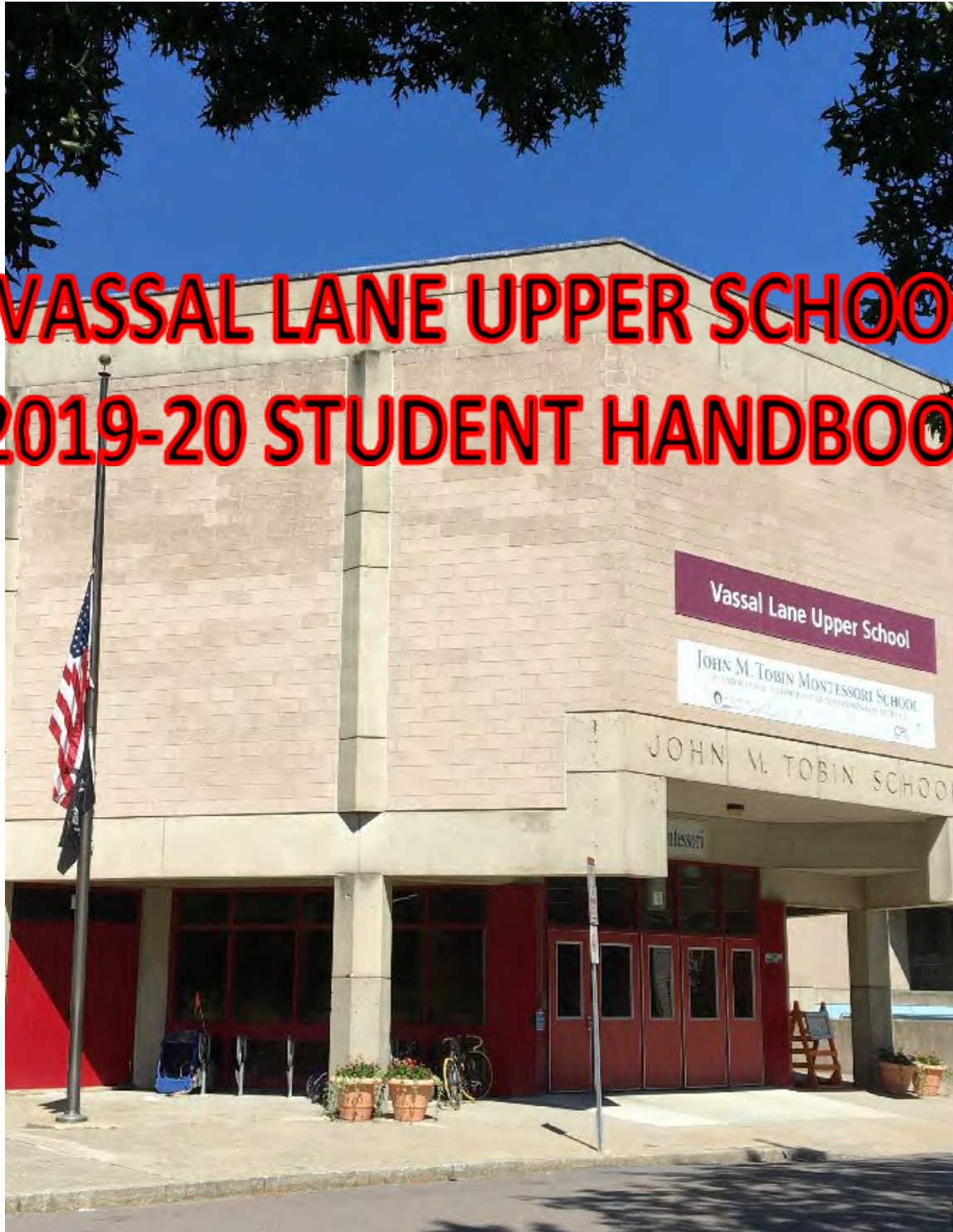


VASSAL LANE UPPER SCHOOL 2019-20 STUDENT HANDBOOK



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<http://vassallane.cpsd.us>

August 2019

Dear Vassal Lane Students and Families,

Welcome back to another school year! Whenever we start something--whether it is something we have done before or if it's our first time--it's very helpful to know what is expected of us.

This handbook contains important information about many aspects of being a student at Vassal Lane Upper School. Each student and caregiver is responsible for reading this document carefully so as to become familiar with our rules and procedures. A signature page, indicating that students and parents/guardians have read this document, is due back in the first week of school.

On behalf of the VLUS teachers and staff, I want to extend our tremendous sense of excitement as to what will be a remarkable school year!

Sincerely,

Daniel Coplon-Newfield
Head of School

Table of Contents

Vision & Mission Statements	4
School Administration	4
Daily Schedule	5
Teams	5
Attendance	6
Tardiness	6
Dismissal	7
Hallway Passes	7
Transportation	7
Lockers	7
Field Trips	8
Lockdown & Fire Drills	8
Academic Expectations	9
Homework	9
Make-up Work/Extra Help	9
Report Cards and Progress Reports	10
Grade Scale	10
Electronic Devices + Headphones	10
Acceptable Use Policy	10
Dress Code	10
Discipline	12-19
Anti-Bullying Policy	19-28
Sexual Harassment Policy	28-29
Hazing Policy	30-32
Library Information/Procedures	33-34

The Cambridge Public Schools is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to the provision of quality educational programs for all students. The Cambridge Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related condition, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, physical appearance or parenting status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Vision Statement

The Vassal Lane Upper School is a place where everyone belongs. We envision our students as scholars and believe in the power of perseverance. We become better together.

Mission Statement

All students, teachers, families, and administrators are active members of the VLUS community, engaging in their own learning and development. We are committed to collaboration and creating environments in which all students learn at high levels. We are mindful of societal inequities and work to challenge injustice. We strive to promote inquiry, reflection, critical thinking, creative expression, resilience, civic engagement, and lifelong learning.

