



# NASHOBA

Regional School District

## Florence Sawyer School

100 Mechanic Street  
Bolton, MA 01740  
<http://sawyer.nrsd.net>

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### **Principal's Message for the 2007-08 School Year:**

Dear Students and Parents:

Welcome to the 2007-08 school year at the Florence Sawyer School. As always, we are looking forward to a healthy and productive academic year filled with new goals, challenges, and accomplishments. As educators, we are entrusted with children across ten grade levels from PK through grade 8, in two buildings run as one school. We strive to work, as partners, with our families to build a strong foundation, a love of learning, and a successful partnership that lives long into the future providing each student with an outstanding educational experience that develops the "whole child". Our hopes and our expectations for each student are high. By combining a challenging, enriching educational environment with a caring climate we hope to create a culture that encourages risk taking to achieve one's best.

Although we house ten grade levels, PK-8, we actually function as three schools in one: an early childhood, PK-2 house; an elementary, grades 3-5 house; and middle school, grades 6-8 house. Our learning community allows for a cooperative approach across the wide grade spans, while providing some unique learning, mentoring, and sharing opportunities presented by the PK-8 grade span. However, the challenges and expectations are appropriately different at each span of grades. I mention this since it is important to keep this in mind as children progress through the school and as you review this handbook. Preparing a student and parent handbook for such a wide variety of ages is a daunting task, each year, done with the advice and direction of a sub-committee of our Florence Sawyer School Council.

Our school handbook is prepared each year as a reference for students, parents, and staff. It is an attempt to provide information on our expectations, our programs, our procedures, and our way of operating as a school within our larger district. Since we cover such a broad range of ages, it is difficult to design one handbook that is developmentally appropriate for all ages of children. Therefore, we have tried to build in some flexibility in our procedures and expectations and we strive to interpret these guidelines in a way that is developmentally appropriate to the grade spans. We have also tried to provide you with as much useful information as possible about the school, our programs, and our expectations. Additionally, we are asked to provide some legal and district information. At times, this requires us, for space reasons, to include references to other documents, such as policies adopted by the Nashoba Regional School District School Committee. These policies are available on-line or in paper copy at our schools.

While we continue to grow, we strive to honor the history of our school; we take pride in our uniqueness within the district, while striving to provide every child with an outstanding educational experience, as mentioned above. Every time your child walks through the doors of the Florence Sawyer School, we will ask that he or she do the best work possible. We expect the same of each and every staff member working to help them achieve this goal. As a staff we will remind ourselves that we are here "to do what is best for children", believing that if we keep that as our main focus we are bound to have our priorities straight. Ours is a community that values involvement and making a contribution. Because of that, we hope that everyone who comes through our doors will be a contributor to the success of our school community. If everyone trusts that we have the best interests of children in mind and that children come first, we will be able to celebrate many successes at the conclusion of another great school year!

Sincerely,

*Kenneth Tucker, Principal*

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<i>Note: “Applicants for employment are considered without regard to race, color, religion, sex, marital status, national origin, age or disability. We encourage applications from minority candidates for all positions.”</i>	
<i>Note: “Florence Sawyer School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability.</i>	



# NASHOBA

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## Regional School District

### ***MISSION:***

***The Mission of the Nashoba Regional District is to Educate All Students to Their Fullest Potential***

### **Core Values:**

- We value excellence through...
- A comprehensive and challenging education.
- High expectations personalized for each student.
- Caring, engaging, and respectful schools.
- Safe and healthy environments.
- A commitment to professional development.
- Community involvement and support.

### **Core Beliefs:**

We believe education is a shared responsibility among students, schools, families, and the community.

About students, we believe...

- All students can learn.
- All students have abilities and talents.
- All students need to have their voices heard.

About educators, we believe...

- Our faculty, staff and administrators are highly motivated, highly qualified and deeply committed.
- Our educators need time for collaboration, planning, and professional development.
- Our educators are an integral part of the leadership of our schools.

About families, we believe...

- Families play an active role in their child's education.
- Families' input is valuable and necessary.
- Families are a resource for reinforcing and enriching learning.

About our communities, we believe...

- Our communities expect, value, and support excellence in education.
- Our communities' input is valuable and necessary.
- Our communities are resources for extending and enriching learning.

### **District Goals:**

**Goal 1:** To foster and sustain educational services that support, enrich and extend our curriculum for all students.

As evidenced by...

- a. A professional development plan with opportunities for teachers, staff, administrators and parents to understand and implement differentiation for all learners
- b. A review of the process for supervision and evaluation that is focused on individual growth and improvement with an emphasis on student learning
- c. Establishment of an Enrichment Task Force
- d. Collaboration with a university or college for intern training.

**Goal 2:** To identify a set of indicators that demonstrates the unity and parity in the quality of our schools across the District.

As evidenced by...

- a. The establishment of a task force to develop quality indicators
- b. A long term financial plan
- c. An endowment for long term capital needs
- d. The development of comparable outcomes.

**Goal 3:** To provide the necessary space, materials and technology necessary for a quality education.

As evidenced by...

- a. A District capital plan
- b. Membership on town master plan committees
- c. A committee focused on providing a safe and healthy environment.

**Goal 4:** To develop a communication plan for all students, families, faculty, staff, administrators, and community members. As evidenced by...

- a. Communication activities written into each school improvement plan
- b. Websites that are connected, maintained, and are informative
- c. A plan that explains the development/ revision/ evaluation cycle of the District curriculum, instruction, and assessment guides.

*Nashoba Regional School District Strategic Plan, 2005-2010, dated 11/03/2005*

### **FLORENCE SAWYER SCHOOL:**

#### **Vision Statement**

The Florence Sawyer School will prepare students who are motivated learners, have achieved measurable academic success, and have developed a solid foundation that gives them the skills for secondary school success. In addition, we will provide opportunities for students to become socially responsible, contributing citizens.

#### **School Improvement Plan 2006-2008/ Goals & Objectives:**

**Goal 1:** To continually improve student performance and knowledge in all academic areas, to include the processes of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

**Objective 1:** Develop curriculum linked to measurable learner outcomes, taking into account the District and School curricula.

**Objective 2:** Implement instructional strategies that support the curriculum and the learning needs of all students.

**Objective 3:** Assess student, staff, and school performance.

**Goal 2:** To foster and sustain educational programs that support, enrich, and extend our curriculum for all students.

**Objective 1:** Provide personalized learning opportunities, both for enrichment and remediation.

**Objective 5:** Utilize technology resources to support and enhance curriculum, instruction, assessment, and to support student enrichment and remediation.

**Goal 3:** Strive for a culture where all treat each other respectfully; a community where everyone, regardless of race, gender, heritage, sexual orientation, mental and physical abilities, economic status, or religion, can be treated with the respect to which every person is entitled.

**Objective 1:** Provide opportunities for everyone to learn about our differences, to explore our commonalities and continue to learn how to deal respectfully with them.

**Objective 2:** Provide a healthy school environment that supports the whole child and school community.

**Goal 4:** To provide an effective communication plan for all of our supporting constituencies.

**Objective:** Communicate effectively with constituents regarding student progress, school expectations, and educational activities.

**Goal 4:** To provide a safe and nurturing environment.

**Objective 1:** Building policies, procedures, and the school culture will support a safe school environment.

**Objective 2:** Establish procedures, training, and expectations that ensure the safety of students.

*Approved: October 2006 by the Florence Sawyer School Council. (Each year the School Council reviews, edits, and approves the School Improvement Plan. The complete School Improvement Plan includes activities, responsibility, timelines, measurements, budget impacts, and results/evaluations, and is available in the school office and on our website.)*

## 1. FLORENCE SAWYER SCHOOL CODE OF RESPONSIBILITY

### Rights & Responsibilities

Rights are things to which you are entitled. There are certain rights, such as respect and personal safety, to which all people are entitled. There are also rights that people have because of the roles they play.

Responsibilities are obligations that you have to behave in a certain way. Your rights depend on others acting in responsible ways. The rights of others depend on your acting responsibly. Here are some of your rights as a student and the corresponding responsibilities.

<u>Rights</u>	<u>Corresponding Responsibilities</u>
You have the right to a clean, orderly place to work, learn and play.	You have a responsibility to keep your surroundings clean and to respond to staff requests to “pitch-in and clean-up.”
You have the right to feel safe as a member of the school community.	You have a responsibility to refrain from physical contact, name calling, put downs and teasing (even if you’re “just kidding”), and respect the personal space and property of others.
You have the right to a school climate where it is okay to take risks, make mistakes and “not know” without fear of being ridiculed or “put down.”	You have a responsibility to listen with an open mind and refrain from “put downs” (verbal or otherwise).
You have the right to be given clear expectations.	You have a responsibility to “check-in” when there is something you do not understand. This can be done verbally or in writing to any staff member.
You have the right to “a say” in the way things are done in this school and question those things you do not agree with or understand.	You have a responsibility to “have your say” in a way that demonstrates thoughtfulness, respect and consideration.
You have the right to due process.	You have a responsibility to work with teachers and the principal during this process.
You have the right to be treated with respect.	You have a responsibility to treat others with respect.

## SCHOOL BASICS

### 1. School Hours:

Grades 1-8, Florence Sawyer & Emerson Wing	8:35- 3:05
Professional Development/Early Release Days	8:35- 12:15
Full Day Kindergarten	8:35-3:05
Half- Day Kindergarten AM	8:35 – 11:35
Half- Day Kindergarten PM	12:05 – 3:05
Preschool	Determined by type of class

Note: There is a 10-minute window for bus and parent drop-offs. The actual school day begins at 8:35 when attendance is taken in homerooms. Students arrive 10 minutes before the start of school and may report directly to their classrooms or homerooms. Any students entering the school before this time must have received permission from a teacher for supervision purposes. Otherwise students should remain in the lobby near the school office, in the cafeteria, or outside the Main Entrance until students leave the buses.

### 2. Student Drop off and Pick up:

AM Drop off:  
(8:20-8:35 AM)

**Emerson Wing:** Cars should not enter the front circle when buses are dropping students off (usually between 8:20-8:35). DO NOT park in the circle at any time. *You may drop students off by pulling into the parking lot, near the flag pole and columns, at the end of the building.*

**Florence Sawyer Wing:** Drive straight toward the cafeteria, *continue around the building (slowly!), with drop off near the front door just before re-entering the circle.* Note: NO CARS will be allowed in the front circle between 8:20 and 8:35. This is bus drop-off time.

Children should be in their classrooms by 8:35 AM whether taking the bus or being driven to school.

***Also Note:*** We do not have an early drop-off program and cannot provide supervision for children who arrive earlier than 8:20. Please do not drop children off before 8:20 AM unless provision has been made for “before school help” under the supervision of a specific teacher!

**PM Pick up:**

**Emerson Wing:** Students cannot be picked up before the school buses are loaded at the end of the school day. Parents may pull into the circle to the front entrance once all buses have left the circle. The end-of-day dismissal procedure will be a two-tier system between the two buildings. Therefore, student pick-up will likely take place no sooner than 3:15.

**Florence Sawyer Wing:** Pick-ups are supervised at the rear door of the school nearest the playground until buses and vans leave. You should enter the fire lane near the cafeteria (as for drop-off) and continue slowly around the building, forming a pick-up line near the playground and behind the vans. DO NOT COME EARLIER THAN 3:00 since children may be outside for physical education classes or recess in these areas. When the chain blocking this entrance is up, there are students outside the building and we are blocking access around the building to insure their safety. The chain will be taken down around 3:00 to allow access to the pick up area.

**Pick up Safety:** Please do not get out of your car unless absolutely necessary during pick up. Do not pass other cars unless directed to do so by one of the staff. We appreciate your attention to the pick up process by placing your car in park or shutting it off, as well as not talking on cell phones during the pick up process.

**REMEMBER:** *You cannot pass buses or school vans when they have their flashers on! No vehicles other than buses and school vans will be allowed in the traffic circle 15 minutes before or after school start times.*

**3. Absences/Safe Arrival:**

Call: 978-779-2295 for FLORENCE SAWYER; 978-779-6497 for EMERSON WING

If your child is going to be absent from school for any reason, you must notify the school nurse before 9:00 AM. Notifying the classroom teacher is optional. The health offices, located in both buildings of Florence Sawyer School have telephone answering machines available to take messages 24 hours a day, as well. Those numbers are: Florence Sawyer Nurse: 978-779-2295; Emerson Nurse: 978-779-6497. Another option is to notify either nurse through email. Notification of your child’s absence will help the school to ensure the safety of your child. **If we do not receive a call by 9:00 AM we will follow the Safe Arrival Protocol summarized below.**

- **SAFE ARRIVAL PROTOCOL:** We adhere to a SAFE ARRIVAL PROTOCOL, as follows: The Safe Arrival Protocol is designed to ensure the safety of any child who has an unexplained absence. If we do not have prior knowledge of an absence, either via telephone notification or a written note to the office (not to homeroom teachers please), we use the blue Student Emergency and Health Record that you fill out at the start of the school year to activate the Safe Arrival System.

