complaint for a felony has been issued against a student, the school principal or a principal designee, may suspend the student for a period of time deemed appropriate if the principal or his/her designee determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Prior to the imposition of the suspension, a student shall receive written notice of the charges against him, the reasons for the suspension and his/her right to appeal the suspension to the Superintendent of Schools. The suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal conducted by the Superintendent. A written notice of appeal shall be made to the Superintendent not later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. At the hearing before the Superintendent, the charged student has a right to counsel and may present oral and written testimony.

If a student is convicted of a felony or adjudicated delinquent of a felony under M.G.L. c. 71 § 37H 1/2, the student may be expelled if the principal or his/her designee determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student is entitled to the same procedural rights as above. If a student is expelled, no school or school district is required to provide educational services.

Due Process

Under Goss v. Lopez, 419 U.S. 565 (1975), the United States Supreme Court held that students have the right to certain minimal due process protections when school officials seek to impose short-term suspensions. The Court stated that in such cases, the student is entitled to oral or written notice of the charge(s) against him/her, an explanation of the basis of the accusation(s), and an opportunity to present his/her version of the facts. This "informal hearing" must be provided in advance of the suspension except where the student's continued presence at school endangers persons or property or "threatens disruption of the academic process". In the exceptional cases where immediate suspension is justified, the notice and hearing must follow as soon as practicable. The United States Supreme Court indicated that where school officials seek to suspend a student for more than ten (10) days (long-term suspension); depending on the length of the exclusion, greater due process protections may be required.

Chapter 71: Section 37H. Policies relative to the conduct of teachers or students; the Student Handbook

Section 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 the 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 violation of other student's civil rights. Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes shall be filed with the department of education for informational purposes only.

In each school building containing the grades nine to twelve, inclusive, the principal, in consultation with the school council, shall prepare and distribute to each student a student 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 provisions:

1. 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 a 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.
2. 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.
3. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (1) or (2) 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 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 (1) or (2).
4. 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 the right to counsel at a hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
5. 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 said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the Superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the Superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

Chapter 71: Section 37H½. Felony complaint or conviction of a student; suspension; expulsion; right to appeal

Section 37H½. Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter seventy-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 continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his 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 calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the

decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

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

   The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Superintendent. The student shall notify the Superintendent, in writing, of his 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 alternate educational program for the student. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion. Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to such student.

<u>Discipline for Students with Disabilities</u>

Students Identified as Having Special Needs

1. All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this Handbook. Chapter 71B of the Mass. General Laws, formerly known as Chapter 766, requires that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation TEAM to have special needs and whose individualized program is described in an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).
   a. Students with Special Needs may be suspended for up to ten (10) consecutive days, and may also be suspended in excess of ten (10) cumulative days, as fully outlined under M.G.L.c. 71B, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Such suspensions may be carried out without any further or additional process.
   b. Suspensions or exclusions in excess of ten (10) consecutive days or ten (10) cumulative days may also occur, provided that the conduct for which the student is being disciplined is not a manifestation of his/her disability, and the District provides educational services which will allow the student to access the general curriculum and to make progress toward his/her goals.
2. The IDEA and M.G.L. c. 71B allow school personnel to move a student with disabilities to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days, if that student is in possession of a dangerous weapon at school or a school function or on school property, is in possession or uses a controlled substance or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function or on school property, or inflicts serious bodily injury on a person, including him/herself. The appropriate interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the IEP TEAM.
3. The IDEA and M.G.L. c. 71B also allow school personnel the option of asking a hearing officer or a court to move children with disabilities to an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days, if they are substantially likely to injure themselves or others in their current placement.
4. When a special needs student has been suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive or cumulative days in a school year, such that a substantial change in placement is occurring or will occur, the IEP TEAM will meet to conduct a manifestation determination. Relevant members of the TEAM meet for the manifestation determination, and they answer two questions, after reviewing relevant documents and the misconduct of the student: Is the misconduct the result of failure to implement the student's IEP? And is the misconduct caused by, or does it have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability. A summary of the manifestation determination review will be written and a copy provided to the Parent/guardian(s) as soon as possible after the review, but no later than five (5) school days after the review.
5. If the TEAM finds that the misconduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, then the student may be disciplined according to the discipline policy in this handbook. The student will receive educational services during this period of suspension or exclusion. If the TEAM finds that the misconduct

was a manifestation of the student's disability, then the school may still be able to implement an IAES (see #2 and #3 above). If the IAES is not possible, then the student will remain in his/her current placement, and the TEAM will arrange for a functional behavioral assessment (if one has not been conducted on the student) and the development or modification of a behavior intervention plan.

6. The principal or designee will notify the Special Education Office of the suspension offense of a special needs student and a record will be kept of such notices.

Students Identified as Having a Disability and on a Section 504 Plan

Students are expected to meet the expectations for behavior identified in this handbook. A student on a Section 504 plan may be disciplined like any other non-disabled student. However, if the student is going to be suspended for ten (10) or more cumulative days, expelled or suspended for more than ten (10) cumulative days (and there is a change in placement as a result), then a manifestation determination review shall be conducted. The students' 504 team shall convene, and answer two questions, after reviewing relevant documents and the misconduct of the student:

1. Is the misconduct the result of failure to implement the students' 504 plan?
2. Is the misconduct caused by, or does it have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability?

A summary of the manifestation determination review will be written and a copy provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) as soon as possible after the review, but no later than five (5) school days after the review.

Procedural Requirements for Students Not Yet Determined to be Eligible for Special Education

If prior to disciplinary action, there is knowledge that the student(s) involved may have a disability, then all protections consistent with special education must be made available to the student(s). If the school administrator has no reason to consider the student(s) disabled but the parent requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, there must be an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility.

The school administration will notify the Student Services staff of a suspension offense of a special need student. If it appears that the suspension(s) will exceed ten cumulative days in a school year, an IEP review will be held to determine if a causal relationship exists between the misconduct and a student's handicapping condition. The team may design a modified program for the student, amend the IEP, or notify the Department of Education as needed.

Smoking and Tobacco Free Policy

The Education Reform Act of 1993 prohibits the use of any tobacco products within school buildings and school facilities, on the school grounds, or on school busses, by any individual. In addition, student possession and the use of tobacco products, such as, cigarettes, chewing tobacco, cigars, or electronic nicotine delivery system (ENDS) are prohibited within the school building, on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities off school grounds, and on school busses at any time.

CHILDREN AND MENTAL HEALTH

A Resource Guide for Families

This guide was developed with support from Elementary Counseling and Community Mental Health Integration discretionary grants from the U.S. Department of Education. The content does not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and endorsement by the Federal Government should not be assumed.