School Administration and Support Staff

Head of School	Daniel Coplon-Newfield	617.349.4858	dcoplon-newfield@cpsd.us
Assistant Principal	Tanya Benzan	617.349.6705	tbenzan@cpsd.us
Guidance Counselor	Matthew Sadowski	617.349.6550 x324	msadowski@cpsd.us
School Social Worker	Susan Peloquin	617.349.6550 x332	speloquin@cpsd.us
School Psychologist	Heidi Munoz	617.349.6550 x334	hmunoz@cpsd.us
School Nurse	Toya Scott	617.349.6550 x295	tscott@cpsd.us
School Clerk	Rachelle Boyce	617.349.6550	rboyce@cpsd.us
Family Liaison	Obi Carrion	617.349.6550	ocarrion@cpsd.us

Daily Schedule

- Prior to 8:40: students are in the cafeteria or outside
- 8:40 a.m.: Locker time
- 8:55 a.m.: School begins with Advisory
- 2:55 p.m.: School dismissal

At dismissal students participating in after school activities or meeting with a teacher may report to the appropriate room. Otherwise, students are expected to pack up their materials and report to the front exit and either board a bus, begin to walk home, or get picked up.

Grade-level Teaching Teams

The 6th, 7th and 8th grade students work closely with a team of four teachers, seeing each once a day. This plan provides for a smooth transition from elementary school and prepares students for high school. There are approximately 100 students on each team. Each teacher provides instruction in one content area: math, science, English, social studies. In addition to these content areas, students will choose a world language to study (French or Spanish) and will also have a robust schedule of off-team classes: Art, Physical Education, Health and Wellness, and Music.

Attendance

Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, section 1, mandates that all students between the ages of 6 and 16 attend school. In accordance with this regulation, school districts are required to regularly monitor attendance and report any excessive absences to the appropriate state agencies.

The policy of the Cambridge Public Schools (JE) states:

- a. Parents/Guardians/Caregivers must call the school to give notification of an absence by no later than the morning of the absence.
- b. If a call is not made, a note from the parent/guardian/caregiver or the student's medical provider is due on the day that the student returns to school explaining the absence. No student, however, shall be sent home to obtain a written explanation from their parent/guardian/caregiver during a school session.
- c. In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school Head of School may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justifiable.
- d. If an extended absence of a student is foreseen, the parent/guardian/caregiver should contact the Head of Upper School to make arrangements for the completion of academic requirements.
- e. A student who is truant, chronically absent or tardy will be referred to the Office of the Safety and Security. The Director of Safety and Security, after consultation with the Head of School, will review each matter and initiate corrective action which may include referral to the Middlesex County Court if the student is deemed to require additional services under the direction of the Court.

If you are absent from school, you may not participate in after-school or evening activities on that day without prior approval from a building administrator.

Tardiness

Good work ethic and habits begin with punctuality. If you reach school after 8:55 AM, go directly to your Advisory. If you arrive to school after Advisory has ended, please report to the main office to be checked in. You will be given a pass to report to class.

If you know that you will be late for school, please have a caregiver call the attendance line as soon as possible.

Students are expected to make up missing assignments due to tardiness or absence in a timely manner as determined by your teacher.

Dismissal

Although we realize it is sometimes necessary to have to be dismissed early from school, this procedure is intended to minimize disruptions to the learning process.

A caregiver must call the main office at 617-349-6550 as early as possible to inform staff of the early dismissal.

- Students may not leave the building without a parent/guardian/caregiver/authorized adult present.
- When a parent/guardian/caregiver/authorized adult arrives in the main office for your dismissal, we will call the student out of class and the parent/guardian/caregiver/authorized adult must sign the student out.
- If a parent/guardian/caregiver is not picking up the student, they must send in a written, signed, and dated note stating what authorized adult will pick up the student.
- Upon returning to school you should report to the main office to be checked-in and receive a pass to return to class.

Hallway Passes

For your safety and the safety of all our students and staff it is important that you are accounted for in case of an emergency. For this reason, you should have a pass to be in the hallways when classes are in session. This pass indicates that an adult is aware of your whereabouts while not in class.

Transportation

Cambridge Public Schools will provide transportation to all 6th-8th grade students who must walk 1.5 miles or more to their assigned schools, and to all students through grade 8 who must cross Fresh Pond Parkway, McGrath Highway, or Alewife Brook Parkway or Bridge, or who must cross the railroad tracks at Sherman Street. Students who are not eligible for transportation in the morning based on their home address may be eligible to take a school bus to an after school program. Please contact Tina Fisher in the Transportation Department (617.349.6862) for more information.

Lockers

All students will be assigned and responsible for a locker for the year. Do not write on your locker, inside or out, or apply stickers, tape, etc. **Valuables should not be brought to school and should not be left in your locker.** Make sure to always keep your locker locked and do not share your combination with others. Lockers, though assigned to students, are school property. The school maintains the right to search lockers if there is reason to believe the locker contains contraband, weapons, or evidence that will link the locker to trafficking in contraband or weapons, or evidence of a violation of school rules or regulations, or if there is a clear and present danger of immediate

physical threat to the school, students and/or staff. The school will conduct announced and unannounced locker inspections to ensure compliance.

(Ref. School Policy JIH and Section 4.0 of the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*).

Locker clean-outs will be held periodically throughout the school year.

You may go to your locker at designated times during the day or when given permission from your team or teacher.

The school does not accept responsibility for damaged, lost or stolen items.

Field Trips

The Cambridge School Committee recognizes that first-hand experiences provided by field trips and school-sponsored trips are a most effective and worthwhile means of learning; therefore, the Cambridge School Committee encourages that field trips and school-sponsored trips of significant educational value, which are related to the total school program and curriculum, be encouraged under guidelines established by the Superintendent of Schools. A student may be denied participation in a school-sponsored trip for legitimate reasons, such as failure to return a signed consent form, or safety concerns.

Lockdown Drill

At the beginning of the school year and periodically throughout the year, teachers will review Lockdown procedures with students. Students are required to follow all instructions immediately and will be expected to practice how to remain quiet and secure in the 'safe spot' of classrooms.

Fire Drill

Teachers will show students how to exit the building appropriately in the event of a fire alarm. During practice drills students will learn various exit patterns and where and how to line up outdoors. Students are expected to be silent during drills and follow all instructions immediately. Clear, consistent practice ensures that we have the most efficient and effective plans in place to support students and staff members in the event of an emergency.

Academic Expectations

At VLUS, your most important job is to be a successful student. With assistance from adults at home and at school, we believe you can take on the responsibility of being an increasingly independent and successful student. A few tips . . .

- Bring the right materials to school and class every day.
- Do your homework each evening – checking Aspen when needed

Homework

Homework is a part of the VLUS learning experience. It provides for practice of skills and content presented in the classroom. It is expected that students may have up to an hour of homework an evening, with students being asked to read independently each night in addition to other assignments.

