

Elementary School Handbook

Falmouth Public Schools



Handbook Translation

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District Information

District Building Information

School Administration Building

340 Teaticket Highway

East Falmouth, MA 02536

p: 508-548-0151

f: 508-457-9032

e: administration@falmouth.k12.ma.us

Falmouth High School

Mrs. Mary Gans, Principal

874 Gifford Street

Falmouth, MA 02540

p: 508-540-2200

f: 508-548-7515

e: falmouthhigh@falmouth.k12.ma.us

Lawrence School

Mr. Thomas Bushy, Principal

113 Lakeview Avenue

Falmouth, MA 02540

p: 508-548-0606

f: 508-457-9778

e: lawrenceschool@falmouth.k12.ma.us

Morse Pond School

Dr. Kathleen Riordan, Principal

323 Jones Road

Falmouth, MA 02540

p: 508-548-7300

f: 508-457-1810

e: morsepond@falmouth.k12.ma.us

East Falmouth Elementary School

Dr. Justine Dale, Principal

33 Davisville Road

East Falmouth, MA 02536

p: 508-548-1052

f: 508-548-0301

e: eastfalmouth@falmouth.k12.ma.us

Mullen-Hall Elementary School

Ms. Nancy Ashworth, Principal

130 Katherine Lee Bates Road

Falmouth, MA 02540

p: 508-548-0220

f: 508-457-5404

e: mullenhall@falmouth.k12.ma.us

North Falmouth Elementary School

Mr. Timothy Adams, Principal

62 Old Main Road

North Falmouth, MA 02556

p: 508-563-2334

f: 508-564-7525

e: northfalmouth@falmouth.k12.ma.us

Teaticket Elementary School

Ms. Sandra Kapsambelis, Principal

45 Maravista Avenue

East Falmouth, MA 02536

p: 508-548-1550

f: 508-540-4383

e: teaticket@falmouth.k12.ma.us

School Committee

Ms. Terri A. Medeiros, *Chairperson*

Ms. Kelly Welch, *Vice Chairperson*

Ms. Melissa Keefe, *Secretary*

Ms. Meghan Fleck

Mr. John Furnari

Ms. Natalie T. Kanellopoulos

Ms. Leah Palmer

Mr. William Rider

Ms. Andrea Thorrold

Central Office Administration

Dr. Lori S. Duerr, Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Sonia L. Tellier, Assistant Superintendent

Dr. Joan Woodward, Director of Student Services

Mr. Patrick Murphy, Director of Finance and Operations

Dr. Joany Santa, Director of Human Resources

Ms. Cynthia Tougas, Director of Digital Learning

District Administration

Ms. Laney Cooke-Johnson, Director of Early Childhood Programs

Ms. Andrea Burnes, Director of Food Services

Mr. Gregory Kennedy, Director of Transportation

Ms. Julie Williams-Tinkham, Director of Physical Education, Health, and Wellness

Mission

The Mission of the Falmouth Public Schools is to educate students so that they are engaged in their education in a way which develops their capacity to pursue their goals and fosters life-long learning. In order to ensure success for all students, three core beliefs define us as a school system and enable us to accomplish our mission:

- Continuous Improvement for Students, Teachers, Staff, and Administration: We strongly believe in continuous improvement, and we achieve this through actions such as
 - clearly communicating learning standards and performance expectations that are personalized for learners
 - assigning tasks that challenge learners to move to deeper and more complex levels of knowledge and understanding along a developmental path that is age-appropriate
 - helping learners develop the self-discipline to work hard and persist at assigned tasks
 - helping learners feel empowered in the learning process through rigorous preparation.
- Enthusiasm for Teaching and Learning: We strongly believe in the enthusiasm for teaching and learning, and we achieve this through actions such as
 - supporting curiosity, inquiry, active learning, reflection, creativity and innovation
 - fostering in teachers and learners the confidence it takes to accept new ideas
 - helping teachers and learners overcome the challenges that sometimes accompany learning.
- Collaboration in Teaching and Learning: We strongly believe in schools where collaboration is highly valued, teachers and learners feel safe, diversity in all its forms is celebrated as an asset, and we achieve this through actions such as
 - acting with integrity
 - demonstrating honesty, responsibility, thoughtfulness, encouragement, and respect
 - modeling good citizenship and encouraging these goals from the greater educational Falmouth community including parents/guardians, volunteers, and community leaders.

Non-Discrimination and Harassment

Introduction

The Falmouth Public Schools believes in the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-racial community of Falmouth. We must be aware that what we say, do, think, allow to happen, or fail to stop has the power to harm or to help our students, their families, our colleagues, and ultimately ourselves. Remarks and actions that negatively impact members of our community are not acceptable. There are times when each of us is a member of a majority and times when we are in a minority. Each of us must be sensitive to the people around us and work for a school community and world in which we will be judged only by the content of our character. We are working to support fully the formal notice of non-discrimination below, and we want to know of any situation that might be in non-compliance.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

Falmouth Public Schools does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination Act of 1974 (Age Discrimination Act). Nor does it discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or religion, in accordance with Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971 (M.G.L. c.76, §5) and Chapter 151B of the General Laws.

To file a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment by Falmouth Public Schools on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender, or religion or to make inquiry concerning the application of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, the ADA, the Age Discrimination Act, or applicable state laws and their respective implementing regulations, please contact:

Falmouth Public Schools
340 Teaticket Highway
East Falmouth, MA 02536
508-548-0151

For students: Attn: Director of Student Services

For faculty/staff: Attn: Director of Human Resources

Inquiries concerning the applicability of the aforementioned federal laws and regulations to Falmouth Public Schools also may be referred to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), JW McCormack POCH, Boston, Massachusetts 02109-4557, telephone (617) 223-9662, TTY (617) 223- 9695.

A grievant may file a complaint with OCR, generally,

- within 180 calendar days of alleged discrimination or harassment, or
- within 60 calendar days of receiving notice of Falmouth Public School's final disposition on a complaint filed through Falmouth Public Schools, or
- within 60 calendar days of receiving a final decision by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Bureau of Special Education Appeals, or
- instead of filing a complaint with Falmouth Public Schools.

Inquiries relative to state law may be referred to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5023 (telephone 781-338-3300) or the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination at One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108 (telephone 617-727-3990).

Policy on Preventing Harassment and Discrimination/Sexual Harassment

The Falmouth Public Schools shall maintain learning and working environment free from discrimination and harassment. In both the education and employment environments of the Falmouth Public Schools, various laws prohibit discrimination and harassment. In an education context, law prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of disability, national origin, race, color, religion, sex or sexual orientation. In an employment context, law also prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of age. All such harassment and discrimination is unlawful and will not be tolerated in the Falmouth Public Schools, M.G.L. c76, §5.

In September, building principals are responsible for reviewing and insuring that all staff are notified in writing annually of the building procedures for filing a report relative to incidents of discrimination and/or harassment.

Defining Discrimination and Harassment

Discrimination: Discrimination occurs when school district's actions, procedures, policy or personnel treat an individual adversely in an educational or employment context solely on the basis of the individual's race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, age, ancestry, citizenship, military status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, disability or genetic information. Discrimination on the basis of sex shall include, but not be limited to, sexual harassment.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment is unwanted attention directed toward a person because of gender. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:

- A. submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made as an implied or explicit term or condition of success in school, employment; or as a basis for employment conditions; or
- B. submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for student grading/participation decisions or employment decisions affecting such individual.
- C. the advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's school or work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive learning or working environment.

Sexual harassment includes advances, requests or conduct by a student to a student, an adult to a student, an adult to an adult or student to adult. Sexual harassment can include advances, requests or conduct directed from male to female, female to male, male to male, or female to female. Sexual harassment can occur by conduct transmitted by telephone, computer, or other electronic means.

Examples of actions that may constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following unwelcome actions:

- whistling, catcalling or making offensive noises;
- staring or making obscene gestures;
- making suggestive remarks, telling jokes of a sexual nature, or using derogatory sexual terms;

- displaying offensive photographs, illustrations, or sex related objects;
- blocking a person's movements;
- touching, brushing, pinching or patting;
- pulling or lifting of clothing;
- pressuring a person for dates, sex or information about personal relationships or sexual experiences; or
- leaving pictures of a homosexual or sexual nature on a locker or making derogatory comments of a homosexual nature;
- transmitting harassing remarks or pictures on the Internet, through a cell phone, or by other electronic means.

Other Forms of Illegal Harassment Including Hate Crimes: Harassment on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, ancestry, sexual orientation, or disability includes any unwanted physical or verbal action toward another that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning or working environment. Harassment of this form includes advances, requests by a student to a student, an adult to a student, an adult to an adult, student to adult, male to female, female to male, male to male and female to female. Harassment can occur by conduct transmitted by telephone, computer or other electronic means.

Examples of actions that may constitute harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- using racial slurs;
- displaying intimidating symbols or words such as swastikas;
- making generalizations;
- using stereotypes;
- telling racial or ethnic jokes;
- leaving pictures of a homosexual or sexual nature on a locker or making derogatory comments of a homosexual nature;
- transmitting harassing remarks or pictures on the Internet, through a cell phone, or by other electronic means.

Harassment in the Form of Bullying: Although not unlawful discrimination, actions in the form of bullying or victimizing (hate crimes) by any members of the Falmouth school community will be considered harassment under the “Falmouth School Committee Policy on Preventing Harassment and Discrimination.” A student is being bullied when the student is exposed to

negative actions from students, Falmouth Public Schools' employees, or other third parties that have the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's school performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning environment for the student.

Examples may include but are not limited to:

- physical threatening (bullying);
- making derogatory comments about peoples' size, weight, height, etc.;
- making derogatory comments about peoples' perceived intelligence or ability or use of sarcasm.

Where Can Harassment Originate?

Harassment can come from:

- students;
- administrators, teachers, coaches or other employees of the Falmouth Public Schools; or
- third parties such as vendors or contractors doing business with the Falmouth Public Schools; visitors or volunteers present within the schools with the permission of the Falmouth Public Schools.

Statements Made Within the Context of the Academic Curriculum: This policy is not meant to stifle or chill the free exchange of ideas in the teaching and learning environment. It should be understood that in the teaching and learning environment, in order to encourage the learning process, statements, writings or visuals may occasionally take on overtones that could be offensive to some individuals. Teachers should use professional discretion when considering whether to include potentially offensive material in the curriculum and then inform students when this is the case and assure them that it is part of the learning environment and not meant to be discriminatory or harassing.

What to do if you feel you have been Discriminated Against or Harassed

Students: Any student who believes they have been subjected to discrimination or harassment should notify any teacher, guidance counselor, nurse, any administrator in their building, or any central office administrator. To effectively resolve complaints of discrimination or harassment, people are encouraged to file complaints soon after an incident occurs. Parents or guardians will be notified within 48 hours.

What to do if you are aware that Someone has been Discriminated Against or Harassed

Students: Any student who has knowledge or belief of conduct that occurred that might be discrimination or harassment should contact any teacher, guidance counselor, nurse, any administrator in their building or any central office administrator.

Consequences for Harassment and Discrimination

Students: Any student found to have engaged in harassment will be subject to school imposed discipline and/or legal action. Consequences imposed on any student found to have engaged in harassment may include, but are not limited to, parent/guardian conference, written or verbal statement of apology, suspension, expulsion and mandatory counseling sessions with a guidance counselor or mandatory in-house counseling sessions with a School Administrator. Parents or guardians will be notified within 48 hours.

Annual Asbestos Notification

In accordance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) regulations, please be advised that copies of the Asbestos Management Plans can be found at the following schools:

- East Falmouth Elementary School: 33 Davisville Road, East Falmouth, MA
- Lawrence School: 113 Lakeview Avenue, Falmouth, MA
- Morse Pond School: 323 Jones Road, Falmouth, MA
- Teaticket Elementary School: 43 Maravista Avenue Extension, East Falmouth, MA

The management plans are site-specific guidance documents that the District must follow in managing the asbestos-containing building materials (ACBM) present in some of the schools. Each plan is updated to keep it current with on-going operations and maintenance, periodic inspections, and response action activities.

Any inquiries regarding the management of asbestos containing materials in our schools should be directed to our district's AHERA Designated Person, Marcel Sanchez at msanchez@falmouth.k12.ma.us.

Attendance

Introduction

The Falmouth School Committee believes that successful achievement of its mission relies heavily on daily attendance. The Committee sees a strong correlation between attendance and achievement and finds that daily attendance is a function of school, student, and family factors. The Falmouth School committee reaffirms its belief in the compulsory attendance law and the responsibility of parents/guardians and students to comply with it.

