

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS .....	3
DOVER AND SHERBORN SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY .....	4
DOVER-SHERBORN MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY .....	6
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE – DOVER-SHERBORN REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL.....	9
ACADEMIC FREEDOM .....	14
SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR .....	16
SCHOOL DAY.....	17
RELEASED TIME .....	18
ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION .....	19
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT .....	20
CURRICULUM ADOPTION .....	21
PHYSICAL EDUCATION .....	22
HEALTH EDUCATION .....	23
HEALTH EDUCATION .....	24
TEACHING ABOUT DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO.....	25
PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION .....	26
SAMPLE NOTICE TO PARENT/GUARDIAN .....	27
SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS .....	28
PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.....	29
OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS .....	30
COMPENSATORY EDUCATION .....	32
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS .....	33
HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION.....	34
HOME SCHOOLING .....	35
HOME SCHOOLING .....	36
HOME SCHOOLING .....	38
ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS .....	42
SUMMER SCHOOLS.....	43
COMMUNITY EDUCATION .....	44
CLASS SIZE – ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS .....	45
CLASS SIZE – SECONDARY SCHOOLS .....	46
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS.....	47
RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES .....	48
TEXTBOOK SELECTION AND ADOPTION .....	49
TEXTBOOKS AND WORKBOOKS .....	49
SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION .....	51
SELECTION POLICY FOR LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER MATERIALS .....	52
LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION .....	54
LIBRARY RESOURCES.....	56
LIBRARY/IMC.....	57
SPECIAL INTEREST MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION.....	59
CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION .....	60
DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY .....	63
USER CONTRACT .....	68
PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTRACT .....	69
SCHOOL AND DISTRICT WEB PAGES .....	70
WEB SITE GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL .....	71
FIELD TRIPS.....	73
FIELD TRIPS.....	74
RELEASE FOR LOCAL FIELD TRIPS.....	75
COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/SPEAKERS .....	75
SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS .....	77
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT .....	78
REPORTING TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS .....	79
STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS .....	80
RANK-IN-CLASS.....	81
PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS .....	82
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.....	83

EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS.....	84
DISTRICT PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS .....	85
DISTRICT PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS .....	86
INTEGRATED LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PLAN .....	86
CURRICULUM EVALUATION PROCESS STEERING COMMITTEE .....	87
TEACHING ACTIVITIES/PRESENTATIONS .....	88
TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS .....	89
SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES.....	90
OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS .....	92
DOVER-SHERBORN RELIGIOUS DAY OBSERVANCES.....	94
PERIOD OF SILENT MEDITATION .....	95
ANIMALS IN SCHOOL.....	96

## INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

The primary function of a school program is the instruction of students. All staff activities and efforts shall be directed toward providing a high quality, effective, and ever-improving instructional program.

There are primarily three functions involved in carrying out the instructional program:

- Operating Function
- Coordinating and Developing Function
- Evaluating and Assessment Function

The operating function involves classroom instruction and building program management. The coordinating and developing function includes monitoring activities (curriculum development), in-service education, and special services. The evaluation and assessment function involves data collection, analysis, synthesis and establishing future direction.

LEGAL REFS.:	603 CMR 26:00
CROSS REF.:	AD, Educational Philosophy ADA, School District Goals and Objectives
FIRST READING:	January 25, 2011
SECOND READING:	May 22, 2012
ADOPTED:	May 22, 2012
SOURCE:	MASC

## **DOVER AND SHERBORN SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

### **SHERBORN PHILOSOPHY**

The Sherborn Elementary School is committed to each student's growth in all areas of development: intellectual, social, physical, emotional, and creative.

This commitment reflects both the high expectations of the community and the increasing demands of a complex, ever-changing, highly technical society.

Education should help children to develop self-control, self-respect and an appreciation of all people. It should provide opportunities for children to master the basic skills to the best of their individual abilities and to assume increasing responsibility for their own learning. Enriching experiences should be provided in a variety of contexts.

The fulfillment of this philosophy can best be accomplished through cooperation of school, family, students and the community.

### **DOVER SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

The Dover Elementary School, in partnership with the home and community, seeks to develop intellectually curious students, who understand and respect themselves, others, and their natural surroundings; who realize their unique potential, continually acquire knowledge and commit themselves to life-long learning; and who are able to function as free, sensitive, and responsible members of a democratic society.

Accordingly, the goals of the Dover Elementary School are:

1. To emphasize the partnership between home, school and community through honest, open communication and active participation in school life so all share in the schools' success.
2. To provide a safe, supportive and stimulating environment where enthusiasm is sparked and alternative strategies are encouraged so intellectual curiosity is cultivated.
3. To provide opportunities for students to learn ethical values, healthy habits, good manners and cooperative skills so they gain confidence and self-respect as well as an appreciation and respect for others.
4. To expose students to the sciences and the arts so they appreciate, gain strength from and become good stewards of their natural surroundings.
5. To nurture students' natural talents so they can realize their unique potentials.
6. To provide a sequential and comprehensive curriculum, a talented and diversified staff, and positive reinforcement so students will continually acquire knowledge and assume increasing responsibility for their own learning.

7. To teach students communication and reasoning skills which will foster their commitment to life-long learning and enable them to adapt to a changing world.
8. To provide opportunities for students to exercise the privileges and responsibilities of a productive citizen who lives freely and sensitively in a democratic society.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011  
SECOND READING: May 22, 2012  
ADOPTED: May 22, 2012  
SOURCE: Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## **DOVER-SHERBORN MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

The adolescents we serve form a group whose physical, emotional, and cognitive abilities are developing rapidly. These adolescents live in an affluent, sheltered community which covers a large land area with no public transportation. They are also a group approaching maturity in the 1990's in a world of fast-paced change and increasing complexity and stress. They are reaching out for independence and identity while, at the same time, maintaining a need for structure, discipline and consistency. The staff of the Dover-Sherborn Middle School strives to provide an atmosphere and a curriculum that serve their academic, creative, emotional, physical and social needs.

Each child must receive instruction in the basic academic skills necessary for successful formal education, and in the problem-solving techniques needed to apply those skills in the world outside of school. In addition, these students should be acquiring a growing awareness of themselves, their community, their country and the world. They should begin to understand the interaction of the individual with the family and society so that they may play a responsible role in their world. They are involved in a search to find the critical balance between freedom and responsibility, a search the staff can help to guide.

As a faculty we enhance our knowledge of student and subject by working closely and interdependently through teams and departments. In addition, we look to our students' families and the communities as sources of support for our programs and offer our support to them. By employing a wide variety of teaching approaches, by offering a well-defined but flexible course of studies, and by integrating these elements through frequent inter-staff communication, we provide a rich and stimulating educational environment for each student.

### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

Dover-Sherborn Regional Middle School is an academic institution which addresses the unique needs of the early adolescent in a safe and supportive atmosphere conducive to learning.

The fundamental mission of the Middle School is to provide students with opportunities to develop intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically. Students develop new skills and gain knowledge from a challenging, rigorous and comprehensive curriculum. The course of study reflects the interests and needs of the early adolescent by offering a wide variety of exploratory courses, traditional courses and hands-on experiences, while encouraging an interdisciplinary approach to learning.

Students at the Middle School are at a transitional period in their lives. Their physical, emotional, social and cognitive skills are in a state of exciting and rapid growth. Students are reaching out for independence, identity and challenges, while at the same time, needing structure, discipline and consistency.

The educational strategy at the Middle School is to motivate and encourage students to develop into critical thinkers, self-motivated learners, good communicators and involved citizens. Class size must be in keeping with each curriculum's objectives to best develop each student's potential. Students are expected to pursue their academic potential, grow in self-confidence, respect and appreciate individual and cultural differences, show good judgment and take responsibility for their actions. These expectations are the Core Values of the Middle School.

The faculty of the Middle School consists of skillful, motivated teachers and administrators. They work closely and interdependently in small groups, grade level teams and subject-focused departments.

Teachers are encouraged to integrate new methods, materials, and, technologies into and across curricula to stimulate and challenge students. The students, faculty, and administration of the Middle School are aided by well-trained support personnel.

The families of the Middle School students take an active role in their children's education by encouraging them to be prepared to meet new challenges and approach education with a positive and open attitude. Community members and families actively participate with school personnel in assessing, evaluating and recommending improvements. Essential to the success of the mission of the Middle School are the resources, volunteers and revenues provided by the towns of Dover and Sherborn.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

### **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

TO DEMONSTRATE ACADEMIC EXPECTATION THE STUDENTS AT DOVER-SHERBORN REGIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL WILL:

- \* Apply analysis, reasoned inference, logical argument, mathematical skills, and scientific inquiry to a variety of problems.
- \* Reach creative, logical or reasoned conclusions.
- \* Use technology to obtain, exchange, and organize information.
- \* Identify and evaluate fact, opinion, stereotype, bias, and humor.
- \* Synthesize information.
- \* Critically evaluate information and its sources.
- \* Read for information, understanding, and enjoyment.
- \* Listen to discern fact, opinion, stereotyping, bias and humor.
- \* Write in a manner appropriate to their purpose or audience.
- \* Speak clearly, concisely, and persuasively.
- \* Use the arts to express themselves.
- \* Show confidence as both an individual and a learner.
- \* Accept the role and responsibilities of being a student.
- \* Strive to fulfill academic potential.
- \* Begin to identify strengths and weaknesses and become an effective self-advocate.
- \* Take risks when appropriate, accept constructive criticism, and learn from the process.
- \* Accept mistakes and learn from them.
- \* Productively apply new knowledge and skills.
- \* Effectively use study skills.
- \* Apply knowledge of the fine and practical arts.
- \* Apply knowledge about a foreign language and its related culture and traditions.

TO DEMONSTRATE SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS DOVER-SHERBORN REGIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS WILL:

- \* Show confidence and pride in themselves.
- \* Show confidence and growth as social learners
- \* Accept, respect, and support other's strengths and weaknesses.

- \* Show appreciation of and respect for cultural and individual differences.
  - \* Show knowledge about customs, ideas and beliefs of cultures beyond their own.
  - \* Show self-discipline and good judgment in decision making.
  - \* Use self-discipline and good judgment in decision making.
  - \* Recognize when, where, and how to seek help.
- \* Manage personal time and balance competing priorities and interests.
  - \* Become involved citizens in school, local, and global community activities.
  - \* Make informed decisions about physical, mental, and social health.
  - \* Show respect for and protect our environment.

## **SCHOOL PERFORMANCES**

IN ACADEMIC AREAS THE DOVER-SHERBORN REGIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY WILL:

- \* Provide a well-trained professional teaching staff and administration.
- \* Provide a well defined but flexible course of studies which includes academic and exploratory courses.
- \* Provide and encourage high academic standards.
- \* Provide opportunities to address self-esteem, explicitly and implicitly throughout all curriculum areas.
- \* Provide a curriculum which promotes respect and appreciation for individual, cultural, racial, religious, and socio-economic differences.
- \* Provide encouragement to students and personnel involved with the METCO program.
- \* Provide a class size, appropriate to the subject and/or facilities, which maximizes learning.
- \* Provide heterogeneous grouping in most classes.
- \* Provide a wide variety of hands-on and/or participatory programs and activities.
- \* Provide academic and remedial support by special educators as directed in Individual Educational Plans (IEP's), in conjunction with regular education staff.
- \* Provide, in school settings, opportunities for communication of individual ideas, knowledge and feelings.
- \* Provide opportunities for the pursuit of individual interests.
- \* Provide opportunities that allow for discretionary choices.
- \* Provide the opportunity for help sessions.
- \* Provide the opportunity to participate in after school programs of academic, creative and physical extra curricular activities.
- \* Provide the opportunity to attend off-site activities in many areas of study to enhance students' success and development.
- \* Provide cultural enrichment programs.
- \* Provide a full-time library/medial specialist.
- \* Provide well-trained staff, support personnel and appropriate facilities for inclusion students.
- \* Provide a well-trained support staff of paraprofessionals.
- \* Provide guidance personnel according to recommended ratios of the Massachusetts School Counselors Association.