Teachers will:

- Give clear concise directions and allow opportunity for student questions
- Assign homework on a regular basis
- Assign long-term assignments (including projects and reports), providing interim due dates when necessary
- Communicate with their team to coordinate an appropriate amount of nightly homework
- Not assign significant homework on religious holidays
- Have a clear policy regarding make-up work after an absence or for incomplete/missing homework
- Post homework consistently online

Students will:

- Record the homework as requested by your teacher
- Ask questions when necessary to clarify the assignment
- Take home all necessary materials
- Plan time for completion of long-term assignments
- Hand in neat, accurate and meaningful work on time
- Seek help when assignments present difficulty
- Determine and complete homework assigned while absent

Aspen is an online classroom portal which allows teachers to post grade and assignment information. Students and families have their own accounts and Aspen is the primary tool for parents to engage with and facilitate conversations about their student's academic progress.

Make-up Work

If you are absent it is your responsibility to speak with your teacher about missed homework, projects, and tests. In most cases, assignments are posted online.

Extra Help

We encourage you to ask your teacher for extra help when needed.

Report Cards & Progress Reports: Progress Reports are posted at the end of Quarters 1 and 3 and report cards are distributed at the end of Quarters 2 and 4 via Aspen.

Grade Scale for Letter Grades

A+ 98-100 A 94-97 A- 90-93
B+ 87-89 B 84-86 B- 80-83
C+ 77-79 C 73-76 C- 70-72
D+ 67-69 D 63-66 D- 60-62
NP 59 & below
P Pass

Electronic Devices + Headphones

Students at Vassal Lane understand that they are not to use any electronic devices (i.e. cell phones, iPods, handheld video games, smartphones, etc.) for personal use during school hours. The policy is that during school hours (8:40-2:55) any such devices are powered off and out of sight. This includes the wearing of headphones, regardless of whether they are connected to a device. If any staff member witnesses a student using a device, the student will first be asked to put it away. After that warning, the device will be confiscated until the end of the day and the student can pick it up in the main office before leaving for the day. Subsequent infractions will result in the device being confiscated and returned to an adult family member after a conversation with a teacher or administrator.

The school does not accept responsibility for damaged, lost or stolen electronic devices.

Acceptable Use Policy

All students will adhere to the *Cambridge Public School's Acceptable Use Policy*, in that all technology will be used in a responsible, legal, and ethical manner. The Cambridge Public Schools computer network is established for limited educational purpose and has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. Accordingly, the Cambridge Public Schools and VLUS has the right to place restrictions on the use of network and to require users to abide by system rules.

Dress Code

When you come to VLUS, you are part of a community of learners. While choosing one's clothing is a personal decision, and involves a combination of taste and trends, VLUS makes a clear distinction between clothing items that are appropriate for home or for out-of-school time, and clothing that is appropriate for school.

The following expectations should be met:

- Clothing that references or depicts drugs, alcohol, tobacco, profanity, sexually explicit language or pictures, or language/imagery that is racist, sexist, homophobic or transphobic or is directed towards or intended to harm, harass, threaten, intimidate or demean an individuals or individual groups on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnicity,

ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or pregnancy or pregnancy related condition, are not acceptable in school or on school trips

- Pajamas and slippers are not acceptable in school or on school trips

Meeting the expectations for student dress is no different than meeting any behavioral or academic expectations. Students are responsible for following all school rules. Teachers will address any concerns regarding the dress code in private.

The school administrators have the final decision on the suitability of what you are wearing, and will base his or her decision on safety or potential disruption to the educational process.

Students who fail to meet student dress requirements may be asked to put on clothes that meet the code and may face disciplinary consequences.

Student Discipline

The safety and comfort of all members of the school community are the main objectives of good discipline. Staff members work closely with school administrators to ensure that all members of the VLUS community are safe and comfortable and ready to learn. When negative behaviors impose on the safety and comfort of the school community consequences will be imposed. The complete codes of conduct established for students by the Cambridge School Committee are set forth in the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*.

Below are some common responses to inappropriate behaviors, however, this list is not exhaustive and other measures may be taken:

- Individual follow-up discussion and/or class discussion
- Parent notification
- Referral to an assistant principal or head of school
- Restoration of physical property
- Community service
- After school detention
- Exclusion from an activity
- Loss of privileges during the school day, after school activities and/or extra-curricular activities
- Removal from class

Suspension

It is the policy of the Cambridge Public Schools that every effort should be made to help students solve conduct problems without resorting to extreme disciplinary measures. However, in those cases where a student's behavior is disruptive to the school, hurtful to themselves or others or engages in activity forbidden by the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts then a suspension may be warranted.

Prior to initiating any disciplinary action, the following steps shall be taken by the Head of Upper School and/or designee in order to afford all students with their due process rights:

a. In-School Suspensions

Prior to imposition of any suspension from regular classroom activities but not the school premises for up to ten (10) consecutive school days or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year, a student shall be informed of:

- i. The disciplinary offense;
- ii. The basis for the charge; and
- iii. The student shall be given an opportunity to respond.

If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal and reporting purposes.

On the same day as an in-school suspension decision, the Head of School and/or designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parents/guardians/caregivers orally as soon as possible of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction and the length of the in-school suspension and shall also invite the parents/guardians/caregivers to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement and possible responses to behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension, if possible, if not, as soon as practicable thereafter.

If a student is placed in in-school suspension or out of school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal and reporting purposes. Additional procedures apply to students with Individualized Education Plans/504 Plans.

b. Short-term Suspensions

Prior to imposition of any suspension from school transportation services or from school for up to ten (10) consecutive school days, or assignment to detention, as a consequence for a disciplinary offense, a student and their parent/guardian/caregiver shall be given oral and written notice in English and the primary language of the home if other than English or other means of communication where appropriate, of the following:

- i. The disciplinary offense;
- ii. The basis for the charge;
- iii. The potential length of the student's suspension;
- iv. An opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the Head of Upper School concerning the proposed suspension and for the parent to attend the hearing;
- v. The date, time and location of the hearing;
- vi. The right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate.

The Head of School may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school.