Regular and timely attendance is necessary for maximum learning success. In accordance with Massachusetts law, students may not be absent from school for seven or more full-day sessions or fourteen half-day sessions within any period of six months.

Falmouth Public Schools makes a sincere attempt to avoid scheduling special school and student events to conflict with religious holidays and will exercise care when scheduling assignments and tests. Students will not suffer consequences from an excused absence for religious observations.

The Falmouth Public Schools recognize that time lost from class is essentially irretrievable in terms of opportunity for instructional interaction. In order for a student to receive a passing grade, the student has an obligation to give, as well as receive, in the context of the classroom setting. It is recognized that attendance is among the requirements for all courses. Regular and timely attendance is necessary for maximum learning success. Parents/guardians and students are asked to take attendance seriously and provide notes explaining any absence responsibly. Valuable staff time is lost investigating absences when a note is not provided.

By improving attendance and encouraging punctuality, the Falmouth Public Schools hopes to achieve the following objectives:

1. Improve academic performance.
2. Develop an attitude of cooperation and responsibility in the students.
3. Place responsibility for attendance and punctuality on the students and their parents/guardians.
4. Develop habits of student as worker that are beneficial to life skills and future employment.

If you are absent from school, you may be required to present a written excuse from a physician or the court to your homeroom teacher on the day following your absence stating the reason for your absence. Excused absences may be for any of the following reasons: death in family; religious holidays; authorized school sponsored activities; illness – as stated, a physician’s note may be required to verify that the physician saw the student in the physician’s office on the day(s) absent from school or specify the dates the student needed to remain at home for a medical issue; court appearances – as stated, a note from the court may be required to verify the date(s) of the student’s court appearance; and other reasons as deemed reasonable and appropriate by the Principal. Parent/guardian notes may be considered, and thus, we ask that you always send a note in to school when your child has been absent from school.

Communication

All schools, at the midterm of their grading period, shall send letters home to parents/guardians of students who exceed certain attendance benchmarks. These letters shall notify the parents/guardians of their child’s attendance, the relevant state laws regarding attendance, and school averages. They shall also invite the parents/guardians to meet with guidance and/or school administration to discuss the student’s attendance, and make a plan to improve it. The dates and benchmarks are as follows:

| Date | Number of Absences |
|------------|--------------------|
| November 1 | 5 |
| January 15 | 10 |
| March 15 | 15 |

Principals will have discretion based on specific circumstances to waive midterm meetings.

Safe Arrival Program

Striving for the safest possible school environment, the Falmouth Public Schools maintains an attendance system that includes a Safe Arrival Program. If a child needs to be absent from school, a parent/guardian must call the Safe Arrival line at the school by 8:00 a.m. for all elementary schools. If a parent/guardian has advanced notice of an absence, a written note signed by the

parent/guardian stating the date, duration, and reason for the absence is helpful for our Safe Arrival program. Students will be expected to make up missed assignments. On a daily basis the school attempts to verify the attendance, or necessary absence, of every student. In grades kindergarten through eight (K-8) parents/guardians are asked to call in to their child's school to record any upcoming absence through the use of an available 24-hour phone line. This would include days of sickness, tardiness, vacations or any other event that may keep a student from arriving for the accounting of attendance at the beginning of the school day.

Each morning the school absence list will be reconciled with the phone calls recorded on our Safe Arrival line. In any situation where a child's absence has not been accounted for, by an appropriate phone call, the school will attempt to contact parents/guardians. Please note, that even when a parent/guardian does call their child in absent, an automated call home will still be generated.

When calling the Safe Arrival line and leaving a message, parents/guardians are asked to include a phone number for return calls. Please do not leave homework requests on the Safe Arrival line. Instead, please call the Main Office directly for homework requests.

Extra Help and Make-Up Work

Upon returning to school after a period of absences, a student has a length of time equal to the number of school days absent to make up missed work. A student not making up the work in the allotted time will receive a failing mark for the work not made up. Previously announced assignments/tests must be completed upon return. The responsibility is on the student to meet with the teacher to determine when the assignment/test is to be made up.

If any extenuating circumstances exist, the parent/guardian should contact the assistant principal or the guidance counselor. The assistant principal and/or guidance counselor will consult with teacher, department head, the assistant principal, and principal when necessary.

The District discourages students from leaving school for travel because our time with students is so valuable and school vacations are well placed at intervals. Make up work is only a small part of the learning missed. Our experience is that providing assignments to be done during vacation is not productive. Vacations are considered unexcused absences. Therefore, we do not require

teachers to design this work in advance for supporting family vacations. We expect students to be present for state MCAS testing.

If a student is going to be absent as a result of travel, the parent/guardian should notify the assistant principal's office and the guidance counselor one week in advance. Students will be expected to make up missed assignments and classroom work within the reasonable amount of time laid out at the beginning of this make up work expectations.

Emergency Closing Information for Inclement Weather or Other Reasons

Introduction

Weather conditions can often change rapidly and seriously because of our coastal location, causing the possibility of school closures, delayed openings, or early dismissals. The Falmouth Public Schools' website will display the announcement on all pages of the website. In addition, the following radio and television stations will carry this announcement:

- Radio
 - WCOD 106.1 FM
 - WQRC 99.9 FM
 - WOCN 104.7 FM
 - WMVY 88.7 FM
 - WXTK 95.1 FM
- Television
 - WBZ Channel 4
 - WCVB Channel 5
 - WHDH Channel 7
 - WFXT Channel 25

Options

School and town officials monitor weather conditions and road conditions. If conditions are severe enough to threaten the safety of students traveling to and from school, a decision is made to close school, delay, or close early.

- School Closed – All school will be closed for the day. Students and staff are to remain home. Emergency personnel will report to work. All morning, afternoon, and evening activities are also canceled.
- Two Hour Delayed Opening – All school and bus times will be two hours later than regular starting time. Schools will end at the normal times. All other school activities will take place at their originally scheduled times. Morning preschools are canceled. All custodial and cafeteria employees are expected to report at normal hours. Students are not to be on school grounds until ten minutes before school begins.

- Early Dismissal – There are no set times for early closure. This will depend on weather conditions. Generally, schools are closed either one or two hours early. Buses should arrive at their destination up to twenty to thirty minutes late because buses must complete high school and middle school runs, often with difficult road conditions. Elementary schools attempt to call the homes or the emergency numbers of preschool, kindergarten, and first grade students. Television and radio stations announce the early closure. Parents/guardians must have a plan for emergency coverage of students in case dismissal closure becomes necessary and no one is home. Whenever possible afternoon preschool programs will be canceled when there is an early dismissal, and all other afternoon and evening activities are also canceled.

Automated messaging will be used to notify families regarding changes in school schedule (snow day, delayed opening, early dismissal). It may also be used to announce upcoming events and school activities. The recipients of the messages are based on the emergency contact information collected at the beginning of the school year. Please notify the student's school office if the recipient of the messages is incorrect.

The Superintendent of Schools or designee makes these decisions. Most often they are made in the 4:30 a.m. to 5:30 a.m. time period based on the latest weather information, and on conversations with the Department of Public Works and safety officials regarding the condition of roads. The district recognizes that there are inconveniences and dangers to keeping schools open during inclement weather but also that there are concerns when closing because of disruption of family routines. We attempt to make the decision that is safest for families with a priority on also maintaining the flow of education.

Student Records

Regulations Pertaining to Student Records

The District's policy of students' and parents'/guardians' privacy rights to academic records is in compliance with Student Record Regulations under the authority of Chapters 71, 71B, and Chapter 76 of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Access to Student Records

Parents/guardians may have access to the student record. Access shall be provided as soon as practicable and within ten days after the initial request, except in the case of non-custodial parents. Upon request for access, the entire student record shall be made available.

Non-Custodial Parent

A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless the school district has been provided with documentation indicating that:

- The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
- The parent has been denied visitation, or
- The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
- There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.
- The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted.
- In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal.
- Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial

parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access.

- The school must 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 must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.
- Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents/guardians and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Falmouth Public Schools receives a request for access. Parents/guardians or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent/guardian or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA. Parents/guardians or eligible students who wish to ask the Falmouth Public Schools to amend a record should write the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian or eligible student, the school will notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service of function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a

parent/guardian or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent/guardian, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing their tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibility. Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the Falmouth Public Schools to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent/guardian or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents/guardians and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents/guardians or the eligible student –

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the

disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))

- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent/guardian or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
- To parents/guardians of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (§99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))

Directory Information

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) allows Falmouth Public Schools to release certain information about students with parental consent, provided that annual notification has been given and the school does not have on file written denial to release this directory information. *Directory Information* is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released. The primary purpose of *Directory Information* is to allow Falmouth Public Schools to include information from students' education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing a student's roll in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor Roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members.

In addition, two federal laws require local education agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA), to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents/guardians have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

Per Falmouth Public Schools policy JRA-R, the following information is designated as *Directory Information*:

- a student's name;
- address;
- telephone listing;
- date and place of birth;
- major field of study;
- dates of attendance;
- weight and height of members of athletic teams;
- class;
- participation in officially recognized activities and sports;

- degrees;
- honors and awards; and
- post-high school plans.

If you do not want Falmouth Public Schools to disclose any or all of the types of information designated as *Directory Information*, from your child's education records without your prior consent, you must notify your child's school in writing. Upon receipt of the document, the school will forward you a form seeking additional information related to your request to not disclose any or all types of *Directory Information*.

General Information

Introduction

Welcome! Communication with parents/guardians is most important to us. This information is provided to help you better understand the ways in which we can maintain good communication between parents/guardians, children, and the school staff.

Each staff member has an email address that you can use for contact. The protocol for Falmouth school staff email addresses (with a few exceptions) is *first initial* followed by *last name* followed by *@falmouth.k12.ma.us*. For example, *Jane Doe* = *jdoe@falmouth.k12.ma.us*. You may look up an email address in our staff directory on our website.

Automated Messages

Periodically, an automated message service will be used to communicate with families via phone call, email, and/or text. In addition to notification regarding changes in the school schedule (snow day, delayed start, early dismissal), it may also be used to announce upcoming events and school activities. The recipients of the messages are based on the emergency contact information collected at the beginning of the school year. Please notify the school office if the recipient of the message is incorrect.

Communications to the Nurse

Contact the nurse if there are any changes in your child's health, diagnosis, or medications; if your child has a contagious illness; or if you wonder if your child should attend school that day. Don't hesitate to contact the nurse about any issues regarding your child's health and safety at school. Please see the Health and Well-Being section of this handbook for more details.

Dress

The appearance of any young person is primarily the responsibility of the individual and their parents/guardians. However, should a student's dress violate health or safety standards, the school reserves the right to require the student to make all necessary changes. Parents/guardians will be called to bring in appropriate clothing, or the student will be sent home to change. Metal link chains attached to wallets or hanging from clothing as well as spiked or studded leather bands or

necklaces may not be worn. Clothing that exposes inappropriate anatomical regions (e.g. abdomen) is unacceptable. The wearing of outdoor clothing such as hats, caps, coats, and heavy hooded sweatshirts within the school building is prohibited without special permission. Clothing that has words or graphics that promote violence; drugs, alcohol, sexual activity, gender and/or racial biases are unacceptable. Students may not be barefoot. “Heelys” or other roller shoes are prohibited. Very loose trousers, jeans, or shorts will be worn at an acceptable belt level at all times.

Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco

In accordance with Massachusetts law, smoking, consuming alcohol, and possession of illegal substances is prohibited. This includes on school grounds, on school buses, and at school sponsored events. Students will be referred to the School Resource Office for possible legal consequences. Appropriate penalties will be enforced.

Due Process

Due process ensures that when disciplinary action is taken against a student, the student has the right to be treated fairly. The penalty that a student receives must be reasonably related to the regulation that the student has violated, and the student is entitled to certain procedural rights when discipline is possible and in appealing disciplinary action once it is taken.

The Supreme Court has established the minimal procedure that must be followed before a student may be disciplined or suspended for less than ten days:

- The student must be informed of what rule the student has broken.
- The student will be given an explanation of why it is believed that they have broken the rule if the student denies it.
- The student will be given a chance to tell their version of what happened.

Ordinarily these procedures are followed before a suspension takes place. However, if the student’s conduct is dangerous to other persons or threatens to disrupt school, the student may be suspended immediately. In such cases, the due process must be provided as soon as reasonable.

When a suspension for a period longer than ten (10) consecutive days, or expulsion is being considered, the student is entitled to more formal due process protections:

- The student must be informed in writing of all the charges and the evidence.
- The student has the right to an impartial hearing. (The person who conducts the hearing will not be the one who seeks to impose the suspension.) The student and their legal representative/parent/guardian will be given adequate time to prepare for this hearing.
- The student has the right to be represented by a lawyer and/or advocate at the hearing. The student's legal representative/parent/guardian has the right to confront and to cross-examine witnesses.
- The student will have the right to present a defense of their position.
- The student has the right to a written decision.