If no one can be reached who is able to explain the absence, it creates sincere concern, as the health and safety of our students is always our primary priority and responsibility. **Please call the building your child attends.** You will receive a Safe Arrival form with the phone number to use. You may want to put this form in a prominent place in your home so that it reminds you to call and the phone number is readily accessible.

**4. No School Announcements**

Starting at 6 AM, announcements will be made on television on Channel 4 (WBZ), Channel 5 (WCVB), Channel 7 (WHDH), and FOX; and on radio WBZ (1030 AM) or WRKO (680 AM). Look for NASHOBA REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT.

IF POSSIBLE, the appropriate announcement will also be posted on the school web site.

## 5. Delayed Opening Days

An announcement will be made as noted above if a delayed opening will occur instead of a no school day. For example, if school opening is delayed two hours, buses will pick students up two hours later than usual. *Student drop-off time is also delayed by two hours in this situation as there is no supervision available.* Dismissal is always at the same time.

## 6. Emergency School Closing

In the event that school is canceled before the normal end of a school day, we need to ensure that all children get to the appropriate emergency residence safely. Parents/guardians are asked to complete an “Emergency Early Release Day” form for each child. It is always helpful for children to be aware of where they should go in the event of an emergency closing. We will use the CONNECT-ED automated messaging system to inform you of emergency closings WHEN POSSIBLE. If power is lost and phone service is unavailable we will NOT be able to call every home to ask where children should go in such a situation. Rather, we will refer to the emergency closing information provided by each parent. Please check television stations WBZ, Ch. 4, WCVB, Ch. 5, and Ch. 7 WHDH as well as radio stations WBZ (1030 AM) or WRKO (680 AM) for cancellation notices, as well.

**PLEASE:** PARENTS SHOULD NOT COME TO SCHOOL TO GET THEIR CHILDREN IN AN EMERGENCY. THIS WILL ACTUALLY INTERFERE WITH OUR ABILITY TO TRANSFER STUDENTS QUICKLY AND SAFELY HOME OR TO AN EVACUATION SITE.

**NOTE:** It is important to keep your emergency contact information up-to-date!  
Please contact the office when this information changes.

**PLEASE NOTE:** *THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS MAKES ALL FINAL DECISIONS ON “NO SCHOOL”, “DELAYED OPENINGS”, OR “EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS”.*

## 7. Inclement Weather and Parental Discretion

Parents are reminded that they have final discretion as to whether to send their children to school in the event of inclement weather. Students will not be penalized for assignments missed, but it is expected that all work will be made up.

## 8. Leaving School Grounds

Students will not be excused to walk home or leave school grounds *without written parent/guardian permission.* The school does not allow students to leave school grounds unsupervised and return to school for extracurricular activities (except on early release days when practices may be scheduled after professional development activities are completed). We expect students to remain in the appropriate areas for the activity in which they are engaged. The school accepts no responsibility for supervision of children who leave school grounds with parent/guardian permission after dismissal.

## ATTENDANCE:

### 1. Nashoba Regional School District Attendance Policy

All students are expected to attend school on a regular basis. Under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts: “Every child between the ages of 7 and 16 is compelled to attend school.”

The Nashoba Regional School District adheres to and is in full compliance with Chapter 76 of the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts which defines the regulations. Except in cases of illness and extenuating circumstances, students are expected to be present when school is in session. Family vacations and trips which are scheduled when school is in session are not considered valid reasons for absence and are not excused absences. While teachers will allow students to make up missed assignments, tests, and quizzes, they will not prepare work in advance for a vacation related absence. In addition, teachers will not re-teach or tutor students when they return from a vacation. It is the student’s responsibility to determine the work which needs to be done when he or she returns to school.

*Any student who is recorded as absent from school on a particular day will not be allowed to participate in any school activities or dances for that day. (The only exception to this would be if the absence or tardy from school has been authorized by the Principal in advance.)* This applies to games, practices, club meetings, rehearsals, or any inter-school competition. *A student who is tardy after 11:00 AM will therefore be ineligible to participate in extra-curricular activities.*

Students who are absent from school for any reason must present a written excuse to the Main Office.

**IMPORTANT, PLEASE NOTE** - *Excused absences include:*

1. Parent note for illness\*\*
2. bereavement\*\*

3. medical appointment\*\*
4. court date
5. school visits (if prior arrangements are made with teachers and/or administration)
6. any school-sponsored activity scheduled during class time
7. religious holidays
8. long-term illness (documented by physician at the start of the year or illness)\*\*

**\*\*NOTE: Items marked with asterisks\*\*:**

- These items (above\*\*) require notes from parents or other official documentation within 2 days of return or the absence will count as unexcused.
- Absences for medical reasons that exceed 5 consecutive days must be substantiated with a physician's note.
- School related functions, whether academic or extra-curricular, will be excused absences.
- Anything other than what is on this list will be considered an unexcused absence.
- Students are expected to make up any missed work.

## 2. School Attendance and Success in School

Success in school is directly related to attendance because new skills and concepts are introduced every day. *Vacations taken during school time are not excused absences.* In addition, any *out-of-school appointments should be scheduled after school hours*, if at all possible, so that the continuity of education will not be interrupted. Please do not make regular appointments that require frequent early dismissals. An occasional doctor's appointment is understood, but too much instructional time is lost with regular dismissals for outside-of-school lessons.

Frequent absences generally have a negative impact on student performance. Although assignments can be made up, lost class time is invaluable. Concepts taught and opportunities for deeper understanding are crucial components of school time. Incompletes will not be given for extended, unexcused absences.

## 3. Tardiness

Students who are not in their classrooms at the school start time will be considered tardy and are to report to the office before going to class. For tardiness to be excused, students are expected to bring a Doctor's note when they arrive.

*In grades 4-8*, a student who is tardy more than five times each trimester will need to make up the time after school with an office detention. *Excessive tardiness below grade 4 could also result in a need to make up lost academic time.*

## 4. Early Dismissal

If it is necessary for a student to leave school early, a parent should send a note stating the time that the student will be leaving, the reason for the early dismissal, and the name of the person who will pick the student up. **The parent/guardian must come into the office area to sign out and pick up your child. DO NOT GO TO A CLASSROOM TO HAVE YOUR CHILD DISMISSED. ALL STUDENTS MUST BE DISMISSED THROUGH THE SCHOOL OFFICE.**

Please do not call school to arrange for an early dismissal except in an emergency.

Repeated early dismissals will not be allowed.

**FOR SAFETY REASONS (in order to track where students are going after school): NO EARLY DISMISSALS CAN BE ALLOWED AFTER 2:30 PM.**

## 5. Religious Holidays Protocol

The Nashoba Regional School District observes the establishment clause of the first amendment of the Constitution which guarantees both the separation of church and state and also the right of an individual to free speech. The School Committee understands that there can be a tension between these two parts of the first amendment. The schools must also respect the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In addition, we recognize that in our communities there are diverse cultural, ethnic, religious and social traditions which should be understood through education practice. We shall recognize and honor our differences, not ignore them. Students and staff will be encouraged to appreciate and accept ethnic and religious diversity. We shall be respectful of the beliefs and practices of others.

### **Instructional Practices for Religious Holidays:**

- a. Teachers will be sensitive and knowledgeable about the diversity of religious beliefs of students in their classes. Instructional practices will balance religious beliefs so that all students will feel included; no

- student will be asked to participate in class activities associated with religion if unwilling, or if a parent/guardian expresses unwillingness.
- b. The school system calendar will indicate religious holidays affecting a significant portion of our population. The school system will indicate holidays that will have an impact upon student participation in school activities.
  - c. Students will be accommodated if they request of the teacher that they be excused from participating in activities involving religion and/or if they are unable to participate in regular activities due to religious observances. Written parent/guardian permission should accompany such student requests.
  - d. Students' observance of a religious holiday may have an impact on their ability to prepare work for the school day. Students and parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers in advance regarding any and all planned absences. Students will not be expected to complete daily homework assigned the evening before, or the day of the religious holiday. Assignments and tests should be made up in a time span that is reasonable to both students and teachers. Typically for every day of a religious holiday there should be an opportunity for at least one makeup day. In addition, teachers will make every effort to plan for tests, quizzes or introduce major new concepts and/or applications with the possibility of student observance of the religious holidays. Long-term assignments, however, may be due the day before or the day after the religious holiday.

**DRESS CODE**  
**Nashoba Regional School District**  
**Student Dress Code**

It is commonly accepted that student behavior and the school environment are strongly influenced by the dress and appearance of students. Students should maintain a clean and neat appearance, and their clothing should be in good taste at all times. The following list of inappropriate attire includes, but is not limited to the following\*:

- any article of clothing that does not cover or reveals underwear
- clothes that reveal the midriff or buttock
- underwear worn as outer wear
- tops that are low cut and/or with straps less than 2 inches in width
- chains worn as jewelry or on pants
- Articles which display drug, alcohol, or tobacco logos or depict the use of same.

Shorts and skirts should be at least at the level of the fingertips when a student stands with arms fully extended. Words, drawings, or symbols considered as being disruptive to the educational process or school activities are not permitted on any article of clothing, bags, back-packs, etc.

Hats may be worn at the discretion of the teacher and the principal. Footwear must be worn at all times. Any item of clothing that is substantially or materially disruptive to the activities of the school will be considered to be inappropriate.

Parents of students who are not appropriately dressed will be asked to bring an acceptable change of clothing to school.

Repeated violations will result in appropriate disciplinary action being taken for those who do not follow the dress code policy as interpreted by each school building administration.

*Draft:* March 28, 2002

*Revised Draft:* May 6, 2002

\*Additional Notes for the Florence Sawyer School:

- Hats are not worn indoors.
- Backless dresses, shirts, or halters would be considered disruptive to the activities of the school as are the other articles described above. Sleepwear (pajamas, lounge wear) are not considered appropriate clothing for school.
- Footwear should be supportive, safe, and appropriate for school. Examples of inappropriate footwear could include shoes or sneakers with wheels, and slippers. Please note that "flip flops" and sandals are not supportive and are not safe for participation in physical activity. Also, supportive athletic footwear is required during physical activity such as daily recess and Physical Education classes (see Physical Education notes).

\*\*Note the discipline code, as indicated below, will be followed in regards to progressive discipline and the Dress Code.

- Step 1- Violation of the dress code is brought to the attention of the student. Student is given the opportunity to change into appropriate clothing or to call home for a change of clothes.
- Step 2- Repeat offense includes a call home in addition to changing clothes.
- Step 3- Parent must bring a change of clothes, detention will be assigned.

## LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

### I. Instructional Areas

Florence Sawyer School emphasizes a developmental approach to learning. We try to recognize individual learning styles so we can accommodate the different ways that students learn. Our programs support critical and creative thinking, cooperative and individual learning, cross-grade learning activities, and community service learning.

The instructional curriculum includes:

#### Core Subjects

- English/Language Arts (Reading, Writing, Grammar)
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies / Humanities
- Spanish (Gr. 8)

#### Applied Arts/ Specials/ Enrichment

- Art
- Health Education (K-8);
- Computer Technology (K-5)\*
- Choral Music (Gr. 4-8)- elective
- General Music
- Instrumental Music (Gr. 4-8)- elective
- Physical Education
- Technology Education (Gr. 5-8)
- Library (Gr. K-5)

- \* Computer Technology will be integrated within Core Subject areas in grades 6-8.

#### 1. Grading Scales:

Kindergarten uses a developmental skills checklist for assessing student progress.

Grades 1-4:

- Beginning
- Developing
- Achieving
- Extending

Grades 5-8:

- A+ = 97-100; A= 93-96; A- = 90-92; B+ = 87-89; B= 83-86; B- = 80-82; C+ = 77-79; C= 73-76; C- = 70-72;
- D+ = 67-69; D= 63-66; D- = 60-62; F= Less than 60.

#### 2. Honor Roll:

Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 will earn status on an Honor Roll when meeting the following standards for a given trimester:

Honor Roll Category:	Suggested for '07-08
Highest Honors	95% or above No C, D, F or Incomplete
High Honors	91% or above No D or F; No Incomplete
Honors	87% or above No D or F; No Incomplete

#### Honor Roll Notes:

**Weighted Average of Grades:** All classes will count toward the computation of the average grade for an honor roll qualification. Grades will be weighted according to the number of times a class meets each cycle. For example, classes that meet daily will be weighted more than those that meet twice per cycle.

**Incompletes:** Any student receiving an "Incomplete" grade at the time of the issuance of the report card is NOT eligible for any honor roll status. Honor roll is decided on the day the report cards are issued to the student body. Make-up of an incomplete grade does not qualify a student for honor roll status.

**CITIZENSHIP AWARD:** A Student will be recognized for “Citizenship” on report cards, each trimester, for receiving at least five (5) marks of “Outstanding” on their report cards for citizenship or “Life Skills” success, as long as they do not receive any other marks below “Satisfactory”, as well. (Note: Honor Roll is purely academic.)

### **3. Homework:**

Research shows that effective, high achieving schools provide meaningful homework assignments on a regular basis. Students learn and retain more when they are asked to apply what they have learned at school to other situations in their lives. Homework helps children to:

- Develop responsibility, independent study habits, and organizational and time management skills
- Provide practice, review, and application of basic skills
- Stimulate critical and creative thinking skills
- Extend classroom learning and create lifelong learning.