IN PERFORMANCE AREAS THE DOVER-SHERBORN REGIONAL MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY WILL:

- \* Provide and encourage open communications which promote mutual respect between students and staff.
- \* Provide the opportunity for parent and community involvement and support.
- \* Provide information about rules and expectations by distributing and discussing the academic and student handbooks.
- \* Provide for the involvement of students, when appropriate, in the decision-making process.
- \* Provide consistent expectations for and monitoring of behavior.
- \* Provide consequences to correct inappropriate behavior.
- \* Provide all teachers with team meeting time to address student and team issues.
- \* Provide appropriate and pertinent information to students, staff and community about events that impact school life.
- \* Provide team leaders to facilitate meetings and coordinate activities.
- \* Provide a building coordinator to facilitate school management issues.
- \* Provide a school nurse according to recommended ratios of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.
- \* Provide a library/media center which supports school programs and has a wide variety of current written and technological information.
- \* Provide a well-trained support staff of aides, secretaries, and food service and maintenance personnel.
- \* Provide curriculum leaders to facilitate department meetings and coordinate curriculum development and articulation.
- \* Provide ways to recognize, celebrate, and publicize student, faculty and school accomplishments.
- \* Provide peer counseling and support groups for friendship, family, and health related issues.
- \* Provide specialized training for staff members who have direct contact with inclusion students.
- \* Provide on-going training in basic first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for all staff.
- \* Provide a safe and healthy learning environment.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE – DOVER-SHERBORN REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL PRIORITIES OF THE SCHOOL**

Dover-Sherborn Regional High School seeks to prepare students to become lifelong learners. The school promotes academic and social skill development and fosters student self-sufficiency. Students are encouraged to become actively involved in the learning process so that they may adapt to the diverse demands of their post-graduate experiences. To this end, Dover-Sherborn seeks to create a community where learning occurs primarily within a formal academic curriculum supplemented by a variety of co- and extra-curricular experiences. This community provides students with interactive opportunities that ask them to evaluate both themselves and the world around them. Such inquiry actively involves students and asks them to be introspective and extrospective, to think and communicate. As individuals they discover their talents and test their limits; as members of a community they begin to understand a citizen's responsibilities. Consequently, they learn to find the balance necessary to allow them to thrive as individuals, as members of the school community, and as citizens insociety.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS**

The student-teacher relationship is at the heart of the learning process in the classroom, and the efforts of the administration and faculty are focused on making this fundamental relationship as effective as possible within the community of learners. Because students learn best in a situation that offers a high degree of interaction with the instructor and other students, small class sizes are vital. Classes utilize a curriculum that is designed and continually refined by the faculty, and because curriculum is created by and not imposed upon teachers, they have not only a sense of ownership, but also the ability to make adjustments that give each student a chance to succeed. Teachers encourage student participation in an atmosphere which values the free exchange of ideas. In fostering this environment, teachers utilize different pedagogues in presenting material, asking students to employ a variety of perspectives, procedures, and skills. Teachers frequently assess student performance so that students are given ample means to demonstrate their grasp and mastery of material, to exercise their ability to express themselves, and to exhibit responsibility in initiating and completing tasks. Should students encounter obstacles, they are asked to take an active role in addressing and resolving such difficulties. Overall, teachers have three major responsibilities in the student preparation process: fostering efficient work and study habits, promoting mastery of subject material, and cultivating higher thinking skills that are essential both within and beyond the classroom.

The administration encourages teachers to work together to create meaningful contexts and to make material complementary. The administration and faculty foster a dynamic environment that finds its energy and ideas within the professional talent in the school by promoting collegial opportunities and encouraging productive innovation. To this end, the administration and faculty also recognize the importance of examining and responding to the current trends in education. Thus, the school endorses and teachers model the life-long learning ideal.

The task of student preparation, especially in the area of academics, is always the school's top priority. The administration ensures that a rich and secure learning environment with well-defined roles and clear expectations exists for teachers and students. Self-respect, personal responsibility, and mutual respect are, because of their essential nature in a democratic society, at the heart of school policies, and extend to all members of the school community. These policies are the product of a process that invites community participation and gives all affected constituent groups a voice. Ultimately, however, the administration is responsible for articulation, implementation, and enforcement of schoolpolicy.

## **WAYS STUDENTS LEARN**

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Teachers and administrators recognize that students enter the classroom as individuals with their own knowledge base and learning styles. Using logical, linguistic, mathematical, visual, musical, kinetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal approaches, students construct meaning based on both personal history and the common experience within the school environment. In this process, they assimilate, evaluate,

and integrate new information and experiences with their current knowledge base. Students must be willing to take chances, to work with uncertainty, and to make mistakes if they wish to succeed. They learn by making choices and accepting the consequences of these choices. Ultimately, students learn only when they take responsibility for their own education.

## **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

The education of a person is a shared responsibility. The school has the ongoing responsibility for curriculum and educational process; however, it can only fulfill this responsibility with the active, informed participation of parents and guardians. Parents have the responsibility for overseeing their child's education; to this end the school provides a complete, challenging, and relevant educational program by engaging in a cooperative effort that focuses on the student's learning experience. Essential to this effort is effective communication between parents and the school. Open, direct communication provides everyone with a clear understanding of the roles, expectations, and responsibilities of students, teachers, administrators, and parents. With the many formal and informal channels available, effective communication allows everyone to be part of the mutually supportive endeavor of educating the student.

## **CONTENT AND METHODS OF INSTRUCTION**

Dover-Sherborn Regional High School seeks to develop a student's thinking and learning skills through instruction in the following areas: English, foreign language, mathematics, science, social studies, fine arts, physical health and fitness, practical arts, and computer literacy and technology. Extra-curricular activities offer opportunities for involvement in athletics, clubs, student performances, and student government. The school experience is designed to meet two needs: first, that students explore a variety of different areas and in doing so discover and develop their own diverse talents and interest; and second, that the graduate possess the skills required to be an informed, active, and productive citizen.

Recognizing that students have individual learning styles, the teacher's methods of instruction enable students to learn in different ways and to utilize a variety of skills. In general, these methods focus on the presentation of information, the interactive oral and written exchange of ideas, and the development of independent learning strategies. Such methods strive to balance teacher- and student-centered approaches. The presentation of information is done by either the teacher or the students, utilizing primary and secondary sources as well as other appropriate, relevant supplements. The teacher facilitates the interactive exchange of ideas through class discussions, small group work, teacher and/or peer evaluation of student work, and after-school extra help. Student writing is vital to this process: through papers of varying lengths, projects, and portfolios, students analyze, explore, and respond to the information presented in class. Tests and other evaluative exercises serve concurrently as another means of instructing, asking students to apply skills in meaningful, relevant ways. The classroom experience is complemented by independent learning opportunities that encourage students to read, observe, listen, research, create, and evaluate on their own. Such opportunities help students understand that their education has given them the ability to recognize and utilize resources which foster independence and autonomy as learners and individuals.

## **EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENT PERFORMANCE**

It is our expectation that over their four years, students will be given opportunities to demonstrate their growth towards becoming independent learners. A prerequisite for this is that students recognize and accept the obligations implicit in the student role. With this in mind, such demonstrations will demand that they perform effectively in the following Areas:

### ***Academic Skills — Acquisition and Application***

Students will:

- \* master basic skills necessary for the solution of problems; take an active part in choosing problems to be solved; know how to access and evaluate needed information; apply learned skills to analyze, organize and present information clearly in written, spoken, artistic, and dramatic form; work effectively both individually and cooperatively;
- \* apply critical and creative thinking in order to develop their own understanding within and across disciplines;
- \* consider multiple perspectives;
- \* become familiar with and utilize, where appropriate, a variety of technological, visual, auditory, and kinetic forms of communication.

### ***Self-Discipline and Personal Responsibility***

Students will demonstrate:

- \* effective organizational skills  
  
*Preparation for class--* bringing appropriate materials; completing assignments on time;  
*Preparation outside of class--* managing time so that both daily and long term assignments are addressed adequately; procuring resources necessary for class;
- \* active participation in the learning process  
  
*Punctuality/attendance-* coming to class on time  
*Involvement in curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities-* moving from predominantly teacher-initiate to predominantly student-initiated participation  
*Adaptability-* working in groups or as an individual; responding to different approaches; *Utilization of opportunities for oral, written, artistic, and athletic expression—* meeting requirements; striving to exceed requirements;  
*Self-evaluation--* understanding teacher expectations; creating own expectations; assessment of performance in fulfilling both kinds of expectations; evidence of self-discovery;  
*Consistency of excellence--* reaching and maintaining a high level of proficiency;  
*Assumption of Leadership Roles and Initiatives-* sharing skills and talents while accepting responsibility for being part of the larger community

### ***Behavior — Social and Civic Responsibilities***

Students will:

- \* demonstrate an understanding of the principles of democracy and the democratic process through their direct participation;
- \* demonstrate their understanding of individual rights and responsibilities and their relationship to communal well-being through involvement in school and community activities and service;
- \* develop a respect and understanding of individual differences and cultural diversity, as well as an appreciation of the similarities and interdependencies among all people;
- \* make informed and ethical choices in relation to self, others, and the environment and resolve conflicts in a non-violent way.

### ***Physical and Mental Well-Being***

Students will demonstrate:

- \* a mindfulness of personal health fitness;
- \* appropriate and acceptable behavior as described in the student handbook;
- \* behavior that engenders a safe and orderly environment for the school community;
- \* mental and emotional stability that enables them to function within the school community;
- \* open and active communication among members of the school community;
- \* respect for self, peers, faculty, staff and other members of the school community

### ***Expectations for School Performance***

The school shall:

- \* make the fundamental relationship between teachers and students as effective as possible;
- \* utilize a curriculum that is designed and continually refined by the faculty;
- \* provide opportunities that give each student a chance to succeed;
- \* encourage student participation in an atmosphere which values the free exchange of ideas;
- \* utilize different pedagogues in presenting material, asking students to employ a variety of perspectives, procedures, and skills;
- \* provide ample means for students to demonstrate their grasp and mastery of material, to exercise their ability to express themselves, and to exhibit responsibility in initiating and completing tasks;
- \* foster in students efficient work and study habits, promoting mastery of subject material, and cultivating higher thinking skills that are essential both within and beyond the classroom;
- \* foster a dynamic environment that finds its energy and ideas within the professional talent in the school by promoting collegial opportunities and encouraging productive innovation;
- \* examine and respond to the current trends in education, thus endorsing and modeling the life-long learning ideal;
- \* ensure that a rich and secure learning environment with well-defined roles and clear expectations exist for teachers and students;
- \* encourage open, direct communication that provides everyone with a clear understanding of the roles, expectations, and responsibilities of students, teachers, administrators, and parents.

FIRST READING:           October 21, 2014

SECOND READING:       Dover School Committee October 28, 2014,

***The Public Schools of Dover and Sherborn***

Dover-Sherborn Regional School Committee November 4, 2014  
Sherborn School Committee November 18, 2014

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

**ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

The School Committees seek to educate students in the democratic tradition, to foster recognition of individual freedom and social responsibility, to inspire meaningful awareness of and respect for the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Fairness in procedures will be observed both to safeguard the legitimate interests of the schools and to exhibit by appropriate example the basic objectives of a democratic society as set forth in the Constitutions of the United States and the Commonwealth.

LEGAL REF.: Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

## SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar for the ensuing year will be prepared by the Superintendent and submitted to the School Committees for approval by the spring of each year. The number of days or instructional hours scheduled for the school year will be determined in accordance with the following standards set by the Massachusetts Board of Education:

1. Elementary school will operate for a minimum of 180 days. Schools shall ensure that every elementary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 900 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in 603 CMR 27.02. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.
2. Secondary schools, which shall include the Middle School and High School, will operate for a minimum of 180 days. Schools shall ensure that every secondary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 990 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in 603 CMR 27.02. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.