A legal representative/parent/guardian may appeal any decision by the Principal to suspend the student on a long-term basis or to expel the student pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H by sending a written request to the Superintendent within ten (10) days of the notice of suspension/expulsion.

Notwithstanding the above, the Principal may suspend or expel a student charged/convicted of a felony using the standards and procedures set forth in M.G.L. c. 71 §37H1/2.

In all cases, the suspension/expulsion will remain in effect pending completion of the appeal.

Gift Giving

Teachers may not accept individual gifts from parents/guardians or students valued at \$50.00 or more. The \$50.00 limit is per parent/guardian or student per year. In the case of a class gift, the total value for the year may not exceed \$150.00, and teachers may not know the names of the students or families that contributed or how much each contributed.

Hazing

The Falmouth School Committee recognizes the right of all students to participate, through competition or open admission, in all clubs, activities, and sports programs, and, therefore, prohibits the practice of "hazing". The full document regarding hazing is available at all school buildings and our website.

Lost and Found

If your child has lost something, your child should check the designated lost and found area in the school. The school is not responsible for replacing lost or stolen articles. For that reason, we recommend that all valuable items be kept at home. Try to have your child's coats, boots, and other personal belongings marked with your child's name so that lost items may be returned to your child easily. You may not wish to use your last name as a safety measure.

Meetings with Staff Members

Parent/Guardian/Teacher conferences are scheduled once a year to discuss your child's performance in school. Appointments can be made at other times of the year, as well. Staff members such as your child's teacher(s), the principal, the assistant principal, and the adjustment counselor are available, if needed, for phone conferences or to meet in person.

Notices Home

To keep you informed about what is going on at the school, periodic notices from the school principal, your child's teachers, or the Parent Teacher Organization will be sent home along with your child's work. Check with your child daily to ensure that you are receiving this information. Some schools use electronic communication as a regular way to communicate with families. Please check your email regularly as well.

Parties

No invitations are to be given out at school unless all children in the individual classroom receive one. Excluding some children is a very hurtful experience, both for those excluded and those invited. The best approach is to mail invitations.

Permission Notes for Changes in After-School Routines

A note to the child's teacher should communicate an occasional change to a student's regular or daily dismissal on the day of the change. The note should include the date, the student's name and what will be different that day. If someone different will be picking up your child, please include the name of that adult. If your child is riding the bus home with a friend, the note should include

the name of the friend, as well as the bus number. If you find it necessary to change your child's dismissal plan during the school day, please call the school office and communicate the changes before 2:30 p.m. We respectfully request that no phone call changes occur after 3:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence

In accordance with Massachusetts law, each school will recite the Pledge of Allegiance and will observe a moment of silence at the start of the school day. School personnel will not require students participate during the Pledge of Allegiance and/or the moment of silence. In addition, students will not be required to provide a reason if they choose not to participate nor will disciplinary action occur.

Out-of-District Students

A student must be a resident of Falmouth to attend Falmouth Public Schools, with the exception of students who attend from outside of the town of Falmouth via the School Choice process. Within Falmouth, there are four distinct elementary school districts. If a student's residency within the town changes during the course of the school year to another elementary school district, parents or guardians who want to maintain enrollment in the present school are expected to follow the procedures contained in the "Exceptions to School District Attendance" policy.

Public Meetings: PTO, School Council, School Committee

There are several public venues where you may learn more about the school and have opportunities to give your input. There is a Parent Teacher Organization at each elementary school that meets periodically to discuss activities. Each school also has a School Council, which acts as an advisory committee to the principal. Many topics that affect your school are discussed at the School Council meeting. The Falmouth School Committee meets twice per month and deals with issues impacting the entire school district.

Returned Check Policy

This local policy refers to checks that are made out to the Town of Falmouth or any group sponsored by the Town of Falmouth, including the Falmouth Public Schools. Checks are subject to a \$25.00 surcharge if the checks are returned as an overdraft.

School Visits by Visitors/Parents/Guardians

When entering the school, all visitors must enter the main entrance and check in at the main office. All other doors will be locked during the school day. Parents/guardians are invited to visit the school as long as it does not interfere with the normal school or class routine. If you want to visit the school, contact the principal at least 48 hours before your planned visit. This is not necessary if you are joining your child for lunch, but you must sign in and obtain a Visitor's Pass in the office before going to the cafeteria. If you wish to visit your child's classroom, please make arrangements with your child's teacher at least 48 hours before your planned visit. Individuals visiting the school to volunteer need to preregister with VIPS.

Sharing Information Regarding Tragic Events

If a tragic event occurs during school hours, students will not receive any information from the school. We will not use Internet or television that confronts students with such disastrous events as they are taking place or in the immediate aftermath. Principals and administrators are responsible for monitoring these situations. In all schools, when such tragedies or disasters stimulate emotional reactions on the basis of national origin, race or religion, or any categorical grouping, the schools will take appropriate steps to discuss the dangers of stereotypical statements. All schools will work to assist parents/guardians with information on how to help respond to students' reactions.

Telephone Use/Personal Electronic Devices/Cell Phones

The main office telephone is available to students for emergencies only. Use of personal electronic devices, such as cell phones, laptops, iPods, SMART watches is not permitted during regular school hours unless under the direct instruction of a teacher or an IEP accommodation is being met and the device is being used for instructional purposes. Students bringing such devices to school for the above stated purposes do so at their own risk, and the school is not responsible for attempting to retrieve lost or stolen property.

Transfers

Families moving out of the community or school district shall notify the school secretary at least three (3) days before leaving. Upon registration at their new school families will sign a records

release form. At that time, student records at Falmouth Public Schools will be released to the new district.

Forms Packet Information

Introduction

A summary information sheet and the accompanying forms have been included in the forms packet distributed at the beginning of the school year. If any forms are missing that you require at the beginning of the school year or later on, please contact your school for a replacement form. Various services are available as well as opportunities to be involved with your child's school. All these forms are available on the Falmouth Public Schools' website. On most forms, a signature of a parent or guardian is required.

Required Forms

Forms 1-5 must be completed for each student and returned to the classroom teacher by the first Friday of the school year or immediately following enrollment in the Falmouth Public Schools. All forms should be read in their entirety. The information below provides a brief summary of the contents of the forms.

Form 1: Student Information/Medical Form

Please be aware that this form is not included in the forms packet. Your child's school provides this form separately. The Student Information/Medical Form is very important in the event that the school needs to contact you regarding an emergency. The form contains information that is essential should your child need to be dismissed early from school. The student will only be dismissed to a person you have listed on this form. There are two sides to the form to be completed for your school. If there is information printed on the form, check all information provided making corrections as needed. A child new to the district will receive a blank form. Include the full names of all parents and guardians with whom your child is living. Also, your telephone numbers need to be included even if they are unlisted. You may indicate if the number is unlisted. It is important to include the names and phone numbers of local people who are willing to be contacted if you are unreachable. Please include specific medical information pertaining to your child. If there are any changes to this information during the school year (i.e., cell phones and email addresses) notify the school immediately.

Form 2: General Permission Form and Acknowledgment of Handbook

The General Permission Form is for various activities that may take place in school during the school year. You may give permission to all or some of the items on this form by checking YES or NO. Complete copies of all supporting policies are available in the main office. Failure to respond within two weeks of the starting date of the school year indicates permission has been granted. Below is a summary of activities found on the General Permission Form and Acknowledgement of Handbook:

- **Field Trips:** Field trips are planned during the school year to enrich the curriculum taught in our schools. The staff, from time-to-time, would like to take advantage of educational resources in our community and surrounding areas. There may be a small fee associated with the field trip, and the PTO will sponsor any student who needs financial assistance. To facilitate these enrichment activities, you are asked to give permission on this form for your child to participate in any and all field trips that may be planned for their class during the current school year. An advanced notification of each trip will explain the trip in more detail. You may at that time elect not to allow your child to participate in the planned trip. If we do not hear from you at that time, this General Permission form allows your child to participate on the field trip. Check YES if you wish your child to participate.
- **Internet (Technology) Access:** The Internet Access Permission allows your child to use the Internet under the supervision of an adult in an appropriate manner. The conditions of use are described in more detail in the Technology Acceptable Use Policy. To allow your child access to the Internet for classroom activities, you are asked to check YES on this form.
- **Videotaped or Photographed Activities:** Giving permission for photographing or videotaping allows your child to be included in activities that may be videotaped or photographed and intended for a public audience. Policy IJOE describes the conditions regarding such videotaping or photography. To facilitate this process, you are asked to check YES on the General Permission Form. If we do not hear from you at that time, this permission form allows your child to participate in the activity. This procedure does not apply to the videotaping of public performances, contests, athletic events, or other events specifically established with an expected public audience or for use in fulfilling a specific educational purpose in the classroom.

- **Release of Information:** State law prohibits the release of student information to anyone without the permission of parent or guardian. This even prohibits us from releasing the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the students in a class to the PTO or to other parents or guardians who wish to contact you/your child for a variety of reasons (e.g., have a party, send Valentine cards). Therefore, we seek your permission to allow the classroom teacher or main office to release the name, address, and telephone number of your child to the PTO, room parents/guardians, and other parents and guardians of children in your child’s class. Other records are not covered by this permission and will be released only with your specific approval. Please check YES to allow information to be shared with the PTO, room parent, or other parents or guardians of students in your child’s class.
- **Access to *G Suite for Education* Account:** Falmouth Public Schools’ students and staff use *G Suite for Education*, formally known as *Google Apps for Education (GAFE)*, to support student learning. Google Drive, Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Slides, Google Keep, Google Classroom, Google Calendar, Google Sites, and Gmail are available to students. Please check YES to allow students to use *G Suite for Education* apps.
- **Acknowledgement of Handbook:** This form has a section for the parent/guardian to acknowledge that they have read the handbook and discussed pertinent information with their children. Review the handbook in its entirety before signing this acknowledgement.

Form 3: Consent and Release

If you checked the “Participate in field trips this year” option in the General Permission form (Form 1), you will need to also fill out and sign this form. Signing this form gives consent to participate in programs and activities of Falmouth Public Schools.

Form 4: Daily Dismissal Card

All students must have a detailed daily dismissal plan on file with the school. Two cards are included: one for the school office and one for the student’s teacher. The dismissal cards should be completed by parents/guardians and updated if a student’s schedule changes. List how the student will depart from the school each day of the week and transportation mode. The name of any adult authorized to pick up the child should be listed on the form as “Designated Adults”. If there is a specific adult, such as a parent without custody, who absolutely should not have contact

with the child, that adult should also be listed under “Additional Information.” On the occasional day that the student’s departure schedule changes, a note of the detailed change should be sent in to the teacher.

Form 5: Fluoride Rinse Program Consent Form

Falmouth Public Schools provides a fluoride rinse service to children in the elementary schools. This program has proven to reduce tooth decay by 20-50%. This form needs to be returned at the start of school with either your permission to receive the rinse or your request to have your child not participate. This program is for grades one through four only.

Form 6: Background Checking (Parents/Guardians and Volunteers)

Falmouth Public Schools will obtain criminal offender record information (CORI) for all volunteers and others who wish to participate in school activities. This includes classroom volunteers and field trip chaperones. The CORI process must be completed before any involvement in the schools and the results of the CORI, based on the discretion of the Superintendent or their designee, will determine one’s eligibility to participate in school activities. CORI information is confidential, and privacy will be maintained. In addition, individuals may be asked to submit state and national fingerprint-based criminal background checks at the expense of the individual. The requirement to submit state and national fingerprint-based criminal background checks will be made by the Superintendent or their designee. Forms 6 - 9 need to be completed if you will be volunteering in various capacities with the school. All volunteers must complete the CORI form. The PTO, VIPS, and Driver forms will need to be completed if these are ways in which you will be volunteering. Return these forms to the office yourself.

Form 7: Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) Registration Form

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) extends its welcome and invites all parents, guardians and teachers of our students to join. Many events and activities are sponsored by the PTOs in the Falmouth Public Schools. The PTO is a wonderful way to get to know other parents/guardians and faculty members of your child’s school and to be involved with enrichment activities for the students.