Since the time needed to complete each homework assignment varies from student to student, the listing below should only be viewed as a general guide. The points listed above are more important than the time frames provided below. Any time listed is “focused time”, not total time that may be disrupted by other activities.

Special Note: *If your child repeatedly spends more time please contact the appropriate teacher(s) for advice.*

Kindergarten: Activities designed to encourage home/school communication.

Grade 1: Not more than 30 minutes per night. Homework to include: spelling, reading each night, math fact practice, Math Home Links.

Grade 2: Not more than 30-40 minutes per night. Homework to include: spelling, reading each night, math fact practice, Math Home Links. An occasional long-term project may be assigned.

Grade 3: Not more than 30-40 minutes per night. Homework to include: spelling, reading each night, math fact practice, Math Home Links, an occasional long-term project, a Social Studies or Science assignment, or skills practice (adjectives, possessives, etc.)

Grade 4: Approximately 45-60 minutes per night. Homework to include: spelling, math fact practice, Math Home Links, an occasional long-term project, or a Social Studies or Science assignment, study for a test. Reading should be done each night.

Grade 5: Nightly homework in Math and Reading. Frequently, the completion of an unfinished class assignment in Writing, Social Studies, or Science will be given as school work to be completed at home. The amount of time required to finish all of the homework may vary considerably due to the students’ completion of class work, their focus on the homework, or their skill level. Of course, we would want to know if you feel your child is spending an undue amount of time on homework. Long-term projects are assigned each trimester in Reading and Social Studies. Most of this work will be completed at home. Check-in dates will usually be given to monitor the students’ progress.

Grade 6: Homework is planned for each night. Reading/ English Language Arts and Math homework are assigned each night. In addition, there will be writing assignments and Science or Social Studies assignments. Occasional long-term projects will be assigned with check-in deadlines given. The Core teachers will coordinate the assigning of homework, especially projects. Students are expected to learn to budget time and have a plan for completion of long-term projects.

Grade 7: Homework reinforces material and skills covered during the school day. Homework in Math and ELA is usually assigned each night. In Science and Social Studies, homework is assigned as needed. Long-term projects with check-in deadline dates should be expected.

Grade 8: The amount of daily homework can vary night to night, but students should expect to spend time doing homework or studying in all core subjects on weeknights. The amount of time spent will vary due to differences among students in motivation and study skills, but will average between 1.5- 2 hours per night. Long-term projects with check-in deadline dates should be expected.

### **4. Some Suggestions for Studying:**

Good study habits are very important. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Plan a study area that is quiet and well lit. Create a comfortable place to work
2. Follow a regular time schedule for studying
3. Complete the more difficult work first
4. Keep agenda books accurate and up-to-date
5. Plan ahead for long-term assignments, projects, and studying for exams. Break big tasks into small steps and plan steps to meet the deadlines. Revise plans carefully as needed
6. Keep the materials needed for studying, such as textbooks, assignment books, pens, pencils, paper and ruler within the study area
7. Stop occasionally to relax and reflect
8. Learn to stay focused during study time. Listening to the radio, watching television, and telephoning friends interrupt concentration and lengthen the time it takes to complete homework assignments
9. After an absence from school, ask each teacher for homework assignments. Discuss what is important and determine exactly what is to be done
10. Review lessons, especially the more difficult material. This will help to reinforce knowledge and strengthen skills.

## **II. Reporting and Supporting Student Achievement**

### **1. Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences are an opportunity for exchanging information about student progress and needs. Conference days are included in the school calendar. Spring conferences in grades 5-8 will take the form of “student-led” or “student-involved” conferences. Students are required to take part in the conference. Parents are encouraged to take advantage of these specific opportunities for meeting with teachers. Conferences may be requested at any time by a teacher or parent.

### **2. Progress Reports**

Progress reports are issued midway through each marking period in grades **3 through 8**. Progress reports are sent to notify students and parents of mid-trimester successes, continuing challenges, goals, and gains, and current status with recommendations for improvement where needed. This should NOT be considered another report card. Parents should please take the time to review and discuss a progress report at home; set goals where appropriate, sign the progress report and envelope, and return them to the homeroom teacher promptly.

### **3. Report Cards**

We will report student progress through report cards on a trimester basis. This will align with the school calendar established by the district and is consistent with the reporting practices in the other district towns for grades K-8. Students will receive their first “report cards” before the December conferences, their second report in March, again prior to parent conferences, and a final report on the last day of school. Parents are required to sign and return one copy of the report card (for the first two trimesters) and return it to school promptly.

In grades 5-8, teachers use an electronic grade book through *Power Grade* that calculates all assessments and translates them to report card grades.

### **4. Failing Grades**

It is the responsibility of students, teachers, and parents, working together; to do all they can to ensure that each student is successful in school. Academic and social advancement are educational priorities for all students. When students fail in school, it is important to immediately address the reasons for failure and determine an appropriate plan of action.

In general, the level of personal responsibility for academic achievement increases as a student progresses through the grade levels. At all levels, teachers are expected to make appropriate accommodations for different learning styles, abilities and circumstances within their classrooms, and students will be assigned grades that reflect their achievement in accordance with these differences. Teachers are expected to notify students and parents, through progress reports or other means of a student’s potential failure. At the same time, students have a responsibility for being aware of their academic status and should share any academic difficulties with parents.

### **5. Cheating and Plagiarism:**

Cheating and plagiarism are somewhat different issues. Cheating is copying another student’s class work, homework, or test answers, as examples. It could also be gaining an unfair advantage by getting an assignment ahead of time, dishonestly. Plagiarism is taking information from published work and using it as your own. Both are obviously unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any student who cheats or commits plagiarism shall be subject to academic disciplinary action, including,

but not limited to, receiving no credit for that particular assignment (since the offense relates directly to academic work). An immediate office detention (that same day, the student is required to attend), and/or suspension (in-school or outside of school) will be assigned and parents will be contacted. During the consequence time, the student will be required to make up the assignment or an alternative in order to demonstrate his/her understanding of the standard and to regain some credit.

In addition, the student will be required to demonstrate an understanding of the importance of doing his/her own work by mandatory participation in a cheating or plagiarism tutorial.

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will be subject to the "Student Not in Good Standing" policy (will be required to have a Individual Improvement Plan).

## **6. Promotion and Retention of Students**

The Nashoba Regional School Committee is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited for them academically, socially, and emotionally.

In evaluating student achievement, each teacher will make use of all available information, including results of tests, quizzes, and other measures of skill and content mastery, standardized test results, and teacher observation of student performance. The principal will direct and aid teachers in their evaluations and review grade assignments in order to ensure uniformity of evaluation standards.

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved. Exceptions will only be made after prior notification and explanation to each student's parents/guardians, but the final decision will rest with the building principal.

Once a determination has been agreed to regarding promotion of a child at risk, or retention in rare circumstances, a plan will be developed by the sending teacher that results in either "promotion with a plan" or "retention with a plan". This plan will follow the student to his/her recommended placement.

## **7. Academic Sessions**

Teachers, individually, take responsibility for insuring that students complete all work necessary in individual classes to help them be successful. However, an *individual teacher* can assign after-school or before school make-up sessions for students who have not completed assigned work, or have not met the expectations outlined for that assignment. These sessions are assigned when the academic work needs to be completed in order for the student to demonstrate they have learned the material. The purpose of this is to help students to complete work, impress upon them the importance of the assignment, to help the student meet their academic expectations, or to give them time to complete the work. Being unprepared for class is likely to result in an assigned make-up session, as described here. This will generally take place when the student has failed to turn in the work necessary for the teacher to assess his/her progress. The number of occurrences of missed work will be determined by the grade-level team and is usually related to the importance of the assignment and other factors.

If at all possible a one-day advance notice will be given. If the student must stay after school the same day, parents or guardians will be notified. If the session is planned for another day, students are asked to inform their parents and make arrangements for transportation.

Staying after school for an academic *session* takes priority before any other after-school activity. Academic assignments take precedence over extracurricular activities. Activity leaders and coaches are aware that accommodations need to be made for academic priorities. Parent support is expected in this regard.

## **8. Office Detentions**

An office detention *may* be assigned by an Administrator for students who fail to return for Academic Sessions (*in addition to behavioral issues*). Teachers will refer such students to an administrator for such consideration. Please see **Discipline Policy** for "Office Detentions" given for behavioral and/or ongoing academic issues.

## **9. After School/ During School/ or Before School Help**

Part of being an effective student is to learn to use time to talk with teachers outside of class and outside of the regular school day. Each student is responsible for the satisfactory completion of assigned schoolwork, so it is important to check with teachers when there are questions about assignments. All teachers should be available to help students.

Teachers will establish times to be available to students before and/or after school. Other opportunities for help may be offered to students, for example “homework clubs”, extra help sessions at designated times or days, or on a case-by-case basis with individual students.

Academic assignments take priority over extracurricular activities as stated above. Coaches and activity leaders are aware of this expectation and support it. Students might meet with teachers to:

- Go further into an idea from class that interested the student
- Propose a project for which the student wanted help or extra credit from the teacher
- Discuss an interest
- Talk about a problem the student is facing
- Settle a disagreement
- Get extra help on a concept that is difficult for the student

### **III. Other Curriculum Areas and Support Services**

#### **1. Technology Guidelines**

The Florence Sawyer School uses technology (computers, scanners, printers, cameras, video equipment, etc.) to support our educational goals. All student use of technology is to be conducted under faculty supervision. Students are also expected to take individual responsibility for appropriate use of technology to support their education. Student access to technology is a privilege, not a right. School officials may revoke a student’s access if this privilege is abused (inappropriate games, tampering with network files or folders, Internet abuse, cyber bullying, email, myspace.com, facebook.com, etc.).

In addition:

- All software should be installed by technology staff or with their permission.
- For access to the Internet and World Wide Web, students and staff will adhere to the District Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) adopted by the Nashoba Regional School District on the District web site.
- Signature of student and parent on handbook sign-off page will signify acceptance of all technology guidelines and policies.

The Florence Sawyer School is proactive in implementing an Internet Safety Program with students. Our professional duty is to take appropriate steps to block access to social networking websites within our schools. Our social and moral responsibility is to communicate and work with the community also, to ensure that our students remain safe while using the Internet. To that end, the following links are being included here and on our website to further promote and help with Internet safety for you and your child.

<http://www.netsmartz.org> – A great resource for parents, staff and students from Kindergarten on up.

[www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide.htm](http://www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide.htm) - FBI Publication - A Parent’s Guide to Internet Safety.

<http://www.netparents.org/> - Internet Safety tips – top 5 from Software4Parents.com

<http://safekids.com/> - Safekids.com home page with guidelines for parents.

[www.nypl.org/branch/safety/html](http://www.nypl.org/branch/safety/html) - A safety net for the Internet.

[www.wiredkids.org/safety/im](http://www.wiredkids.org/safety/im) - Instant Messenger Safety for kids and teens.

[www.wiredteens.org/parentsim.html](http://www.wiredteens.org/parentsim.html) - Instant Messenger Safety for parents.

[www.youthonline.ca/safety](http://www.youthonline.ca/safety) - Play it safe online and off.

[http://www.worcesterda.com/genassit/intnet\\_safety.html](http://www.worcesterda.com/genassit/intnet_safety.html) - Worcester County District Attorney Internet safety tips.

[http://www.woresterda.com/daunits/intnet\\_cyber\\_crime.html](http://www.woresterda.com/daunits/intnet_cyber_crime.html) - Cyber crime and District Attorney unit.

<http://www.familywatchdog.us> – family watch dog site.

- Revised, 6/2006

#### **2. Conflict Resolution (K-5)/ Second Step Program**

Periodically, as a student progresses through Florence Sawyer School, they are taught conflict resolution skills. This occurs as part of “class meetings”, “teachable moments”, and formal instructional time to help students work at understanding and resolving conflicts. The goal is to help students understand the causes of conflict, how to avoid conflict situations, and give them the skills to effectively deal with conflict when it arises. Simulated and actual conflict situations may be used to help students learn to resolve conflicts with others. The Second Step Program is a specific curriculum geared toward assisting with this and teaching children about empathy.

#### **3. Advisory Program (6-8)/Second Step Program**

The Advisory Program is offered in Grades 6-8 as part of the middle school program. Issues such as organization, time management, interpersonal relations, goal-setting, self-esteem issues, conflict resolution, and responsibility are topics of the advisory program. The Second Step Program is a specific curriculum geared toward assisting with this and teaching children about empathy. The staff advisor can serve as an advocate, a friend, and a person to whom the student can turn to for advice, Student & Parent Handbook 2007-2008

understanding, and caring on a daily basis. The groups also serve as an outlet for students to share their ideas and concerns about school and their pre-adolescent years.