For the information of staff, students, and parents, the calendar will set forth the days schools will be in session; holidays and vacation periods; and in service days.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 4:7; 15:1G; 71:1; 71:4; 71:4A; 71:73; 136:12  
Board of Education Regulations for School Year and School Day, effective 9/1/75  
Board of Education, Student Learning Time Regulations  
603 CMR 27.00, Adopted 12/20/94

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC



## SCHOOL DAY

The length of the school day is established in the collective bargaining agreements with the various school committees. The specific opening and closing times of the schools will be recommended by the Superintendent and set by the Committees.

The Superintendent is authorized to make minor changes in opening and closing times to simplify transportation scheduling; however, major changes in schedules will be subject Committees' approval.

Parents and guardians will be informed of the opening and closing times set by the Committees. To help insure the safety of all children, parents will also be notified that students will not be admitted into the school building until 15 minutes prior to the start of the official day unless bus schedules require earlier admittance.

LEGAL REFS.:	M.G.L. 15:1G; 71:1; 71:59 Board of Education Regulations for School Year and Day, effective 9/1/75
FIRST READING:	January 25, 2011
SECOND READING:	May 22, 2012
ADOPTED:	May 22, 2012
SOURCE:	MASC

**RELEASED TIME**

To provide staff time for professional development meetings and conferences, the following schedule for releasing students shall be in effect:

Dover & Sherborn: Approximately two Wednesday afternoons each month.

Dover-Sherborn Regional Middle School and High School: As determined by the administration.

FIRST READING:	January 25, 2011
SECOND READING:	May 22, 2012
ADOPTED:	May 22, 2012
SOURCE:	Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION

The Schools offer a diversified educational program compatible with the needs of the community and state standards.

The organizational plan is designed to facilitate the philosophy of educating every student, each to his/her fullest potential.

The structure will consist of three levels -- Primary/Elementary, Middle, and Secondary levels.

The Primary/Elementary level includes schools with kindergarten through grade five. The Middle level consists of schools for grades six, seven and eight. The Secondary level consists of schools with grades nine, ten, eleven, and twelve.

Special education services are integrated across each grade level in all schools.

The organization is designed to meet the standards established within the Curriculum Frameworks as required by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and to serve the needs of all students.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

## CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Constant adaptation and development of the curriculum is necessary if the Schools are to meet the needs of all students. To be successful, curriculum development must be a collaborative enterprise involving staff and administrators utilizing their professional expertise, and gathering input from parents/guardians and the community.

The Committees expect the faculty and administration to regularly evaluate the education program and to recommend modifications of practice and changes in curriculum content as well as the addition or deletion of courses to the instructional program.

LEGAL REF.:	M.G.L. 69:1E 603 CMR 26:05
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SOURCE:	MASC

## CURRICULUM ADOPTION

The School Committees will rely on the professional staff to design and implement instructional programs and courses of study that will forward the educational goals of the Schools.

The Superintendent will have authority to approve new programs and courses of study after they have been thoroughly studied and found to support educational goals. The Committees will consider, and officially adopt, new programs and courses when they constitute an extensive alteration in instructional content or approach.

The Committees shall be informed of all new courses and substantive revisions in curriculum. It will receive reports on changes under consideration. Its acceptance of these reports, including a listing of the high school program of studies, will constitute its adoption of the curriculum for official purposes.

LEGAL REFS.:	M.G.L. 71:1; 69:1E
FIRST READING:	January 25, 2011
SECOND READING:	May 22, 2012
ADOPTED:	May 22, 2012
SOURCE:	Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

The School Committees will attempt to provide every student with an opportunity for wholesome and enriched educational experiences. It is the Committees' belief that the following basic aims and objectives of the physical education program will contribute to this goal:

1. To aid the development of the entire student so that a well trained mind may function properly in a healthybody.
2. To encourage student participation in vigorous physical activity while in school, and to teach the skills of those activities so that they will have a carry-over value for later activities in every daylife.
3. To increase appreciation of physical fitness and its importance in regard to goodhealth.
4. To impress upon students the importance of integrating one's mind, body, and attitude in preparing to face the obligations of a complex society.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1; 71:3  
Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to Physical Education, adopted  
4/25/78, effective 9/1/78  
603 CMR 26:05

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

## HEALTH EDUCATION

Good health depends upon continuous life-long attention to scientific advances and the acquisition of new knowledge.

The Schools are committed to a sound, comprehensive health education program as an integral part of each student's general education. Health education will be taught as a specific discipline in grades K through 5 and as a separate class in middle and high School.

The health education program will emphasize a contemporary approach to the presentation of health information, skills, and the knowledge necessary for students to understand and appreciate the functioning and proper care of the human body. Students also will be presented with information regarding complex social, physical and mental health problems, which they might encounter in society. In an effort to help students make intelligent choices on alternative behavior of serious personal consequence, health education will examine the potential health hazards of social, physical, and mental problems existing in the larger school-community environment.

LEGAL REF.:	M.G.L. 71:1
FIRST READING:	January 25, 2011
SECOND READING:	May 22, 2012
ADOPTED:	May 22, 2012
SOURCE:	MASC

**HEALTH EDUCATION  
(Exemption Procedure)**

Exemption will be granted from a specific portion of health education curriculum on the grounds that the material taught is contrary to the religious beliefs and/or teachings of the student or the student's parent/guardian.

A request for exemption must be submitted in writing to the principal in advance of instruction in that portion of the curriculum for which the exemption is requested. The request must state the particular conflict involved.

The principal will confer with the teacher to determine the length of time a student will be exempt. The teacher will develop an alternative activity for which the student will receive credit.

The principal will inform the parent/guardian of disposition of the request within a reasonable number of school days of receipt of the request.

LEGAL REF.:	M.G.L. 71:1
FIRST READING:	January 25, 2011
SECOND READING:	May 22, 2012
ADOPTED:	May 22, 2012
SOURCE:	MASC



## **PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION**

In accordance with General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, the School Committees adopted this policy on the rights of parents/guardians of our students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

At the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students in our Schools will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum we offer that primarily involve human sexual or human sexuality issues. The Superintendent of Schools will determine the administrator(s) responsible for sending the notice(s). Parents/guardians of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If planned curricula change during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Each such notice to parents/guardians will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy, and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

1. Exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexual issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.
2. Inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable. Parents/guardians may arrange with the principal to review the materials at the school and may also review them at other locations that may be determined by the Superintendent of Schools.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the principal concerning notice, access to instructional materials, or exemption for the student under this policy may send a written request to the Superintendent for review of the issue. The Superintendent or designee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within two weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with the Superintendent's decision may send a written request to a School Committee for review of the issue. The School Committee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within four weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is still dissatisfied after this process may send a written request to the Commissioner of Education for review of the issue in the dispute.

The Superintendent of Schools will distribute a copy of this policy to each principal by September 1 of each year.

REF.: Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

FIRST READING: [November 21, 2016](#)

SECOND READING: January 31, 2017

ADOPTED: January 31, 2017

SOURCE: MASC

**TEACHING ABOUT DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO**

In accordance with state and federal law, the Schools shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, evidence-based drug, tobacco, and alcohol education and prevention programs in grades K-12.

The drug, alcohol, and tobacco education program shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of drug, alcohol, and tobacco use. It shall include special instruction as to the effects upon the human system; the emotional, psychological and social dangers of such use with emphasis on nonuse by school age children and the illegal aspects of such use. The program also shall include information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use illicit drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.

The objectives of this program are rooted in the Committees' belief that prevention requires education, and that the most important aspect of the policies and guidelines of the Schools should be the education of each individual to the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

The curriculum, instructional materials and outcomes used in this program shall be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the School Committees.

This policy shall be posted on the Schools' website and notice shall be provided to all student and parents in accordance with state law. Additionally, the Schools shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1; 71:96

FIRST READING: November 21, 2016

SECOND READING: January 31, 2017

ADOPTED: January 31, 2017

SOURCE: MASC March 2016

**SAMPLE NOTICE TO PARENT/GUARDIAN**

[Date]

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Enclosed is an outline of our school's comprehensive health education curriculum. This program has been developed by our professional staff under the guidance of the community health education advisory council. The overall goal of the course is to continue efforts begun in earlier grades to promote the health and well-being of our students, and to help them make wise and informed decisions during their teen-age years and beyond.

Sex education is part of the health education curriculum, including topics such as puberty; dating; relationships and communication skills; pregnancy; birth control; abortion; homosexuality; prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases; and prevention of sexual abuse. The instructional materials we use for the course include a curriculum package and a video, listed on the enclosed outline. If you would like to review these materials at the school, you are welcome to do so. Please call me to arrange a convenient time.

During the course, students will be able to ask questions, which will be answered factually and in an age appropriate manner. Each student's privacy will be respected, and no one will be put on the spot to ask or answer questions or reveal personal information. Material will be presented in a balanced, factual way that makes clear that people may have strong religious and moral beliefs about issues such as birth control and abortion, and that these beliefs must be respected.

Under Massachusetts law and School Committee policy, you may exempt your child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. To receive an exemption, simply send me a letter requesting an exemption for your child. No student who is exempted from this portion of the curriculum will be penalized. We may provide an alternative assignment to students who are exempted.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that your child has a positive and educationally enriching experience this school year. If you have any questions about sex education or any other matter concerning your child's education, please call me.

Sincerely,  
Principal  
[Phone Number]

Enclosure: [course outline; list of curriculum materials for sex education]

| FIRST READING: November 21,  
2016 SECOND READING: January 31, 2017  
ADOPTED: January 31, 2017

SOURCE: MASC

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS  
(PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES)**

The goals of the Schools' special education program are to allow each student to grow and achieve at his own level, and to gain independence and self-reliance.

The requirements of Chapter 71B and the Massachusetts General Laws (previously referred to as Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972) and state regulations will be followed in the identification of students with special needs, in referrals for their evaluation, in prescribing for them suitable programs and in assessing their educational progress. In keeping with state requirements, all students with special needs between the ages of three through 21 who have not attained a high school diploma or its equivalent will be eligible for special education.

LEGAL REFS.:       The Individuals with Disabilities Ed. Act (PL 108-446, adopted 12/03/04)  
                          Rehabilitation Act of 1973  
                          M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)  
                          Board of Education Chapter 766 Regulations, adopted 10/74, as amended through  
                          7/1/81  
                          603 CMR 28:00 inclusive

FIRST READING:    January 25, 2011

SECOND READING:  May 22, 2012

ADOPTED:           May 22, 2012

SOURCE:           Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

**PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

In keeping with the intention of the state of Massachusetts to offer educational opportunities to all students that will enable them to lead fulfilling and productive lives, the Schools shall provide appropriate educational opportunities to all resident students in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## **OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

1. Parents'/guardians' request to observe their child(ren), current program, or a potential placement must be made at least five days in advance with the special education administrator or designee and/or principal.
2. The special education administrator or designee shall contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) for initial scheduling conversation within five (5) days of receipt of the parents'/guardians' request.
3. When a parent/guardian requests an observation of a special needs student or program, the special education administrator or designee will seek approval from the principal before it is processed. Such approval may only be withheld for those reasons outlined within law and DESERegulation.
4. The special education administrator or designee and/or principal will work with the classroom teacher and the observer to set up the specifics of the observation (including, but not limited to, scheduling and placement of the observer in the classroom).
5. The number, frequency, and duration of observation periods will be determined on an individual student basis in accordance with law and regulation. The start and end time of observation periods and a schedule of observation periods will be stated in advance. In order to minimize classroom or student disruption, the length of individual observation periods may be limited.
6. If the observer is not the parent/guardian, the parent/guardian must sign a release for the individual to observe.
7. The number of observers at any one time may be limited.
8. The observer will be informed that he/she is not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom. If his/her presence presents a problem, he/she will be asked to leave. This notice is particularly important, since the presence of parents/guardians can influence both the performance of their child(ren) and those of others.
9. The observer will be asked to submit his/her report of the observation in advance of any follow-up TEAM meeting.
10. The observer will be informed that he/she is there to evaluate the appropriateness of a specific educational program to meet the needs of an individual child. He/she is not there to evaluate a teacher's ability to perform his or her contractual job duties.
11. The observer will be instructed regarding the disclosure of confidential or personally identifiable information relating to other children. Staff must be mindful of removing materials which may be part of students' records from plain view. In the event that removal is not possible the observer may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

12. A school administrator, or designee, also will observe at the same time and take notes as to what is observed, paying particular attention to note anything that is non-typical concerning the period. This observation summary will be placed in the student's file and provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to any follow-up TEAM meeting.