If a student is placed in in-school suspension or out of school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal and reporting purposes. Additional procedures apply to students with Individualized Education Plans/504 Plans.

c. Long-term Suspensions

Prior to imposition of any suspension of a student from school for more than ten (10) consecutive school days as a consequence for a disciplinary offense, a student

and their parent/guardian/caregiver shall be given oral and written notice in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, of the following:

- i. The disciplinary offense;
- ii. The basis for the charge;
- iii. The potential length of the student's suspension;
- iv. An opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the Head of School concerning the proposed suspension and for the parent/guardian/caregiver to attend the hearing;
- v. The date, time and location of the hearing;
- vi. The right of the student and the student's parent/guardian/caregiver to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
- vii. The right, in advance of the hearing, to have the opportunity to review the student's record and documents upon which the Head of School may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
- viii. The right to be represented by counsel or a layperson of the student's choice, at the expense of the student or the expense of the student's parent/guardian/caregiver;
- ix. The right to produce witnesses on their behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident but the student may not be compelled to do so;
- x. The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school;
- xi. The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Head of School and a copy of the audio recording provided to the student or the parent/guardian/caregiver upon request.
- xii. The right to appeal the Principal/Head of School's decision to the Superintendent.

The Head of School may, in their discretion, allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school.

Please note: Additional procedures apply to students with Individualized Education Plans and the additional procedures set forth below also must be followed prior to any disciplinary action being taken.

- d. In all instances, notices of the suspension and the hearing must occur before the student may be asked to leave school, except when a student presents an immediate threat to school officials, other students, staff and/or themselves or clearly endangers the school environment. *See Section 15.0 of the Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* for procedures related to Emergency Suspensions. In this case, the hearing may be delayed but must be held within a reasonable period of time.

The Head of School shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian/caregiver orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent/guardian/caregiver present, the Head of School shall document reasonable efforts to contact the parent/guardian/caregiver. Reasonable efforts are presumed to have been made if the Head of School has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent/guardian/caregiver in the manner specified by the parent/guardian/caregiver for emergency notification. Written notice to the parent/guardian/caregiver may be made by hand-delivery, first class mail or email to an address provided by the parent/guardian/caregiver for school communications, or by any other method of delivery agreed to by the Head of School and the parent/guardian/caregiver.

The Head of School and/or designee should exercise reasonable care in reviewing the circumstances and use their good professional judgment in making a suspension decision. Extenuating or mitigating circumstances will receive consideration before a decision on suspension is made.

Depending on the severity of the incident, a student may be suspended for up to ten (10) consecutive school days for violations of school rules that occur while in school buildings, on school grounds, in transit to and from school or during any authorized school activity whether on or off school grounds. Although it is not possible to list all behaviors or infractions that might result in a suspension from school the following behaviors may result in a student's suspension or possible expulsion from school:

- Possession or use of a dangerous weapon, drugs, alcohol, tobacco or any drug, alcohol, or tobacco paraphernalia, on school property, at a school-related activity, including athletic events*
- Bullying, Harassment, Discrimination, Retaliation or Hazing*
- Vandalism, damaging or stealing of property*
- Cheating
- Vulgarity, profanity, or offensive verbal or written language*
- Defiance (insubordination) or disrespect to a staff member
- Assault of a student or staff member or use of force*
- Verbal or written threats or abuse*
- Skipping school or classes
- Pulling a fire alarm, making a verbal or written threat to the safety of others or a threat of a bomb*
- Repeated violation of school rules or disrespect

*Denotes discipline governed by Massachusetts Laws or Federal Laws and students may be subjected to further disciplinary actions and disciplinary responses outside of the school.

The Head of School has the right to further review the facts and agreement reached at the suspension hearing and has the right to extend said suspension.

While on suspension, a student is not to be within the vicinity of the school and is not eligible to participate in or attend any schools' events or activities.

Discipline Procedures for Special Education/504 Plans

Students with disabilities, as defined by federal and state laws and regulations, shall be subject to the provisions of this *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*, except as otherwise provided by this section.

The Individual Education Program (IEP) and/or 504 Plan for every student will indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code as set forth in the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* or if the student's disabilities requires modification of this discipline code or to any school-based rules. Any required modifications to the discipline code or any school-based rules will be set forth in the student's IEP and/or 504 Plan.

If a student's behavior is impacted by the student's disabilities, such behaviors will be dealt with through the TEAM process.

In conjunction with making any administrative decision under the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* the Head of Upper School or r designee will notify the Office of Student Services or designee of the suspendable offense of a student with disabilities whose IEP and/or 504 Plan does not reflect the need for modifications to the discipline code set forth in the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* or any school-based rules, and a copy of the suspension notice will be forwarded to the Office of Student Services.

Staff from the Office of Student Services shall be involved in all administrative decisions under the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* involving students with disabilities

If an administrative decision under the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* will not impact the student's placement and/or will not result in a cumulative suspension of more than ten (10) school days during a school year, a TEAM meeting is not required.

If an administrative decision under the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* will impact the student's placement and/or will result in a cumulative suspension of more than ten (10) school days during a school year, a TEAM meeting is required before any administrative decision with respect to discipline is made.

Prior to making an administrative decision under the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*, the Head of School shall determine whether or not the student has been designated a student with disabilities or has been referred for a special education evaluation but not yet determined to be eligible for special education and related services.

A student who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services and who has engaged in behavior that violated any rule or code of conduct may assert any of the protections provided by state and federal special education laws if the school had knowledge that

the student is a student with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

- The school department is deemed to have knowledge that a student is a student with a disability if before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action the following occurred:
 - The parent/guardian/caregiver has expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel or a teacher of the child that the student is in need of special education services; or
 - The parent/guardian/caregiver has requested an evaluation of the student; or
 - The student's teacher or other school personnel have expressed specific concern about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student directly to the director of the Office of Student Services or other supervisory personnel in the Office of Student Services.
- The school department is deemed not to have knowledge that the student is a student with a disability if:
 - The parent/guardian/caregiver has not allowed an evaluation of the student;or
 - The parent/guardian/caregiver has refused services for the student;or
 - The student was evaluated and found ineligible for special education and related services.
- If the school department is not deemed to have knowledge that the student is a student with a disability, the student may be disciplined under the discipline code set forth in the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* except that the following limitations apply:
 - If the parent/guardian/caregiver of the student requests an evaluation during the time period that the student is subjected to discipline, then the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner; and
 - Until the evaluation is completed, the student remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities.

If an administrative decision under the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* will impact the student's placement and/or will result in a cumulative suspension of more than ten (10) school days during a school year and/or will result in an expulsion, the following provisions shall apply:

A manifestation review will be conducted by the school, the student's parents/guardians/caregivers and other relevant members of the student's TEAM to determine whether the student's misconduct was a manifestation of their disability. In making this determination the TEAM will consider whether: (a) the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child's disability; or (b) the conduct in question was the direct result of the non-implementation of the student's IEP and/or 504 Plan. Depending upon the result of the manifestation determination, the proposed disciplinary action may or may not be implemented.