#### **4. Florence Sawyer School: Peer Mediator Program**

Florence Sawyer School has piloted a Peer Mediator Program in the 7th grade. The Peer Mediator Program involves trained 8<sup>th</sup> grade students helping their classmates and peers resolve conflicts and disputes through a systematic process of information gathering, needs assessment, and problem solving. The larger goal is to improve school climate, and to help students acquire effective problem-solving skills, so that they will be better equipped to handle similar problems independently in the future.

Thirteen of Florence Sawyer School's 7<sup>th</sup> graders volunteered to undergo twelve hours of training in March, 2007 to become mediators. With periodic meetings, refreshers, and planning sessions, the Peer Mediators work to publicize their cause to both teachers and students alike, and to continue to sharpen their mediation skills. With greater knowledge of their purpose and value to the school, it is hoped that the school community will take advantage of the Peer Mediators as a helpful resource, and a means to an even more positive school climate. - *Robert Verdolino, Peer Mediator Program Supervisor*

#### **5. Guidance**

Guidance services are available to all students. The guidance counselor may meet with students on a regular basis or whenever needed. In addition, the guidance counselor may work with an entire classroom on guidance or health issues, consult with classroom teachers regarding student performance and progress, and may mediate conflicts between students. Parents and students may contact the counselors for consultation and advice at any time.

Guidance Counselors function as liaisons to outside service providers, and may be members of committees that discuss pre-referral issues. Guidance Counselors are often the building's liaison to the Section 504 process, and are usually the individuals that write Section 504 plans. Guidance counselors also are key responders to crisis situations, and typically sit on the building Crisis Team.

- Guidance counselors serve as the conduit of information for those children receiving therapy with an outside counselor whether in conjunction with our school services or independent of school counseling.
- The guidance staff meets regularly with a consultative Psychologist and/or Psychiatrist to keep current with methods of counseling and review current literature relevant to our school's unique counseling needs.
- Guidance Counselors develop and implement appropriate behavior plans in collaboration with our teachers and parents.

#### **6. Student and Teacher Assistance Team (STAT)**

Some students may have problems that interfere with their academic or co-curricular performance, or with their emotional, physical, and social development.

The Student and Teacher Assistance Team is a pre-referral team composed of teachers, guidance staff, reading specialists, administration, and other specialists, that is designed to address concerns about a student's progress or problems. Parents may become part of the team when his/her child is referred for services. The team receives referrals from staff members or parents and meets weekly to consider them.

STAT is designed as a resource to:

- Help students who are having difficulty being successful in school by assisting and supporting teachers in generating alternative instructional strategies
- Provide regular education services and/or instructional modifications that will enhance overall student performance
- Provide a multi-disciplinary approach to prevention, intervention, referral services, and continuing support
- Utilize resources available to assist those in need
- Determine the need for referral to Special Education when all reasonable efforts with regular education services have not proven effective
- Initiate the pre-referral process for special education services, when appropriate
- Refer students to the Crisis Team when appropriate
- Involve parent(s)/ guardian(s) in the decision making process for services, retention, or promotion
- To determine whether or not the student should be retained or promoted by investigating all factors and circumstances that influence student performance and well being
- To discuss alternatives to grade-level retention
- To provide professional support for each other.

## **7. Crisis Team**

Florence Sawyer School will maintain a Crisis Team that is responsible for emergency procedures, responds to a crisis within the student body, or one that affects the school as part of the Bolton community. Administration, guidance, and health personnel will be the core of this team.

## **8. Nurse's Office**

The nurse's office is located in the main office area in both buildings and is open to students during school hours. The nurse provides emergency first aid when it is needed, dispenses medications, and refers students for outside treatment when necessary. Any injury occurring at school will be reported to the school nurse. Parents are always notified in the case of serious injury or illness.

Other services offered by the health office include a postural screening for students in grades 5-8; and vision and hearing screenings.

All students are required to meet immunization requirements set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Information on the requirements is available from the school nurse or from your child's primary care physician. In addition, all students are required to have a physical assessment prior to entering kindergarten, 4<sup>th</sup> grade and 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Students participating in interscholastic sports are required to have a current (within the past year) physical assessment on file in the health office prior to trying out for any sport.

No medication (including Tylenol, aspirin or asthma inhaler) may be given without written permission from a physician, dentist, or nurse practitioner **and** from a parent or guardian. Permission forms may be obtained from the nurse. All medication must be in a pharmacy container and left in the nurse's office. ***Students are not allowed to have medication in lockers or within their personal belongings. Any medication to be dispensed during school hours must be transported to school by a parent/guardian or other adult.***

For their protection and support, all students are required to return the health information sheet and emergency information form listing home and work phone numbers for parents, and two neighbors or friends who may be called in case of illness or emergency.

## **9. Library**

Students and staff have access to the library/ media center throughout the school day. They can select books and other materials for pleasure reading or for information for research projects. Computers, electronic encyclopedias, and the internet are available for supervised student use.

Students in grades K-5 meet regularly with the librarian (and volunteers) for story time, library skills lessons, and to check out books and materials. Middle School classes schedule library time for research with the librarian and their teachers, or they may come to the library for individual research with a pass from a teacher. Upper grade students may also come to the library with a pass to do research or to check out books during designated times or times scheduled by classroom teachers.

Two items may be checked out at one time. These may be kept for two weeks and renewed as often as desired unless there is a waiting list. Reference materials may be taken out overnight. There is no charge for overdue materials; however, when an item is overdue, the privilege of checking out any more items will be deferred until the overdue items are returned or the library receives written notification from home that the materials are lost.

## **10. Physical Education**

In physical education classes, all students are required to wear supportive sneakers and clothing which allows freedom of movement. They must also tie or secure hair securely for safety reasons during activity. Students in grades 6, 7 and 8 must have a separate change of clothing appropriate for the current activity (i.e. shorts or sweatpants, T-shirt or sweatshirt).

## **11. Medical Excuses for Physical Education Class**

Students are required to participate in Physical Education class to encourage a healthy lifestyle and the development of healthy habits. If a student is injured or ill, the parent or the school nurse may excuse the student from one P.E. class. Students who must miss more than one class are required to bring a note from a doctor stating the length of time the student will be absent from class. Medical absences of an indefinite length require a doctor's note for readmission to class. Any student, who misses class, unexcused or without a note to return, will receive a "0". A student with proper documentation for sitting out of class will not be penalized for missing work.

## IV. Curriculum Enrichment

### 1. Renzulli Learning

The Renzulli Learning System is an exciting new on-line resource that matches students' interests and learning styles to many different opportunities designed to provide enriched, challenging learning. All of the activities and options in the Renzulli Learning System are based on The Enrichment Triad Model, which has been cited as the most widely used plan for enrichment and talent development in the world.

In the Renzulli Learning System, the Renzulli Profiler™ generates an individual profile for each student. Once online, students create their own profile. Then, an individualized collection of Internet and downloadable enrichment resources are made available that matches student interests, learning styles, and preferred modes of expression. Students design interest based projects using the available resources.

Subscriptions are made available to students, generally in grades 3-8 who demonstrate an interest and desire to become involved in interest-based, enriched learning. Contact the school or your child's teacher for more information.

### 2. Accelerated Reader

The Bolton Schools Donations Committee has provided funding to purchase an entire school version of *The Accelerated Reader*, a computerized reading management program. The program contains software titles for a wide variety of high interest reading selections. *The Accelerated Reader* is self-paced, easy to use, and individualized. After reading a selection, students take a test on the computer to determine their comprehension of the topic.

### 3. Junior Great Books

Florence Sawyer School offers reading challenge programs which supplement the school's reading curriculum. *Junior Great Books* is an inquiry based reading/discussion program offered to students who are able to add an additional reading assignment to their regular class schedule. This is often a pull-out group facilitated by trained volunteers. Students are invited to participate if their classroom teachers recommend them based on specific criteria.

### 4. Four Winds Nature Institute

Four Winds is a volunteer based program sponsored by the Bolton Conservation Trust, in which parents and teachers learn about the local environment through workshops and written material. Four Winds' Nature Program offers monthly two-hour natural science workshops for adults interested in sharing their love of nature in our school children with activities designed to encourage curiosity and questions about the natural world, and give them an understanding of the way it works. With engaging indoor and outdoor activities and explorations, adults give students an opportunity to study nature in their own schoolyard and neighborhood. Children learn important science concepts and practice science skills such as asking questions, making observations, recording data, and communicating information. Community support allows teachers to divide children into small groups, each with a leader, and take them outdoors to investigate their surroundings.

### 5. Field Trips

Field trips are intended to allow students experiences that provide them with insight, information, or knowledge that supplements regular classroom instruction. Field trips are considered an integral part of the curriculum and should be an essential part of the instructional process along with textbooks, equipment, and other instructional resources. It is the policy of the Nashoba Regional School District that such field trips will be established within the regular curriculum of the school system. All field trips require approval of the building principal and the superintendent or his/ her designee. Accompanying the request for approval must be information specifying those students who are participating and the basis for their participation. In addition, the request to take a class on a field trip must state specific reference to the curriculum, the source of payment for the trip, the method of transportation, as well as specific dates, times, and the number of chaperones attending. Such requests must be submitted in a timely fashion. Parents or guardians must sign permission slips in advance of the event. Those individuals responsible for the field trip will submit a list of participants to the school nurse in a timely fashion, so that special medical conditions can be accommodated.

Chaperones shall be informed of their responsibilities prior to the beginning of the trip. In most cases, chaperones must accompany the class on the bus to provide supervision to and from the trip.

Occasionally, during the academic career of students, class trips will be permitted which do not specifically relate to the school curriculum, but provide an opportunity for students to develop socially and celebrate their school experiences with friends. Such trips will be scheduled outside the regular instructional day, or during vacation or weekend periods.

## 6. Sargent Center

Each year in the fall, the 7<sup>th</sup> grade participates in a week-long outdoor education program at Sargent Camp in Peterborough, NH in conjunction with Boston University. Students are involved in learning about their environment through direct experiences in the “Great Outdoors”. Also emphasized are the ideas of community and working together, as cooperation becomes a necessity rather than a choice. This outdoor education experience has always been a memorable one for Bolton students and has helped develop class unity and student leadership.

## V. Extracurricular Activities

Any school-sponsored, adult-supervised activity held before or after school on a regular basis is considered to be an “extracurricular activity”. Various activities may be offered to students at different grade levels. Below are examples of programs that have been offered to students in past years. To participate in extra-curricular activities is to assume a responsibility to the team or club, and to the school. We expect our students to conduct themselves at all times in a manner which will bring credit to themselves, their team and their school. **Academic assignments take precedence over participation in extra-curricular activities.**

In addition, students must meet the following criteria for participation in extracurricular activities:

- Students must meet the “Student in Good Standing” eligibility requirement listed below.
- Parental permission forms must be signed and returned prior to participation in each activity.
- Any student absent from school on the day of a practice or contest may not participate or attend unless prior approval of the principal has been given.
- A student late to school must sign in at the office before 11:00 AM to be eligible to participate in a contest or practice unless prior approval of the principal has been obtained.
- Participants traveling to and from all activities must wear appropriate attire as designated by the coach or activity director.
- When under school jurisdiction, the use of controlled substances, alcohol or tobacco products, as well as theft or unauthorized removal of school equipment or supplies will result in **at least**\* a two-week suspension of representing the school by participating in any athletic event. During that time students may be required to participate in practices or attend contests at the discretion of the principal/coach. Depending on the circumstances, the consequence may be more.\*

*\* Violations of expected conduct, or failure to meet the above criteria, may result in suspension from participation in the activity. The length and severity of the suspension will be left to the discretion of the coach/advisor with the approval of the principal.*

- User Fees

A user fee (amount determined by the Nashoba Regional School Committee) will be charged to those students participating in some extracurricular activities, particularly our Interscholastic Sports programs. The fee charged is set by the school district/school committee. Some fundraising and donations may be available to offset the cost of the extracurricular programs. No student will be denied participation due to inability to pay user fees, however. Delayed payments and scholarships will be made available. Parents or guardians should contact the principal, directly, under these special circumstances. Activities requiring a user fee will be announced at the beginning of the school year.

### 1. Student in Good Standing Standard (for Extracurricular Eligibility)

A “Student in Good Standing” is one who is meeting basic academic and behavioral expectations as described here and in the discipline section of this handbook. Students are expected to maintain at minimum a C average in all subject areas and to meet teacher expectations with regard to homework, conduct, effort, preparedness, and organizational skills.

Any student below this standard or with two D’s or one F in any subject will be required to have an “Individual Improvement Plan” to participate in extracurricular activities. The initial development of the plan is the responsibility of the student in consultation with his/her parent(s). Once the form is returned to school, it will be further developed with input from grade level teachers, the student, the coach or advisor, parents, and administration, as needed. Any student on an individual improvement plan must continue to meet the terms of the plan to continue to participate or to try-out for an activity. Failure to do so, at progress report time or upon receiving a report card, will result in the student not being able to continue participation.

In addition, any student participant must meet the expectations for behavior described in this handbook. A student who demonstrates a pattern of inappropriate behavior based on teacher and/or administrative records will not be eligible to participate in extracurricular activities.