LEGAL REF.: MGL 71B:3  
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2009-2 dated January 8, 2009

CROSS REF.: KI, Visitors to Schools

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

**COMPENSATORY EDUCATION  
(Title 1)**

Title 1 funds shall be used to provide educational services that are in addition to the regular services provided for Schools' students. By adoption of this policy, the School Committees ensure equivalence in the provision of curriculum materials and supplies.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC



## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The Schools shall provide suitable research-based language instructional programs for all identified English language learners in grades Kindergarten through 12 in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes and Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations and guidance.

The Schools shall identify students whose dominant language may not be English through home language surveys that identify a primary home language is other than English (PHLOTE), observations, intake assessments, and recommendations of parents/guardians, teachers and other persons. Identified students shall be assessed annually to determine their level of proficiency in the English language.

The Schools shall certify to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education each year those students whose dominant language is not English, including specification of the number of non-English languages identified as dominant languages and the number and percent of students who speak each non-English language as their dominant language.

The Schools shall provide additional information as required by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to comply with the No Child Left Behind Act.

LEGAL REFS.:	20 U.S.C. 3001 et seq. (language instruction for limited English proficient and immigrant students contained in No Child Left Behind Act of 2001) 42 U.S.C. 2000d (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) 603 CMR 14.00
FIRST READING:	January 25, 2011
SECOND READING:	May 22, 2012
ADOPTED:	May 22, 2012
SOURCE:	MASC 2006

## **HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION**

Upon receipt of a physician's written order verifying that any student enrolled in a public school or placed by the public school in a private setting must remain at home or in a hospital on a day or overnight basis, or any combination of both, for medical reasons and for a period of not less than fourteen school days during a school year, the principal shall arrange for provisions of educational services in the home or hospital. Such services shall be provided with sufficient frequency to allow the student to continue his or her educational program, as long as such services do not interfere with the medical needs of the student. The principal shall coordinate such services with the Administrator of Special Education and/or Guidance for eligible students. Such educational services shall not be considered special education unless the student has been determined eligible for such services, and the services include services on the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP.)

LEGAL REFERENCE(S): 603 CMR 28.03(3)(c) and

28.04(4)

ADOPTED: October 3, 2017

SOURCE: MASC

## HOME-SCHOOLING

The Massachusetts General Laws require School Committees to determine that a Home-Schooling program meets the minimum standards established for public schools in the Commonwealth prior to approving such a program.

### **A. Procedures for Establishing a Home-Based Education Program**

When a parent/guardian of a student below the age of 16 wants to establish a home-based educational program for his/her child, the following procedures shall be followed in accordance with the law:

Prior to removing the child from public school:

The parent/guardian must submit written notification of establishment of the home-based program to the appropriate administrator 14 days before the program is established, and resubmit notification on an annual basis as long as the child or children are being educated in a home-based environment.

The parent/guardian must certify in writing, on a form provided by the Schools, the name, age, place of residence, and number of hours of attendance of each child in the program.

The Superintendent shall give the notice to produce records required by law if there is probable cause to believe the program is not in compliance with the law.

The School Committees delegate the approval of home instruction to the Superintendent. Any approval or rejection of an application by the Superintendent is subject to review by a Committee. Factors to be considered by the Superintendent or School Committees in deciding whether or not to approve a home education proposal may be:

1. The proposed curriculum and the number of hours of instruction in each of the proposed subjects.
2. The competency of the parents to teach the children,
3. The textbooks, workbooks and other instructional aids to be used by the children and the lesson plans and teaching manuals to be used by the parents.
4. Periodic standardized testing of the children to ensure educational progress and the attainment of minimum standards.

A student being educated in a home-based program within the Schools will have access to the School's extra-curricular activities but will not have access to curricular programs unless required by law or upon approval of the Superintendent. Home-schooled students who are eligible to receive services such as special education and English Language Learner services, will receive such services in accordance with state law.

A student, with the approval of a School Committee, may be awarded a high school diploma if they have satisfied the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's competency requirements and have met the Schools' educational standards for graduation.

## **B. Required Elements of Home-Based Education Programs**

1. Annual Application: The parent/guardian must request permission to hold home instruction on an annual basis. A home instruction application form will be provided to the parents/guardians. This form must be completed and returned to the Superintendent before approval may be granted.
2. Progress Indicators: Parents/guardians in charge of home instruction should make provision for regular testing or use of other indicators of student progress such as evaluations, portfolios, or standardized achievement tests. As an alternative to home testing and at the request of those in charge of the home instruction, the Schools will make provision for inclusion of home-taught children in the annual achievement test battery, which is usually administered in February or March of each school year. The home instruction summary form must include either a summary of home testing results for each required subject for each child or the results of the achievement test that is administered through the Schools.
3. Audit of Home Instruction Program: Auditing functions of the Committees for the home instruction will include:
  - a. The Committees at any time may request a review by the Superintendent of the attendance rolls, records of test scores or other achievement indicators in each required subject for any child in home instruction.
  - b. The Committees may request at any time that the Superintendent review the instructional materials and methods used by the person(s) responsible for the home instruction.
  - c. The Superintendent will prepare for the Committees an annual summary of the children included in home instruction. This report will also summarize, in general, the appropriateness or possible deficiencies of home education situations.
4. Home Instruction Summary Form: Within one week of the ending date of the home instruction, as indicated on the home instruction application form, the Schools will mail the parents/guardians a home instruction summary form. The completed form should be returned to the Schools within 30 days. This summary form must be returned to the administration building before annual approval of home instruction can be made for any succeeding years. If deficiencies in a home education situation are not corrected or the proper annual application or summary is not completed by the parents/guardians, an appropriate referral will be made.
5. The Committees will act in a responsible, cooperative manner to ensure that all children in the Schools receive competent, adequate instruction. This concern includes children in home education. If the Committees determine that a home instruction situation is inadequate, a conference between

the parents/guardians and the Superintendent will be scheduled to find mutually acceptable ways to correct any deficiency.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 69:1D; 76:1, Care and Protection of Charles Care and Protections of Charles - MASS. Supreme Judicial Court 399 Mass. 324 (1987)

CROSS REFS: MASC File: IHBG-R, IHBG-E

FIRST READING: Dover, Sherborn and Dover Sherborn Regional School Committees  
June 15, 2021

SECOND READING: Dover, Sherborn and Dover Sherborn Regional School Committees  
October 19, 2021

SOURCE: MASC

## HOME SCHOOLING

1. Requirements for approval of home instruction will include:
  - a. The parent/guardian must request permission to hold home instruction on an annual basis.
  - b. A home instruction application form will be provided to the parents/guardians. This form must be completed and returned to the Superintendent before approval may be granted.
  - c. Committees delegate the approval of home instruction to the Superintendent. Any approval or rejection of an application by the Superintendent is subject to review by a Committee.
2. Children in home instruction may, at the discretion of parents/guardians, attend the public schools on a part-time basis. It may be an advantage for a home-taught child to attend specialized classes in the public school.
3. Parents/guardians in charge of home instruction should make provision for regular testing or use of other indicators of student progress such as standardized achievement tests. As an alternative to home testing and at the request of those in charge of the home instruction, the Schools will make provision for inclusion of home-taught children in the annual achievement test battery, which is usually administered in February or March of each school year. The home instruction summary form must include either a summary of home testing results for each required subject for each child or the results of the achievement test that is administered through the Schools.
4. Auditing functions of the Committees for the home instruction will include:
  - a. The Committees at any time may request a review by the Superintendent of the attendance rolls, records of test scores or other achievement indicators in each required subject for any child in home instruction.
  - b. The Committees may request at any time that the Superintendent review the instructional materials and methods used by the person(s) responsible for the home instruction.
  - c. The Superintendent will prepare for the Committees an annual summary of the children included in home instruction. This report will also summarize, in general, the appropriateness or possible deficiencies of home education situations.
5. Within one week of the ending date of the home instruction, as indicated on the home instruction application form, the Schools will mail the parents/guardians a home instruction summary form. The completed form should be returned to the Schools within 30 days. This summary form must be returned to the administration building before annual approval of home instruction can be made for any succeeding years.

6. The Committees will act in a responsible, cooperative manner to ensure that all children in the Schools receive competent, adequate instruction. This concern includes children in home education. If the Committees determine that a home instruction situation is inadequate, a conference between the parents/guardians and the Superintendent will be scheduled to find mutually acceptable ways to correct any deficiency.
7. If deficiencies in a home education situation are not corrected or the proper annual application or summary is not completed by the parents/guardians, an appropriate referral will be made.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

## HOME SCHOOLING

In March 1987, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court decided the case entitled Care and Protection of Charles, 399 Mass. 324 (1987). The decision sets forth the legal standards for approval of home education programs for children of compulsory school age in Massachusetts. This advisory opinion, prepared by Rhoda E. Schneider, General Counsel of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, is intended to inform public school officials and other interested parties of the standards set forth in the decision. It supersedes the Department's January 4, 1980 Advisory Opinion on Home Education, although the approval guidelines established by the court are very similar to those in the 1980 advisory.

There are four main components to the decision, which may be summarized as follows:

### **I. The School Committee may enforce the compulsory school attendance law through a care and protection proceeding.**

The court held that the Canton School Committee had authority to file a petition for care and protection (pursuant to General Laws Chapter 119, Section 24) with respect to three school-age children whose parents had not enrolled them in public school or an approved private school, and who had not been granted permission to educate them at home. The court noted that the compulsory school attendance law (General Laws Chapter 76, Section I) states that "the School Committee of each town shall provide for and enforce the school attendance of all children (ages 6-16) actually residing therein in accordance here-with," and concluded that one appropriate way for the School Committee to do so is a petition to find the children in need of care and protection with respect to their educational care.

### **II. The compulsory school attendance law provides adequate standards to determine a child's need for educational care and to withstand constitutional challenge.**

The court held that General Laws Chapter 76, Section 1, the compulsory school attendance law, provides the standards by which a judge may determine that a child is in need of educational care, and is neither void for vagueness nor an unlawful delegation of legislative authority. In pertinent part, the statute provides:

Every child between the minimum and maximum ages established for school attendance by the board of education (6-16) . . . shall . . . attend a public day school . . . or some other day school approved by the School Committee . . . unless the child attends school in another town . . . **but such attendance shall not be required of a child . . . who is being otherwise instructed in a manner approved in advance by the Superintendent or the School Committee.** (Emphasis added.)

The court concluded that this grant of authority to the Superintendent or School Committee to approve an alternative manner of instruction for a child (specifically, home instruction) is not unconstitutionally vague, because the school officials may draw approval criteria from three sources. First, the legislatures established a general framework for public education, by mandating the subjects that must be taught in public schools and qualifications public school teachers must meet. (See General Laws Chapter 71, Sections 1, 2, 3 and 38G.) Second, the court stated that proposed home education programs are subject to the same standard of approval as private schools under General Laws Chapter 76, Section 1:



“For the purposes of this section, school committees shall approve a private school when satisfied that the instruction in all the studies required by law equals in thoroughness and efficiency, and in the progress made therein, that in the public schools in the same town; but shall not withhold such approval on account of religious teaching...”

Third, the court set forth specific procedures and approval guidelines for home education programs, which are discussed in section IV of this advisory. In light of all these factors, the court concluded that the law provides reasonable standards for reviewing and approving home education programs, and therefore meets constitutional requirements.

### **III. Parents have a basic right to direct their children's education, but that right is subject to reasonable regulation to promote the state's substantial interest in the education of its citizens.**

Several United States Supreme Court decisions, cited by the court, have affirmed substantial state interest in the education of its citizenry, with which parents' basic right to direct children's education must be reconciled. The court agreed with the parents: "the state interest in this regard lies in ensuring that the children residing within the state receive an education, not that the educational process be dictated in its minutest detail." However, the court concluded that the approval process required under General Laws Chapter 76, Section 1 "is necessary to promote effectively the state's substantial interest," and that the School Committee may use that statutory approval process to impose on home education programs "certain reasonable educational requirements similar to those required for public and private schools."