If the TEAM concludes that the student's conduct is a manifestation of the student's disability, the student shall be returned to the placement from which they were removed unless the parent/guardian/caregiver and the school district agree to a change of placement as part of the behavioral intervention plan for the student. Additionally, the TEAM must take immediate steps to remedy any deficiencies found in the student's IEP and/or 504 Plan, placement or implementation in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including conducting a functional behavioral assessment for the student, provided that such an assessment had not been conducted prior to the occurrence of the conduct that led to the manifestation determination team meeting; and either implement a behavioral intervention plan or review and modify as necessary the student's existing behavioral intervention plan.

If the TEAM concludes that the student's conduct is not a manifestation of the student's disability:

- The TEAM shall develop an alternative plan that provides a free appropriate public education to the student during the period of the suspension;
- The TEAM shall present the alternative plan to the student's parents/guardians/caregivers along with the written notice as required under state and federal laws and regulations. Refusal or failure by the parents/guardians to consent to provision of services under the alternative plan shall not prevent the suspension from being implemented.
- If the student's parents/guardians/caregivers request a hearing before the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau of Special Education Appeals, the student shall continue in the interim alternative educational placement identified by the school as a result of an administrative decision under the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* until either the expiration of the term of discipline or an order by a hearing officer changing the student's placement, whichever occurs first.

In all instances in which a change in placement or a suspension of ten (10) or more school days will be imposed, the student must be provided with a free appropriate public education.

School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a student who has violated a code of conduct.

Within ten (10) school days after the date of the administrative decision to impose a disciplinary action, the following shall occur:

- the TEAM must convene to conduct a functional behavioral assessment of the student, if such an assessment does not already exist;
- the TEAM must implement the student's behavioral intervention plan if such plan was not implemented prior to the behavior resulting in the discipline; or
- the TEAM must review and modify the behavioral intervention plan for the student if such plan was implemented prior to the behavior resulting in the discipline.

The TEAM may determine a change in placement, with or without the parents/guardians/caregivers permission, to an interim alternative educational setting for a period not to exceed forty-five school (45) days, as long as a free appropriate public education is provided in one or more of the following instances:

- a student carries a weapon to school or to a school function;
- a student knowingly possesses, uses, sells or solicits the sale of an illegal drug and/or controlled substance while at school or at a school function; or
- a student inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function. “Serious bodily injury” is more specifically defined as involving substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ or mental faculty.

The school also may seek an order from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau of Special Education Appeals for the removal of a student for up to forty-five (45) school days to an interim alternative educational setting if the school determines that the student remaining in their current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The Cambridge Public Schools is committed to creating a safe, caring, respectful learning environment for all students and strictly enforces a prohibition against bullying, including without limitation, cyberbullying, of any of its students by anyone and also strictly enforces a prohibition against retaliation of any person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. Site-based initiatives, developed collaboratively between school administration and personnel, students, families and community members will seek to: (1) help students of all ages and abilities stay safe, act wisely, and believe in themselves; and (2) help adults respond effectively to students’ reports and their own observations.

Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target/victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target/victim or damage to the target/victim’s property; (ii) places the target/victim in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or damage to their property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target/victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target/victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For purposes of this policy, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

Cyber-bullying is further defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer or 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 communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) 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 (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include 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 (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Aggressor or Perpetrator is defined as a student or a member of 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, school volunteer or a vendor, contractor or other person working under a contract with the school district who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

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

Staff is defined to include, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

Target or Victim is defined as a student or an adult against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Bullying can take many forms and can occur in any setting. Bullying can include, but is not limited to, intimidation such as name calling or threatening; social alienation such as shunning or spreading rumors; or physical aggression such as assaults on a student or attacks on a student's property. Bullying can create an atmosphere of fear for all members of the school community. It also can create unnecessary and unwarranted anxiety that affects the ability of a student to attend school, learn in school, walk in school corridors, eat in the school cafeteria, play in the school yard or recreation areas, participate in or attend special or extracurricular activities or travel to and from school. More specifically, a "hostile environment" is defined as 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. Bullying behaviors that are not addressed can lead to devastating consequences for young people, including depression, drops in school performance and attendance. The failure to address bullying behaviors also gives other students the message that it is permissible to engage in negative behaviors.

Bullying of students occurring in the schools is prohibited by law and will not be tolerated by the Cambridge Public Schools. For purposes of this policy, "school" includes schools, school grounds,

travel to and from school and/or school-sponsored events or functions, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, school-sponsored or school-related activities, functions, programs whether on or off school grounds (such as social events, trips, sports events, or similar school-sponsored events and functions), at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the school district or a school, on the way to and from school or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district or a school and 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 school district or school, if the act creates a hostile environment at school for the target/victim or witnesses, infringes on the rights of the victim or witnesses at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Consistent with state law, the Cambridge Public Schools recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including: race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related condition, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, physical appearance or parenting status, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one (1) or more of these characteristics.

The Cambridge Public Schools takes allegations of bullying seriously and will respond promptly to complaints and allegations of bullying. Additionally, allegations of retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying also shall be taken seriously and the Cambridge Public Schools will respond promptly to such complaints and allegations.

If any student, parent/guardian/caregiver of a student, staff member or other community member believes that a student has been subjected to bullying, or to retaliation for reporting bullying, providing information during an investigation of bullying or witnessing or having reliable information about bullying, he or she should bring the matter to the attention of the Head of School. This may be done verbally or in writing. Reports of bullying and/or reports or retaliation for reporting bullying, providing information during an investigation of bullying or witnessing or having reliable information about bullying also may be made anonymously to the Head of School. Please note; however, that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report having been received.

Where it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the Cambridge Public Schools will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose corrective action as necessary, which may range from requiring the aggressor to work with school personnel on better behavior, the recommendation for the provision of counseling or other therapeutic services and/or disciplinary action where appropriate, up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or court involvement. Additionally, consistent with state law, if it is determined that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal, in conjunction with the Director of Safety and Security, shall (i) notify local law enforcement if the Head of School believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor ; (ii) take appropriate disciplinary action; (iii) notify the parents/guardians/caregivers

of the aggressor; and (iv) notify the parents/guardians/caregivers of the target/victim; and, to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

Furthermore, if it is determined that a student has knowingly made a false accusation of bullying or retaliation, they shall be subject to discipline, up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or court involvement. All students shall be afforded the same protection regardless of their status under the law.