An "Individual Improvement Plan" (Contract) form will be sent home to parents with the Progress Report and/or Report Card. Once the contract process has begun, the following deadlines apply:

- A. Student contract is initiated – 7 calendar days after issuance of the progress report or report card
- B. Contract is implemented within 14 calendar days of the progress report or report card
- C. Improvement must be shown by the next reporting period (progress report or report card)
- D. Failure to meet plan results in student being ineligible until the next report period.

## **2. Bona fide Team Member (for Extracurricular Eligibility)**

A bona fide team member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for, and actively participates in, all school team sessions. Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a school practice or competition in order to participate in a non-school athletic activity/event in any sport recognized by the MIAA (Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association). Any student who violates this standard is ineligible for the next two (2) contests for two weeks (whichever is greater) immediately upon confirmation of the violation.

## **3. Programs Currently Offered**

Below are programs currently offered that fall under the provisions of the extracurricular activities program. Therefore, students must meet the outlined standards for participation.

### **Interscholastic Sports\***

Our interscholastic sports adhere to the policies of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, as they apply to Middle School athletics. Schedules and regulations come under the supervision of the NRSD Director of Athletics and Student Activities, as well as the Principal.

Students in grades 6-8 are offered an opportunity to try out for the following interscholastic sports teams offered at Florence Sawyer School. Interscholastic Sports offer competition against other middle school teams. If a user fee is charged, it is due once teams are selected.

- Coed Cross Country Running (Fall)
- Boys Basketball (Winter)
- Girls Basketball (Winter)
- Baseball (Spring)
- Softball (Spring)
- Track & Field (Spring)

In addition to the rules listed above for all extracurricular activities the following are specific to Interscholastic Sports:

- Written verification of a physical examination is required every thirteen months and prior to participation
- All participants will travel to and return from events in school provided transportation. Exceptions must be approved by the coach before the trip. Players are reminded that the coaches have full responsibility for them while participating in school related games/practices and are not permitted to leave school grounds at home or away
- An athlete that misses a practice/game due to injury will not be allowed to participate until a signed note or "Return to Activity" form from a doctor and parent is returned to the coach
- Attendance is required at all practices/games scheduled unless the athlete has prior approval from his/her coach. Approval is based on individual circumstances, the team's situation, and the total number of requests Approval cannot be granted in order to play for another team or sport
- Athletes shall refrain from the use of profanity or abusive language
- Athletes are responsible for all equipment issued to them. Failure to return equipment will result in suspension from all athletic activities until equipment or payment for replacement has been received.

Violations of expected conduct, or failure to meet the above expectations, may result in suspension from participation in the activity. The length and severity of the suspension will be left to the discretion of the coach/advisor with the approval of the principal.

### **Intramural Sports\***

Florence Sawyer School has always attempted to offer a wide range of intramural sports programs. Most are for students in middle school, but there may be some offered for students in grades 4 and 5 as well. The programs teach sportsmanship, individual and team skills, and provide in-house competition. All activities take place at the school and may be subject to a minimum number of participants in order to be offered. The activities will be announced, with students being given ample opportunity to sign up for participation. All intramural sports are open to all students in the appropriate grade levels and there are no "cuts".

### **Student Council\***

The Florence Sawyer Student Council was created in September, 1979 and has since become an important part of the school. In the fall sixth, seventh and eighth grade students are elected as representatives to serve as school leaders. They work to create understanding among students and among the student body, the staff, the school administration and the community; to ensure that school activities are carried out in an organized and positive manner, and to sponsor social and fund-raising activities.

### **Destination ImagiNation\* (Elementary and Middle School Divisions)**

Destination ImagiNation, formerly Odyssey of the Mind, is a competitive program that encourages divergent thinking strategies, risk-taking, teamwork and tenacity to solve long and short-term challenges. Teams, consisting of seven students each, form in the fall, based on a specific tryout process. Middle school level teams and elementary level teams may be offered. The teams compete in a regional tournament each spring. The spirit of team cooperation and creativity is highly valued in the assessment of the team's solutions. Fundraising may be done to specifically support this program.

\*Note: the capital N in ImagiNation is not an error but part of the logo.

### **Other\***

Any approved, school sponsored activity offered that requires time beyond the school day will be considered "extra-curricular". Therefore, students will be required to meet the "Student in Good Standing" standard for participation.

**\*Note: Subject to Academic Eligibility Policy**

## **VI. Other School Related Activities**

### **1. Dances**

Several dances are sponsored during the year for Florence Sawyer School 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Usually, they are held on Friday evenings from 7 to 9 PM. Staff members from Florence Sawyer School chaperone the dances. Students must arrive on time and remain in the cafeteria until they are picked up to go home. Several different school groups raise funds by sponsoring the school dances. Guests may be able to accompany Florence Sawyer School students providing they meet the guidelines outlined below.

Traditionally, the last dance of the year sponsored by the school in May is opened to sixth graders as a transition to the next school year.

### **2. Guidelines for Guests Attending Florence Sawyer School Dances:**

Middle School students may invite guests to our dances, but the following criteria must be observed before approval will be granted.

- The intended guest must be either in the 7th or 8th grade.
- The name of the guest must be given to the sponsoring teacher or administrator at least 3 days prior to the dance.
- In addition to the guest's name, the following is also required: parents' names, parents' phone number and the name and location of the guest student's school.
  - ✓ Guests must arrive at the school and leave the school with the host student
  - ✓ The host student must introduce the guest to the sponsoring teacher at the dance, and give this teacher the telephone number of the guest's home or place where parents could be reached in the event of an emergency
  - ✓ All guests at Florence Sawyer School dances must observe the same rules of conduct that govern the behavior of Florence Sawyer students
  - ✓ All guests at Florence Sawyer School dances must have a student or adult host, who will assume the responsibility of informing the guest of Florence Sawyer School's guidelines
  - ✓ The person who hosts a guest at a dance must be in good behavioral and academic standing at Florence Sawyer School.

The sponsoring teacher or an administrator may call the guest's home and confirm that arrangements have been made for the dance. The school may also be contacted to determine that the student is in good behavioral and academic standing. Once confirmed, Florence Sawyer School staff will approve the visit and notify our student.

### **3. Extended Day Program**

A division of the Nashoba Regional School District, the Extended Day Program provides care for children in Grades K-5. The program offers a safe, relaxing, and stimulating experience after the school day has ended. Included are sports, games, storytelling, homework, arts and crafts, and field trips. Hours are:

Days when School is in session:	Dismissal - 6:00 p.m.
Early Release School Days:	Dismissal - 6:00 p.m.
Emergency Early Release:	from dismissal (for students already registered that day)

Please check with the director of the Extended Day Program directly if you have questions.

## **OTHER SCHOOL INFORMATION**

### **1. Behavior and Safety on the Bus**

The bus driver's most important job is to bring students back and forth to school safely. The student's help is needed in letting the driver concentrate on that job. Because of the safety matters involved, misbehavior on the bus is an especially serious matter. The bus driver is in charge on the bus and will report any violations he/she thinks appropriate to school administration. Seat belts are now available on all buses. Use is optional for students. Bus drivers are not expected to check for student use. Students will be informed of their availability. Parents should discuss the pros and cons of seatbelt use on buses.

The same expectations for behavior apply on the bus as in school. In addition, please be sure:

- to be respectful of the other students and the driver
- to follow the driver's directions (disagreements are to be settled only when the bus driver is ready or able to do this safely)
- to stand back from the road while waiting, and especially when the bus is arriving
- to board and exit the bus in an orderly fashion
- to walk to and from the buses
- to sit in the seat, facing forward
- to keep anything (toys, books, bags, instruments, etc...) out of the aisle and away from the windows
- to listen especially carefully during drill or real emergency evacuations, or when special announcements are made by the driver
- to keep your voice at a low level - use a normal speaking voice
- to not eat on the bus
- to be on time for bus pick-up
- to sit in your assigned seat if the driver or school requires this

Remember: The bus driver's most important job is to get you back and forth to school safely. Your help is needed in letting the driver concentrate on that job. Because of the safety matters involved, misbehavior on the bus is an especially serious matter.

Bus violations will be issued to students who do not follow these expectations for behavior. Any student receiving a violation must have it signed by a parent/guardian and return the signed form to school the next day.

Upon issuance of a 3rd bus violation form during the school year, the student will be denied transportation for a time not to exceed five school days. The length of the suspension will be at the discretion of the administration.

If there are subsequent instances of such behavior, in addition to the consequences listed, the student could be denied transportation for any period of time considered appropriate by the administration.

### **2. Bus Slips/Changes in Transportation:**

Please note the following procedures to be followed if you are looking to make an adjustment to your child's transportation schedule or plan. Dee Bus Co. has developed these guidelines across the district.

#### **Transportation Guidelines**

- a. The District will provide transportation to students residing within the Nashoba Regional School District, from the student's home address bus stop to the student's designated district school.
- b. The District will provide student transportation from child care locations to school in the morning, and to child care locations from school in the afternoon, whenever it is within reason to provide such services, and providing the child care location falls within the district and student's school boundary.
- c. There will be no changes made to any student's regular bus schedule without prior approval. If special circumstances occur, parents/guardians are responsible for contacting Dee Bus Service directly at 978-365-1986 to make arrangements, and notify the school of the change.

- d. The district will not provide transportation for individual or *one-time* “play-dates” or private lessons/activities. The district *may* provide transportation to an *existing bus stop* for a *regularly* scheduled lesson or activity. All such alternate stop requests should be directed to Dee Bus Service at 978-365-1986, who will work directly with parents to ensure all *reasonable* requests are scheduled appropriately.
- e. The District may provide transportation to and/or from school sponsored athletic events and other activities, at the discretion of the school, and when it is within reason to provide such services.

Note: Please see the District Website, under parent information/transportation for more information about school busing. You may contact Dee Bus Company directly with questions as noted there.

### **3. Cafeteria**

The school cafeterias provide four choices for lunch every day: hot lunch, sandwich, salad or yogurt. Milk, juice, or water may be purchased separately. Menus are published monthly in the School Newsletter, in newspapers, are also posted in each classroom and on the school website. Lunches can be purchased on a daily or weekly basis. More specific information will be provided at the beginning of the school year. Cafeteria prices are set by District Food Services.

The cafeteria should be a place for everyone to enjoy lunch. Conversations at the tables should be carried on in a quiet, pleasant way with good table manners prevailing. Food must be eaten in the cafeteria and may not be taken outside for recess or back to classrooms. Students are responsible for emptying their trays and leaving the table area and floor clean. Students are dismissed by the adults on duty when their table is clean.

An Allergy free table is available. Any student may choose to sit at this table, whether he/she has an allergy or not. The table is cleaned appropriately by cafeteria staff.

Parents are welcome to purchase adult lunches and join their children at lunchtime. Please notify the cafeteria of your lunch plans by 9:00 AM, if possible.

### **4. Nashoba Regional School District Health and Wellness Policy**

It is the policy of the Nashoba Regional School District to promote actions that create a healthy and safe environment for all students, faculty, staff and citizens. The school district is committed to taking the necessary precautions that will enable all users of our schools to learn, teach, and visit in our schools.

It is our goal to promote the students’ physical, emotional, and social well being through a coordinated school health program. This includes providing a healthy environment, school nurse services, nutritious school meals, health education and opportunities for physical activity. It is the intent of this policy to enable students to become independent and self directed learners by taking initiative to meet their own health and nutritional needs as developmentally appropriate.

Furthermore, it is our expectation that specific actions will take into account the health needs and well being of all children without discrimination or isolation of any child. It is the School Committee’s belief that education and open and informative communication are vital for the creation of an environment with reduced risks for all students and their families. In order to assist children to assume more individual responsibility for maintaining their safety as they grow, it is the policy of the School Committee that the guidelines reflect student development as children advance from the primary grades through secondary school.

*Adopted, September 9, 2004*

*See the Nashoba Regional School District Health and Wellness Administrative Protocol, available in the office or school web site for more information on the implementation of this policy.*

### **5. Health and Wellness Administrative Protocol**

The policy is supported by specific protocols that includes, but is not limited to the following clarifications:

- A. Health and Safety: This section includes individual health care plans, training, classroom expectations, and hand washing expectations.
- B. Nutrition and Wellness: Includes information about school lunch nutrition, vending machines, health education, physical activity, recess, and counseling.
- C. Instruction: Includes guidelines for when food may be included in the curriculum. Teachers must submit a form for review by Administration and school nurse when they want to include food products in the activity. Specific to this, food can be included when “its presence is central to the understanding of the concepts, themes, or objectives” of the instruction. “Healthy food choices” are required. Parents must be informed and alternate plans made as needed.

- Celebrations: Each student is responsible for bringing his/her own food to the event, particularly when the celebration takes place within the classroom
  - Other options must be approved in advance of the event and the specifics of the event (i.e. the specifics of the menu) must be communicated in advance
  - Sharing or trading of food is discouraged
  - Birthday celebrations will focus on the child and will be celebrated without food.
- D. After school and Extracurricular Activities: A sign must be posted if food is being served. Clean up after the event is required.
- E. Prevention and Supervision: This section includes information about designated allergen free tables and their clean up in the cafeteria. Also included are:
1. Training for food services personnel
  2. No food may be consumed or shared on regular school buses
  3. Field trip snacks, during travel time on buses, must be planned and approved
  4. Fundraisers cannot include making unhealthy food or snacks available during school hours or on the buses
  5. The policy will be reviewed annually.