### **IV. Guidelines for approval of home education plans.**

Having concluded that the approval process under General Laws Chapter 76, Section 1 is constitutionally permissible the court set forth guidelines for parents and school officials to follow in considering home education plans. They may be summarized as follows:

#### **A. Procedures.**

1. Parents must obtain approval **prior** to removing the children from the public school and beginning the home education program.
2. The Superintendent or School Committee must provide the parents with an opportunity to explain their proposed plan and present witnesses on their behalf. A hearing during a School Committee meeting is sufficient to meet this requirement.
3. In obtaining approval from the Superintendent or School Committee, the parents must demonstrate that the home education proposal meets the requirements of General Laws Chapter 76, Section 1, in that the instruction will equal "in thoroughness and efficiency, and in the progress made therein, that in the public schools in the same town."

4. If the home education plan is rejected, the Superintendent or School Committee must detail the reasons for the decision, and allow the parents to revise their proposal to remedy its inadequacies. If they begin the home education program without the necessary approval, the School Committee may initiate a truancy proceeding or a care and protection petition, in which it would have to show that the instruction in the home does not meet the statutory standard for thoroughness, efficiency and educational progress.

**B. Approval factors.**

The court listed the following factors that may be considered by the Superintendent or School Committee in deciding whether or not to approve a home education proposal:

1. **The proposed curriculum and the number of hours of instruction in each of the proposed subjects.**

General Laws Chapter 71, Section 1, 2 and 3 list the subjects of instruction that must be taught in the public schools. Section 1 allows the School Committee also to require such other subjects, as it may deem expedient. In addition, the Superintendent or School Committee "may properly consider the length of the proposed home school year and the hours of instruction in each subject," noting that state law requires public schools to operate for a minimum of 180 days.

2. **The competency of the parents to teach the children.**

General Laws Chapter 71, Section 1 provides that teachers shall be "of competent ability and good morals." The court noted that parents providing education at home need not be certified, nor must they have college or advanced academic degrees. However, "the Superintendent or School Committee may properly inquire as to the academic credentials or other qualifications of the parent or parents who will be instructing the children."

3. **The textbooks, workbooks and other instructional aids to be used by the children and the lesson plans and teaching manuals to be used by the parents.**

The Superintendent or School Committee need access to this material "to determine the type of subjects to be taught and the grade level of instruction for comparison purposes with the curriculum of the public schools," but they "may not use this access to dictate the manner in which the subjects will be taught."

4. **Periodic standardized testing of the children to ensure educational progress and the attainment of minimum standards.**

The Superintendent or School Committee may properly require such testing, and in consultation with the parents may decide where the testing will occur and the type of testing instrument to be used. The court noted that "where practical, a neutral party should administer the test" and that the school authorities and parents may agree to other means of measuring the children's progress, such as periodic progress reports or dated work samples. In addition, it suggested that on-site visits by public school representatives

may be included, although "with appropriate testing procedures or progress reports, there may be no need for periodic on-site visits or observations of the learning environment by school authority personnel."

**V. Conclusion.**

The Supreme Judicial Court's decision provides both a legal framework and useful guidance for public school officials and parents with respect to proposals to educate a school-age child at home. We recommend that Superintendents and School Committees review their procedures and approval criteria for home education plans, to assure that they are consistent with the court's decision. As long as the school officials making the decision to approve or disapprove a home education program do so reasonably and in good faith, using the standards and procedures discussed above, it is likely that a court will uphold their educational judgments.

LEGAL REFS.:	M.G.L. 69:1D; 76:1
FIRST READING:	January 25, 2011
SECOND READING:	May 22, 2012
ADOPTED:	May 22, 2012
SOURCE:	Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## **ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

Some children have great difficulty coping with the conventional school program and as a result will drop out of school. Some children require more support and direct supervision than is reasonably available in conventional school settings. And, some children, along with a highly structured academic experience, require a special focus on life skills and an appropriate vocational involvement.

The School Committees will provide alternative education programs where these needs have been identified, where establishment of such programs is feasible, and where the proposed programs fall within the function normally associated with the Schools.

These alternative educational programs will seek to provide an appropriate academic, social, and vocational experience to aid these young people either to reenter the Schools, move into another educational setting, or prepare them for successful employment.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37I; 71:37J Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to Section 8 of Chapter 636 of the Acts of 1974, Regarding Magnet School Facilities and Magnet Educational Programs, adopted 2/25/75

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## **SUMMER SCHOOLS**

The Schools will conduct summer sessions as a supplement to the instruction offered during the school year, when funding for such programs is available. The focus of the program will be remedial work in reading and mathematics.

To attend tuition-free remedial summer school, students must have the approval of their classroom and/or special subject teachers.

Students at all instructional levels may attend approved summer schools for remedial, enrichment, or make-up purposes. Credit towards graduation requirements may be granted high school students in line with regulations of the Schools.

All summer programs will be subject to annual approval by the School Committees.

LEGAL REF.:	M.G.L. 71:28
FIRST READING:	January 25, 2011
SECOND READING:	May 22, 2012
ADOPTED:	May 22, 2012
SOURCE:	MASC

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION

The Dover-Sherborn Regional District School Committee shall make available, when practicable, to the residents of the district a Community Education Program. Class size shall be determined by the school administration. Application shall be made to obtain supportive state and federal funds for the program.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## CLASS SIZE – ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

### **Pine Hill, Sherborn**

The Sherborn School Committee recognizes that class size can be an important factor in good education. For planning purposes, the School Committee supports the following class size guidelines:

The number of students in Kindergarten through Grade 5 shall be in the range of 18-23 students per classroom. The principal, working with the professional staff, will develop and recommend to the School committee any staffing needs consistent with this policy.

Grades K-5 18-23 students per class

The process that the School Committee uses to determine class size considers many factors including group composition, staff needs, available space and the financial health of the school budget. In keeping with this policy, the School Committee will adhere, whenever possible, to these guidelines.

### **Chickering School, Dover**

The number of students in Kindergarten through Grade 5 shall be in the range of 17-22 students per classroom. The principal, working with the professional staff, will develop and recommend to the respective School Committee any staffing needs consistent with this policy. Decisions regarding class size will be based on the Core Values, Mission Statement and budget priorities as established by the School Committees. Six major criteria will be taken into account in determining class size:

- Enrollment projections
- Educational philosophy
- Class make-up
- Facility issues
- Budgetary issues
- Staffing issues

Each year, using the above criteria, the principal will conduct an in-depth review of the projected class sizes. Initial presentation of this review will take place during the Superintendent's preliminary school budget planning process. Final decisions regarding class size will be made by a School Committee in a time frame allowing the administration to implement the recommendation prior to the commencement of the school year.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011, Sherborn School Committee December 14, 2020

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012, Sherborn School Committee February 9, 2021

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012, Sherborn School Committee February 9, 2021

SOURCE: Dover & Sherborn School Committees

## **CLASS SIZE- SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

It is desirable to limit class size in most areas, in relation to the subject taught, type of student, safety factors, physical plant, availability of staff and various support facilities and/or techniques. Class size, where practical, should be held to a number that will permit optimum learning conditions.

The exceptions to the above would be in the Living and Practical Arts courses where the physical layout limits the class size. Classes containing concentrations of identified students or those students with special needs shall be held to a number that will permit the optimum learning conditions insofar as it is practicable. Classes shall be so composed that the respective burdens in a grade or school shall be fairly apportioned.

The foregoing standards are subject to modification for conformity to the policy and educational purposes of the Dover-Sherborn approach to education, and shall not prevent the use of specialized or experimental techniques, nor will they cause split or half classes or other limitations that are unreasonable in the light of existing conditions. However, if a teacher considers that there have been excessive departures from the agreed standards, a complaint may be filed and shall be subject to the grievance procedure.

FIRST READING:	January 25, 2011
SECOND READING:	May 22, 2012
ADOPTED:	May 22, 2012
SOURCE:	Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee



## INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The School Committees believe that materials appropriate to the needs of the Schools must be available to each student and teacher. These will be furnished by School Committees subject to budgetary constraints.

The task of selecting instructional materials for programs will be delegated to the professional staff of the Schools. Because instructional programs and materials are of great importance, only those that meet the following criteria will be approved by Committees:

1. They must present balanced views of international, national, and local issues and problems of the past, present and future.
2. They must provide materials that stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic and ethical values.
3. They must help students develop abilities in critical reading and thinking.
4. They must help develop and foster an appreciation of cultural diversity and development in the United States and throughout the world.
5. They must provide for all students an effective basic education that does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, physical disabilities, or sexual preference.
6. They must allow sufficient flexibility for meeting the special needs of individual students and groups of students.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:48; 71:49; 71:50  
BESE regulations 603 CMR 26.00

CROSS REF.: KEC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

FIRST READING: October 21, 2014

SECOND READING: Dover School Committee October 28, 2014,  
Dover-Sherborn Regional School Committee November 4, 2014  
Sherborn School Committee November 18, 2014

ADOPTED: November 18, 2014

SOURCE: Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Material that is challenged usually belongs to one of the three basic categories: religion, ideology, or profanity/obscenity. Committees' policies regarding these areas shall be as follows:

Religion -- Factual, unbiased material on religions has a place in school libraries.

Ideologies -- Libraries should, with no thought toward swaying reader judgment, make available a balanced collection of primary and factual material, on the level of their students on various ideologies or philosophies which exert or have exerted a strong force, either favorably or unfavorably, in government, current events, politics, education and other phases of life.

Profanity/obscenity -- Materials shall be subjected to a test of literary merit and reality in context using the criteria established.

When a problem concerning instructional resources in a school arises, the disposition of the problem will be made in a reasonable period of time using Schools' adopted procedures.

In accordance with the statement of philosophy, no questioned materials shall be removed from the school pending a final decision. Pending the outcome of the request for reconsideration, however, access to questioned materials can be denied to the students of the parents/guardians making the complaint, if they so desire.

If the decision of a School Committee is that the questioned instructional resource be retained, the Schools will not convene a Review Committee relative to the same complaint for a period of three years. If a substantially different point of view is advanced, it will be investigated. (The period of three years does not apply in this instance).

If an individual or a group undertakes action to keep material from the shelves by checking it out and failing to return it, or by taking turns in keeping it checked out so that it is not available for student use, the Superintendent shall request, in writing, the return of the material. If it is not returned within thirty (30) days, a bill for the current replacement cost of the item shall be rendered to the party holding the item.

After a School Committee has adopted new materials or approved certain methods, that decision will not be reconsidered for a period of three years beginning with the end of the school year when the adoption is made.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

## TEXTBOOK SELECTION AND ADOPTION

Responsibility for the review and selection of textbooks to be purchased shall rest with the principal of each school. The principal is encouraged through the School Committees to establish a review committee to assist in the process to determine the textbooks that best meet the curriculum guidelines of the Schools. The review committee should include teachers who will use the texts and other staff members as found desirable. Students and parents/guardians will be encouraged to serve.

Principles that apply generally to the selection of instructional materials and library materials shall apply to textbooks. Additionally, basic textbooks and textbook support materials shall be chosen:

- To advance the educational objectives of the Schools and particular objectives of the course program;
- To contribute toward continuity, integration, and articulation of the curriculum; and
- To establish a general framework for the particular course or program.

Because the instructional purposes of textbooks, as stated above, are of such importance, particular care shall be taken in their selection as to content.

Although many points must be examined, the School Committees direct the staff to be mindful of the following considerations:

- The needs of all learners must be provided for.
- Attention should be given to gender roles depicted in the materials.
- The textbook and textbook support materials should lead the student and teacher beyond the textbook into a wide variety of other materials and educational experiences.
- If the textbook deals with problems and issues of our times, it should present and encourage examination of varied points of view.
- Because textbooks are selected for several years' use, special attention also shall be given their physical characteristics, durability, format and price.