In notifying the parents/guardians/caregivers of the target and the aggressor, the principal must comply with the confidentiality requirements of the Massachusetts Student Record regulations, 603 C.M.R. 23.00, and the Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act regulations, 34 C.F.R. Part 99, as set forth in 603 C.M.R. 49.07. More specifically, the Head of School may not disclose information from a student record of a target or aggressor to a parent/guardian/caregiver unless the information is about the parent/guardian/caregiver's own child. The Head of School may disclose a determination of bullying or retaliation to a local law enforcement agency under 603 C.M.R. 49.06 without consent of a student or their parent/guardian/caregiver but the Head of School shall communicate with law enforcement officials in a manner that protects the privacy of targets, student witnesses and aggressors to the extent practicable under the circumstances. Additionally, if the Head of School has determined that there is an immediate and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or individuals, the Head of School may disclose student record information about a target or aggressor to appropriate parties in addition to law enforcement in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals as provided in 603 C.M.R. 23.07(4)(e) and 34 C.F.R. 99.13(a)(10) and 99.36. In this latter situation, the disclosure is limited to the period of the emergency and the principal must document the disclosure and the reasons that the Head of School determined that a health and safety emergency exists.

The Superintendent of Schools will develop and keep updated on at least a biennial basis as required by law a plan to address bullying prevention and intervention. Such plan shall, as required by law, be developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians. The Cambridge Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will address training and professional development for staff and will also address sharing information with parents/guardians/caregivers and students about bullying and sharing information with students about bullying, including information on prevention of bullying, reporting of bullying and the potential legal consequences of engaging in bullying. Additionally, the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will include specific steps that schools will take to support vulnerable students and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying and harassment.

The provisions of this policy and the procedures in the Cambridge Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan do not preclude a student from using the complaint process set forth in the Cambridge Public Schools "Non-Discrimination Policy and Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment Policy" to seek resolution of any complaints of discrimination or harassment that is

based on a characteristic protected by law such as race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related condition. It also should be noted that the provisions of the Anti-Bullying Policy and the procedures set forth in the Cambridge Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan do not preclude a student from using the complaint process set forth in Section 23.0 of the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* to seek resolution of any complaints regarding a student's deprivation of rights set forth in the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*.

Consistent with federal and state laws and regulations and the policies of the school district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any city or town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related condition. Nothing in this policy and/or the *Cambridge Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* prevents a school or the school district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state or federal law or school district policies. In addition, nothing in this policy and/or the *Cambridge Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* is designed or intended to limit the authority of a school or the school district to take disciplinary action under M.G.L.c. 71, sections 37H and 37H 1/2, other applicable laws, or local school or school district policies in response to violent, harmful or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether this policy and/or the *Cambridge Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* covers the behavior.

Intervention and Reporting Requirements

It, however, is important to note that *all school staff are required to immediately report any instance of bullying or retaliation they witness or become aware of to the Head of School or designee*. The requirement to report to the Head of School or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

When the complaint is received, the Head of School will immediately notify:

- Parents/guardians/caregivers of the alleged target
- Parents/guardians/caregivers of the alleged aggressor
- Office of Safety and Security
- The Head of School may consult with the School Resource Officer but shall not share identifying information of the alleged target or aggressor

In notifying the parents/guardians/caregivers of the target and aggressor, the Head of School must comply with the confidentiality requirements of the Massachusetts Student Record regulations, 603 C.M.R. 23.00, and the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations, 34 C.F.R. Part 99, as set forth in 603 C.M.R. 49.07. More specifically, a Head of School

may not disclose information from a student record of a target or aggressor to a parent/guardian/caregiver unless the information is about the parent/guardian/caregiver's own child. A Head of School may disclose a determination of bullying or retaliation to a local law enforcement agency under 603 C.M.R. 49.06 without consent of a student or their parent/guardian/caregiver but the Head of School shall communicate with law enforcement officials in a manner that protects the privacy of targets, student witnesses, and aggressors to the extent practicable under the circumstances. Additionally, if the Head of School has determined that there is an immediate and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or other individuals, a Head of School may disclose student record information about a target or aggressor to appropriate parties in addition to law enforcement in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals as provided in 603 C.M.R. 23.07(4)(e) and 34 C.F.R. 22 99.13(a)(10) and 99.36. In this latter situation, the disclosure is limited to the period of the emergency and the Head of School must document the disclosure and the reasons that the Head of School determined that a health or safety emergency exists.

The Head of School will provide a copy of the *Cambridge Public Schools Non-Discrimination Policy and Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment* and the *Cambridge Public Schools Anti-Bullying Policy* to all parties including the person making the complaint, the alleged student target, the parents/guardians/caregivers of the alleged student target, the alleged aggressor and the parents/guardians/caregivers of the alleged aggressor.

Reports of bullying and/or retaliation for reporting bullying may also be made anonymously to the Head of School of the school where the student attends. Please note, however, that no disciplinary action can be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report having been received.

Complaint Investigation

When the Cambridge Public Schools receives a complaint of bullying or retaliation for reporting bullying, providing information during an investigation of bullying or witnessing or having reliable information about bullying, the Cambridge Public Schools will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances and to protect from bullying or retaliation a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

The investigation may include an interview with the student, parent/guardian/caregiver, staff member or community member filing the complaint, the student alleged to be a victim of bullying or retaliation, the student(s) alleged to have committed the bullying or retaliation, witnesses to any alleged incidents or other individuals as determined by the school department. Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Head of School or designee will promptly notify the parents/guardians of the target and the aggressor of this and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the Head of School or designee contacts parents/guardians/caregivers prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 C.M.R. 49.00. In notifying the

parents/guardians/caregivers of the target and aggressor, the Head of School must comply with the confidentiality requirements of the Massachusetts Student Record regulations, 603 C.M.R. 23.00, and the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations, 34 C.F.R. Part 99, as set forth in 603 C.M.R. 49.07. More specifically, a Head of School may not disclose information from a student record of a target or aggressor to a parent/guardian/caregiver unless the information is about parent/guardian/caregiver's own child. A Head of School may disclose a determination of a bullying or retaliation to a local law enforcement agency under 603 C.M.R. 49.06 without consent of a student or their parent/guardian/caregiver but the Head of School shall communicate with law enforcement officials in a manner that protects the privacy of targets, student witnesses, and aggressors to the extent practicable under the circumstances. Additionally, if the Head of School has determined that there is an immediate and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or other individuals, a Head of School may disclose student record information about a target or aggressor to appropriate parties in addition to law enforcement in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals as provided in 603 C.M.R. 23.07(4)(e) and 34 C.F.R. 99.13(a)(10) and 99.36. In this latter situation, the disclosure is limited to the period of the emergency and the Head of School must document the disclosure and the reasons that the Head of School determined that a health or safety emergency exists.