### **6. Lost and Found**

A Lost and Found area is located near the cafeteria. Students are reminded to check the box periodically during the year for lost belongings. It is strongly recommended that all books and articles of clothing be labeled for easy identification. Unclaimed articles are donated to charity several times during the year.

### **7. Fire Drills**

For student safety, fire drills are held monthly during the year. Students follow the directions posted in each classroom or the instructions of the teacher. Classes leave the building quietly and in an orderly manner. The teacher then takes attendance and action is taken to locate students as necessary.

### **8. Lockers**

Lockers are school property assigned to students in Grades 5-8, as available, by the homeroom teacher at the beginning of school. Students may go to their lockers before and after school and only at other designated times during the school day. For their protection, students should not leave valuables or money in their lockers. Since lockers are school property, they could be subject to inspection at any time by school administration. Other than an emergency situation, students would normally be notified and may be allowed to be present if a locker must be inspected. Students are responsible for maintaining a clean and neat locker. Drinks may not be stored in lockers.

### **9. Telephone Use**

Use of the school telephones by students is limited to emergency calls or *with permission* from a staff member. Phone calls during class time from classrooms are allowed only in emergencies. Forgotten books, homework, instruments, or other materials are not considered emergencies. Personal matters and social planning should be attended to before coming to school. Students may also use phones in the school office with permission of supervising staff members, must will be restricted to allow for emergency calls, incoming calls, and school business.

The nurse's office will contact the student's home for medical reasons (such as forgotten prescribed medications *or to dismiss students for medical reasons once they are in school*). *Only the School Nurse is authorized to dismiss students for medical reasons. The nurse will be the person to contact you in this event.*

Calls into classrooms will not be allowed during class time so instruction is not interrupted, unless absolutely necessary. Instead, the office will transfer calls into the voice mail system. Teachers are expected to check voice mail messages each day. However, please do not leave voice mail messages to change afternoon pick up plans as we cannot guarantee the message will be relayed in time. Instead, contact the office directly.

### **10. Cell phones**

Cell phones and "black berries" cannot be used in school. If you supply a student with a cell phone, it must be turned off *during school hours and cannot be used to make calls during school events or activities*. Therefore, there is no reason for a student to have a phone in their possession during school hours. It is assumed a child has been given a cell phone for emergency purposes or to contact parent(s)/guardian(s) for a ride home after an event. Students should keep phones in lockers during the school day or give them to a staff member for safe-keeping. Picture phones are discouraged and cannot be used as a camera without permission of a staff member and the subject of the picture. Phones will be taken from students

until the end of the school day for a first violation. Subsequent violations will result in disciplinary action and denial of the PRIVILEGE to bring the phone to school.

*Visitors to the school are also expected to turn cell phones off while in the school. Please ask for a quiet space if you must make a call during your visit.*

## **DISCIPLINE**

### **Purpose**

Discipline means punishment to many people. At the Florence Sawyer School, we will define discipline as: *strategies for organizing your thinking, your actions, your skills, and your time for a specific purpose. This is often referred to as self-discipline.*

People need discipline to be successful in school and to be successful in everyday life. If you think about discipline in this way, it can be seen as a positive part of your educational experience!

### **Behavior Principles**

Discipline at the Florence Sawyer School reflects our values and beliefs about how students should behave in school. Students are expected to follow the directions of all school staff, be respectful at all times, adhere to school rules and traditions, and actively participate in school activities in an appropriate manner for their age and grade. Teachers are responsible for supervising children and maintaining order and decorum.

The school administration supports staff and students in maintaining appropriate discipline by ensuring that the school environment remains safe and accessible for all students at all times.

### **Additional Responsibilities**

- Arrive at school on time, prepared with assignments and the materials you'll need to work throughout the day
- Be honest in your work and your relationships with members of the school community
- Follow expectations for work and behavior
- Follow the rules established in "Policies"
- Accept responsibility for your actions and learn from your mistakes.

### **Accountability**

Students at Florence Sawyer School have a lot of responsibilities. When you have responsibilities you also have accountability. Accountability means that when you carry out your responsibilities, you receive positive recognition. It also means that when you do not carry out your responsibilities, it is brought to your attention. One way or another there are consequences for actions and decisions. Consequences can be positive or negative. Often, there is some sort of disciplinary action taken when you do not act responsibly. One of your responsibilities as a student of Florence Sawyer School is to be accountable for your obligations and your actions.

## **IF YOU ARE REFERRED TO THE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL OR THE PRINCIPAL**

If you have engaged in serious or severe misbehavior, a staff member will refer you to the Assistant Principal or the Principal. If you are referred, report promptly. A written record will be kept of the referral and notes will be taken during discussions of the act in question. If your story is the same as the one told by the person who referred you, we will discuss consequences and decide on a logical consequence, directly related to the misbehavior. For example, if you damaged school property a logical consequence would be to pay for the damage. In extreme cases, a consequence may be dictated by an outside agency. For example, if you pull a false fire alarm the consequences have to be consistent with the law.

If your story is not the same as the story told by the person who referred you, The Assistant Principal or Principal will speak to other people, students and staff, who witnessed the act in question. You will be informed of all the information gathered and a decision will be made, usually with input from your parents, regarding accountability.

If you have misbehaved, accept responsibility for your actions and learn from your mistakes. You are not expected to be perfect. You are expected to work with members of the school community to learn how to think and act in ways that show you care about yourself, care about each other, and care about school.

## 1. Progressive Consequences for Misbehavior

Step 1 - The misbehavior will be brought to your attention. If you recognize that your action(s) was inappropriate and apologize genuinely and/or make restitution, if necessary, that will be the end of it unless the behavior is serious or severe.

Step 2 - If you repeat the same or similar misbehavior, you will be asked to discuss the act and its effects. You will also be asked to come up with alternative behaviors (other ways you can act in the same or similar situations). If the staff member with whom you discuss the behavior is satisfied that you will make a genuine effort to change your behavior, that will be the end of it, unless the behavior is serious or severe. However, you may be required to apologize or make restitution, if necessary.

Step 3 - If you continue to repeat the same or similar misbehavior, you may be required to serve detention. Detention is time spent after school for a specific staff member. Detentions will be assigned by staff members. Your parents will be notified in writing or by telephone. Detentions must be served within the allotted time frame. Participation in after-school or non-school activities is not a valid reason for not serving a detention.

Two types of Detentions:

1. Teacher Detention: Staff members may assign a detention when a student does not meet the expectations in his/her class. The classroom teacher will monitor the time after school.
2. Office Detention: Administrators assign office detentions for class disruption, behavioral issues, and school disruptions. Office detentions run until 4:00 and are supervised by administrative staff or teachers.

Step 4 - You may receive a suspension for misbehavior that is considered serious if other consequences have been ineffective. Alternatives to suspension may be considered in some cases. Students who fight (real or “just fooling”) may be suspended from school a minimum of one day.

**Examples of Serious Misbehavior:** includes, but is not limited to:

- repeated misbehavior
- sexual harassment
- harassment
- cheating/ plagiarism\*\* *See section on this; carries specific academic consequences*
- damaging property
- fighting (real or “just fooling”)
- swearing
- Inappropriate writing, drawing, pictures, or use of electronics (i.e. cell phones, PDA’s, computers, ipods, other...)
- stealing
- disrespectful behavior

Step 5 - Severe misbehavior always carries a suspension and may involve outside authorities such as the police or counselors.

**Examples of Severe Misbehavior:** includes, but is not limited to:

- Pulling a false fire alarm
- assaulting a staff member or student
- gross disrespect (flagrant, repeated or obscene behavior that is beyond disrespectful)
- violation of civil rights
- habitual harassment of students and staff
- possession of a potentially dangerous object
- violations of the law

## 2. Suspension:

Suspensions are in school or out-of-school. When a suspension is being given, a parent will be contacted and a written explanation will be provided as to the reason(s) for the suspension. See the Nashoba Regional School District policy below.

Upon return from a suspension, students are responsible for making up all work missed (including spending time after school for help if necessary, based on the availability of staff). The suspended student and parent(s) will be offered a conference with an administrator and guidance staff, as needed, prior to being readmitted to school to determine if the student is ready to reenter, to clarify any related conditions, and to try to ensure a sound new beginning.

### **3. Alcohol and Drug Abuse Policy**

The following additional regulations have been established to help assure the welfare of individual students as well as the general welfare of the school population. Any student or parent seeking guidance on a drug/alcohol problem from any school administrator, counselor, teacher or other staff person shall be provided with such guidance without disciplinary action provided the student is not observed on school premises or at a school-related function under the influence, selling, possessing, and/or using alcohol or drugs.

The transportation, use, possession, distribution (the act of giving or selling any such substance to another) and/or sale of alcohol, drugs, or drug paraphernalia (including look-alike drugs) on school property, or at any school activity is strictly prohibited. A school activity is defined as any activity that has at least one of the following characteristics associated with it:

- a parental permission slip
- announced over the school intercom as a school activity
- an event or athletic activity supervised by coaches, teachers or school administrators
- transportation to the event is provided by the school
- the student activity fund is utilized in some manner to pay for the activity.

Disciplinary actions up to and including expulsion, may be imposed for the following infractions of the alcohol and drug abuse policy:

- a. Transportation, possession, use and/or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs; and
- b. Selling or distribution of drugs or alcohol.

Any student who has consumed or used alcohol or drugs before or during a school-sponsored function or extra-curricular activity (including but not limited to dances, banquets, athletic contests, drama and musical productions, awards programs.) may be barred from any school-sponsored function or extra-curricular activity for a specific period of time as determined by the Principal.

Whenever a student is suspended or expelled for drug/alcohol-related acts, the school administration shall conduct a conference with the student and his/her parent or guardian prior to reinstatement of the student.

### **4. Use of Tobacco Products**

Effective June 18, 1993, smoking, chewing, or other use of tobacco products by staff, students, and members of the public shall be banned from all district buildings. All forms of tobacco use shall be prohibited on all district property. In addition, tobacco use by students is banned at all school-sponsored events, even though this use does not take place on school grounds.

The same regulations apply to use of tobacco as outlined in the alcohol and drug abuse policy.

### **5. Staff Responsibilities**

If a student uses, possesses or transports alcohol, drugs, suspected drug materials (including look-alike drugs, over-the-counter drugs, tobacco, alcohol, prescription drugs, and other), drug paraphernalia and/or devices or is suspected of same, school administrators may:

- Notify the student's parents or guardians
- Ask police to identify the suspected materials
- Search the student, the student's belongings, the student's vehicle and/or the student's locker
- Refer the matter to law enforcement personnel
- Take any other action deemed appropriate to maintain the safety and order of the school environment.

Administrators who have *reasonable suspicion* or are *reasonably convinced* a student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol on school premises or at a school-related event may do the following:

- The Principal or his/her designee may contact the nurse and the parent or guardian
- The principal or his/her designee, with the advice of the school nurse, will decide whether the student should remain in school, be taken for emergency medical treatment or evaluation, or be released to the parent or guardian
- The Principal or his/her designee may notify law enforcement personnel
- The Principal may make a referral to the student's guidance counselor.

### **6. Assault and Battery**

Assault means placing a person or persons in fear of risk of imminent harm or danger. An assault may be committed by

physical or verbal means. Battery means any touching by one person upon another without consent. Battery includes, but is not limited to, hitting, kicking, spitting or touching another person with an object.

Any student who commits an assault and/or battery upon another person on school premises or at a school sponsored event shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions, including expulsion.

#### **7. Hazing (Summary of District Policy)\***

Any conduct or method of initiation into any school organization, club, or activity which will willfully endanger a person's physical and/or mental health is prohibited, as per M.G.L. Chapter 269, Section 17-19.

Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to be contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

#### **8. Hazing Disciplinary Action:**

Students: Subject to three-day suspension from school and/or removal from any athletic team or other co-curricular school activity. CH. 269, S.17. CRIME OF HAZING; DEFINITION; PENALTY: A fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

Staff: Subject to suspension and/or dismissal as well as to the legal penalties.

Non-School-Affiliated Organization: Subject to revocation of permission for an organization to use school facilities and/or subject to appropriate legal action.

#### Legal References:

DUTY TO REPORT HAZING: CH. 269, S.18.

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

HAZING STATUTES TO BE PROVIDED; STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY REQUIRED  
CH. 269, S.19.

(\*Refer to Nashoba District Hazing Policy for complete policy; Organizations using school facilities must complete the form relating to Hazing prior to building use.)