LEGAL REFS.: 71:48; 30B:7; 71:50  
603 CMR 26:05

CROSS REF.: KEC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## TEXTBOOKS AND WORKBOOKS

The Dover-Sherborn Public Schools shall, at the expense of the Schools, purchase textbooks and other school supplies, and shall loan them to the students free of charge. The students shall make every effort to give proper care to all school property loaned to them.

Students may purchase any textbooks in use by them in the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools.

LEGAL REFS.:	M.G.L. 71:48 and 49
FIRST READING:	January 25, 2011
SECOND READING:	May 22, 2012
ADOPTED:	May 22, 2012
SOURCE:	Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The School Committees recognize that knowledge is changing and expanding and that it may be necessary to use various types of supplementary materials in addition to the basic and fundamental textbooks.

For the purpose of this policy, supplementary materials shall be defined as any instructional materials other than textbooks including, but not limited to, books, periodicals, newspapers, pictures, diagrams, maps, charts, slides, filmstrips, films, records, audiotapes, and suitable technological applications which relate directly to the adopted curriculum.

The School Committees believe that teachers and administrators should have a large role in selection and recommendation of supplementary materials. Teachers are encouraged to use a wide range of learning aids, provided the expense incurred in purchasing these aids remains within the limits of the budget.

LEGAL REF.:	603 CMR 26:05
FIRST READING:	January 25, 2011
SECOND READING:	May 22, 2012
ADOPTED:	May 22, 2012
SOURCE:	MASC

## SELECTION POLICY FOR LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER MATERIALS

### I. Policy and Objectives

In accordance with the American Association of School Librarians' School Library Bill of Rights and the American Library Association's Bill of Rights, the Dover, Sherborn, and Dover-Sherborn Regional, School Committees assert that the responsibility of the Schools is to select educational materials to implement, enrich, and support the educational program for the student and "...to provide resources and services that create and sustain an atmosphere of free inquiry." Educational materials "...allow students to interact with words, images, and ideas in ways that develop their abilities in reading, listening, viewing, thinking, speaking, writing, and using media and technology." (NCTE) Materials must serve both the breadth of the curriculum and the needs and interests of individual students and staff.

It is the obligation of the Schools to provide for a wide range of abilities and to respect the diversity of many differing points of view. To this end, principles must be placed above personal opinion in the selection of materials of the highest quality and appropriateness in fulfilling the following objectives:

- To provide materials that will implement, support, and enrich the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, learning styles, and maturity levels of the students served;
- To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards;
- To provide a background of information which will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives;
- To provide materials from different perspectives on controversial issues, so that students may develop critical reading and thinking skills;
- To provide materials that contribute to an understanding of our American heritage and global community;
- To provide materials representative of gender perspectives.
- To provide materials representative of various ethnicities, religions, and cultures.

### II. Responsibility for Selection

1. The building headmaster/principal shall delegate responsibility for selection to the library/media specialist, who shall discharge this obligation consistent with adopted selection policy, criteria and procedures.
2. The library media specialist shall work cooperatively with staff to select materials for the library media center. Final selection of library media materials rests with the library media specialists.

### III. Selection Criteria

*The Public Schools of Dover and Sherborn*

Library materials will be selected according to the following criteria as they apply:

1. Learning resources will support and be consistent with the general educational goals of the state and Schools and the aims and objectives of individual schools and specific courses.
2. Learning resources will meet high standards of quality in factual content and presentation.
3. Learning resources will be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social development of the students for whom the materials are selected.
4. Physical format and appearance of learning resources will be suitable for their intended use.
5. Learning resources will be designed to help students gain an awareness of our diverse society.
6. Learning resources will be designed to motivate students and staff to examine their own attitudes and behaviors and to comprehend their own responsibilities, rights, and privileges as citizens in our society.
7. Learning resources will be selected for their strengths, rather than rejected for their weaknesses.
8. The selection of learning resources will be directed toward maintaining a balanced collection representing various views.

#### **IV. Selection Procedures**

1. In selecting learning resources, the library/media specialist will evaluate available resources and curriculum needs and will consult reputable, professionally prepared aids to selection or other appropriate sources.
2. Requests, suggestions, and reactions for the purchase of instructional materials shall be gathered from staff, to the greatest extent possible, and students when appropriate.
3. Gift materials shall be judged by the criteria outlined and shall be accepted or rejected by those criteria.

#### **V. Re-evaluation (weeding) of library/media resources**

1. Purpose

"The continuous review of library/media center materials is necessary as a means of maintaining a useful and active collection. As new materials are selected and added, some older materials are withdrawn. The responsibility for determining which materials are to be withdrawn rests with the professional staff." (Procedures for Selection, Maintenance and Reconsideration of Library and Instructional Media Resources)

## 2. Procedures

Re-evaluate and withdraw (weed) from the collection for the following reasons:

- a) Curricular changes have rendered superfluous some materials (or multiple copies of materials).
- b) Materials contain factual information that is no longer accurate or current.
- c) Materials for recreational reading have become dated or unattractive and are no longer in demand. ... "some such books which are deemed 'standards' or 'classics' will be retained even though they rarely circulate." (Ibid, p.2)
- d) Materials that have become worn out, damaged, or physically deteriorated and have lost utility and/or appeal.

Process withdrawn materials in the following manner:

- a) Offer duplicate, viable materials as resource to teachers' classroom libraries.
- b) Offer duplicate, viable materials as a resource to other media centers in the district, as it is possible that material that lacks utility in one building may have some usefulness in another.
- c) Offer duplicate, viable materials as a resource to appropriate charitable or educational agencies.
- d) Discard, when warranted.

"Continuing evaluation is closely related to the goals and responsibilities of library/media centers and is a valuable tool of collection development. This procedure is not to be used as a convenient or expedient means to remove materials presumed to be controversial or likely to be disapproved by segments of the community. Materials are not to be proscribed or removed because of actual or potential partisan or doctrinal disapproval, nor because of the origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation." (Ibid, p. 2)

FIRST READING:                    January 25, 2011  
SECOND READING:                May 22, 2012  
ADOPTED:                            May 22, 2012  
SOURCE:                                Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee



The continuous review of integrated learning center (library) materials is necessary as a means of maintaining a useful and active collection. As new materials are selected and added, some older materials are withdrawn. The responsibility for determining which materials shall be withdrawn shall rest with the professional staff.

Among the other reasons for withdrawing an item shall be the following:

- Curricular changes have rendered as superfluous materials (or multiple copies of materials) formerly used but no longer in demand.
- Materials contain information which is no longer accurate or current.
- Materials intended for recreational reading have become dated or unattractive and are no longer in demand. Some books which are deemed standards or classics shall be retained even though they rarely circulate.
- Materials have worn out, been damaged or physically deteriorated, and have lost utility, and/or appeal.
- Materials have been superseded by newer items, which present the same information, but in superior format.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

## **LIBRARY RESOURCES**

The primary objective of the library/media center is to implement its resources to enrich and to support the educational program of the school.

### Definition of Library Resources

Library resources are those materials, both print and non-print, found in school libraries which support curricular and personal information needs. Print items include books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, microfiche or microfilm. Non-print items include films, disc records, filmstrips, slides, prints, audiotapes, videotapes, compact discs, and computer software.

### Criteria for Selection of Library Resources

The criteria for selection of library resources in the Schools are:

- Needs of the individual student  
Based on knowledge of students  
Based on requests of parents/guardians and students
- Needs of the individual school  
Based on knowledge of the curriculum of the school  
Based on requests from the professional staff
- Provision of a wide range of materials on many levels of difficulty with a diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view.
- Provision of materials of high artistic quality.
- Provision of materials with superior format.
- Reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids are consulted as guides.

In accordance with the Schools' policy of providing instructional materials on opposing sides of controversial issues, it should be noted that neither the media centers nor the Schools serve as advocates for the ideas expressed in any materials, nor does the presence of any material indicate automatic endorsement of the ideas expressed therein.

### Disclosure of Information/Privacy of Circulation Records

Circulation records shall not be made available to anyone except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized by law.

### Re-evaluation (Weeding) of Library Resources

The continuous review of library/media center materials is necessary as a means of maintaining a useful and active collection. As new materials are selected and added, some older materials are withdrawn. The responsibility for determining which materials are to be withdrawn rests with the professional staff.

Among the reasons for withdrawing an item are the following:

***The Public Schools of Dover and Sherborn***

- Curricular changes have rendered superfluous some materials (or multiple copies of materials) formerly used but no longer in demand.
- Some materials contain factual material that is no longer accurate or current.
- Some materials intended for recreational reading have become dated or unattractive and are no longer in demand. (Some such books, which are deemed “standards” or “classics”, will be retained even though they rarely circulate).
- Some materials have become worn out, damaged or physically deteriorated and have lost utility and/or appeal.
- Some materials have been superseded by newer items, which present the same information, but in superior format.

Withdrawn library/media center materials are processed in one or more of the following ways:

- Made available to be used as resource or supplementary material by teachers.
- Offered to other media centers in the Schools, as it is possible that a material, which lacks utility in one building, may have some usefulness in another.
- Contributed to appropriate charitable or educational agencies.
- Discarded, when warranted.

Continuing evaluation is closely related to the goals and responsibilities of library/media centers and is a valuable tool of collection development. This procedure is not to be used as a convenient or expedient means to remove materials presumed to be controversial or likely to be disapproved by segments of the community. Materials are not to be proscribed or removed because of actual or potential partisan or doctrinal disapproval, nor because of the origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

## **LIBRARY/IMC**

There shall be a library and/or IMC in each school providing print and non-print materials. To strengthen the school library program, a cooperative working relationship shall be developed with the trustees of the public libraries as well as between the respective school libraries.

*The Public Schools of Dover and Sherborn*

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011  
SECOND READING: May 22, 2012  
ADOPTED: May 22, 2012  
SOURCE: Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## **SPECIAL INTEREST MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION**

Organizations, institutions, and individuals at times develop materials that are offered to schools free or inexpensively. As a general rule, sponsored materials present a particular point of view, and extreme care must be exercised in evaluating and using them. The responsibility for using sponsored materials rests with the certified staff member who recommends its use. In any questionable instance, the principal should be informed and shall decide whether its use in the best interests of the students.

Sponsored materials must meet the same basic selection criteria as any other learning material, as well as the following special criteria.

Any expression of a point of view should be clearly identified.

Any advertising that appears on or with any material should be in good taste and unobtrusive.

The source of all material should be clearly identifiable.

LEGAL REF.:	603 CMR 26:05
FIRST READING:	January 25, 2011
SECOND READING:	May 22, 2012
ADOPTED:	May 22, 2012
SOURCE:	MASC

## **CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

### **Access to Electronic Media**

The Committees support the right of students, employees, and community members to have reasonable access to various information formats and believes it is incumbent upon users to utilize this privilege in an appropriate and responsible manner.

#### **Safety Procedures and Guidelines**

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement appropriate procedures to provide guidance for access to electronic media. Guidelines shall address teacher supervision of student computer use, ethical use of electronic media (including, but not limited to, the Internet, e-mail, and other Schools' technological resources), and issues of privacy versus administrative review of electronic files and communications. In addition, guidelines shall prohibit utilization of networks for prohibited or illegal activities, the intentional spreading of embedded messages, or the use of other programs with the potential of damaging or destroying programs or data.

Internet safety measures shall be implemented that effectively address the following:

- Controlling access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web;
- Safety and security of minors when they are using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct or electronic communications;
- Preventing unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors online;
- Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and
- Restricting minors' access to materials harmful to them.

The Schools shall provide reasonable public notice of, and at least one (1) public hearing or meeting to address and communicate its Internet safety measures.

#### **Permission/Agreement Form**

A written parental request shall be required prior to the student being granted independent access to electronic media involving Schools' technological resources. The required permission/agreement form, which shall specify acceptable uses, rules of on-line behavior, access privileges, and penalties for policy/procedural violations, must be signed by the parent/guardian of minor students (those under 18 years of age) and also by the student. This document shall be kept on file as a legal, binding document. In order to modify or rescind the agreement, the student's parent/guardian (or the student who is at least 18 years old) must provide the Superintendent with a written request.