Additionally, consistent with state law, the parents/guardians/caregivers of the target(s) shall be notified of the results of the investigation and any actions that will be taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation if it is determined that such conduct has occurred. Additionally, consistent with state law and the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Cambridge Public Schools and Cambridge Police Department, if it is determined that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Head of School, in conjunction with the Director of Safety and Security, shall:

- Notify School Resource Officer if the Head of School has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor or has determined that there is an immediate and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or other individuals
- Take appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook
- Notify the parents/guardians/caregivers of the aggressor(s)
- Notify the parents/guardians/caregivers of the target(s), and to the extent consistent with state and federal law and regulations, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation

Moreover, if an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school, the school district or school first informed of the bullying or retaliation shall, consistent with state and federal law, promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school district or school so that both may take appropriate action.

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the Head of School or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Head of School, in conjunction with the Director of Safety and

Security, will notify local law enforcement. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 C.M.R. 49.00 and the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Cambridge Public Schools and Cambridge Police Department. Additionally, if an incident of bullying or retaliation occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in a local school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school, the school district or school informed of the bullying or retaliation shall contact law enforcement in a manner consistent with state and federal law and regulations. In making this determination the Head of School will, consistent with the Plan, applicable school district policies and procedures and the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Cambridge Public Schools and Cambridge Police Department, consult with the school resource officer and other individuals the Head of School or designee deems appropriate.

Disciplinary Action/Responses to Bullying

If it is determined that bullying or other inappropriate conduct has been committed, the Cambridge Public Schools will take action that is appropriate under the circumstances. The disciplinary action taken will balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The Head of School or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Head of School or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The Head of School or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

There are a range of options for teaching appropriate behavior including: offering individualized skill-building sessions; modeling and using restorative practices; providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with school counselors and other appropriate school personnel; implementing a range of academic and non-academic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals; meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce bullying prevention and social skills building activities at home; adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills.

Action for students who are found to have engaged in bullying may further include requiring the aggressor to work with school personnel to improve behavior; a recommendation of counseling, support services or other therapeutic interventions for the student and appropriate family members of the student; disciplinary consequences for the student up to and including court

involvement; or school-related discipline consistent with the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or court involvement.

All students who are found to have engaged in bullying will be informed about the prohibition against retaliation and that any acts of retaliation will result in disciplinary action. Where it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the Cambridge Public Schools will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose corrective action as necessary, which may range from requiring the offender to work with school personnel on better behavior, the recommendation for the provision of counseling or other therapeutic services and/or disciplinary action where appropriate, up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or court involvement. Additionally, consistent with state law, if it is determined that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Head of School, in conjunction with the Director of Safety and Security, shall (i) notify local law enforcement if the Head of School believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator; (ii) take appropriate disciplinary action; (iii) notify the parents/guardians/caregivers of the perpetrator; and (iv) notify the parents/guardians of the victim, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation. Furthermore, if it is determined that a student has knowingly made a false accusation of bullying or retaliation, they shall be subject to discipline consistent with the provisions of the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* which may include suspension, expulsion and/or court involvement.

Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

In order to restore a sense of safety for the student target of bullying and assess the target's needs for protection, a meeting shall be held with the student, their parents/guardians/caregivers, and appropriate school personnel (i.e. school Head of School, assistant principal, safety specialist and/or school resource officer). The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the development and implementation of a safety plan for the student, including staff to whom the student may report if any concerns arise. The Cambridge Public Schools also may, as appropriate, recommend counseling, support services or other therapeutic interventions for the student and appropriate family members of the student.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the Head of School or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately. If a restraining order is in place, one purpose of the meeting will be to review the implications of the restraining order and procedures for reporting if any violation of the restraining order occurs. If the restraining order is against another student or an employee, a separate meeting should be held with that individual to review the restraining order and its implications, expectations and the consequences for violation of the order.

False Accusations/Retaliation

If it is determined that a student has knowingly made a false accusation of bullying or retaliation, they shall be subject to discipline consistent with the provisions of the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights & Responsibilities Handbook*. All students shall be afforded the same protection regardless of their status under the law.

Other Complaint Processes Also Available

It should be noted that the provisions of these procedures detailed above in this section and in the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, Anti-Bullying Policy and Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* do not preclude a student from using the complaint process set forth in the *Cambridge Public Schools Non-Discrimination Policy and Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment Policy* to seek resolution of any complaints of discrimination or harassment that is based on a characteristic protected by law such as race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related condition. It also should be noted that the provisions of this section do not preclude a student from using the complaint process set forth in Section 23.0 of the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* to seek resolution of any complaints regarding a student's deprivation of rights set forth in the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*.

Relationship to Other Laws

Consistent with federal and state laws and regulations and the policies of the school district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any city or town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses or study of such public school on account of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related condition. Nothing in this section or in the *Cambridge Public School Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, Anti-Bullying Policy and Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* prevents a school or the school district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state or federal law or school district policies. In addition, nothing in this section or in the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, Anti-Bullying Policy and Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* is designed or intended to limit the authority of a school or the school district to take disciplinary action under M.G.L.c. 71, sections 37H and 37H ½, other applicable laws, or local school or school district policies in response to violent, harmful or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether this section of the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, Anti-Bullying Policy and/or Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* covers the behavior.

Non-Discrimination Policy and Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment

The Cambridge Public Schools has a commitment to maintaining an educational environment and workplace where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related condition are not tolerated and where any form of intimidation, threat, coercion and/or harassment that insults the dignity of others and interferes with their freedom to learn or work is unacceptable.

The Cambridge Public Schools strictly enforce a prohibition against harassment and discrimination, sexual or otherwise, of any of its students, students' parents/guardians/caregivers, employees or members of the public, by anyone, including any fellow student, teacher, supervisor, co-worker, vendor, or other third party, as such conduct is contrary to the mission of the Cambridge Public Schools and its commitment to equal opportunity in education and employment.