Like physical health, mental health is a very important aspect of our overall well-being. Mental health includes how we think, feel and act as we face the ups and downs of our lives. Good mental health helps us make choices and decisions, creates opportunities for healthy relationships with other people, and fosters resilience – our ability to bounce back—when we are when coping with the disappointments, stresses and changes that occur in daily life. These are important goals for adults as well as children. It is true that all people feel sad, angry, worried, and even out of control at times, and that ranges of emotions are a normal part of life.

Sometimes, however, a person's thoughts, feelings, or behaviors become so overwhelming or extreme that they are unable to cope with the everyday demands of home, school, and relationships. This may be a sign of an emerging mental health concern.

While the causes of mental health problems are varied and not always fully understood, it is known that mental health issues may come from a combination of different factors including a person's biology, environment, and experiences. Whatever the cause, a person who struggles with mental health issues is not to blame for their difficulties and they cannot "just stop" the problem when they want to. It's especially important to understand this when we are raising children with more complicated emotional needs. Many parents assume that childhood is a carefree time, and that children are not vulnerable to mental health difficulties. In reality, mental health

problems can affect people of any age, from early childhood throughout the life cycle. Mental health concerns in children and adolescents are much more common than most people think. In the United States it is estimated that one in five have some mental health related issue.

Getting help is an important step in treating mental health issues. Without the right help, children and adolescents are at higher risk to develop other difficulties, such as school failure and the development of poor coping strategies, which may lead to problematic and perhaps even destructive behavior. Identifying problems early and getting appropriate treatment can help children reach their full potential and may prevent more significant problems from emerging. A variety of signs may point to mental health disorders or serious emotional disturbances in children or adolescents. Pay attention if a child or adolescent you know has any of these warning signs:

- *Thinking:* persistent nightmares; unusual thoughts or beliefs; thoughts that race too fast; hearing of voices that cannot be explained; suicidal thoughts
- *Feelings:* persistent feelings of sadness/hopelessness; extreme angry feelings, agitation or uneasiness; sense of worthlessness or guilt; extreme anxious/worried feelings or fear; feelings that life is too hard or has no meaning.
- *Behaviors:* sudden and/or sharp decrease in school performance; loss of interest or effort in things he or she usually enjoys; unexplained changes in sleeping or eating habits; frequent crying and overreaction to small things; avoidance of friends or family; frequent breaking of rules/trouble with the law; use of alcohol or other drugs; threats of hurting self or other people; lack of remorse or guilt when others are hurt; dangerous or life-threatening actions; cruelty to animals/fire setting.

While some of these signs or symptoms may occur as part of your child's normal development, parents should keep in mind that signs of mental health disorders can signal a serious need for help in children and adolescents, as soon as possible. If you are not sure that you should seek help for your child, contact your child's healthcare provider or school counselor for guidance.

Where to Find Help

Once you have begun to identify your concerns, there are many places you can go to get assistance and/or advice about the mental health of your child. Talking with your child's pediatrician or school counselor is a good place to start. They will point you in the direction of the type of help that you might need, and offer names of local mental health providers or make recommendations from the list of providers that you receive from your insurance. If you are not sure where to start, ask someone you trust – perhaps a friend or family member, your child's teacher, healthcare provider or a member of the clergy – to help you get connected with the resources your child may need.

Emergency Services: 911 or (413) 733-6661

If you believe that your child, adolescent, or any family member is in a mental health crisis situation, you should immediately call 911 or the local psychiatric crisis response hotline at (413) 733-6661. **Help is available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week.**

Navigating the Insurance System

Health insurance may cover the cost of child and/or family mental health services. If your insurance policy includes a mental health benefit, it is usually a good idea to call the 800 number on the back of your insurance card to request a list of providers who will accept your insurance company's rate, and to learn about any restrictions that may limit the number of sessions or types of treatment. Families can experience frustration when, in the midst of concern about their child, they also encounter obstacles when they make the decision to seek assistance. Patience and persistence is the key. Many mental health providers will adjust their fees, based on a family's ability to pay. Some mental health providers will also provide mental health services right in your home. If your family or student is eligible for Medicaid or MassHealth, they may qualify for a wide range of services through the Massachusetts Children's Behavioral Health Initiative. Your pediatrician will be able to help you access MCBHI supported services.

Community agencies, faith-based organizations or employee assistance programs provided by some employers can also offer low cost or no cost services, but it is important to find the service that is not only available but is the best possible match to your need. If you have serious concerns regarding your child and are encountering difficulties in your efforts to seek help, do not hesitate to speak with someone you trust, including your pediatrician or school counselor.

When Making an Appointment

By contacting a local mental health provider, you can talk with a therapist whose job it is to understand and provide support to children with mental health issues. The first step in the process is usually called intake.

This might be done over the phone, but often occurs at the first appointment. Depending on the age of the child and the nature of the concern, some clinicians prefer to see the parent(s) alone for the first visit. The purpose of the intake process is to gather information about your child's physical and emotional health (including any use alcohol and drugs), family and social background, and

what goals you have for counseling services. The counselor or intake worker may ask many questions at this time, but it is also an opportunity for you to fully describe any concerns that you have, and ask the kind of questions that will help you determine if you are heading in the right direction.

Following Through

Remember that even when you are on the right track with a service referral it might take some time to find the right course of treatment and set up the kind of supports that will be most helpful to your child. Just as there is usually no single cause for mental health-related concerns, there are usually no simple answers. In many cases, a team approach is necessary and you will definitely want school personnel to be aware and involved. Because of safeguards to your privacy and confidentiality, you will be asked to authorize consent to allow the counselor to speak to the other professionals that may provide services, assistance or insights that improve your child's care. It is important that you feel comfortable with any sharing of information, and that you are assured that only information that is pertinent to effective treatment will be discussed.

Exceptions to Confidentiality

The one exception to confidentiality occurs when a professional believes that a child or family member poses a risk of harm to self or others. In such cases, the professional is required by law to make efforts to protect the safety of your child and those around him or her by reporting this potential risk to the appropriate authorities. Depending on the nature of the circumstances, a risk/threat assessment may be conducted by specially trained school mental health staff or community agency providers and may be required prior to a student's re-entry to school.

Questions to Ask:
Before, During, and After the First Visit

Before:

1. Does my doctor, friend, family member or school liaison have a counselor that they would recommend?
2. Which providers accept my insurance, and what services are covered? If not covered by insurance, how are fees determined?
3. Am I looking for a particular type of therapist? Does my child prefer a male or female? Will the counselor understand my language or cultural background?