Form 8: Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) Registration Form

The Falmouth Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) is another positive way for you to become involved with the public schools. Both parents/guardians and community volunteers are needed and invited to participate. Some of the services include volunteering with your child's classroom, driving for field trips, tutoring, working in libraries and computer labs, and providing clerical assistance to various offices and classrooms. In addition, volunteer coordinators help manage programs in each school. A registration form has been included in the forms packet. All new or returning volunteers must annually complete a VIPS registration form. List the service opportunities for which you are volunteering on the registration form. In addition, all volunteers must complete a CORI form for a criminal background check (see above.) A VIPS registration form needs to be filled out for each school in which you wish to volunteer.

Forms 9-11: Insurance and School Meal Assistance

These forms should be completed if you want to apply for extra insurance or financial assistance with school meals. Complete these forms and forward as described in each section. If you have any questions about these forms or to find out if you are eligible, please contact the school nurse.

Form 10: Free and Reduced Price School Meals Family Application

The request for Free or Reduced Lunch and/or Breakfast is for your use if you wish to apply for your children who are attending Falmouth Public Schools. One form is needed for each family. If you have more than one child at this school, they all can be covered by one form. The forms are available in the main office or on the district's website if you decide to apply later in the year or if you need to update the form because of changes in income or size of household. A two page, front to back form is included in your child's form packet. Detailed information about applying is covered in the form. Return this application to the office at your child's school.

Form 11: Town of Falmouth Optional Accident Insurance Policy

The town of Falmouth provides two types of accident insurance and offers a third insurance for students. This is an optional policy available to any interested parents/guardians. While the Falmouth School Committee does not formally endorse this optional coverage, it is available to those who are interested in obtaining it and should be considered in light of other insurance

coverage a family has. This is 24-hour Student Insurance. This optional policy provides primary coverage with limits established by the policy. Individuals have the option of selecting medical coverage and/or extended dental coverage. Flyers are available to all students with a cover letter explaining this optional policy at all school buildings, including the superintendent's office. Any parent/guardian who wishes to take advantage of this optional insurance coverage may request an application form at any of our school buildings. Parents/guardians are responsible for the cost of this insurance. If you enroll in this insurance coverage, follow the directions on the cover letter. No enrollment form for accident insurance has been included in your forms packet.

If your child is eligible for free or reduced school meals, your child may also be eligible for free or low cost health insurance through MassHealth. To learn more and to receive applications call: 1-800-841-2900. No enrollment form for MassHealth insurance has been included in your forms packet.

Academics

Curriculum and Instruction

The Falmouth Public Schools works tirelessly to develop meaningful, engaging, and relevant opportunities for students to learn. As such, our curriculum and instruction design efforts are always ongoing. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) requires public schools throughout the state to design curricula in alignment with state curriculum frameworks. These frameworks articulate learning objectives for students at each grade. While the standards help districts determine what students will know and be able to do by the end of the school year, the district retains the autonomy to determine how these learning objectives are met.

At the elementary level, our general education classroom teachers are required to provide direct instruction in several areas:

- English Language Arts & Literacy
- Mathematics
- History & Social Sciences (social studies)
- Science & Technology/Engineering

In addition to these core subjects, elementary students also receive instruction from certified faculty in the following areas:

- Art
- Library & Technology/Media
- Music
- Physical Education

Some students receive additional instruction based on specific needs. This would include students diagnosed with a learning or physical disability, English language learners, and students in need of academic intervention. These services are provided by specialists certified to instruct these specific and individualized areas.

Falmouth Public Schools believes that all students are entitled to receive instruction that meets their needs. In some situations throughout the school year, some elementary students demonstrate

the ability to acquire knowledge and skills in some areas at a rate faster than their classmates. These students sometimes come into the classroom already knowing the material being taught or they have the ability to learn the new content quickly. As such, the district is committed to provide our teachers with the skills needed to successfully meet the needs of these learners. Our teachers receive training in how to provide these learners with opportunities to engage in their grade level curriculum at a greater depth.

When developing our instruction, we are very careful to ensure that students receive similar learning experiences throughout the school district regardless of their home school. This helps provide consistency throughout the school district, which is vital in preparing our students to transition to the Morse Pond School. It also allows for individual schools, grade levels, and classroom teachers to adjust their instruction to meet the needs of their individual students.

The Falmouth Public Schools' website provides more specific information about grade-level curriculum and instruction via the Office of Teaching & Learning. As state learning requirements change and as we assess our own practices within the district, we adjust our curriculum and instruction responsively.

G Suite for Education – Parent/Guardian Information

Falmouth Public Schools' students and staff use *G Suite for Education*, formally known as Google Apps for Education (GAFE), to support student learning. As with any educational endeavor, a strong partnership with families is essential to a successful experience.

Falmouth Public Schools actively monitors all student activity within our Google domain, and we ensure that our use of Google complies with both the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). There is no presence of advertising within Falmouth Public Schools' Google Apps Domain, and no personal student information is collected for commercial purposes. All student use of *G Suite for Education* must follow the District's established Internet Acceptable Use Policy, which is available on our website.

The following services are available to students:

- Google Drive: A digital storage tool that allows students to save work in the ‘cloud’ and access it where there is an Internet signal. Each student has storage, which will stay with the student until graduation.
- Google Docs, Sheets, Slides: A suite of applications for creating, editing, and sharing word processing documents, spreadsheets, and presentations.
- Google Keep: A tool that allows students to create electronic sticky notes to help keep them organized.
- Google Classroom: A blended learning platform for students and teachers to create, distribute, and manage classroom assignments in an electronic way.
- Google Calendar: A calendar that can be used to enter events with the potential to be shared with others.
- Google Sites: A web page creation software that allows the user to build a site to display and share information. This is for students in grades 7-12 when approved to use for classroom projects.
- Gmail: Allows students to send messages to other students and teachers within Falmouth Public Schools. This application will be managed so that only internal communication is allowed. Only for students in grades 7-12.

Using these tools, students create, edit, and share files for school related projects with other students and teachers. These services are entirely online and available 24/7 from any Internet-connected device.

Homework Guidelines

As a District, the Falmouth Public Schools recognizes that meaningful and relevant homework reinforces instruction. We collectively define homework as work assigned by a teacher to be completed outside of class time; homework may include both short- and long-term assignments. We recognize that homework helps to expand academic achievement and responsibility while reinforcing or extending learning. Our teachers design homework with three intentions: preparation, practice, and extension.

Intentions of Homework

1. PREPARATION: exposure to a topic as an introduction to new concepts and ideas; such assignments may include reading, studying, and other assignments that do not result in a submittable product but are essential to continued learning.
2. PRACTICE: an opportunity for students to strengthen skills and concepts taught in the classroom by repeating them through continued learning opportunities related to the in-class instruction.
3. EXTENSION: an opportunity for students to apply, synthesize, problem solve, and/or transfer newly acquired skills to other situations and contexts.

In addition to the forms of homework outlined above, students are also assigned longer-term projects from time to time. Such assignments extend skills and concepts taught in the classroom. Class time should be allotted for students to research and work on their project. Time spent outside of class on projects should be part of, not in addition to, routine homework. Timelines should be clearly stated and include interim checkpoints. Projects should reflect the work of students.

Time Guidelines

Grades 1 - 2 Occasional assignments each week, each on a separate night and each having a meaningful connection to learning and lasting no more than 15 to 20 minutes.

Grades 3 - 4 Occasional assignments each week that require no more than 45 minutes of homework on a weeknight.

Grades 5 - 6 Occasional assignments each week that require no more than 60 minutes of homework on a weeknight.

Grades 7 - 8 Up to 90 minutes of homework each night on several evenings throughout the week.

Grades 9 - 12 The courses in which students enroll at Falmouth High School provide an array of opportunities and challenges. Likewise, courses each fall into one of five credit designations: undesignated, college preparatory 1 (CP1), college preparatory 2 (CP2), honors (H), and advanced placement (AP). Each designation bears its own homework expectations:

Undesignated, CP1 & CP2 Average of 30 minutes per evening per course several times throughout the week.

Honors Average of 45 minutes per evening per course several times throughout the week.

AP Average of 60 minutes per evening per course several times throughout the week.

Upon returning to school after a period of absences, a student has a length of time equal to the number of school days absent to make up missed work. A student not making up the work in the allotted time will receive a failing mark for the work not made up. Previously announced assignments/tests must be completed upon return. The responsibility is on the student to meet with the teacher to determine when the assignment/test is to be made up.

If any extenuating circumstances exist, the parent/guardian should contact the assistant principal or the guidance counselor. The assistant principal and/or guidance counselor will consult with teacher, department head, the assistant principal, and principal when necessary.

Expectations

This effort must be coordinated among the schools, educators, families, and students.

An Educator expects a Student will...

1. Record homework assignments in an agenda or similar system for recording assignments and self-monitoring progress;
2. Make a legitimate effort to complete the homework assignment neatly and to the best of their ability or advocate for clarification and/or assistance when needed;
3. Manage time and submit all assignments when due, including long-term assignments provided in advance of an absence;
4. When making course selections, consider ability to realistically complete assignments in a healthy manner.

An Educator expects a Parent/Guardian will...

1. Establish homework as a priority;
2. Assist their child in designating (and organizing) a space in which to complete assignments;
3. Support their child in developing independent time management and work habits by monitoring and assisting as needed;

4. Communicate with an educator if their child experiences difficulty completing homework in the suggested time;
5. Provide limited assistance on assignments to ensure that the student's work is their own.

A Parent/Guardian and Student expect an Educator will...

1. Assign homework assignments that are meaningful and provide independent practice of skills taught or enrichment of content taught in class;
2. Announce, repeat, and remind their classes about short-term and long-term assignments that require time out of class for completion;
3. Communicate to families and students how homework will be evaluated;
4. Check homework consistently and provide timely feedback to students.

Report Cards and Parent/Guardian Conferences

Our standards-based report card reports an individual student's progress toward meeting end-of-year learning goals. The report cards were developed by teachers to serve as an additional way of communicating with parents/guardians. The content articulated in the report card highlights the core curriculum for each grade level and subject and describes what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of the school year.

Report cards are issued three (3) times a year in grades 1-4. Kindergarten students receive progress reports two (2) times per year. Special education progress reports and Title 1 progress reports are also issued with regular report cards during the school year. These reports are provided to inform both you and your child about progress being made. They serve as a formal record of progress and help facilitate communication between the home and the school.

Report cards are not a substitute for parent/guardian conferences. Conferences may be scheduled at any time of the year when a parent/guardian or teacher believes it would be in the best interest of the student. Formal conferences with parents and/or guardians will be scheduled at least once a year. Conferences provide two-way reporting: parent/guardian-to-teacher and teacher-to-parent/guardian. Please refer to your child's school calendar for scheduled parent/guardian conference dates.

Teaching about Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs, and Vaping

In accordance with state and federal law, the District shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, evidence-based alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention education programs in grades K-12. The alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention programs shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, with an emphasis on nonuse by school-age children. The program also shall include information about effective techniques and skill development for delaying and abstaining from using, as well as skills for addressing peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs. The objectives of this program, as stated below, are rooted in the Committee's belief that prevention requires education, and that the most important aspect of the policies and guidelines of the District should be the education of children and youth on healthy decision making:

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

The curriculum, instructional materials, and outcomes used in this program shall be recommended by the Superintendent with support from the School Committee. This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents/guardians in accordance with state law.

Assessment

Teachers and the Falmouth Public Schools administer tests at appropriate times to assess student achievement and to determine if learning difficulties are present. The Falmouth Public Schools benchmark assesses students' reading and mathematics skills three times per year: fall, winter, and spring. Our assessment system, Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST), provides valuable information to help determine students' areas of strength and areas for growth.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) also requires annual testing. The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) is the annual test administered to students in grades 3 and 4. Students are assessed in the areas of English/Language Arts & Literacy and Mathematics. Testing schedules will be shared with parents/guardians once they are established. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education does not allow for students and/or their parents/guardians to opt out of state testing. In accordance with guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, students who refuse to take the MCAS test may remain in the testing room as long as they are sitting quietly and are not interfering with other students. Part of the school's annual accountability rating is tied to students' participation rate in the MCAS test. Parents/guardians should contact their child's teacher or principal if they have additional questions regarding state testing.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Introduction

This information is provided to help you better understand the importance of regular attendance and what to do in the event of a late arrival or early dismissal.

School Hours

The first and last 15 minutes of the day are most critical for the children and the teachers. Have your child arrive at school on time at 9:05 a.m.; 12:45 p.m. for afternoon preschool. Do not have your child leave at the end of the day until school has concluded at 3:30 p.m., 11:45 a.m. for morning preschool.

Bicycles

Children who ride their bikes to school must:

- walk their bikes across the school grounds
- park bicycles in the bicycle racks provided
- lock bicycles securely, and
- wear a helmet as required by law.