Discrimination and harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on a characteristic protected by law, such as race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy related condition. The Cambridge Public Schools will not tolerate harassing or discriminatory conduct that affects employment or educational conditions, that interferes unreasonably with an individual's school or work performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or school environment.

Discrimination and/or harassment of employees, students, students' parents/guardians/caregivers or members of the public occurring in the schools or workplace is prohibited by law and will not be tolerated by the Cambridge Public Schools. For purposes of this policy, "workplace" or "school" includes school-sponsored social events, trips, sports events, work related travel or similar events connected with school or employment. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about discrimination, harassment or retaliation; or any retaliation against any individual who has cooperated with an investigation of a discrimination, harassment or retaliation complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

The Cambridge Public Schools takes allegations of discrimination and harassment seriously and will respond promptly to complaints. Where it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the Cambridge Public Schools will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose corrective action as necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate, which may include termination of employment or school-related discipline.

Complaints regarding alleged discriminatory practices may be raised informally with a student's teacher, Head of School, Director of Diversity Development or Deputy Superintendent. The offices of the Director of Diversity Development and Deputy Superintendent both are located at 159 Thorndike Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts. The telephone number for the Director of Diversity Development is 617-349-6456 and the telephone number for the Deputy Superintendent is 617-349-6418. The Director of Diversity Development and the Office of Human Resources handle formal complaints regarding alleged discriminatory practices.

For more detailed information, consult the *Cambridge Public Schools Non-Discrimination Policy and Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment* which can be obtained on-line at www.cpsd.us or ask the Head of School or assistant principal for a copy of the document.

Hazing

Hazing means any conduct or method of initiation into a student class or group, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any other student. Examples of prohibited conduct include, but are not limited to:

- Beating
- Whipping
- Forced Calisthenics
- Exposure to Weather
- Forced consumption of food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance
- Other brutal treatment or forced physical activity
- Extended isolation
- Extended deprivation of sleep or rest

Hazing is a violation of school policy. Students involved in hazing may be suspended. A criminal complaint will be filed.

Students should immediately report any incidents or suspected incidents of hazing to a teacher, assistant principal or the Head of School. All complaints/reports are treated seriously and are promptly and thoroughly investigated. The Head of School also will notify the School Resource Officer of any incident of hazing.

The state's hazing law is set forth below:

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Section 17

Crime of Hazing; Definition; Penalty

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

The term hazing as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or person, which subjects such student or

other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Added by St. 1985, c. 536; amended by St. 1987, c. 665.

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Section 18

Duty to Report Hazing

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

Added by St. 1985, c. 536; amended by St. 1987, c. 665.

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Section 19

Statutes to be Provided to Student Groups; Compliance Statement and Discipline Policy Required

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

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

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

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams, or organizations and to notify each full-time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such reports.

Added by St. 1985, c. 536; amended by St. 1987, c. 665; St. 1998, c. 161, ss. 557, 558

Library Information

Circulation Procedures

School library resources are highly valued and shared not only within the school, but also throughout the school district. As such, the ICTS Library Media Services Division asks that all students, faculty and families enter into the spirit of community sharing and cooperation when it comes to the use and return of library items.

When borrowing an item from a school library, the borrower agrees to take responsibility for the care and return of that item as it is school property. If an item is lost or stolen, the borrower (and/or their parent/guardian/caregiver if a student) must pay the replacement cost. If the item is damaged beyond normal wear, the borrower (and/or their parent/guardian/caregiver of a student) must pay the costs for repair or replacement. In addition, the borrower agrees to abide by the school library's rules and procedures as stated in this document and otherwise outlined by the individual lending library's procedures. Violation of these rules and procedures can result in the school district seeking reimbursement for costs or other damages incurred as a result of loss or damage to loaned items, including without limitation, the costs for repair or replacement of loaned items and/or disciplinary action.

Borrowing Items

- All items borrowed from the school library must be checked out using the online checkout system. If a school librarian is unavailable to check an item out immediately, a backup system or suitable check-out time will be provided.
- Taking an item from a school library without first checking it out is in violation of these procedures. Additionally, it is a violation of the provisions of Section 14(e)(iv) and (vii) of the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* to cause damage to or steal school property or to attempt to cause damage to or attempt to steal school property. The school administrator will be alerted regarding anyone who removes an item without permission from the library.
- All CPS students and faculty are allowed to check-out library materials for 30 days.
- Parents/guardians/caregivers of CPS students are welcomed and encouraged to borrow items from the school libraries for 14 days for all materials.
- Some curriculum and audio-visual materials and equipment have shorter loan periods and/or may not be loaned. Please see a librarian at your school for specific loan periods applicable to these items.
- All items that are loaned may be renewed twice before they must be returned unless a shorter loan period applies as detailed above. Renewals also may be limited if other borrowers are waiting for an item.
- All borrowers may request extended loans, summer loans, and extra renewals for items necessary to complete coursework.
- Inter-library loan requests from other schools within the school district may be restricted by the needs of the school library that holds the item. The decision to loan and the length of the loan depends on the needs and policies of the school library that holds the item.
- School librarians reserve the right to refuse checking-out or renewing a library item to any borrower based on the borrower's account

Returning Items

- All items are to be returned on or before the due date.
- Items should be returned in the same condition as they were in when they were borrowed. At the same time, we understand that general wear and tear is expected and the borrower will not be penalized.
- Please alert a school librarian when damage occurs. Many books can be repaired to a “like new” condition if the damage is caught early.
- Malicious damage, gross carelessness, or defacing of a library item is unacceptable and is a violation of the provisions of Section 14.3(e)(iv) and (vii) of the *Cambridge Public Schools Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* to cause damage to or steal school property or to attempt to cause damage to or attempt to steal school property.
- School library items may be returned to any school library in the Cambridge Public Schools.
- School library items should not be returned to the Cambridge Public Libraries.
- Students leaving the school district, transferring to other schools within the school district, and students graduating from 5th, 8th and 12th grades are expected to return all items to the school libraries before their last day.

Overdue Notices and Lost Items

- Library overdue notices are generated once a month, at the beginning of each month, and are delivered to students’ class or homeroom.
- Materials that are overdue for 90 days or more are considered “Lost” and a bill is generated. The bill is for the current cost to replace the item.
- Arrangements can be made with a librarian to provide a “like new” replacement or to perform community service in lieu of payment. The librarian reserves the right to reject a replacement that is not in good condition or not identical to the lost item.