During:

1. What experience do you have with children who may be experiencing similar difficulties?
2. Do you have a preliminary diagnosis?
3. What counseling approach are you likely to recommend, and what will my role be in my child's treatment?
4. If medication is being discussed or evaluated, what are the benefits and side effects?
5. Will you be seeking input from school personnel? *(Remember to sign a release authorizing communication between the counselor and the school.)*

After:

1. Does the counselor seem to be a good "fit" for my child and my family?
2. Does the counselor seem to have a treatment strategy, and is my role clear?
3. Is the counselor willing to work with teachers and school professionals to seek input on how these concerns may be affecting academic performance of school adjustment?

Community Services Guide

There is no greater priority than your child's health, including his or her emotional well-being. If you have concerns, please remember that you are not alone. Consider teachers, school administrators, and school counselors, as partners in getting the assistance that you and your family may need.

The following listings provide just a few of the many resources that are available to help you and your family when you encounter difficult or stressful situations. While this information is intended to be helpful, we also recognize that contact information and scope of available services can quickly change. This is not a directory, but the support agencies represented in this guide are well established within the community and are intended to be good reference points for answering your questions or accessing services that are more targeted to individual needs. Remember that school personnel including nurses and counselors are frequently familiar with your child, knowledgeable about up-to-date resource information and happy to help.

1. Behavioral Health Network Crisis Services

417 Liberty Street, Springfield, MA 01104
(413) 733-6661 (413)536-2251

BHN Crisis Services is a comprehensive program designed to respond to individuals experiencing a crisis related to a mental illness or substance use. Services are delivered through a range of programs including evaluation services, stabilization services, outpatient services, and support services.

2. Bureau of Substance Abuse Services

(800) 327-5050

The Bureau of Substance Abuse Services oversees the substance abuse and gambling prevention and treatment services in the Commonwealth.
Responsibilities include: licensing programs and counselors; funding and monitoring prevention and treatment services; providing access to treatment for the

indigent and uninsured; developing and implementing policies and programs; and tracking substance abuse trends in the state.

3. Pathways for Parents

(413) 583-3527 or email c_milner@ludlowps.org

The Pathways for Parents is a program of the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, established to give support services to children, from birth to age 8, and their families *(i.e. parenting education and community resource referrals).*

Visit: https://pathways4parents.wordpress.com/

4. Department of Children and Families

VanWart Area Office, Springfield, MA

(413) 205-0500

NOTE: To report abuse or neglect, call the Child-at-Risk Hotline anytime of the day or night at (800) 792-5200.

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) is the Massachusetts state agency charged with the responsibility of protecting children from child abuse and neglect. DCF strives to build the capacity of communities to support families and prevent child abuse and neglect, and to integrate a strengths-based approach.

5. Department of Mental Health

P.O. Box 389, Northampton, MA 01061

(413) 587-6200

The Department of Mental Health facilitates access to services and supports to meet the mental health needs of individuals of all ages. The department sets the standards for the operation of mental health facilities and community residential programs and provides clinical, rehabilitative and supportive services for adults with serious mental illness, and children and adolescents with serious mental illness or serious emotional disturbance.

6. **Federation for Children with Special Needs** 1135 Tremont Street, Suite 420, Boston, MA 02120 *Western MA Contact: (413) 323-0681 or* fcsninfo@fcsn.org

The Federation is a center for parents and parent organizations to work together on behalf of children with special needs and their families. Resources include parent support, workshops, advocacy and publications.

7. Rick's Place Center for Grieving Children

35 Post Office Park Suite 3514 | Wilbraham, MA

(413) 348-3120 http://ricksplacema.org

Rick's Place is a safe, compassionate environment for all children affected by the death of a close family member. Children and teens, kindergarten through high school, participate in age-appropriate group activities and discussion related to their grief experience. Trained facilitators use creative approaches including art, music, play and poetry to encourage grief expression, memory sharing, feelings exploration, and self-care. Concurrent adult groups help caregivers to develop understanding children's grief, and strategies for support. To learn more, call *(413)348-3120* or visit: http://ricksplacema.org

8. Behavioral Health Network, Inc. (BHN)

This is a non-profit community behavioral health service agency that provides comprehensive, outcome-driven behavioral healthcare to help individuals, families, and communities improve the quality of lives for those with behavioral health and developmental challenges. For additional information, please visit: www.bhninc.org

9. Center for Human Development (CHD)

This is a Human Services agency, with over 70 programs that serve those in Western Mass and CT. From Early Intervention and young children through Adult Day Health, CHD recognizes the unique needs of program participants and works to go above and beyond each and every day. For additional information, please visit www.chd.org

10. Massachusetts 211 United Way of Western Massachusetts

1. 2-1-1 connects callers to information about critical health and human services available in their community, 24 hours/day and 7 days/week.
2. 2-1-1 provides a one-stop service for vital information, including referrals to human services for every day needs and in times of crisis.

For example, 2-1-1 can offer access to the following types of services and resources:

- *Basic Human Needs:* food banks, clothing, shelters, rent assistance, utility assistance.
- *Physical and Mental Health:* medical information lines, crisis intervention services, support groups, counseling, drug and alcohol intervention, rehabilitation, health insurance programs, Medicaid and Medicare, maternal health, children's health insurance programs.
- *Support for Children, Youth, and Families:* quality childcare, after school programs, Head Start, family resource centers, summer camps and recreation programs, mentoring, tutoring, protective services, and disabilities information.

Substance Use Prevention/Intervention Resources

The following information is provided by the Hampden-Wilbraham Partners for Youth Coalition with support from a grant from the federal Drug Free Communities (DFC) programs.

Youth Addiction Support

Youth Central Intake & Care Coordination

This program provides 'free' and confidential support, on how to help a youth or young adult who may be struggling with substance use. Ask any questions and get referrals to DPH-licensed treatment services at the right level of care needed.