Provisions for Child Care

On occasion, children may need to be sent home other than at normal dismissal time (e.g., due to sickness or schools closing for inclement weather). Parents/Guardians should have a plan for each situation to provide coverage for children who might arrive home early for whatever reasons. Some parents/guardians arrange with relatives, friends, or neighbors to meet the children coming home early. In the event of a child becoming sick or injured at school and needing to go home, an adult will be contacted. This is one reason that the names listed on your child's emergency procedure card must be up-to-date and that the people listed are available to pick up your child at their school.

Safe Arrival Program

On a daily basis, the school attempts to verify the attendance or necessary absence of every student. Please call the school to record any upcoming absence through the use of an available 24-hour phone line. This would include days of sickness, tardiness, vacations, or any other event that may

keep a student from arriving at the beginning of the school day. Record the name of the student, the grade level and the date(s) of the anticipated absence or tardiness.

Each morning the school absence list will be reconciled with the phone calls recorded on our Safe Arrival line. In any situation where a child's absence has not been accounted for by an appropriate phone call, the school will attempt to contact parents/guardians. We assume that all K-8 parents/guardians are part of the Safe Arrival Program. If you wish to "opt out" of this program, please contact your school's main office.

Scheduled Early Dismissal Days

Occasionally during the year, there will be an early dismissal of school to provide teachers and staff time for professional development activities. Dismissal for the morning preschool will be at 11:45 a.m. Kindergarten and grades 1-4 will be at 12:40 p.m.

Late Arrivals and Early Departures

Given the importance of having the children here for the entire school day, we hope that the occurrence of late arrivals and early departures will be reserved for emergencies. If you find it necessary to change your child's dismissal plan during the school day, please call the school office and communicate the changes before 3:00 p.m. We respectfully request that no phone call changes occur after 3:00 p.m.

Parking

Automobiles are not allowed in the area reserved for school buses. It is illegal and potentially life-threatening to pass a stopped bus when the red lights are flashing. Park in the designated parking areas only and follow the directions of school personnel directing traffic.

Bus Safety Program

Introduction

The Bus Safety Program was developed to maximize our students' safety while they are being transported to and from school. This is reviewed with the students at school periodically during the school year. We would like to enlist your help in reviewing and supporting this program with your child.

When Crossing the Street

If your child needs to cross the street to get to or from a bus, they need to

- wait for the bus to stop,
- wait for the driver's signal,
- look both ways for on-coming traffic, and
- walk quickly across the street ten (10) feet in front of the bus.

At Bus Stops

Your child should

- arrive no earlier than five (5) minutes prior to the bus arrival,
- wait in line in order to arrive at the bus stop without pushing or shoving,
- not try to retrieve a lost or dropped item that is under or near the bus,
- report to the driver when they are on the bus about a lost or dropped item, and
- be supervised while waiting for the bus to arrive.

On the Bus

While on the bus, students should

- sit in their chosen or assigned seat from entry onto the bus until the bus arrives at its destination and comes to a complete stop,
- respect the rights and property of all others on the bus, and
- realize that they are responsible for keeping the noise on the bus to a reasonable level to ensure that the driver is able to concentrate on transporting them safely.

If as student has a problem

- the student can decide to ignore the situation or tell the person how they feel,
- the student can tell the bus driver, when it is safe, and
- if the problem continues, the student can tell the principal.

At School

When getting off the bus, the student should

- go directly to the designated waiting area or into the school if the doors have been opened, and
- not wait around the bus area for friends or other busses.

When getting on the bus, the students should

- walk carefully to the bus,
- allow space for the person in front of them to get on the bus first, and
- go immediately to the assigned or vacant seat.

Student Consequences

If a student presents a threat to the safe operation of the bus, the driver may report, in writing, that student to the principal or their designee for administrative action. The information below describes the various levels of consequences. Based on the severity of the behavior, the following consequences may be issued

- student receives a warning,
- student receives formal discipline including loss of recess or detention after school, and/or
- student loses bus privileges for a period of time.

Note, if your child is involved in such a situation, you will receive a bus conduct report that you will need to initial and return to the school principal.

Video Cameras

Video cameras may be used to monitor behavior on school buses.

Food Services

Introduction

The Falmouth Public Schools Food Services Department offers breakfast and lunch daily. We are committed to meeting the needs of our students with balanced and nutritious meals. We welcome students to our program. If there are any special dietary needs students may have, please notify the school nurse. The Child Nutrition Program administered by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) contributes to the health and well-being of the Commonwealth's students by supporting nutritious meal services in schools. Nutritious breakfasts and lunches are provided to your child at the lowest possible cost to you. The school lunch program is an excellent value for the money, and we encourage you to utilize it. Please make sure that your child has lunch money, money on their account, or a homemade lunch for each school day. Parents/guardians are invited to have lunch with their child at any time. Parents/guardians must sign in at the main office.

Food Costs

- Breakfast costs \$2.00
- Lunch, including milk, costs \$3.00
- Milk costs \$0.50
- Soup costs \$1.00
- Snacks and Frozen Yogurt cost \$1.00
- Adult lunch, including milk, costs \$3.75

Free and Reduced Lunch

An application for free or reduced priced meals is included in the forms packet of this handbook and is available on the Falmouth Public Schools' website. Free or reduced priced meals may be available for your child based on the size of your family and your family's income. Households may apply at any time of the year. Extra copies of the forms are available in the school office throughout the school year if your financial situation changes. The Falmouth Public Schools participates in the Direct Certification Process. If your child has received a Meal Benefit Certificate from the Department of Transitional Assistance, you do not have to complete an application.

Online Payment System

The Falmouth Public Schools Food Services Department is excited to provide parents/guardians a convenient, easy, and secure online prepayment service to deposit money into your child's school meal account at any time. This service also provides parents/guardians the ability to view their child's account balance through a website called *MySchoolBucks*.

To access these services:

- Go to the district website at www.falmouth.k12.ma.us.
- Click on *Families*
- Click on Lunch Menus
- Click on the *MySchoolBucks* Login

Health and Well-Being

Introduction

The staff at your child's school cares about the physical, emotional, and social well-being of your child, in addition to their academic success. We are committed to providing education in a safe, healthful environment allowing all students to reach their full potential. Many of the available programs and professional staff may be used to help support your child's education.

School Safety

The Falmouth Public Schools are committed to providing a safe place for our students. The district has policies and procedures in place to ensure student safety. If you ever have questions regarding the safety of your child, please feel free to speak to your child's teacher and/or the school's principal.

Adjustment Counselor

Each school has an adjustment counselor on staff available to provide support to the students, staff, and parents/guardians. The adjustment counselor helps to resolve conflicts and assists with normal developmental issues. The adjustment counselor acts as a student advocate. Students view the counselor as someone who is available to listen to their problems, worries, and successes. We view the self-esteem and self-confidence of each student as strong predictors of a child's academic success. We believe each student is unique, possessing intrinsic worth with specific rights of unconditional positive regard and respect. The types of services offered by the School Adjustment Counselor include

- individual check-ins, where the student, parent/guardian, or teacher can request to speak with the counselor;
- support groups depending on the needs of the student population at a particular time such as a "lunch bunch" or groups covering divorce, bereavement, social skills or self-control,
- crisis intervention;
- counseling with staff members and family members;
- referrals and contact with outside agencies and services;
- follow-up on disciplinary matters, if appropriate;
- classroom discussions or lessons if requested by a teacher;

- monitoring of student population attendance;
- problem solving and mediation; and
- Peace Building ambassador.

Child Neglect

When you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, you should immediately contact the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Area Office serving the child's residence and ask for the Protective Screening Unit. Offices are staffed between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. weekdays. To make a report at another time, including after 5:00 p.m. and on weekends and holidays, please call the Child-At-Risk Hotline at 1-800-792-5200.

If you are a mandated reporter, you are also required by law to mail or fax a written report to the Department of Children and Families within 48 hours after making the oral report. The form for filing this report can be obtained from your local DCF Area Office. Falmouth Public Schools' employees are mandatory reporters.

School Nurse

Each school has a registered nurse on staff to support student learning by implementing strategies that promote health and safety. The nurse is available to intervene with actual and/or potential health problems. School nursing services include

- identification, assessment, planning, intervention, and evaluation of student health concerns;
- illness and injury assessments and interventions;
- immunization surveillance;
- state mandated health screenings of hearing, vision, height, and weight. Parents/guardians may opt their child out of any screening. Your child's school nurse must be notified by email or by written note;
- medication administration and monitoring;
- skilled nursing care and case management for students with special health care needs;
- health education and information for students, staff, and parents/guardians;
- assistance to families who have no health insurance; and

- mandated reporting of abuse and/or neglect, etc.

Any student who is not up-to-date with their immunizations by the third Friday in September may risk exclusion from school. Please contact the school nurse for information regarding local immunization clinics.

State Health Mandates

Health measures that are required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for students to attend school include immunizations and physical exams at specific grades. Immunization verification requests are for any newly enrolled student, students entering preschool, and students entering Kindergarten. A copy of a current physical exam is required for any newly enrolled student, students entering Kindergarten, and students entering third grade.

Allergies

Many children have allergies or sensitivities to various foods or other products. Some children have life-threatening reactions to these allergens, such as peanuts or latex. Please inform the school nurse/principal if your child has any allergies so that safety accommodations can be put in place. Please note, no homemade/baked products are allowed in peanut/nut free classrooms (e.g., parties) for class consumption. Items purchased at the store must have a clearly marked label stating all ingredients.

Latex Gloves and Balloons

Because of the potential for serious latex-related allergic reactions, as well as the choking hazards associated with latex balloons, only non-latex gloves and balloons will be allowed in the school building or on school grounds.

Medications

Parents and guardians need to remember that there are very specific criteria that must be met when medication is administered at school. Please contact the school nurse with any questions.

For medications being administered for ten (10) days or less:

- only medication taken four (4) times a day or less can be given at school;

- a labeled container from a pharmacy for prescription medications or original purchased container for over-the-counter medications is required. If needed, ask the pharmacist for an extra labeled container that can be left at school;
- the Parent/Guardian Medication Consent Form is to be filled out and signed by the parent/guardian; and
- the parent/guardian, or a responsible adult, must bring the medication and form to the nurse's office.

For medications being administered for more than ten (10) days:

- the medication must be in a labeled container from the pharmacy;
- no more than a 20-day supply of medication may be kept at school;
- the Physician Medication Order Form is to be filled out by the doctor;
- the Parent/Guardian Medication Consent Form is to be filled out and signed by the parent/guardian;
- the parent/guardian, or a responsible adult, must bring the medication and form to nurse's office; and
- students are not allowed to bring any medications into school themselves.

The school nurse needs to be aware of all children taking medication at home and in school at all times. All medication is to be stored in the health office. An adult must pick up all medications at the completion of treatment or on the last day of school. Any medications left at school will be disposed of at the end of the school year. All medication must be provided by the parent/guardian.

Missing School due to Illness

Your child should stay home from school if your child has

- a contagious illness, such as strep throat, until they have been on antibiotics for 24 hours;
- a fever or has had a fever within the past 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medication;
- vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours;
- an unknown rash; and/or

- untreated head lice – contact the school nurse regarding the protocol for returning to school and to ask any questions about treatment.

Insurance Coverage

All students are covered by accident insurance paid for by the district while they are on their way to or from school, on school grounds, or participating in an approved school activity. If your child is injured at school and the injury is observed by a school staff member then the school staff member will then determine if treatment or further action is needed. If your child is injured at school and a school staff member does not observe the injury then your child needs to report the accident and injury to a member of the school staff who will then determine if treatment or further action is needed. If your child requires treatment by a doctor then reimbursement requests must first be submitted to the family insurance carrier. If your child has no coverage or the expenses are not completely covered, then a bill can be submitted to the school insurance carrier and the school must verify the accident by means of an accident report.

Town of Falmouth Accident Insurance

The Town of Falmouth provides two types of accident insurance. Each of the policies is described below. The 24-Hour Student Insurance is an optional policy that is available to any interested parent or guardian. While the Falmouth School Committee does not formally endorse this optional coverage, it is available to those who are interested in obtaining it and should be considered in light of other insurance coverage a family has.

- **School Time Compulsory Accident Insurance:** The Town of Falmouth provides School-Time Compulsory Accident Insurance to all students. Students are insured for accidents that occur during school time or at school sponsored events, for example, field trips. This insurance policy provides excess coverage above and beyond the individual's primary insurance.
- **24-Hour Student Insurance:** This is an optional insurance policy available to all Falmouth students. This optional policy provides primary coverage with limits established by the policy. Individuals have the option of selecting medical coverage and/or extended dental coverage. Flyers are available to all students with a cover letter explaining this optional policy at all school buildings including the Superintendent's Office. Any parent/guardian

who wishes to take advantage of this optional insurance coverage may request an application form at any of our school buildings. Parents/Guardians are responsible for the cost of this insurance. No enrollment form for this accident insurance is included in your forms packet.