- Adopted: April 26, 2001

### **RIGHT TO NOTICE AND HEARING FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION**

*Nashoba Regional School District File: JKFA*

The Nashoba Regional School District shall ensure every student due process under the law regarding disciplinary actions. Upon determination that a disciplinary action is required that would result in a student being suspended or expelled, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. **Temporary Disposition:** The student shall remain in school and under the supervision of school authorities on the day of the suspension until the end of the school day or until the parent, guardian, or his/her designee takes physical custody of the student.
2. **Notification of Students:** Upon completion of an investigation written notification will be provided to the student and mailed to the parent/guardian of the student explaining the charges against the student, the reasons for the charges, the disciplinary action proposed, and the student's right to a hearing. (M.G.L. 71:37 H)
3. **Opportunity for a Hearing:** Upon notification of a suspension, a student has the opportunity for a hearing with the principal if charged with any of the following: found on school premises, or at school sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or charged with assault of a school employee. At this hearing, he/she shall receive the following:
  - a. Oral notice of charges against him/her
  - b. An explanation of the basis for the accusation, and
  - c. The opportunity to present his/her defense.

The hearing shall take place before a suspension begins, unless the student's presence at the school or in the classroom is considered dangerous or substantially disruptive to the academic process. If immediate suspension is necessary, notice to a student and a hearing must follow as soon as possible.

4. **Expulsion:** As is provided by law a hearing must occur prior to an expulsion. An expulsion may not occur without first giving the student and his/her parent or guardian an opportunity to be heard. Once the expulsion has occurred, it shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted according to the statutes.
5. **Appeals:** The student shall have the right to appeal an expulsion to the Superintendent of Schools. The student shall notify the Superintendent in writing of his/her appeal no later than ten calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The Superintendent shall hold an appeal hearing with the student in accordance with the state law. At the appeal, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his/her behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. The Superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. Such decision shall be the final disciplinary action within the school community.
6. **Civil and Criminal Offenses:** In serious cases requiring legal action students may be remanded to the custody of the police. Parent/guardians will be notified of this decision as stated herein. Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony conviction, the student shall be given due process according to M.G.L. Chapter 71, §37H½. Under this law, if the principal has deemed that the presence of the student would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, the principal may suspend the student immediately. The student may appeal this decision to the Superintendent of Schools, but shall notify the Superintendent in writing of his/her request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the disciplinary action. Such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent of Schools.

*Nashoba Regional School District, File: JKFA*

Adopted: August 19, 1999; Amended: May 5, 2005

#### **STATE LAW RE: DISCIPLINARY POLICY**

**Florence Sawyer School's disciplinary policies are governed by state and federal laws, including M.G.L. c. 71, sections 37H and 37H1/2.**

**Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 71, section 37H states the following:**

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

Relative to student discipline:

- (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 chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- (b) Any student, who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- (c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).
- (d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
- (e) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the Commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

**Massachusetts General Laws, chapter 71, section 37H1/2 states the following:**

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal if said 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 the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission on 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 his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his/her request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his/her 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 five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

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

**DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

*Nashoba Regional School District Policy* File: JKG

The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and related regulations provide eligible students with certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline. A brief overview of these rights is provided below.

In general, special education students may be excluded 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 his/her program for more than ten school days in a school year, the student's special education Team must develop a functional behavioral assessment plan. In many instances, the Team may also be required to determine whether the student's behavior was related to his/her disability (a "manifestation determination").

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

In the event a student has in his/her possession, uses, sells or solicits a controlled substance or possesses a weapon at school or 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 that the current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others.

When a parent disagrees with the Teams decision on the "manifestation determination" or with a decision regarding placement, the parent has a right to request an expedited due process hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals.

Additional information regarding procedural protections for special education students can be obtained from the Director of Special Education, who can be reached at the Nashoba Regional School District Offices.

- LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. c 71B, 603 CMR 28: Special Education
- I.D.E.A.

First Reading: July 8, 1999; Adopted: August 19, 1999; Revised: January 23, 2003

## **OTHER SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

### **1. Substitute Teachers and Teacher Assistants**

Substitute teachers and teacher assistants have a difficult job. They are vital to the operation of the school and need extra support from students, staff, and parents. Students need to be prepared to accept and help out with activities and procedures that may differ from the standard routine. Uncooperative behavior with a substitute or teacher assistant is a serious matter which will be handled by the classroom teacher upon return from an absence with the support of the administration, as needed.

### **2. Bicycles, Skateboards**

Students are allowed to ride bicycles and skateboards to school with written parental permission.

- When students arrive at school, they are to park their bikes in the bike rack and leave skateboards in the office
- At dismissal time, students riding bicycles or skateboards can leave with the buses. If this compromises the safety of the bike rider, s/he will have to wait until the buses have left school grounds
- Helmets must be worn while riding on school grounds
- Skateboards cannot be ridden in the road areas in front of the school if the safety of the rider or others is considered to be at risk
- Bicycles and skateboards cannot be used during the school day

### **3. Equipment and Other Items Not to be Brought to School**

Certain kinds of equipment have to be prohibited from school because of potential danger, risk of loss, theft or damage or risk of distraction of students from the school's main purposes. Electronic sound equipment (such as ipods, CD players, cell phones, PDA's) cannot be used in school. If they are brought to school, they must be kept in lockers, in the office, or be given to a teacher until the end of the school day. Water guns or toy weapons cannot be brought to school. For their own protection, students should not bring personal possessions of unusual value (unless prior arrangements are made with teachers) or sizable amounts of money. The school is not responsible when valuables are brought to school and the above guidelines are not followed.

### **4. Recess and Playground Safety**

Weather permitting, students in grades 1-8 go outside for a short recess. Only students with a medical excuse or a teacher's permission may remain indoors. Students should dress appropriately for the predicted weather conditions and follow the directions of the adults in charge when going outside. During inclement weather, elementary students will go back to their classrooms for indoor recess. Grades 6-8 will go to designated areas in the middle school.

Recess is a time to relax and play. At the same time, students should show respect for the property and feelings of other people. Play in the assigned areas only. Play in a safe and orderly way. Be considerate, wait your turn, be patient, and be a team player. Remember to use the equipment as intended to ensure safety. Use appropriate language. Respect each other and the environment.

If behavior on the playground is unacceptable, the following actions may be taken. Depending on the offense, the student will:

1. Receive a firm warning
2. Be moved to a designated "time out" area
3. Be sent to his/her teacher or to the office to see an administrator

Any student endangering another's safety will:

4. Have parents notified
5. Lose recess privileges
6. Be subject to all other serious misbehavior consequences

## MAINLY FOR PARENTS

- **Building Safety and Security**

Florence Sawyer community members are asked to let the office know about unfamiliar persons on the school grounds. You should expect to be asked for identification if you do not have a visitors' pass. All school phones have emergency numbers taped to them in the event of need. Exterior doors are kept locked other than the main entrance. The main entrance and entire building will be locked each evening. Custodians will be available to unlock the doors for scheduled meetings after doors are locked.

### **1. The Process for Obtaining Further Assessment and Help for a Child**

- a. A staff member, or parent through a staff member, begins the referral process for additional help by submitting a request in writing for the Student and Teacher Assistance Team (known as STAT and described elsewhere in this handbook)
- b. Relevant information will be gathered by the team members and discussed at a regularly scheduled STAT meeting.
- c. The originating staff member attends an assessment meeting with STAT or its representatives. If a parent has made the request, he/she may attend the meeting. These preliminary meetings, in general, are considered staff consultations from which the staff members may bring information or recommendations to the parent
- d. Recommendations are developed leading to one or more of the following actions:
  1. Further assessment involving standard school observations and measures (such as a reading test or classroom observations)
  2. Modifications in the classroom or school program without involving Special Education services
  3. Provisions of additional regular education services, such as services of the guidance counselor and reading teacher, or help from a volunteer upper grade or high school student
  4. Referral of the child for outside help and further assessment. The District Special Education Chairperson takes over coordination at this point
- e. While progression through the steps as outlined is considered prudent, a parent or staff member may consider a situation serious enough to warrant an immediate referral for Special Education assessment. The principal makes the final decision about whether a SPED assessment is indicated. Parental permission is required for all individual testing.

### **2. Channels of Communication**

If a parent has a concern or question or would like to offer a suggestion concerning school practices, we would like to hear about it. To support responsibility and accountability at each level, we ask that you follow these steps in bringing matters to our attention:

- Step 1: If your concern relates to your child and a particular teacher (regular or special education teacher) or class please contact the teacher directly.
- Step 2: If your concern is of a school-wide nature or if you are not satisfied with the results of your discussion with a teacher, then please call the Assistant Principal, Principal or Special Education Director.
- Step 3: If your concern is of a system-wide nature or if you are not satisfied with the results of the conference in Step 2, then you are asked to contact the Superintendent.
- Step 4: Finally, if the situation is a policy matter and is not resolved to your satisfaction, and the Superintendent refers you to the School Committee you may have the opportunity to take the matter to a School Committee member for final disposition.

### **3. Student Records**

- a. **Types and Locations**

The school must provide, upon request, a complete list of the types and locations of education records collected, maintained or used by the school district. In Bolton, each student has a cumulative record maintained at Florence Sawyer School which may contain: a log (for use in monitoring dissemination of any part of the record); report cards and progress reports or conference preparation forms; academic and medical information forwarded from previous schools; standardized test scores and other assessment information; a registration form; an emergency information form; records of formal disciplinary action, individual education plans (IEP), 504 plans.

Other records and their locations, include:

- Student portfolios are kept with the current classroom teacher
- Health records are maintained in the nurse's office
- Building SPED records are filed in the cumulative file at the Florence Sawyer School

- Complete (official) Special Education records are maintained at the central office

#### **b. Right to Review**

Parents or guardians are permitted to review education records that have been collected and maintained by the school district, which pertain to their children. Such review is granted within two consecutive days of the request, unless the parent and school personnel agree upon a longer period of time.

#### **c. Requests for Access**

Requests for access to the regular education records maintained in the school building are made to the principal or guidance counselor. Requests for access to the complete special education records, maintained at the central office, are made to the Director of Pupil Personnel Services or the building Special Education Chairperson. Advanced notice is expected.

Parents may also request that the records be interpreted for them; that copies, at a nominal cost, be made of material within a record; and that a representative of the parent reviews and inspects the record. In the latter case, written release of the record to the representative is to be provided by the parent. Forms are available in the office.

The school district will inform parents and students when information collected, maintained or used by the district is no longer needed for the purpose of providing educational services and is to be destroyed.

#### **d. Deleting or Adding Information**

A parent or guardian may request of the principal that information be deleted from the student record. The principal is to respond to a request within a week of receipt. A parent or guardian may add information, comments, data or other relevant material to the student record.

#### **e. Destruction of Records**

So that students and parents may request copies of records prior to their destruction, all 8th grade students, upon graduation, are to receive advanced notice concerning the timing and process of the destruction of records. Students are asked to acknowledge by signature their receipt of this notice that is then placed in the cumulative file. The school newsletter will also publish reminders concerning the destruction of records. Notice is also placed in local newspapers with the intent of informing students, families, and former students when records will be destroyed and indicating that students may request a copy of records prior to their destruction.

#### **f. Rights Apply at Age 14**

According to State regulations, rights regarding records apply to students upon their reaching 14 years of age. Once the student is 14, both the student and/or parent may alone exercise these rights. The student may not limit the parents' right to inspect the student record.

#### **g. Copies of Regulations**

If you would like to obtain a copy of the student record regulations, you may contact the Massachusetts Department of Education.

### **4. Visiting the School**

- a. Parents and other visitors are welcome and encouraged to visit the school during the course of the school year. Potential visitors to Florence Sawyer School shall contact a member of the Florence Sawyer School administration at least 48 hours prior to the visit to request permission to visit the school.
- b. All visitors must report to the main office, sign in, and be issued a visitor's pass; the visitor's pass must be displayed at all times during the visit. The pass must be returned to the main office and the visitor must sign out at the conclusion of the visit.

### **5. Parent Visits**

Parents and guardians can make a request to administration in order to schedule an appointment to observe any of their child's classes. Observations will be scheduled at mutually convenient dates and times for teachers and parents. In order to discuss any problems or concerns, parents are encouraged to schedule appointments to meet with teachers, guidance counselors, the school nurse, and other support personnel.

### **6. Student Visits**

Any student wishing to bring a guest to school must obtain prior written permission from the Principal or Assistant Principal and from the parent or guardian of the guest at least one day prior to the anticipated visit. Guests will ordinarily be limited to: (1) relatives who for some reason might be houseguests for an extended period of time, or (2) persons who have legitimate business within the school. Students who wish to have a guest accompany him/her to classes must receive written approval

from each teacher prior to seeking approval from the administration. The visitor must provide the school with emergency contact information. All visitors must comply with the rules of the school. Failure by guests to abide by school rules will result in the guest being instructed to leave the school immediately. Alumni and/or former students must visit the school after normal school hours have ended.

#### **7. Volunteer/Visitors Name Tags**

In an effort to support school security, to manage traffic in classrooms and to reduce interruptions, the school requests that volunteers and visitors check in at the office and obtain a name tag from the secretaries each time they enter the building. When leaving the building, visitors and volunteers are asked to leave the nametag in the office and sign out.

#### **8. School Council**

The School Council is made up of representatives from the Florence Sawyer School Community: administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, and community members-at-large. Anyone is welcome to attend the meetings. Meeting times, agendas, and a list of members are posted in the school office area.