Toll free: *(866) 705-2807* or *(617) 661-3991*

MA Substance Abuse Information & Education Helpline: *(800) 327-5050*
Free, anonymous information and referrals for alcohol and drug use problems (all ages).
Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Weekends: Saturday/Sunday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. http://hria.force.com/

Support Groups

Learn to Cope
This is a peer-led support network for families dealing with addiction, and an online 24/7 chat room for support and resources. Please visit: www.learn2cope.org Meetings: Thursdays, 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Providence Behavioral Health Hospital
1233 Main Street, Holyoke, MA *(1st floor auditorium)*
Contact: mjulian@learn2cope.org

Western MA Parents Support Group
Parents and caregivers helping each other while trying to cope with a child using alcohol and/or drugs.
Meetings: Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Providence Behavioral Health Hospital
1233 Main Street, Holyoke, MA *(1st floor auditorium)*
Contact: Barbara Gallo at bgallo61@yahoo.com

Al-Anon and Alateen
Understanding and support for friends and families of problem drinkers. For information or to find a group meeting visit: www.valleyalanon.org

Naranon
This is a 12-step support program for family and friends of an addict. For more information or to find a group meeting throughout your area visit: www.naranonctma.org

Helplines and Online Support
Partnership for Drug-Free Kids
Helpline National Helpline available:
Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and 24/7 on-line resources.
Toll Free: *855-DRUGFREE (855) 378-4373*
http://www.drugfree.org

Allies in Recovery
This is an online resource to help support families who have a loved one struggling with addiction.
Free for MA residents. Visit: www.alliesinrecovery.net

Parental Stress Line
This is a toll free helpline for parents, 24/7 availability, confidential and anonymous.
Toll free: (800) 632-8188
http://www.parentshelpingparents.org/parental-stress-line

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
This is an online resource and group meeting directory for grandparents and all relatives raising grandchildren
Visit: http://wwwmassgrg.com

PART 2

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

School Hours

Below are the hours of your child's school day.

Undermountain Elementary	8:10 – 2:40
New Marlborough Central	8:10 – 2:40
South Egremont School	8:10 – 2:45

Arrival Times for School

Unless otherwise noted, students should not arrive to school any earlier than the morning times listed below, as supervision is not provided before that time.

Undermountain Elementary	7:50
New Marlborough Central	8:00
South Egremont School	___

Absences

Regular attendance enhances learning through uninterrupted access to academic content, continuous direct instruction and consistent development of skills and application of knowledge. Excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused; tardiness; and leaving school before scheduled dismissal times have a negative effect on student performance.

Did you know...?

- Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 76, Section 2 and Session Laws of 2012, Chapter 222 defines school attendance regulations
- Each school district is required to have a policy of notifying parents if their child has **five** or more *unexcused* absences in a year – see Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 76, Sec 1B
- School principals are required to request a meeting with parents/guardians of a child who has **five** or more *unexcused* absences for the purposes of developing an action plan to improve student attendance
- SBRSD adheres to and is in full compliance with these regulations
- Parents/guardians have legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school during the school year

After **five** *unexcused* absences, a meeting will be scheduled with the Principal, Assistant Principal parent or guardian and working together to improve that student's attattendance. ***However, in extreme cases, or if this pattern continues, the next step may be for the school to solicit assistance from the Court (by filing a Failure to Send) or the Department of Children and Family Services.***

- ***Excused absences*** include absences due to illness/medical reasons (**documented by a doctor's notes),** bereavement, religious holidays, time spent with a family home on military leave and court appearances (documented). Calls in notifying the office that your child is sick without documentation from a doctor's office will be marked as unexcused.
- If your child is dismissed by the school nurse for medical reasons and she requests that you keep him or her home for an additional period of time, this will also be considered an excused absence.
- ***Unexcused absences*** include vacation, truancy, and absences due to illness without medical documentation.
- If you feel your child is missing school due to anxiety, or emotional causes, please contact us so that we may be of help to you and your child. Your child's safety and success in school are our priorities.

If a child reaches 10 excused absences due to illness, it will be necessary for the parents/guardians to provide the building principal with a written note from a doctor or other medical professional. Exceptions will be made for any student who is identified by a licensed physician as having a chronic health condition that will affect regular school attendance. In this case, the District will provide appropriate educational opportunities for the student upon receipt of necessary documentation and in accordance with state regulations.

To be eligible to participate in an activity, practice, game, parade or play, a student must be in attendance before 10:00 a.m. on the day of the activity.

Please send a note:

- When a child returns from an absence
- When a child will require early dismissal for any reason stated above
- When a child is tardy for any reason stated above

STATE AGENCY CUSTODY

If a student under the care or custody of a state agency is absent for five (5) or more consecutive days, the principal shall contact the agency's educational liaison, case manager, or supervisor on the fifth (5th) day of nonattendance and every five (5) days thereafter regarding the student's absenteeism.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

1. Undermountain

- If your child is not dismissing from school in his/her normal manner the office must be notified via note/phone call from the parent/guardian. If we do not have one of these forms of communication, we cannot change their way of dismissal.
- All visitors/parents must use the main entrance to the school. Side and back entrances will remain locked during school hours. The school administration reserves the right to deny visitation for reasons of safety.
- All visitors/parents must be buzzed in.
- All visitors/parents must sign in and out at the main office and wear a "Visitor's Badge" while in the building.
- Drop off for EK – grade 6 is 7:50 – 8:05 a.m. in the small elementary parking lot (no child should be dropped off prior to 7:50).
- Pick up is in the elementary lobby at 2:40.
- **A note should be sent to school when a child will be leaving school to go to another child's home, leaving school with another designated adult, or attending an after school event.**
- ***AT NO TIME SHOULD YOU PASS THE SCHOOL BUSES AFTER THEY HAVE ENTERED THE SCHOOL GROUNDS.***

2. New Marlborough Central

- Drop off for Pre-K, EK and K children is at the front of the building at 8:00 a.m., entering through the front door.
- Drop off for grades 1-4 is at the rear of the building facing the driveway. If you arrive before 8:00, line up behind the buses. Children will enter the building right after the buses finish unloading. At 8:10, the rear door is closed and locked. Any student arriving after that time is tardy and must enter using the front door and check into the office.

3. South Egremont School

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Tardy and Early Dismissal

1. Students who arrive at school after the starting time are considered tardy and should report to the office before going to their class. Students should then follow the procedure that pertains to their particular school.
2. Students who are late due to a bus delay will not be considered tardy.
3. Please note that if a student is out of school for more than one-half of the school day, it will count as an absence.
4. When necessary, early dismissals are granted upon written parental request specifying the time, date, reason, and who will be picking up your child. Please contact your individual school to determine the procedure for an early dismissal. Please schedule appointments outside of school hours.