**Employee Use**

Employees shall use electronic mail only for purposes directly related to work-related activities.

Employees shall not use a code, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication unless they have been given authorization to do so. (Authorization is not required each time the electronic media is accessed in performance of one's duties.) Each employee is responsible for the security of his/her own password.

### **Community Use**

On recommendation of the Superintendent or designee, Committees shall determine when and which computer equipment, software, and information access systems will be available to the community. Upon request to the principal or designee, community members may have access to the Internet and other electronic information sources and programs available through the Schools' technology system, provided they attend any required training and abide by the rules of usage established by the Superintendent or designee.

### **Disregard of Rules**

Individuals who refuse to sign required acceptable use documents or who violate rules governing the use of Schools' technology shall be subject to loss or restriction of the privilege of using equipment, software, information access systems, or other computing and telecommunications technologies.

### **Responsibility for Damages**

Individuals shall reimburse the Committees for repair or replacement of School property lost, stolen, damaged, or vandalized while under their care.

### **Responding to Concerns**

School officials shall apply the same criterion of educational suitability used to review other educational resources when questions arise concerning access to specific databases or other electronic media.

### **Audit of Use**

Users with network access shall not utilize the Schools' resources to establish electronic mail accounts through third-party providers or any other nonstandard electronic mail system.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a process to determine whether the Schools' education technology is being used for purposes prohibited by law or for accessing sexually explicit materials. The process shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Utilizing technology that blocks or filters Internet access for both minors and adults to certain visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or, with respect to computers with Internet access by minors, harmful to minors;



2. Maintaining and securing a usage log; and
3. Monitoring online activities of minors.

LEGAL REFS: 47 USC §254

CROSS REFS: IJNDB, DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND Acceptable Use Policy

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

# **DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

## **1. Introduction and Purpose**

The Dover Sherborn Public Schools believe in providing all students, staff and teachers with access to electronic resources that promote educational excellence, sharing of information, innovative instruction and online communication. It is our belief that the importance of technology accessibility and access to the abundance of resources on the Internet is critical for delivery of all educational content.

Online access and responsible communication is critical for all learners to apply 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills to keep students safe and comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the Acceptable Use Policy is put in place, reviewed and approved by School Committee annually to comply with existing law and balance the desire to use technology with the need to protect the Schools from unnecessary liability.

This Acceptable Use Policy is written for all those who use school provided network connections. These connections may be used for educational purposes employing tools such as interactive websites, blogs, podcasts, video conferencing, wikis, and access to E-Learning platforms as well as performing research. The use of these tools must be consistent with the educational objectives of the Schools.

All students, faculty and staff in the Dover Sherborn Public Schools will be provided access to the Internet via a network login using school owned desktops or laptops or via wireless access on any electronic device be it school owned or personally owned. It is understood that all users will have reviewed and adhere to our guidelines for network, Internet and electronic device access.

## **2. Schools' Responsibilities**

In compliance with the Child Internet Protection Act of 2000, which places a duty on the Schools to protect students from inappropriate material on the Internet, the Schools take precautionary measures to protect children from exposure to inappropriate materials, including filtering access to the Internet. The Schools ensure that all school owned computer systems are protected and secure.

All files and messages created, retrieved and/or stored on school equipment using the Schools' network or Internet are the property of the Dover Sherborn Public Schools and should not be considered confidential, consistent with the Electronic Communication Privacy Act. All network and email accounts are provided to all students (grades 6-12), staff, administrators, and faculty and are supported by the IT Department. All email messages created with the school-provided email system are archived for a minimum of seven years. Where appropriate, communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or receiver.

## **3. User Responsibilities**

All network resources require a network password to access. It is the sole responsibility of the user to keep his/her password secure and to change your password often. If you feel that your password has been compromised, it is your responsibility to notify the IT Department and request a password change. It is a violation of this agreement for any user to share/use his/her password.

### **Digital Responsibility**

## **4. Online/Network Etiquette**

*The Public Schools of Dover and Sherborn*

*Users* are expected to learn and to abide by generally accepted rules of online network etiquette, as well as rules of schools' handbooks. These include respect and responsibility as well as avoidance of vulgar language. Try to avoid sarcasm and humor; without face-to-face communication, your *comments* may be misinterpreted or viewed as criticism. Harassing, bullying, swearing, vulgarities, suggestive, obscene, threatening or abusive language of any kind is not acceptable. Online access is not allowed to make or distribute jokes or stories, cyberbully, obscene material or material that is based on inappropriate remarks or stereotypes relating to race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, or sexual orientations.

**5. Websites, Social Networking, blogging, wikis, podcasting, video or other Web 2.0 tools** are considered an extension of classroom collaboration and communication. Whether at school or home, any speech that is considered inappropriate in the classroom is also inappropriate in all use of blogs, wikis, podcasts and other Web 2.0 tools. Students using these communication tools are expected to act safely by keeping all personal information out of their posts. Comments made on school related blogs should follow the rules of online etiquette described above and will be monitored by school personnel. If comments or posts are inappropriate, they will be deleted.

#### **6. Messaging/Email**

Teachers may incorporate: email, blogs, podcasts, video conferencing, online collaborations, instant messaging, texting, Virtual Learning Environments and other forms of direct electronic communications (i.e. cell phones, PDAs, cameras) or Web 2.0 applications for educational purposes. Although teachers monitor student online activity, it is the direct responsibility of the user to comply with this Acceptable Use Policy.

#### **7. Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's words or ideas as your own. Students are required to give proper credit to all Internet sources used in academic assignments, whether quoted or summarized. This includes all forms of media on the Internet, such as, but not limited to, graphics, movies, music, and text. Plagiarism of Internet resources will be dealt with consistent with existing disciplinary guidelines relating to plagiarism.

#### **8. Copyright/Licensing**

The Schools strongly condemn the illegal distribution (otherwise known as pirating) of software; making available copyrighted software or other content that has had the copyright protection removed; making available serial numbers for software that can be used to illegally validate or register software; making available tools that can be used for no purpose other than for "cracking" software or other copyrighted content. Abuse in this area may result in suspension or termination of network access privileges and may also result in other disciplinary action consistent with the disciplinary policies of the Schools. In addition, if such conduct constitutes a violation of law, criminal prosecution may result. All users should be aware that software piracy is a federal offense and is punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

#### **9. Proxies**

The use of anonymous proxies to circumvent the content filter is strictly prohibited and is a direct violation of this agreement. If you have a legitimate reason to believe that a site being blocked should be unblocked, please submit the URL of the blocked site to the IT Department for review.

#### **10. Additional Illegal Activities**

Use of the network for any illegal activities is prohibited. Illegal activities include, but are not limited to: (a) tampering with computer hardware or software, (b) unauthorized entry into computers and files (hacking), (d) knowledgeable vandalism or destruction of equipment, (e) deletion of computer files

belonging to someone other than oneself, (f) gambling, (g) posting inappropriate content (including but not limited to images, video, audio and comments) can result in disciplinary consequences as well as potential legal charges. Users must be aware that any illegal action carried out over the Internet will be reported to law enforcement officials for possible prosecution. Please be advised, it is a federal offense (felony) to break into any security system. Financial and legal consequences of such actions are the responsibility of the user and student's parent or guardian.

## **11. Bullying & Cyberbullying**

**Please see the *Dover Sherborn Public Schools Bullying Prevention-Intervention Plan* found at [www.doversherborn.org](http://www.doversherborn.org) or available in hard copy at any school.**

- a. **Bullying**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:
  1. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
  2. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
  3. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
  4. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
  5. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- b. **Cyberbullying** is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.
- c. **Hostile environment**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

## **12. Terms and Conditions**

The Schools reserve the right to deny, revoke or suspend specific user privileges and or to take other disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion (students), or dismissal (staff) for violations of these Guidelines. The District will advise appropriate law enforcement agencies of illegal activities conducted through the Dover Sherborn Network Connection. The Schools also will cooperate fully with local, state, and/or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the service.

School administration reserves the right to amend this policy at any time without prior notice.

### **Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs)**

**PED Definition:** Personal Electronic Devices whose main purpose are for personal entertainment and/or communication, such as, but not limited to: cell phones (such as, but not limited to, smart phones, feature phones, dumb phones), iPods, iPads, digital cameras, video cameras, MP3 players, laptops, netbooks, and e-Readers (such as, but not limited to, Kindles and Nooks) that are student-owned.

***The Public Schools of Dover and Sherborn***

**PED Overview:** Increased student use of school and personal electronic devices (PEDs) has the potential for both positive and negative consequences. PEDs can help to enhance the learning environment, and many schools have incorporated them in teaching and learning with much success. However, student use of PEDs can be abused in such a way that it negatively affects students, teachers, and the overall school environment. This policy is intended to support the benefits of PEDs use while curtailing possible abuses.

**PED Unacceptable Use:** The following behaviors related to the use of PEDs are unacceptable at all times: making threats, cyber-bullying, taking photos without first obtaining the written consent from the individuals involved before taking photos, taking videos without first obtaining the written consent from the individuals involved before the recording of sound or video, sexting, plagiarism, cheating, copyright violation. Engaging in these types of behaviors can result in disciplinary consequences as well as potential legal charges.

**PED Classroom Standards:** Teachers will select a classroom standard regarding the use of PEDs in his or her classroom. Each teacher (and other staff such as, but not limited to the librarian and nurse) will select a PED Usage Level for his or her classroom (or specific section of the school campus - the auditorium, cafeteria, library or nurses room for example) and communicate expectations clearly to the students as well as consequences should there be a violation from the designated standard. The PED Usage Levels are as follows:

- **PED Usage Level 1:** Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs) are not allowed in this classroom.
- **PED Usage Level 2:** Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs) are sometimes allowed in this classroom based on the curriculum for that course. In addition, certain features of various PEDs may be allowed while other features may not be allowed. For example, the iPod feature of a cell phone may be allowed but the texting feature of a cell phone may not be allowed.
- **PED Usage Level 3:** Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs) are always allowed in this classroom based on the curriculum for that course.

**Responsibility:** Students who bring PEDs to school do so at their own risk. It is the responsibility of the students to treat their PEDs with respect and to protect them to prevent theft or damage.

**Off Campus:** The Acceptable Use Policy for PEDs also applies to students during off-campus school events. These events include but are not limited to, athletic events, field trips, camps and other extra-curricular activities.

**Emergency Situations:** During fire drills, emergency situations when being spoken to by an adult, the student should remove both “ear buds” and address the adult or situation at hand.

**Tests and Exams:** All PEDs must be switched off during tests and other exams. Failure to do so may be regarded as cheating.

**Assemblies:** All PEDs must be switched off during assemblies and other events such as, but not limited to, listening to a guest speaker in a classroom.

**PED Violations:** Students and parent(s)/guardian(s) should consult with their child’s school’s handbook for information regarding violations,

The Schools reserve the right to amend this policy at any time without prior notice.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE:

## USER CONTRACT

I understand and will abide by the Digital Citizenship and Internet Acceptable Use Policy. I have received a copy of the Policy and am aware there is a copy of the document maintained on the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools web site. I further understand that any violation by me of the terms of the Policy may result in the suspension or revocation of my Network and/or Internet privileges and may also result in school disciplinary action. If a violation constitutes a criminal offense, appropriate legal action may be taken. I further agree to indemnify the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools for any losses, costs or damages, including reasonable attorney's fees, incurred by the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools relating to or arising out of any violation by me of the Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

Name (please print)

---

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTRACT  
(for Users under 18 Years of Age)**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

As parent/guardian of the above-named student, I have read the Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes. I recognize that some controversial materials exist on the Internet. I have discussed with my son/daughter his/her responsibilities regarding the use of the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools' Network and Internet access. My son/daughter understands and agrees to follow the Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy of the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools. I understand that any violation by my son/daughter of the terms of the Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy may result in the suspension or revocation of his/her Network and/or Internet privileges and may also result in school disciplinary action. I will not hold the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools liable or responsible for any materials my son/daughter accesses, acquires or transmits via the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools' computer network and/or Internet connection. I hereby give permission for my son/daughter to use the Network and Internet at school. I further agree to indemnify the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools for any losses, costs or damages, including reasonable attorney's fees, incurred by the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools relating to or arising out of any violation by my son/daughter of the Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## SCHOOL AND DISTRICT WEB PAGES

The Dover-Sherborn Public School District realizes the limitless potential for information and communication provided by the World Wide Web. The availability of this communication vehicle provides an opportunity for students and staff to access and contribute to the world of information related to curriculum, instruction, school, and school community related activities. Therefore, the Dover-Sherborn Public School District will use the Internet as an effective, efficient and timely source of information, method of communication and vehicle for resource collection. In order to take advantage of the opportunities the Internet provides, the Committees authorize the creation of school and/or Schools' web pages on the Internet.