Promoting Your Child's Well-Being

- Fill out the Student Information/Medical Form and all health forms relevant to your child.
- Take your child for regular physicals.
- Follow-up on any health concerns that the school nurse brings to your attention regarding your child.
- Speak with the nursing staff about any issues that will help them better support your child.
- Have your child get plenty of sleep.
- Support your child in developing good time management skills for homework and extended projects.
- Dress your child appropriately for the outdoor weather and the indoor temperature.
- If appropriate, send your child to school with a change of clothes.
- Talk with your child about bullying, making sure they speak to an adult if there is ever a problem.
- Talk with your child regularly about their day.
- Talk with your child about making good choices.
- Talk with your child about making healthy food choices and that sharing food at school is discouraged.
- Send in a water bottle, so your child can stay hydrated during the day.
- Send in a healthy snack for your child, avoid sugary foods and drinks such as candy or soda.

Parent/Guardian Involvement

Introduction

For every child to reach their potential there needs to be a strong partnership between the family and the school. We welcome the involvement of parents/guardians and the community-at-large in our schools. There are many ways for parents/guardians to be involved in our schools. The purpose of this section is to list some of the opportunities that are available to you.

- Read at home with your child and discuss their day in the evening.
- Have lunch at school with your child.
- Attend special events at the school, such as Meet the Teacher Night or other activities that invite families into the school.
- Stay in communication with your child's teacher and set up conferences where you and the teacher can share insights about your child.
- Attend bi-weekly School Committee meetings.
- Attend monthly School Council meetings.
- Visit the school website to view teacher websites and current events.

Parent/Guardian Advisory Groups

There are two main advisory groups established by state and federal law. These two groups meet regularly throughout the year. For more information, please contact the school.

- School Councils – The advisory board to the school principal. The School Council is an advisory group to the principal at each school. Issues are discussed at the School Council that impacts that particular school. To learn more, please contact the school principal.
- Special Education Parent/Guardian Advisory Council – The advisory board for topics related to special education programs. To learn more, please contact the Office of Student Services at 508-548-0151, ext. 143.

Volunteer Opportunities

All volunteers working in any capacity with students are required to submit a CORI form as discussed in the forms section of this handbook. The following volunteer opportunities allow an

individual to work directly with the students and staff and are quite rewarding for the volunteer as well as the students:

- Become a room parent/guardian, helping the teacher organize celebrations and special events with other families
- Join the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and attend monthly meetings or help with the programs that it supports, such as fundraising for field trips and other enrichment activities for the students.
- Become a Volunteer in Public Schools (VIPS) and assist with various volunteer opportunities such as reading one-to-one with a student, assisting a teacher, working in the school library, or running a softball game at recess. Contact the VIPS Office at 508-548-1621 or vips@falmouth.k12.ma.us for additional information.
- Volunteer to chaperone on field trips.

Discipline and Code of Conduct

Serious Infractions

The following behaviors demonstrate a lack of respect of themselves, others, or learning. These behaviors are unacceptable and will result in a consequence:

- Disrespectful physical action: i.e., poking, cutting in line, rocking back in chair, spitting.
- Disrespectful verbal actions: i.e., lying, tattling, whining.
- Disrespectful toward learning environment: i.e., calling out, cheating, passing notes, humming/singing during instruction, lying down in meeting, refusing to work, not staying with group, talking to another, tapping pencils or other distracting noises.

Consequences for Serious Infractions

Depending upon the severity and frequency of the unacceptable behavior, one of the following consequences will be matched to the student and the situation:

- Acknowledge the student's behavior – pause and look verbal order, and/or signal.
- Student apology – verbal and/or written.
- Hold class meeting – talk to all students about behavior.
- Student spends extra time “practicing” desirable behavior.
- Speak to the student one-to-one in classroom and/or hall.
- Quiet/reflective table.
- Removal from the activity.

Very Serious Infractions

The following behaviors are threatening to the immediate well-being of a student or to the school. These are also unacceptable and will result in immediate attention or consequence:

- Hurtful physical contact.
- Inappropriate or distressful language – bullying, swearing, talking back to adults, teasing.
- Abusing school material/property.
- Repeated demonstration of serious behaviors.

Consequences for Very Serious Infractions

Depending upon the severity and frequency of the unacceptable behavior one of the following consequences will be matched to the student and situation:

- Contact parent/guardian – phone call, note home, or meeting.
- Conference with student – student fixes the problem or works toward fixing the problem, contract, school adjustment counselor intervention, spend extra time “practicing” the desirable behavior, principal’s office.
- Quite/reflective table.
- Removal from the activity.

Intolerable Infractions

The following behaviors are unacceptable and will result in immediate attention and significant consequences:

- Purposeful or deliberate unsafe behavior to self and/or others.
- Physical attack or aggression.
- Inappropriate touching of private parts.
- Verbal attack – i.e., racial slurs, sexual comments, threats.
- Leaving school grounds without supervision.
- Using anything as a weapon.
- Stealing.
- Vandalism.
- Repeated or severe demonstration of “very serious behaviors.”
- Harassment or discrimination.

Consequences for Intolerable Infractions

Depending on the severity and frequency of the unacceptable behavior one of the following consequences will be matched to the student and situation:

- Contact with the parent/guardian.
- Classroom and/or school consequence – i.e., bus suspension, detention, losing social time with peers, removal from activity.
- Removed from classroom by principal.
- Suspension or expulsion.

Corporal Punishment

State law prohibits the use of corporal punishment as an effective means of disciplining children in school.

Search of Students and Their Personal Property

A search of a student or their personal property in the presence of a second adult may be performed if a school administrator considers that there is a reasonable cause based on school rules dealing with theft, weapons, drugs, or other illegal substances.

Weapon Free Environment

The carrying or wearing on school property of any object which may be considered or used as a weapon is forbidden, including, but not limited to, firearms and knives of any size.

Bullying, Cyber-Bullying, and Retaliation

The Falmouth Public Schools is committed to maintaining a school environment where students are free from bullying and cyber-bullying and the effects thereof. Acts of bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited:

- i. on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the school district; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district and
- ii. 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, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

Definitions

Aggressor is a student or staff member who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c.71, s. 370 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 or target that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the targeted student or damage to their property;
- ii. places the target student in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or of damage to their property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the targeted student;

- iv. infringes on the rights of the targeted student at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying generally involves “picking on” a student over time and may include conduct such as hitting and shoving; pressuring a student into taking an action the student does not wish to take, words that involve threats, teasing, putdowns, or name-calling; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations; and social isolation.

Cyber-bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c.71, s. 37O is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but 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 communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying also includes:

- i. the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- 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 above in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying; and
- iii. 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 above in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying may include conduct such as sending derogatory, harassing or threatening email messages, instant messages, or text messages; creating websites that ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate others; and posting on websites or disseminating embarrassing or inappropriate pictures or images of others.

Hostile Environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, s. 37O, 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 any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Target is a student or staff member against whom bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Bullying and Retaliation are Prohibited And Will Lead to Discipline

The Falmouth Public Schools absolutely prohibits bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation as defined above. Students and staff members who engage in bullying or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action; however, disciplinary action taken must balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The range of disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to, one or more of the following: verbal warnings, written warnings, reprimands, detentions, short-term or long-term suspensions, or expulsions from school as determined by the school administration and/or school committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements. Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent the school administration and/or school committee from taking disciplinary action against a student or staff member for conduct that does not meet the definition of bullying or cyber-bullying, as defined above, but nevertheless is inappropriate for the school environment.

Reporting Obligations

Reporting by Staff: 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, shall immediately report any instance of bullying or retaliation the student has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or designee.

Reporting by Students, Parents/Guardians, and Others: The district expects students, parents/guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation

involving a student to report it to the school principal or designee. An individual may make an anonymous report of bullying or retaliation, however, no disciplinary action may be taken against a student or staff member solely on the basis of an anonymous report. A student or staff member who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Reporting to Parents/Guardians: The principal or designee must promptly notify the parent/guardian of the alleged target and the alleged aggressor of a report of bullying or retaliation and of the school's procedures for investigating the report. If the alleged target and alleged aggressor attend different schools, the principal receiving the report shall inform the principal of the other student's school, who shall notify the student's parents/guardians of the report and procedures.

Reporting to Local Law Enforcement: At any point after receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, or during or after an investigation, if the school principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that the incident may involve criminal conduct, the school principal or designee will notify the local law enforcement agency. In addition, 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 Superintendent of the Falmouth Public Schools or designee will notify local law enforcement if they believe that criminal charges may be pursued.

Reporting to Administrator of Another School District or School: 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 and the Falmouth Public Schools is the first to be informed of the bullying or retaliation, then the Superintendent of the Falmouth Public Schools or designee must, 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.

Investigation

The school principal or designee shall investigate promptly a report of bullying or retaliation, giving consideration to all the circumstances at hand, including the nature of the allegations and the ages of the students involved. The following are general guidelines for responding to a report of bullying or retaliation. The guidelines will be adapted as necessary to respond appropriately to the complaint.

Pre-Investigation: Even before fully investigating allegations of bullying or retaliation, school personnel will consider whether there is a need to take immediate steps to support the alleged target and/or protect the alleged target from further potential incidents of concern. In taking any such action, however, the rights of both the alleged target and alleged aggressor must be considered.

Written statement of the complaint: The investigator will seek to determine the basis of the complaint, gathering information from the complainant, including such matters as: what specifically happened, who committed the alleged acts, who was present or may have information about the events, when the events occurred (date, time of day), and where the events occurred. It is helpful to have these facts in writing. If age appropriate, the complainant may be asked to put the complaint in writing and to sign and date it. If the complainant cannot or chooses not to write a complaint, the investigator will record the allegations, read them to the complainant to confirm accuracy, and ask the complainant to sign the document. If the complainant cannot or chooses not to sign, the investigator may sign and date the document themselves.

Interviews: Once the allegations of the complainant are established, the investigator will gather other evidence, which often involves interviews of the alleged aggressor and/or other witnesses. If appropriate, the investigator should remind the alleged aggressor and witnesses that retaliation against persons whom they believe might have reported the incidents or cooperated with the investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Confidentiality: The confidentiality of the complainant and the other witnesses will be maintained to the extent practicable given the school's obligation to investigate and address the matter.

Determination

School personnel must weigh all of the evidence objectively to determine whether the alleged events occurred and, if they did, whether the events constitute bullying or retaliation. The determination must be based upon all of the facts and circumstances and the perspective of a reasonable person. When applied to children, the "reasonable person" standard is generally "that of a reasonable person of like age, intelligence, and experience under like circumstances." See *Ellison v. Brady*, 924 F.2d 872 (9th Cir. 1991).

If bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the school will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. As with the investigation, the response will be individually tailored to all of the circumstances, including the nature of the conduct and the age of the students involved. In addition to taking disciplinary action, the following are examples of steps that may be taken to prevent the recurrence of bullying or retaliation:

- Holding parent/guardian conferences;
- Transferring student's classroom or school;
- Limiting or denying student access to a part, or area, of a school;
- Enhancing adult supervision on school premises;
- Excluding from participation in school-sponsored or school-related functions, after-school programs, and/or extracurricular activities;
- Providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students or staff members. Guidance counselors and others in the school setting who have been trained in working with students or staff members on interpersonal issues may be helpful in providing such programs.
- Personalized Action Plan and directives for future conduct, including providing the target with a process for reporting any concerns about future conduct immediately. It is critical to involve the student or staff member in creating an action plan that involves a reporting process that works for that particular student or staff member.
- Arranging for communication between the parties, if appropriate, to assist them in resolving issues which have arisen between them. (Such an approach will be used

- cautiously since communication can sometimes exacerbate, rather than alleviate, the target's concerns and since the conduct often involves an imbalance of power.)
- Providing counseling (or other appropriate services) or referral to such services for the target and/or the aggressor and/or for appropriate family members of said students.

Closing the Complaint and Possible Follow-Up

School staff will promptly provide notice to the parent/guardian of a target and an aggressor about whether or not the complaint was substantiated and, if substantiated, what action is being taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation. Specific information about disciplinary action taken generally will not be released to the target's parents or guardians—unless it involves a “stay away” or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

If appropriate, within a reasonable time period following closure of the complaint, the administrative staff or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been any recurrence of the prohibited conduct.