General School Visitation

Parents are welcome to visit our schools at any time. Please observe the following guidelines when visiting:

- **For security purposes all visitors must report to the main office upon entering and leaving the building, sign a guest log showing arrival and departure times and wear a visitor's pass at all times while they are in the building.** Staff are encouraged to ask a person not wearing a visitor's pass if they have registered in the principal's office.
- Parental requests for classroom visitations will be welcomed as long as the educational process is not disrupted. To this end, we ask that such requests be made at least forty-eight hours in advance to allow for proper arrangements to be made.
- The building principal has the authority to determine the number, times, and dates of observations by visitors. This will be done in consultation with staff members so as to give adequate notice to the staff of the impending visits.
- Under ordinary circumstances, classroom observations will be strongly discouraged during the first three weeks of school in September and during the month of June.
- Any student who wishes to have a guest in school MUST ask permission of one of the administrative staff 24 hours in advance of the proposed visit. If permission is granted, the guest is expected to follow the standards of behavior expected of all

students. Upon arrival, the guest must register in the office. Any guest who fails to comply with student regulations will be asked to leave the school building and grounds immediately.

Occasionally, there may be circumstances that will require you to show an ID, such as a driver's license, in order to enter the building or pick up your child. While some of these measures may create anxiety, inconvenience or delays, they are necessary steps to provide the safest and most secure learning environment possible.

Informal Classroom and School Visitations

Refer to Part 1 of this Handbook.

Parent Volunteers

Parent participation in school is expected and encouraged. However, please be reminded that all parent volunteers who are working in any capacity in the school setting are bound by the laws of confidentiality. Information obtained through observation or participation in classrooms is completely confidential. *On a yearly basis, the SBRSD School Volunteer Agreement must be completed prior to volunteering in the District.*

Every 3 years the volunteer must have a District CORI clearance. Southern Berkshire Regional School District is required by law to request Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) from the Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB) for present and future volunteers who have direct and unmonitored contact with children.

Parents who are able to volunteer can make valuable contributions to educational programs. Help is often needed with various school functions, field trips, class celebrations, and exhibitions. Ask your child's teacher how you can help.

Refer to the *School Volunteer Agreement* at the end of this Handbook.

Grading and Reporting

Refer to Part 1 of this Handbook.

Parent/School Communication

Parent/teacher conferences are an integral part of the communication carried on between home and school. Through these conferences, a better assessment of each student's progress can be achieved between teacher and parent. Parents may request a conference with their child's teacher or team any time during the school year by calling the school office to arrange a convenient time.

- Report cards that reflect the student's progress are sent home three times a year for Kindergarten – 6th grade (November, March & June).
- Parent/teacher conferences are formally held twice a year. However, if you feel you need a meeting you may schedule a conference with your child's teacher at any time. Please contact your child's teacher to schedule an appointment.
- At the beginning of each year, in mid-September, there is a Parent Orientation evening. During Orientation, parents and guardians meet teachers to learn about classroom routines and expectations and attend a large group meeting to learn about school-wide initiatives, goals, events and celebrations. There is an end of year Open House in May where students' work is exhibited.
- Administration and teachers welcome requests to meet with parents/guardians to learn more about the school and to discuss questions or concerns about the education of your child. Please call and make an appointment.
- There are many exhibitions, concerts, and athletic events through the year that showcase student performances. Teachers send home announcements and newsletters regularly. Most events are also posted on the school website: www.sbrsd.org under Calendars>Events Calendar.
- Individual Next Generation MCAS 2.0 student results are confidential and will be sent to the student's home in the fall with the scores from the previous spring's testing.
- If your child has a problem with another student on the bus, at an after school event, at recess, or in the classroom, please contact your child's teacher, assistant principal, or the principal as soon as possible after the incident.

Homework Policy

Homework is an essential and valuable component of the learning experience in the SBRSD elementary schools. Current research shows that homework provides an opportunity to practice organizational skills, and develop strong work and study habits. It also helps promote parent-child interaction and strengthen home/school communication. As they progress through their academic career students take more responsibility for homework completion. To achieve these ends, relevant, high quality standards-based assignments are

given to students on a regular basis. Homework can support and enhance learning, provide feedback to teachers about learning, allow students to practice skills and deepen their knowledge. It can instill confidence within students when they successfully complete tasks on their own. Homework assigned in class is never used as a punitive measure.

A. Homework Requirements

- Research shows that reading every night is one of the most important activities any child can do for homework. Reading at the child's instructional level can take place each night.
- Homework may be used to provide practice in needed skills.
- Homework assignments will be relevant to what is being taught. Consideration is given to the individual skill needs of each student.
- Homework assignments should be completed and turned in on time.
- Parents will communicate with the school if homework is unable to be completed at home.

B. Homework Guidelines

- In kindergarten, assignments may be given up to three times a week and may require up to 20 minutes to complete.
- In first and second grade, assignments may be given up to four days per week requiring up to 20 minutes.
- In third and fourth grade, assignments may be given up to four times per week and may require from 30 to 45 minutes.
- In firth and sixth grade, assignments will be given up to four times per week and may require from 40 to 60 minutes to complete. Long-term assignments may also be given and the time for them may vary.

C. Summer Homework

Summer homework, at each grade level, may be assigned. Parents will be notified with specific details including participation requirements.

D. Homework Center

The Undermountain Homework Center is open Monday through Thursday from 2:40 to 3:40 for grades 3 – 6 and is available to NMC students as well who may ride the activities bus from NMC to UME. Parents are required to pick up students promptly at 3:40 p.m. End of day transportation is the responsibility of the parents/guardian.

Parents can assist their children in doing a responsible job of completing homework assignments by:

- Providing suitable study conditions (desk or table, lights, books, supplies, quiet environment)
- Reserving time for homework
- Encouraging children to begin an assignment and to complete as much of it as possible
- Encouraging children to put forth their best effort on each assignment

Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher if they have any questions about the type or duration of homework assignments. Students vary widely with regard to work habits. If a student appears to spend significantly more or less time on assignments than indicated in the guidelines stated above, parents should contact the teacher.

Class Placement

The teaching staff and administrators do class placements. Grade level teams, along with specialists and administration, consider a variety of issues to ensure that your child has a teacher and a class that is appropriate to his/her needs and is a balanced heterogeneous group. Considerations are many, including academics; social, behavioral and emotion needs; learning styles; student services; and distribution of boys and girls. Parents/guardians are invited to share their input regarding placement with the principal, in person, or by completing a Parent Input Form that will be sent home to all parents in the spring. Students will learn who their teacher is for the following year on the last day of school. Parents will receive notice of their child's teacher in their child's report card. Placement decisions are made at the sole discretion of the school administration.