The mission of the School Council is the continual improvement of the quality of the educational experience of our children and the community. The dynamics of improvement and growth are accomplished through the development of partnerships to explore ideas, communicate effectively with constituent groups and develop strategies for action in selected areas. The purpose of the School Council is to advise the principal on ways to improve educational opportunities for all Florence Sawyer School students. All decisions made by the School Council are to reflect the core values and vision of the Florence Sawyer School community.

#### **9. Bolton School Donations Committee, Inc.**

The Bolton School Donations Committee, Inc. (BSDC) is a non-profit corporation with approximately fourteen parent and teacher members. Its purpose is to coordinate the solicitation, reception, and distribution of donations and gifts to Florence Sawyer School. The committee meets each month. Presently, BSDC sponsors fund-raisers each year and helps to make decisions concerning the allocation of the proceeds based on requests from the Florence Sawyer School staff.

#### **10. Parents' Advisory Council**

The Florence Sawyer Parents' Advisory Council (PAC) was organized to provide and foster effective communication and active cooperation among the students, staff, administration, parents/guardians of the students, and the larger community. PAC is strongly committed to providing learning enrichment opportunities for the students such as, dramatic interpretations of American history, and presentations by children's authors and practitioners of the fine arts. It administers a volunteer program which assists in placing parent volunteers in classrooms and in the school library. The Parents' Advisory Council provides adult enrichment programs to familiarize parents with school curriculum, teaching methods and subjects that provide direction in child rearing and personal growth. It hosts receptions held for new and/or departing school personnel and annual staff appreciation activities. PAC produces and publishes an annual student directory and helps publish the Florence Sawyer School Newsletter. PAC may also assist in projects recommended by the school administration and it serves as the organization that solicits candidates for and elects representatives to the parent positions on the Florence Sawyer School Council.

The Parents' Advisory Council is able to provide these services because of both the commitment of the parents and its fund-raising activities. All parents/guardians are members of the Parents' Advisory Council and have voting privileges at meetings. Evening meetings are scheduled regularly during the school year and are announced in the Florence Sawyer Newsletter. Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend PAC meetings, become active members of PAC and participate in the various PAC activities. The names and telephone numbers of officers of the Parents' Advisory Council can be obtained from the Florence Sawyer School office.

#### **11. Fundraising \* (also refer to District Policy)**

All fund raising activities that involve students during school hours or which are either supported by or sponsored by Florence Sawyer School must have prior approval of the principal. New fundraisers must be approved by the building principal and may need the approval of the school committee.

#### **12. Release of Information for School Organizations \* (refer to district policy)**

Recent legal requirements make it necessary to have a family's written permission before student names, phone numbers or addresses can be released to the Florence Sawyer Room Parents, Florence Sawyer School Parent Advisory Council, the Florence Sawyer School Council or other school organizations. On the card sent home each year which requests school emergency contact information, parents and guardians will be asked if they are willing to release information for school organizations and school-related purposes.

The NRSD policy for publications with limited circulation (in district) is as follows:

For written publications with limited circulation, such as school newsletters and newspapers, the NRSD hereby designates the student/ staff member's name and class assignment as its only categories of 'directory information' as defined in the FERPA 5(B). (Page 3). The release of any other information about a student or staff member shall require written consent from the student's parent/ guardians, from any student over 18 years of age, or from the staff member.

At least once a year, the principal of each building shall inform parent/ guardian/ staff that they may refuse publication of 'directory information'. (Required in FERPA p. 3). Refusal must be made within a reasonable time, or the District shall assume that consent is granted.

\* See the District policy manual for specific information on other types of publications, including web pages.

### **13. Resource Materials**

Parents and community members have access to a wide variety of information and resource materials regarding the educational process at Florence Sawyer School. These materials may be found in the school library or the school office to include agendas and minutes of:

- Nashoba Regional School Committee
- Parents' Advisory Council
- Bolton School Donations Committee
- Florence Sawyer School Council

### **14. "I Forgot" Items**

Parents are asked to leave messages and drop off forgotten items at the office rather than taking them directly to the student's classroom. Place the student's name on the item and it will be delivered to the teacher.

**District Harassment Policy:** A copy of the district adopted Harassment Policy is available in the school office.

### **TITLE IX CONTACTS:**

**Darlene Perkins; Ken Tucker, Janet Milliken, or Joel Bates**

### **Title IX Policy and Chapter 622: Anti-Discrimination Law**

It is the policy of Nashoba Regional School District not to discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation or handicapping condition in educational programs, activities, or employment.

Inquiries regarding compliance may be directed to the Title IX coordinators at Florence Sawyer School. Please contact the Principal for the names and telephone numbers of the Florence Sawyer School Title IX Coordinators. The Title IX district level coordinator can be reached at 978-779-0539 Ext. 3009.

Chapter 622 of the General Laws, Acts of 1971, is referred to as "An Act to Prohibit Discrimination in the Public Schools" which reads as follows:

No person shall be excluded from, or discriminated against, regarding admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantage, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sexual orientation, gender, religion or national origin.

Please contact the Superintendent of School's office for the name of the Title VI and chapter 622 district level coordinator (978-779-0539 Ext. 3002).

## **NASHOBA REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT Addendum to Student Handbook September 29, 2003**

### **Part I: Limited English Proficient Student/Parent Assistance**

#### **English:**

Students or families who need translation assistance or orientation in a language other than English may contact the district ESL teacher/coordinator, Genevra Valvo, based at the Mary Rowlandson Elementary School at (978) 368-8482 x2222.

#### **Spanish:**

Los estudiantes o familias de habla hispana que desean ayuda en traducción u orientación en un idioma diferente del inglés pueden contactarse con la maestra/coordinadora de Inglés como un Segundo Idioma (ESL), Geneva Valvo, Mary Rowlandson Elementary, (978) 368-8482 anexo 2222.

**Portuguese:**

Os estudantes ou famílias quem fala Português que precisa de assistência com tradução ou orientação pode comunicar com a professora/cordenadora de Inglês como Segundo Idioma (ESL), Geneva Valvo, na escola Mary Rowlandson Elementary a (978) 368-8482 anexo 2222.

**Part II: Promotional, Recruitment, and Employment Practices:**

Employers recruiting at the high school or any other school are required to sign a statement verifying **they** do not discriminate in their hiring or their employment practices.

**Part III: Grievance Procedures for Filing, Processing, and Resolving Alleged Discrimination Complaints**

**Procedural Requirements Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADA (Students, Applicants, Employees)**

**I. Definitions**

- A. Discrimination Complaint - A written complaint alleging any policy, procedure or practice that discriminates on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender or disability.
- B. Student Grievant - A student of the Nashoba Regional School District who submits a complaint alleging discrimination based on race, color, national origin, gender or disability.
- C. Employee Grievant - An employee of the Nashoba Regional School District who submits a complaint alleging discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, or veteran status.
- D. Applicant Grievant (under ADA) - An applicant for employment of the Nashoba Regional School District or applicant for admission to postsecondary education who submits a complaint alleging discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability or veteran status.
- E. Title VI (if applicable), Title IX, Section 504, and ADA Coordinator - The person(s) designated to coordinate efforts to comply with and carry out responsibilities under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and other state and federal laws addressing equal educational opportunity. The compliance coordinator is responsible for processing complaints and services as moderator and recorder during hearings.
- F. Respondent - The person alleged to be responsible for the violation alleged in a complaint. The term may be used to designate persons with responsibility for a particular action or those persons with supervisory responsibility for procedures and policies in those areas covered in the complaint.
- G. Day - Day means a working day. The calculation of days in complaint processing shall exclude Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

**II. Pre-Filing Procedures**

Prior to the filing of a written complaint, the student or employee is encouraged to visit with the Compliance Coordinator and reasonable effort should be made to resolve the problem or complaint.

**III. Filing and Processing Discrimination Complaints**

- A. Grievant submits written complaint to compliance coordinator stating name, nature, and date of alleged violation; names of persons responsible (where known); and requested action. Complaint must be submitted within 30 days of alleged violation. Complaint forms are available in the school office
- B. Compliance Coordinator notifies respondent within 10 days and asks respondent to:
  - 1. Confirm or deny facts;
  - 2. Indicate acceptance or rejection of student's, employee's, or applicant's requested action; or
  - 3. Outline alternatives.
- C. Respondent submits answer within 10 days to Compliance Coordinator.
- D. *Within 10 days after receiving respondent's answer, the Compliance Coordinator refers the written complaint and respondent's answer to the Principal. The Compliance Coordinator also schedules a hearing with the grievant, the respondent, and the Principal.*
- E. The Compliance Coordinator conducts the hearing.
- F. The Compliance Coordinator issues within 10 days after the hearing a written decision to the student, employee, or applicant, and the compliance coordinator.

- G. If the grievant or respondent is not satisfied with the decision, they must notify the Compliance Coordinator within 10 days and request a hearing with the superintendent.
- H. Compliance Coordinator schedules, within 10 days of request, a hearing with the grievant, respondent, and superintendent.
- I. The Superintendent conducts a hearing.*
- J. The Superintendent issues a decision within 10 days following the hearing.*
- K. If the grievant or respondent is not satisfied with the decision, they must notify the Compliance Coordinator within 10 days and request a hearing.
- L. Compliance Coordinator notifies the Principal within 10 days after receiving request. Compliance coordinator schedules hearing with the governing board. Hearing is to be conducted within 30 days from the date of notification to the Compliance Coordinator.
- M. The Compliance Coordinator conducts hearing.
- N. The Compliance Coordinator issues a final written decision within 10 days after the hearing regarding the validity of the grievance and any action to be taken.

#### **IV. General Provisions**

- A. Extension of time: Any time limits set by those procedures may be extended by mutual consent of parties involved. The total number of days from date that complaint is filed until complaint is resolved shall be no more than 180 days.
- B. Access to regulations: The Nashoba Regional School District shall provide copies of all regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, qualified disability, or veteran status upon request.
- C. Confidentiality of records: Complaint records will remain confidential unless permission is given by the parties involved to release such information. No complaint record shall be entered in the personnel file. Complaint records shall be maintained on file for three years after complaint resolution.

#### **NRSD Policy File: IJNDB Use of Networked Information Resources**

The Nashoba Regional School District recognizes the value and importance of network information sources and related technologies for a well-rounded education. The District supports access of students and staff to numerous technology resources within appropriate bounds.

The District makes telecommunications, electronic information sources, and networked services available for the enhancement of learning and teaching within various curricula. The District expects the staff to blend thoughtful use of these educational avenues throughout the school experience and provide guidance and instruction to all users in the appropriate use of these resources to promote their successful but safe integration.

The District realizes the positive and constructive use of these resources: it also recognizes the potential for possible misuse. Therefore, individual users must take full responsibility for their own actions. All users shall assume full liability, legal, financial or otherwise, for their actions. The district has the right to access, audit, and review usage. In addition to state and federal statutes, use shall be governed by administrative regulations, procedures, user guidelines and user agreements. Information stored or transmitted on NRSD and may be reviewed by the District at any time without prior notification. Incompliance with these governing policies, the NRSD will secure and maintain resources that within reason filter and block information that is deemed offensive, obscene and/or age inappropriate.

NRSD technology resources are to be used for work-related, academic and/or training purposes. Access to NRSD technology resources shall be limited, suspended, or revoked if these resources are misused.

Independent use of telecommunications and electronic information shall be permitted only upon submission of signed agreement forms by both parents/guardians and students. In addition, all users must pass a NRSD administered network use test. Some networks may require an additional agreement by users; i.e. outlining standards for behavior and communication.

#### ***The following are not permitted:***

1. Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
2. Sharing personal information such as name, address and phone number
3. Harassing, insulting or attacking others
4. Altering computers, computer systems or computer networks without NRSD permission
5. Violating copyright laws
6. Using others' passwords
7. Trespassing in others' folders, work or files
8. Intentionally wasting limited resources

## 9. Employing the network for commercial purposes

Publication of information shall be in accordance with the Nashoba Regional School District Publication of Personal Information Policy. The Nashoba Regional School system takes no responsibility for any information or materials that are transferred through the Internet.

Reference: NRSD District Publication of Personal Information Policy. FERPA, CIPA

First Reading: May 27, 1999

Second Reading: June 10, 1999

Revision: June 20, 2002

### **Acknowledgment**

This expanded handbook attempts to define, more clearly, some policies and procedures. Throughout the school year, comments and suggestions from students, staff, parents and the community are encouraged and can be forwarded to the school principal or Sawyer School Council.

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**SIGNATURE PAGE:**

**Student *and* Parent Acknowledgment of Receipt**

**Handbook:**

**I have read and understand the rules and regulations of the Florence Sawyer School Parent and Student Handbook.**

Student:

(Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent:

(Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

(Please sign) \_\_\_\_\_

**Use of Networked Information Resources:**

**I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the rules and regulations of the Use of Networked Information Resources on page 37.**

Student:

(Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent:

(Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

(Please sign) \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Return this form to your homeroom teacher the first week that school is in session. Failure to return the form does not supersede the authority of the Florence Sawyer School Parent Student Handbook.**