The district will retain a report of the complaint, containing the name of the complainant, the date of the complaint, investigator, school, a brief statement of the nature of the complaint, the outcome of the investigation, and the action taken. Quarterly review of reports will be conducted by the Superintendent or designee in collaboration with the building administrator.

Protection for Students with Disabilities

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and related regulations provide eligible students with certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline.

In general, special education students may be suspended from their programs, just as any other student can be, for up to ten school days per year. However, when a special education student is excluded from their program for more than ten school days in the school year, the student's special education Team must develop a functional behavioral assessment plan. In many instances, the Team also may be required to determine whether the student's behavior was a direct result of their disability (a "manifestation determination").

If the Team determines the behavior was not a direct result of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student according to the school's code of conduct, except that the district must continue to provide the student with educational services during the period of the suspension or expulsion. However, if the Team determines that the behavior was a direct result of the disability, the student may not be excluded from the current educational placement (except in the case of weapons, drugs, or the possibility of serious bodily injury to the child or others) until the Team develops and the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent(s) to a new IEP.

In the event a student possesses, uses, sells or solicits a controlled substance or possesses a weapon or seriously injures an individual at school or at a school function, a school may place a student in an interim alternative education setting for up to 45 days. Hearing officers may also order the placement of a student in an appropriate interim setting for up to 45 days upon determination the current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others. When a parent (s)/guardian (s) disagrees with the decision on the "manifestation determination" or with a decision regarding placement, the parent(s)/guardian(s) have the right to request an expedited due process hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals. Similar procedures apply to students who have been determined to have a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

The IDEA protections summarized above also apply to a child who has not yet been found eligible for services under the statute if the district is "deemed to have knowledge" that the child was eligible for such services before the conduct that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. The

IDEA provides that a school district is “deemed to have knowledge” if: (1) the child’s parent/guardian had expressed concern in writing to district supervisory or administrative personnel or the child’s teacher that the child needs special education and related services; (2) the child’s parent/guardian had requested an evaluation of the child to determine eligibility for special education services; or (3) the teacher of the child or other school district personnel had expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior by the child directly to the district’s director of special education or to other supervisory personnel. However, a school district is not “deemed to have knowledge” if the district evaluated the student and determined that the child was not eligible for special education services or the child’s parent/guardian refused an evaluation of the child or IDEA services.

If the school district has no knowledge that a student is an eligible student under the IDEA before taking disciplinary measures against the student, the student may be disciplined just as any other student may be. If, however, a request is made for an evaluation to determine eligibility while the student is subject to disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner. Pending the results of the evaluation, the student must remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion without services. If the student is determined eligible for an IEP as a result of the evaluation, the school district must provide the student with special education and related services in accordance with the IDEA.

Additional information regarding the procedural protection for students with disabilities can be obtained from the Director of Student Services, who can be reached at the Administration Building at 508-548-0151 x143.

Discipline of Students Whose Eligibility for Special Education is Suspected

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) protections apply to a child who has not yet been found eligible for services under the statute if the district is “deemed to have knowledge” that the child was eligible for such services before the conduct that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. The IDEA provides that a school district is “deemed to have knowledge” if:

- the child’s parents/guardians had expressed concern in writing to district supervisory or administrative personnel or the child’s teacher that the child needs special education and related services
- the child’s parent/guardian had requested an evaluation of the child to determine eligibility for special education services, or
- the teacher of the child or other school district personnel had expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior by the child directly to the district’s director of special education or to other supervisory personnel. However, a school district is not “deemed to have knowledge” if the district evaluated the student and determined that the child was not eligible for special education services or the child’s parent/guardian refused an evaluation of the child or IDEA services.

If the school district has no knowledge that a student is an eligible student under the IDEA before taking disciplinary measures against the student, the student may be disciplined just as any other student may be. If, however, a request is made for an evaluation to determine eligibility while the student is subject to disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner. Pending the results of the evaluation, the student must remain in the educational placement determined by the school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion without services. If the student is determined eligible for an IEP as a result of the evaluation, the school district must provide the student with special education and related services in accordance with the IDEA.

Chapter 222

In accordance with student discipline laws and regulations, effective July 1, 2014, enacted by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts pursuant to Chapter 222 of the Acts of 2012 (An Act Relative

to Student Access to Educational Services and Exclusion from School), the Falmouth Public School District has modified its student discipline procedures and guidelines so as to be in compliance with Chapter 222, M.G.L. c. 71 SS 37H, 37H $\frac{1}{2}$ and 37H $\frac{3}{4}$, M.G.L. c. 76, SS 1, 18, 18, and 21, and 603 CMR 53.00 (adopted by Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education on April 29, 2014).

Glossary of Terms

Assistant Principal – An assistant principal is designated by a Superintendent as next-in-line of authority to the school principal and holds a principal’s license. Under special circumstances, a local board of education may employ an assistant principal with a provisional license.

Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) – Information regulated by the Criminal History Systems Board and maintained by the Board of Probation regarding criminal information of persons within the Massachusetts Court System. Any person seeking employment or volunteering in Falmouth Public Schools must fill out a CORI application.

English Language Development (ELD) – State law requires that English Language Learners (ELLs) receive instruction that is specifically designed to assist them in learning the English language and subject matter content and that parent/guardian participate in the decision-making process. When a student enrolls in Falmouth Public Schools, the district will determine whether the student is an English Language Learner and the student will be placed in an appropriate instructional setting to support content and language learning.

Electronic Devices - Falmouth Public Schools understands the value of using various electronic devices for instructional purposes to enhance our students’ learning and educational opportunities. The school district may provide students with electronic devices for use during the school day. In addition, students may be asked to use their own electronic devices. The use of these devices will be for educational purposes and may not interfere with instruction. The taking, filming, or transmitting photographic or digital images of any person on school grounds without their permission is prohibited. The inappropriate use of technology may result in disciplinary measures as well as the confiscation of the device.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) – An IEP is a written plan developed for a student that identifies that student’s special educational needs and describes the services, modifications, and accommodations a school district shall provide to meet those needs.

Inclusion - Inclusion is a term that expresses commitment to educate each child, to the maximum extent appropriate, in the school and classroom the student would otherwise attend. It involves

bringing the support services to the child (rather than moving the child to the services) and requires only that the child will benefit from being in the class (rather than having to keep up with the other students).

Instructional Support Team – A professional team of teachers and specialists whose goals are to maximize individual student success, while at the same time serving as a screening process for students who may be in need of special education services.

Language Based Learning Center (LBLC) – A multi-modality special education program for children with language processing disabilities.

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) – The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) was implemented in response to the Education Reform Law of 1993.

Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO) – A group of parents/guardians that supports a school and teachers by volunteer work and fundraising events.

Principal - A principal is designated by a Superintendent as the head of a school. To receive State funding for a principal, a school must have 100 or more students in average daily membership (ADM) and/or seven or more full-time state paid teachers (or the equivalent). A principal must hold a principal's license.

School Adjustment Counselor - The school adjustment counselor's role is to help children experiencing short or long-term crises, which impact their ability to learn and participate in the full range of school activities. Adjustment counselors work using a child-centered approach, with teachers, administrators, family members, and in some cases, agencies to bring about solutions through a wide range of strategies.

School Committee - The School Committee is responsible for overseeing the local public schools. Elected by the voters of the town, members appoint the Superintendent, approve the budget, negotiate union contracts, and set policies for the public schools in the district.

School Council - A school council is a representative, school building-based committee composed of the principal, parents/guardians, teachers, community members and, at the secondary level,

students, required to be established by each school under Massachusetts General Laws and operates under Massachusetts opening meeting laws. Teachers, parents/guardians, and community members can become more committed to improving the schools and more supportive of the public school system when they enjoy the opportunity to serve or be represented on a school council that has a role in shaping the policies and programs of the school. School councils enhance site-based decision making because they expand the participation of the school community in its schools' decision making. The involvement of different groups on the council provides the school with different and mutually complementary perspectives on its improvement goals and plans. In addition, by involving people who work in and support the school in the development of the school's improvement plan, the likelihood will increase that the plan will be successfully implemented. School councils are to assist principals in adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide student performance standards, identifying the educational needs of students attending the school reviewing the annual school building budget and formulating a school improvement plan.

Special Education Parent's Advisory Council (SEPAAC) - A group of parents/guardians, professionals and administration in a shared effort to understand, respect, and support appropriate education for all children with special needs in our community.

Special Education Building Administrator (SEBA) - A building-based administrator responsible for the oversight of special education programming within the school. This person may sometimes assume the role of the assistant principal.

Speech/Language - The capacity to use expressive and/or receptive language. If a student has communication impairment, the student would have difficulties in one or more of the following areas- speech, such as articulation and/or voice; conveying, understanding, or using spoken, written, or symbolic language. The term communication impairment may include a student with impaired articulation, stuttering, language impairment, or voice impairment if such impairment adversely affects the student's educational performance.

Superintendent of Schools - The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for the actual administration of the schools in the district. The powers and duties of the Superintendent are

prescribed by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Superintendent is appointed by the School Committee.

The Learning Center (TLC) - A special education program for children and students with developmental delays and/or intellectual impairment which coordinates academic, communication, and personal-social activities tailored to meet the needs of the individual children. The key to this program is the specialized teacher who manages an array of specialized strategies and activities both separately and in the mainstream to increase the student's independence and success with individualized learning goals.

Therapeutic Intervention Program (TIP) - This program services children with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). The students receive specialized instruction that promotes generalization and coping strategies to natural environments.

Title I - Title I provides federal funding for schools to help students who are behind academically or at risk of falling behind. Funding is based on the number of low-income children in a school, generally those eligible for the free lunch program. Currently, the following schools are identified as Title I schools: East Falmouth Elementary, Mullen- Hall Elementary, Teaticket Elementary. Title I is intended to supplement, not replace, state and district funds.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy

Introduction

The Falmouth Public Schools, through its mission statement and core beliefs, encourages students to be engaged in their education in a way that develops their capacity to pursue their goals and foster life-long learning. Technology is an integral part of the Falmouth mission and its use supports our goals to promote academic excellence and to enhance teaching and learning. Through access to all forms of technology, our students will gain the skills and expertise to prepare them for an increasingly technology-oriented society. Technology and the Internet have great potential both for use and abuse. Access to district technology is a privilege, not a right, and can be revoked if it is abused. The expectation of the Falmouth Schools is that all users will act responsibly in accordance with this Acceptable Use Policy.

Policy

It is the policy of Falmouth Schools to provide access for employees and students to technology, including networks and the Internet, for educational and administrative purposes. Users are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible, ethical and polite manner while using district technology resources.

Falmouth has taken precautions to eliminate controversial material and implements Internet filtering in accordance with the federal Children's Internet Protection Act. It also recognizes that it is impossible to restrict access to all controversial materials and cannot replace appropriate student use and supervision by a responsible adult. In addition, some resources accessed may be inaccurate, inappropriate for classroom or library/media use, or contrary to school standards. If such inappropriate material is inadvertently encountered, it shall be the student's responsibility to disengage immediately and report it to the principal or their designee. Ultimately, students are accountable for all activities conducted while using technology in school.

Use of district technology will be governed by applicable sections of the Falmouth School Committee Policies and the Parent/Student Handbooks. The network is the property of the school district; therefore, Falmouth reserves the right to monitor all use, making it subject to inspection at any time. Students should have a limited privacy expectation in the contents of their personal

files on the network. All students shall assume full liability; legal, financial or otherwise for their use of technology.

The primary use of district technology resources is for educational purposes; non-school uses are not permitted. Personal information should never be transmitted on the Internet. Improper uses of district technology resources are prohibited. Unacceptable uses include, but are not limited to:

- Violation of copyright or plagiarism of another person's intellectual property
- Violation of any local, state or federal statute
- Violation of computer security systems or access to another person's files without permission
- Access, upload, download or distribute illegal, pornographic, gambling or hate materials
- Transmission of obscene, abusive or sexually explicit language or images that could be considered harassment or bullying
- Disruption of system performance including changing configurations or attaching devices, physically or wirelessly, that will disrupt the system performance
- Use of the system for commercial purposes, defined as offering or providing goods or services
- Public resources may not be used for political campaigns. Users may communicate with their elected representatives
- Any form of vandalism, including but not limited to damaging equipment, networks, data or programs, disseminating malicious software programs such as viruses, and/or disrupting the operation of the network
- Any activities that might cause a disruption of the educational process

Disciplinary actions will be handled by the building principal in accordance with the applicable provision detailed in the student handbook. Consequences imposed will be based upon the severity of the violation. Falmouth Public Schools will cooperate fully with the local, state or federal officials in any investigation concerning any illegal activities conducted through the district system.