Policies Relating to Student Conduct and Discipline

The school's primary goal is to educate, not discipline. When the behavior of individual students comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may

be necessary both for the benefit of that individual as well as the school as a whole. The conduct of students shall be governed by the policies, regulations and rules of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District.
These rules are applicable in school, on the school grounds, at a school activity away from school, on the way to and from school, and on a school bus. Students who become involved in behaviors that are beyond the scope of the above area, which adversely affect the continuity and/or quality of school operations, and/or the effectiveness and well-being of school personnel (to include the harassment of school personnel, bomb threats, and vandalism to school property and buses, etc.) will be subject to disciplinary action.

Discipline Protocols

In all circumstances, meaningful accountability for inappropriate behavior is applied. A student's past discipline record, individual needs, and/or 504 or IEP status will be considered prior to making discipline decisions. The following consequences or combination of consequences may be used to hold students accountable for their inappropriate actions at school, but this list is not exhaustive and the school administration reserves the right to impose different consequences as appropriate. In all cases, confidentiality must be adhered to by law.

- phone call home
- conference with principal or assistant principal
- parent/teacher conference
- time out in classroom or office
- repair or replace damaged, defaced, lost, or stolen property
- loss of recess privileges with prior approval by administration
- mediation
- field trip denied
- after school activity denied
- internal suspension
- external suspension
- expulsion from school
- restorative discipline

Suspension Code

The principal or designee may suspend a student for acts of a serious nature. Some acts for which suspension will be considered include, but are not limited to, the following:

- open defiance of authority and/or school rules and regulations, including failure to report to the main office when sent by a teacher
- threatening, striking, and/or assaulting a student or staff member, to include, but not limited to, punching, biting, or kicking
- damaging or defacing the property of students, teachers, or the school district, (including computer hardware/software)
- profanity, immorality or impropriety (word, materials, gesture, comment, or deed)
- verbally harassing, intimidating, or provoking a student or staff member (including electronic submissions)
- theft or attempted theft
- failure to abide by corrective measures for previous acts of misconduct
- smoking or use of tobacco or nicotine devices
- drug or alcohol possession or use
- leaving school without permission
- continually being deceitful, i.e. lying and/or forging information
- hazing
- sexual impropriety
- sexual harassment
- bullying

Any student who intentionally injures another student or staff member will be subject to a suspension of one or more days.

Disciplinary Definitions

Expulsion: the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) consecutive school days

In-School Suspension: the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. *Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.*

Long-Term Suspension: the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. *Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.*

Written Notice: written correspondence sent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent

Principal: the primary administrator of the school (or his/her designee) for disciplinary purposes

Protocols

- **In-School Suspension**
  Prior to the imposition of an in-school suspension, the student will be informed of the disciplinary offense and provided with an opportunity to respond. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal will provide oral notice to the student and parent of the length of the in-school suspension and will make reasonable efforts to meet with the parent. On or before the day of the in-school suspension, the principal will deliver written notice to the parent of the basis for and length of the in-school suspension and inviting the parent to meet to discuss the student's behavior if such a meeting has not already occurred.

Students have the right to appeal an in-school suspension that will result in their removal from regular class schedule and activities for more than ten (10) total school days in a school year.

- **Out of School Suspension**
  In the case of disciplinary offenses not involving a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension. Written notice of the date and time for the hearing will be provided in English and in the primary language of the student's home and will identify the disciplinary offense with which the student has been charged, the basis for the charge, the potential length of the student's suspension, and inform the parent and student of the right to interpreter services if necessary to participate in the hearing. Where a student may be subject to a long-term suspension, the principal will also notify the student and parent of the student's right to legal representation (at parent's/student's expense), the right to present and examine witnesses, the right to review the student record and documents that may be relied upon by the principal, and the right to request that the hearing be audiotaped.

  For disciplinary offenses involving a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge of felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student will be given oral notice of the violation with which he/she is charged and an opportunity to respond thereto, prior to the principal's imposition of a short-term suspension or an interim suspension of less than ten (10) consecutive days pending formal proceedings. Upon imposition of a short term or interim suspension of ten (10) consecutive days or less pending further disciplinary proceedings, the student and parents will be provided with written notice of the suspension and the date and time of any formal disciplinary proceedings.

The Principal's Hearing

- **Short-Term Suspension**
  The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. The principal will discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student will have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate. The principal will provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

- **Long-Term Suspension**
  The purpose of the hearing is the same as the purpose of a short-term suspension hearing.

  In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student will have the following rights:

➢ the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;

- the right to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student;
- the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident;
- the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; and
- the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request.

The Principal's Decision

Based on the evidence presented at the hearing, the principal will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and the remedy or consequences to be imposed. The principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense and, in cases not involving a) possession of a controlled substance, b) a weapon, c) an assault on a member of the educational staff, or d) felony charges, shall avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. If the principal decides to suspend or expel the student, written notice of the principal's decision will be sent to the student and parents in English and the primary language of the home identifying the disciplinary offense, the factual basis for the principal's decision, the beginning and end dates of the suspension or expulsion, and the process for appeal. The principal will also notify the student and parent of the student's opportunity to make academic progress during the period of removal from school in accordance with M.G.S. c. 76, §21.

Prior to suspending a student in grades K-3 from school, the principal will send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

Disciplinary Appeals

Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, the student shall have ten (10) calendar days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the superintendent of schools. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71 §37H1/2, the student shall have five (5) school days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the superintendent. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, §37H3/4, the student shall have five (5) calendar days from the effective date of the suspension imposed by the principal but shall be granted an extention of seven (7) calendar days upon request.

Academic Progress

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, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. 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 opportuity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, in accordance with the school's educaton service plan.

Emergency Removal of Student

Under certain emergency circumstances, it may not be practical for the principal or his/her designee to provide prior oral and written notice before removing a student from school. The principal or his/her designee may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's (or his/her designee's) judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The principal or his/her designee will immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall:

(a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, the potential consequences, including potential length of suspension, the opportunity for a hearing including the date/time/location of the hearing, the right to interpreter services, and other rights permitted for students who may be placed on long-term suspension as set forth in 603 CMR 53.08(3)(b);
(b) Provide written notice to the student and parent, including the information described in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
(c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal or his/her designee that complies with 603 CMR 53.08(2) or 52.08(3), as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school

days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent;

(d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(2)(c) and 53.08(2)(d) or 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c) and 53.08(3)(d) as applicable.

A principal will not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities & Section 504 Plans

The following procedures apply to suspension of students with disabilities and on Section 504 Plans when suspensions exceed ten (10) consecutive school days or when a student is subject to a pattern of removal exceeding ten (10) cumulative school days. These procedures include the responsibilities of the team and the responsibilities of the district.

(a) A suspension of longer than ten (10) consecutive school days or a series of short term suspensions that exceed ten (10) school days and constitute a pattern of removal and are considered to constitute a disciplinary change in placement.