Appendix A: Student Discipline

Pursuant to Chapter 222 of the Acts of 2012 (An Act Relative to Student Access to Educational Services and Exclusion from School), the Commonwealth of Massachusetts enacted student discipline laws and regulations, effective July 1, 2014, for the purposes of (1) limiting the use of long-term suspension as a consequence for student misconduct and offenses subject to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4}, as set forth in 603 CMR 53.01(3)(a), until other consequences have been considered and tried as appropriate, (2) promoting engagement of a student's parents/guardians in a discussion with respect to the student's misconduct, and options for responding to same, (3) assuring that every student who is expelled or suspended, regardless of the reason, has the opportunity to receive education services so as to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion, and (4) keeping schools safe and supportive for all students while ensuring fair and effective disciplinary practices.

In accordance with said Chapter 222, the Falmouth Public School District will abide by the following laws, regulations, procedures, and guidelines with respect to student discipline, and incorporates by reference this Appendix A as part of the accompanying Student Handbook:

Definitions:

“Disciplinary offenses” encompassed by M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H^{1/2} means one or more of the following alleged or determined disciplinary infractions:

- a. possession of a dangerous weapon;
- b. possession of a controlled substance;
- c. assault on a member of the educational staff; and/or
- d. a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H^{1/2}

“Disciplinary offenses” encompassed by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4} means any alleged or determined disciplinary infraction by a student *other than* those encompassed by M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and

37H ½ as set forth above. A disciplinary offense, as so defined, is subject to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾ and the regulations set forth in 603 CMR 53.01 through 53.14.

“Expulsion” means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than 90 school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H½ for:

- a. possession of a dangerous weapon;
- b. possession of a controlled substance;
- c. assault on a member of the educational staff; and/or
- d. a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student’s continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H½.

“In-school suspension” means removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than 10 consecutive school days, or no more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for 10 days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension under 603 CMR 53.00. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than 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 pursuant to 603 CMR 53.00.

“Long-term suspension” means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than 10 consecutive school days, or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. A principal may, in their discretion, allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in subsections (a) or (b) of M.G.L. c. 71, §37H, or in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H½, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than 90 school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from

school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

“Parent” means a student’s father, mother, or legal guardian, or person or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the student in place of or in conjunction with the father, mother, or legal guardian.

“School-wide education service plan” means the document developed by a principal, in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, § 21, that includes a list of education services available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive days.

“Short-term suspension” means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for 10 consecutive school days or less. A principal may, in their discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

“Suspension” means short-term suspension and long-term suspension unless otherwise stated.

Suspension and Expulsion Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H:

- a. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife, or a controlled substance as defined in M.G.L. c. 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- b. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- c. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) above 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 their discretion, decide

to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b) above.

- d. Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have 10 days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of their 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.
- e. Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide education services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under M.G.L. c. 76, § 21. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide education services to the student in an education service plan, under M.G.L. c. 76, § 21.
- f. Districts shall report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the Commissioner. The Department shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the Department shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the Commissioner.
- g. Under the regulations promulgated by the Department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the Commissioner shall investigate and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

Suspension and Expulsion Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H½:

Notwithstanding the provisions of M.G.L. c. 71, § 184, and M.G.L. c. 76, §§ 16 and 17:

- a. 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 may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal if they determine 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 their 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 their request for an appeal no later than 5 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 3 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 their behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within 5 calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.
- b. 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 may expel said student if the principal 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 their 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 their 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 their behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within 5 calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the expulsion. Any school that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under M.G.L. c. 76, § 21. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide education services to the student under an education service plan, under M.G.L. c. 76, § 21.

Disciplinary Offenses and Education Services Under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½:

- a. The Falmouth Public School District is required to adopt disciplinary policies and procedures applicable to a student who is accused of a disciplinary offense under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½. Such policies and procedures shall be consistent with the applicable statute and provide due process of law.
- b. Pursuant to 603 CMR 53.12, the principal may remove a student who has committed a disciplinary offense under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½ from school for more than 90 days in a school year.
- c. Any student who is removed from school for a disciplinary offense under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½ shall have the opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13, and as set forth below herein.

Suspension and Expulsion of Students Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾ (i.e., suspension or expulsion for offenses other than those covered in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H (a) or (b) (dangerous weapons, controlled substances, and assaults on educational personnel) and M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H½ (felony complaint)):

- a. Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise

discretion, consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process, and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.

- b. For any suspension or expulsion under this section (i.e., § 37H^{3/4}), the principal or their designee shall provide to the student and to the parent/guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or a designee to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or a designee shall ensure that the student's parent/guardian is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent/guardian only if the principal or a designee can document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian in the meeting.
- c. If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or their designee shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent/guardian shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or their designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.
- d. A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the

superintendent. The student or a parent/guardian shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent/guardian may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent/guardian within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent/guardian may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent or a designee may proceed with a hearing without a parent/guardian present if the superintendent or a designee makes a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

- e. For a disciplinary offense committed under this section, no student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.
- f. 603 CMR 53.00 (Code of Massachusetts Regulations -- Student Discipline Regulations approved by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education on April 29, 2014, effective as of July 1, 2014):

53.01: Authority, Scope, and Purpose:

For all public preschool, elementary, and secondary schools and programs in Massachusetts, including charter and virtual schools, 603 CMR 53.03 through 53.11 sets forth:

- a. the minimum procedural requirements applicable to the suspension of a student for a disciplinary offense *other than*: i) possession of a dangerous weapon; ii) possession of a controlled substance; iii) assault on a member of the educational staff; or iv) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½;

- b. the minimum requirements and procedures necessary to ensure that all students who have been suspended, in-school or out-of-school, or expelled, regardless of the type of offense, have an opportunity to make academic progress during their period of suspension, expulsion, or removal from regular classroom activities; and
- c. the requirements pertaining to school discipline data reporting and analysis.

53.02: Definitions:

See Definitions section above

53.03: Policies and Procedures:

The Falmouth School Committee shall ensure that policies and procedures are in place for all public preschool, elementary, and secondary schools and programs under its jurisdiction that meet, at a minimum, the requirements of M.G.L. c.71, § 37H³/₄, M.G.L. c. 76, § 21, and 603 CMR 53.00.

53.04: Investigation of Disciplinary Incidents:

Nothing in these regulations shall prevent a school administrator from conducting an investigation, including student interviews, of a school-related disciplinary incident.

53.05: Alternatives to Suspension Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H³/₄:

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, a principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense; consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

53.06: Notice of Suspension and Hearing Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H³/₄:

1. Except as provided in 603 CMR 53.07 and 603 CMR 53.10, 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 for a hearing on the charge 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, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language:
 - a. The disciplinary offense;
 - b. The basis for the charge;
 - c. The potential consequences, including 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, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, 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 interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate; and
 - 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/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent/guardian for emergency notification.
4. Written notice to the parent/guardian may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian.

53.07: Emergency Removal Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾:

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 and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no

alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The principal shall immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal 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/guardian 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/guardian 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(2) or 53.08(3), as applicable, and the parent/guardian an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian; and
- 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.
- e. 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.

53.08: Principal's Hearing Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4}:

1. The principal shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense. If the consequence may be long-term suspension from school, the principal shall afford the student, at a minimum, all the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08(3) in addition to those rights afforded to students who may face a short-term suspension from school.
2. Principal's Hearing - Short-Term Suspension:
 - a. The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary

offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05. The principal shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

- b. Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.
 - c. The principal shall notify the student and parent/guardian of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(1). The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.
 - d. If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.
3. Principal's Hearing - Long-Term Suspension:
- a. The purpose of the hearing is the same as the purpose of a short-term suspension hearing.
 - b. At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights:
 - I. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
 - II. The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's/guardian's expense;

- III. 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;
 - IV. The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; and
 - V. The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent/guardian requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent/guardian upon request.
- c. The principal shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
 - d. Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent/guardian by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent/guardian. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:
 - I. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
 - II. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
 - III. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
 - IV. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(4)(a); and
 - V. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary

language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:

1. the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent/guardian must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent/guardian may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that
2. the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.
3. If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

53.09: Superintendent's Hearing Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4}:

1. A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.
2. The student or parent/guardian shall file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within the time period set forth 603 CMR 53.08 (3) (c) 5.a). If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in their discretion, for good cause.
3. The superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the superintendent shall grant the extension.
4. The superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian in the hearing. The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if they have made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent/guardian and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent/guardian of the date, time, and location of the hearing.
5. The superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence

shall be. The superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request. The superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent/guardian upon request.

6. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension under 603 CMR 53.08(3) (b).
7. The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(3) (c) 1 through 5. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision.
8. The decision of the superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district, charter school, or virtual school, with regard to the suspension.

53.10: In-School Suspension Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H^{3/4}:

1. The principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.
2. The principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the principal follows the process set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(3) through 603 CMR 53.10(5) and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as set forth in 603 CMR 53.13(1).
3. The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.
4. On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent/guardian to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and

possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent/guardian after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent/guardian of the in-school suspension.

5. The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent/guardian about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent/guardian to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(4), if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent/guardian.

53.11: Emergency Removal Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H³/₄:

The principal may remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the procedures in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H³/₄ or 603 CMR 53.00.

53.12: Disciplinary Offenses Under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H¹/₂:

1. School districts shall adopt disciplinary policies and procedures applicable to a student who is accused of a disciplinary offense under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H¹/₂. Such policies and procedures shall be consistent with the applicable statute and provide due process of law.
2. The principal may remove a student who has committed a disciplinary offense under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H¹/₂ from school for more than ninety (90) days in a school year.
3. Any student who is removed from school for a disciplinary offense under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H or § 37H¹/₂ shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13.

53.13: Education Services and Academic Progress Under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H¹/₂, and 37H³/₄:

1. 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 their removal from the classroom or school. The principal shall inform the student and parent/guardian of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

2. Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.
3. The principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents/guardians of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under M.G.L. c 69, §§ 1D and 1F.
4. Notice of Education Services for Students in Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion; Enrollment Reporting.
 - a. The principal shall notify the parent/guardian and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.
5. For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department.

Appendix B: Videotaping/Photography of Children in Schools

The Falmouth School Committee recognizes that the use of media is a valuable technology tool and endorses its established practice in the schools for educational and/or public relations purposes.

The Falmouth Public Schools will be designated executive producer of all media of children in the schools.

Parents/guardians will give permission annually to allow their child to be videotaped or photographed through the use of a parent/guardian form included in the parent/guardian/student handbook, and will also be available in each school office. Records of all completed forms will be retained in the school office in which the student attends in order to be made available to staff, approved video producers, and/or photographers.

Parent/guardian permission for videotaping and photography is not required for:

- Events, such as awards assemblies, plays, concerts, athletic contests or similar events, with an expected public audience.
- Use by school officials with a legitimate educational interest or where the work meets other exceptions to Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) disclosure rules and is performed with the explicit knowledge and permission of students.
- Use by school officials where it is done as a direct consequence of security procedures implemented with the express knowledge and approval of the superintendent.
- In unusual circumstances, such as in the event of fire or accident, the public and/or media shall not be permitted access to the school.

Public and Private Video Producers / Photographers

Permission for video producers and/or photographers from outside the school district must be secured from the affected building principal and the teacher(s) involved. The requestor must provide sufficient reason to justify an intrusion into the school's learning activities.

Before any such permission may be granted, the prospective producer/director must provide the school with a written outline of the intended production and distribution, the production's goals

and a description of the treatment, if appropriate, planned to achieve those goals. This outline must be submitted to and approved in writing by the affected building principal or their designee in advance of the start of any school videotaping or photography.

The building principal or designee will inform the requestor which, if any, students are not to be videotaped or photographed due to the parent's/guardian's failure to provide the Permission Form or decision to deny permission. Any approval of a project is conditioned upon the requestor's commitment to videotape or photograph only those students whose parents/guardians have provided permission for such.

When such permission is granted, a designated liaison will be established by the building principal or designee, and this liaison will establish necessary contacts and participate in the project as Falmouth Public School's representative.

A label will appear on all approved videos that will state "This video is approved by the Falmouth School Department for public viewing in accordance with School Committee Policy IJOE. Any use of this film will be by approval of the school Principal only." As part of the project's permanent documentation, the producer will make available one (1) physical or electronic copy of the finished production to Falmouth Public Schools.

School Personnel

Staff members who plan activities that may include their videotaping or photographing of students will adhere to all district policies and guidelines in regard to posting of student media. Video or photographs of students prepared by staff or students which include students whose parents/guardians have not provided permission may not be shown outside of school and may only be shown to school officials with a legitimate educational interest or others for whom consent is not required by FERPA and Board Policy.