(b) Prior to a suspension that would result in a disciplinary change in placement of a student with a disability; building administrators, the parents and relevant members of the student's IEP/504 team will convene to determine whether the violation for which the student is subject to a disciplinary change in placement was caused by or directly and substantially related to the student's disability or was the direct result of a failure to implement the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan.

(c) If the team determines that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, the student may be disciplined in accordance with the policies and procedures applicable to all students except that students eligible for special education services shall be entitled to a free appropriate public education as of the eleventh (11th) day of disciplinary exclusion in the school year.

(d) If the team determines that the behavior IS a manifestation of the disability, then the district will conduct a functional behavior assessment or review any existing behavior intervention plan and take steps (with the consent of the parent) to correct the IEP, the placement, or the behavior intervention plan and the student will not be suspended for the violation found to be a manifestation of his/her disability.

(e) Regardless of the manifestation determination, the district may place the student in an interim alternative setting (as determined by the team) for up to forty-five (45) school days:
- if the behavior involves weapons or illegal drugs or another controlled substance while at school or at a school function; or
- if the student causes substantial bodily injury to another at school or a school sponsored event; or
- if the district provides evidence that the student is "substantially likely" to injure him/herself or others and a hearing officer/court orders the alternative placement.

(f) The parent shall have the right to appeal the manifestation team's determination, the imposition of a disciplinary change in placement, and the student's placement in an interim alternative educational setting. The student will remain in the disciplinary placement imposed by school authorities pending a decision on the appeal or until the expiration of the disciplinary sanction, whichever comes first.

Bus Conduct and Bus Conduct Reports

Riding the school bus is a privilege. The bus is an extension of the classroom and children are expected to conduct themselves on the bus in a manner consistent with established standards for acceptable behavior. The safety of students is paramount. Any action, which interferes with the bus driver's attention, constitutes a serious safety hazard and shall be reported to the principal by issuance of a bus conduct report. Any student receiving 3 bus conduct reports or behaves in a manner affecting the safety of others, will be in danger of having his/her bus privilege suspended. If necessary, the driver, bus owner, or school administrator may issue assigned seats. In addition, if the driver, bus owner, or administrator is concerned that an elementary aged student may not safely board or disembark at a stop, then a school administrator will notify the parent/guardian that he/she, or an adult designated by the parent/guardian, will be required to supervise the child. School buses are the private property of bus contractors and destruction of bus equipment may require appropriate payment for any necessary repairs when riding the bus.

Bus behavior guidelines:
- Be on time for the bus.
- Stay off the road while waiting for the bus.
- Exercise caution when crossing roads.
- Board and exit the bus in an orderly manner

and only from the front door.

- Respect the driver and the rights of all student riders.
- Be seated promptly and face forward (3 pupils per seat may be permissible)
- Remain in your seat until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Students changing buses are to walk directly and safely to the next bus.
- Keep hands, arms, and head inside bus at all times.
- Never drop or throw objects while entering/exiting or riding the bus.
- No eating or drinking on the bus.
- When riding the bus, students may use hand held electronics. Volume must be kept low so as not to distract the bus driver.
- Shouting and loud talking are not permitted.

Neither the bus company nor the school is responsible for any lost or stolen items. Students may not use cell phones on the bus for any purpose and may not record or video other students when waiting at bus stops or when riding the bus. Other than the use of electronics, all forbidden items and activities during school hours apply to the guidelines for bus conduct.
Bus conduct reports must be signed and returned to the office to be sure that parents have seen them. If parents cannot be notified by phone, a 24-hour notice will be given.

STUDENT RULES AND REGULATIONS

Cafeteria Behavior

Lunch should be an enjoyable experience. We ask each child to behave as if he/she were at home eating with his/her family. Students must follow the cafeteria rules of the school they attend. Students may be removed from the cafeteria and/or lunch recess for inappropriate behavior.

Courtesy

Courtesy to teachers, school employees, substitutes, other students, and visitors is important in our school system. As a school citizen, each person should strive to be considerate of others. The expectation is that all members of the school community will be respectful and treat people as they would want to be treated.

Gum and Candy

Gum chewing is not allowed in school at any time. Students are not permitted to sell gum, candy, or any other items in school.

Classroom

Students must come to school with the necessary materials they will use during class time. This should include their textbooks, pencils, pens, and student agenda. Upon entering the building, students go directly to their classroom. Morning homeroom/ advisory is a time for students to organize for the day's activities. Attendance and announcements will be made at this time.

Restrooms

Students must receive permission from their teacher to leave the classroom at any time, unless there is an extreme emergency.

Honesty

Honesty is important and is expected in the Southern Berkshire Regional School District. Students have the duty to be responsible and honest people. Dishonesty and cheating deprive people of their most prized possession: self-respect.

1. Students may not forge (write the signature or initials of another person) any note, pass or official paper work for themselves or for another student.
2. Students may not cheat on a quiz, test or other class work. Cheating is personally unethical and counter-productive to learning. Cheating includes:
   a. Copying class work or homework, or providing answers to another student. Plagiarism (using ideas or writings of another as one's own work, such as copying and pasting from an internet source).
   b. Bringing answers into a testing area.
   c. Giving test questions/answers to a member of a later class or receiving test questions /answers from an earlier class.
   d. Copying from another student's test or knowingly permitting another to copy during a test.
   e. Any other action intended to obtain credit for work that is not one's own.

Money and Valuables

It is strongly suggested that students should not bring more money to school than needed for the day. If you need to bring a large sum of money to school, take it to the office where it can be kept until dismissal time.

Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

In some cases, it is academically appropriate to utilize the portable technology to enhance student learning.

We recognize this potential as well as the possible negative consequences for their use in the classroom. Teachers may use electronic device technology in their classroom as they deem appropriate for educational purposes. If such an item is lost, stolen, or damaged, the school will not be responsible for restitution. Under no circumstances are students to make or receive phone calls or text messages during school hours. Cell phones and any wireless communication devices are to be turned off and put away out of sight during the school day, unless authorized by a staff member. Portable music and video players are to be turned off and put away during all academic times unless with specific permission by classroom teacher. No recording device (audio or video) of any type is allowed during school hours or in the building any time without specific permission.

Cell Phone Search

Search of cell phones for pictures, text messages, and videos that are pertinent to a specific investigation is permissible if the search is reasonable in its inception and justified in its scope.

Physical Education

The physical education program provides a variety of activities. To be excused from gym class, a written note is required from the student's parent/guardian, or school nurse explaining the reason. If there is a need to be excused for more than one week, a note must be sent to the school stating the problem and length of time to be excused. This note must be signed by a doctor and presented to the school nurse. Sneakers are a requirement for gym class.

Respect and Care of School Property

Respect for school property is the sign of a good school citizen. Persons who willfully damage school property will be required to make full restitution and will be reported to the proper legal authorities. Vandalism may result in suspension from school for up to 10 days. Textbooks and school supplies are loaned to the student, who is expected to return them in good condition. Lost or damaged books and materials must be paid for in order that immediate replacements may be made.

Bullying, Harassment or Cyberbullying

The complete Bullying Prevention/Intervention and Education Plan (2014) is available on the school's website under Students & Parents.

Southern Berkshire Regional School District strives to create an emotionally and physically safe environment of courtesy, respect, and tolerance for all. We are committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive effort to promote learning and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that impedes the learning process.

Bullying in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. In addition, retaliation against another student who has brought forth a bullying complaint to the attention of the SBRSD or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy is also prohibited and will not be tolerated by the SBRSD. It is a violation for anyone, including another student, to bully or intimidate a student through conduct or communication as defined in the above definition.

Bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds
- at school sponsored or school-related activities
- at functions or programs whether on or off school grounds
- at school bus stops
- during transit to and from school or school-related activities
- on school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district
- through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the Southern Berkshire Regional School District

Bullying and cyberbullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the Southern Berkshire Regional School District if the act or acts in question:

- create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the classroom

A. BULLYING DEFINITION

Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessional of a

written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that:

1. causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property;
2. places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property;
3. creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;
4. infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or
5. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school

For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyberbullying.

B. CYBERBULLYING DEFINITION

Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, Internet communication, instant messages or facsimile communication. Cyberbullying shall also include:

1. the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person; or
2. the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses 1 – 5, inclusive of the definition of bullying.

Cyberbullying includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses 1 – 5 inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

C. HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

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

D. BULLYING PREVENTION & INTERVENTION

The Superintendent and/or his designee will develop, adhere to, and update a plan to address bullying prevention and intervention, in consultation with district stakeholders. The plan will be reviewed and updated at least biennially. The District's bullying intervention plan will recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become a target of bullying and harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including "race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics." The District's bullying intervention plan will include the specific steps that each school will take to support these vulnerable students and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment.

NON-VIOLENT PHYSICAL CRISIS INTERVENTION/PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

All schools and programs within the Southern Berkshire Regional School District strive to maintain safe learning environments for all students and staff. It is the policy of the District that physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations and with extreme caution, after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate. As part of a comprehensive approach to safety, all schools have physical restraint procedures in place that follow the Department of Education regulations. Qualified, trained staff carry out specific procedures and parents/guardians are notified. Under appropriate circumstances, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is notified. For further information, please contact your child's school.

School Attire

Student dress and grooming should be the responsibility of the individual and his/her parents. Attire should not disrupt the educational process. Shirts or other articles of clothing, with either double meaning or explicit statements, which interfere with the civil rights of others will not be permitted. Short midriff tops, spaghetti strap tank tops, and short shorts or short skirts are **not** appropriate school attire. Modest attire is expected. Shorts/skirts must have a hem that reaches the tips of the fingers when arms are extended down the thigh. Pants must be pulled up and underwear may not be visible. Students who come to school in inappropriate clothing will be given an

alternative shirt or shorts, if such clothing is available, to wear for the day, or parents will be called to bring in appropriate attire. All students must wear footwear that is safe in the school environment. Appropriate and safe footwear is required for gym and recess. State law requires that shoes must be worn in a public building.
Any questions or concerns regarding appropriate student attire should be brought to the attention of the principal.
Students should be appropriately dressed to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning.

In addition to the listing above, clothing, attire, and accessories found to be disruptive or distracting to the educational process, or which has affected the safety of students, will be determined a violation of the dress code by the school administration.

Unless the weather is unseasonably warm, jackets are required for school beginning November 1st. Parents should use their discretion on the wearing of jackets and shorts with an understanding that all students are required to go outdoors for lunch recess.

Contacting Students and Staff in School

Phone calls to the classroom can disrupt the teaching process and distract students. Parents and guardians are asked not to make calls to the classroom during the school day. If you need to speak with a teacher, leave a message with the office. If there is an urgent matter that requires a parent or guardian to speak to a child, contact the office and the message will be delivered to the student.

STUDENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

School Insurance

Student insurance is available at a nominal cost and is optional. When a student who is insured under this plan is injured, he/she will be given a claim form from the nurse's office. This form must be completed by the student's parent(s) and presented to the doctor or hospital. The school merely acts as a medium in supplying the insurance and assumes no liability, for either the injury, or the subsequent negotiations with the insurance company.

Sexual Education

The Southern Berkshire Regional School District provides a developmentally appropriate curriculum beginning in Grade 5 covering various aspects of human growth and development including sexual education. Parents have the right to exempt their child from lessons covering sexual education issues. Parents must submit a request in writing to the building principal if they do not wish to have their child participate in this portion of the curriculum. All materials are available to parents for inspection and review in the building principal's office. Parents will be notified of their right to exempt their child from sexual education in September of each school year.

Excursions Policy

Excursions are supplements to the school program and typically do not require the participation of all students in a group or class. Examples include trips sponsored by student clubs and travel of special interest groups outside of school hours and annual class trips.

Students participating in an excursion are representing both our school and community and exemplary behavior is expected at all times.
Students are required to have acceptable attendance, academic and behavioral records in order to participate. Parent consent, as indicated by signature on specific forms provided by the school, is also required for participation. Some excursions may require additional rules for participation.
Minimum Standards for Academic, Behavior, and Attendance:

1. Students must be passing all classes including their Related Arts Classes at the time of the trip or excursion. Minimum grade average must be 60%.
2. One of the following discipline records will exclude you from an excursion:
   a. After receiving three separate incidents of suspension, a student will become ineligible to participate on an excursion for the remainder of the year.
   b. A serious violation of school rules and/or persistent behavioral issues may also be considered as reason to deny a child's participation under the discretion of the principal.
3. A student cannot miss more than 20 school days or the equivalent thereof in school tardiness.

If a student becomes ineligible to participate in an excursion due to the above standards, he/she will forfeit any payments made towards the trip that are non-refundable at the time of the exclusion.
The principal reserves the right to review this policy based upon the best interest of the school and the student(s) involved.

Field Trips and Co-Curricular Activities

Field trips/co-curricular activities are a valuable part of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District's educational program. Parents must sign all