Only those web pages maintained in accordance with Committees' policy and established procedures shall be recognized as official representations of the Schools or individual schools. All information on a school or web page must accurately reflect the mission, goals, policies, program, and activities of the school and of the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools. The web pages must have a purpose that falls within at least one of three categories:

1. Support of curriculum and instruction – intended to provide links to Internet resources for students, parents/guardians, and staff in the Schools.
2. Public information – intended to communicate information about the schools to students, staff, parents/guardians, community, and the world at large.
3. Schools' technology support – intended to provide and respond to instructional and administrative technology needs of students and staff.

The Superintendent shall designate an individual(s) to be responsible to maintaining the official Dover-Sherborn Public School's web page and monitoring all Schools' web page activity. A principal shall make such designation for an individual school. Schools or departments that wish to publish a web page must identify an appropriately qualified publisher and/or author.

As with any instructional materials or publication used by or representing a school or the Schools, the principal or Superintendent, respectively, are ultimately responsible for accuracy and appropriateness of the information made available at the web site. Concern about the content of any page(s) created by students or staff should be directed to the principal or to the Superintendent's office when related to the Schools' web site.

**Web sites developed under contract for the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools or within the scope of employment by the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools employees are the property of the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools.**

Due to the dynamic nature of the World Wide Web, this policy is to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis or more frequently if required.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

## **WEB SITE GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL**

Unlike the Internet itself, schools and the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools can control the type of information placed on web pages. Documents created for the web and linked to Schools' web pages shall meet the criteria for use as public information or an instructional resource. The following considerations should be considered when determining the information to include on a school's web page: Copyright/trademark issues; applicability to the curriculum or communication goals of the school or Schools; privacy issues; and related School Committees' policies. Links to other web pages should be carefully selected based on the above issues.

### **Defined Purpose**

A web page must have a clearly defined purpose that is published on the web page. Included in the purpose, the target audience must be specified and defined; however, all web site users are reminded that their audience includes the worldwide community.

### **Content Standards**

All subject matter on web pages should relate to curriculum, instruction, school-authorized activities, general information supporting student safety, growth, and learning, or public information of interest to others. Therefore, neither staff nor students may publish on the Schools' server personal pages or pages for individuals or organizations not directly affiliated with the Schools. Staff or student work may be published only as it relates to a class project, course, or other school-related activity. Parent/guardian groups, partnerships, and municipal or educational cooperatives are considered affiliates of the Schools. No confidential information is to be published on or linked to a web page.

### **Quality Standards**

All Web page work must be free of spelling and grammatical errors. Documents may not contain objectionable material or link directly to objectionable materials. Objectionable material is addressed in more detail in the School Committees' policy for instructional material selection and reconsideration. Authors and publishers are reminded that a web site is a virtual doorway to your school. A site and a school will be judged on its ease for the user, the design, and the content. It is strongly recommended that a school form a building committee of interested individuals including staff, administrators, parents/guardians, students, and community members for the development of the web site. Thoughtful consideration should go into decisions regarding purpose, usefulness, and appearance of each item on the web site. As much as possible, publishers are encouraged to include student pictures and work. As the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools represents itself to the world through this medium, assurances should be provided that students are the focus of the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools. Written student and parent consent must be secured for publication of student work.

## Consistence Standards

Each existing school or department Web site shall have a link to the Schools' web site. For consistency, all Schools' web sites must contain certain elements:

- At the bottom of each page there must be a link to the home page (to be defined by the school or District home page once online).
- At the bottom of the web page, there must be an indication of the date of the last update to that page and the name or initials of the person(s) responsible for page update. It shall be that person's responsibility to keep the web page current. Repeated failure to do so may result in revocation of approval. It is strongly recommended that a building set up a system of checks and balances for the web site (for example: all incoming e-mail is blind copied to the Principal or department head).
- All web sites must display the name and approved logo of the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools.
- All web pages must be given names that clearly identify them.
- Links to student e-mail accounts are not allowed.
- Student directory data is prohibited from publication, except for the first name and grade level of a student in relation to a photo or work.
- Web pages may not contain links to other web pages not yet completed. If additional pages are anticipated, but not yet developed, the text that will provide such a link should be included. However, the actual link to said page(s) may not be made until the final page is actually in place.
- All web sites must include: the author or publisher's name; the publisher or school's e-mail address; appropriate copyright citations.
- Student photos published to the Schools' public website will not include any identifying student information.
- The non-discrimination statement must appear at the bottom of each web page. The statement reads: "The Dover Sherborn Public Schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex/gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness."

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

## **FIELD TRIPS**

The School Committees recognize that firsthand learning experiences provided by field trips are a most effective and worthwhile means of learning. It is the desire of the Committees to encourage field trips as part of and directly related to the total school program and curriculum.

Specific guidelines and appropriate administrative procedures shall be developed to screen, approve, and evaluate trips and to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken for the safety of the participants. Said guidelines and procedures should be developed by the administration and reviewed and approved by the School Committees.

These guidelines and appropriate administrative procedures shall ensure that all field trips have the approval of the principal and that all overnight trips have the prior approval of appropriate administrative level.

CROSS REFS.: JH, Student Travel

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips can bring the school and the community closer together, which can result in real life experiences that enrich the curriculum for students and also bring about better public relations. The School Committees will also encourage field trips as an integral part of the instructional programs in the schools.

The Superintendent will establish regulations to assure that:

1. All students have parent/guardian permission for trips.
2. All trips are properly supervised.
3. All safety precautions are observed.
4. All trips contribute substantially to the educational program.

All out-of-state or extended (overnight) trips and excursions, except those required for student participation in tournament competition or contests, must have advance School Committee approval. Fundraising activities for such trips will be subject to approval by the appropriate administrator.

CROSS REFS.: JH, Student Travel

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

**RELEASE FOR LOCAL FIELD TRIPS**

I/we, the parent(s)/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ (the student) hereby acknowledge and agree that the student will be participating in a field trip<sup>1</sup> to \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_. The student will be under the supervision of his/her regular classroom teacher. Transportation will be by \_\_\_\_\_.

I/we hereby release and discharge the Town of Dover, the Town of Sherborn, the Dover School Committee, the Sherborn School Committee and the Dover-Sherborn Regional School Committee, their officers, employees, volunteers, agents, and other personnel (hereafter referred to collectively as "Dover-Sherborn") from any and all claims, damages, losses or expenses of whatever kind or nature arising out of or resulting directly or indirectly from the student's participation in the field trip. I/we agree to defend and indemnify Dover-Sherborn against any claim, damage, loss or expense of whatever kind or nature that arises from the student's intentional, grossly negligent or reckless acts or omissions while participating on the field trip.

I/we hereby give our consent to the student's participation in the field trip and for administration of emergency first aid to the student and/or transfer of the student to a medical facility. I/we hereby authorize Dover-Sherborn's employee(s) or agent(s) who is supervising the student to act on our behalf in authorizing and consenting to emergency medical care for the student while participating in the field trip. This document may be presented to the appropriate emergency medical staff at such time as emergency medical care may be required. I/we hereby release and discharge Dover-Sherborn from any all claims of any nature whatsoever which may arise out of the decision to provide emergency care.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number where parents/guardians can be reached in an emergency: \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> Note that field trips are an optional part of the curriculum and each student is expected to attend only if parental permission is granted. Absent parental permission, the student is expected to report to school on the date of the field trip.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

**COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/SPEAKERS**

*The Public Schools of Dover and Sherborn*

Human resources are those individuals or groups who are invited into the schools to present supplementary information and ideas to the classroom course of study. These experiences afford students the opportunity to benefit from community viewpoints. Care should be taken in selecting these speakers so that they are individuals who respect diversity in thinking and varying views and who are not attempting to inappropriately influence points of view.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011  
SECOND READING: May 22, 2012  
ADOPTED: May 22, 2012  
SOURCE: Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## **SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS**

It is the policy of the School Committees to encourage volunteer efforts in the schools. Parents/guardians, business representatives, senior citizens, and other community volunteers are recognized as important sources of support and expertise to enhance the instructional program and vital communication links with the community. The volunteer program will be coordinated in cooperation with building administrators.

FIRST READING:                    January 25, 2011  
SECOND READING:                May 22, 2012  
ADOPTED:                            May 22, 2012  
SOURCE:                              Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee



## **ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

The philosophy of the School Committees concerning academic achievement, as well as children's social growth and development, is based on the premise that children have diverse capabilities and individual patterns of growth and learning.

Therefore, the Committees feel it is important that teachers have as much and as accurate knowledge of each student as possible in order to assess his/her needs and growth, and make instructional plans for him/her. A sharing of information among parent, teacher, and student is essential.

The Committees support staff efforts to find better ways to measure and report student progress. It will require that:

1. Parents/guardians be informed regularly, and at least four times a year, of the progress their children are making in school.
2. Parents/guardians will be alerted and conferred with as soon as possible when a child's performance or attitude becomes unsatisfactory or shows marked or sudden deterioration.
3. Insofar as possible, distinctions will be made between a student's attitude and his academic performance.
4. At comparable levels, the Schools will strive for consistency in grading and reporting except as this is inappropriate for certain classes or certain students.
5. When no grades are given but the student is evaluated informally in terms of his/her own progress, the school staff will also provide a realistic appraisal of the student's standing in relation to his/her peers.
6. When grades are given, the school staff will take particular care to explain the meaning of marks and symbols to parents/guardians.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

## REPORTING TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

### General

The School Committees believe that good communication between parent and teacher is important in the educational process. With this in mind, the school committees believe that the reporting contacts between parents/guardians and teacher should be varied and frequent. All forms and methods of communications, such as parent-teacher conferences, email, mail, telephone, and school visitation by parents/guardians should be utilized.

The progress report should reflect the educational growth of the student in relationship to his/her ability and achievement. Teachers shall be responsible for making these reports to parents/guardians concerning student performance. These reports shall be made as follows:

#### Elementary (Grades K-5)

An elementary school student's progress shall be reported to parents/guardians through the use of formal, planned parent-teacher conferences in the fall and the spring. A written progress report shall be transmitted to the parent at each conference. Parents/guardians of students in grades 1-5 shall receive a final written report at the end of the school year. Parents/guardians of kindergarten students shall receive oral reports of progress and semi-annual written reports.

Beyond the formally scheduled parent-teacher conferences, continuous contact between parents/guardians and teachers shall be encouraged.

#### Secondary (Grades 6-12)

A secondary school student's progress shall be reported to parents/guardians by use of written reports four times each school year. In addition to the four regular reports, mid-term notices may be issued midway in each of the four report card terms. The mid-term reports are usually used to warn parent and student of unsatisfactory performance. Sometimes teachers use these to report marked improvement or outstanding work. Teacher evaluation of the student's progress at the secondary level is made on the basis of his/her achievement in relation to other students as well as to his/her individual ability.

In addition to reporting progress in the curriculum areas, the report card shall provide parents/guardians with the student's attendance record (absence, tardy, dismissal) and his/her school effort.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to make arrangements for a teacher conference to discuss a student's progress or academic standing in any course. Conferences will be scheduled for the parents/guardians of sixth graders at the end of the first marking period.

FIRST READING:	January 25, 2011
SECOND READING:	May 22, 2012
ADOPTED:	May 22, 2012
SOURCE:	Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The School Committees recognize the Schools' obligation to give periodic reports of a student's progress and grades. The Committees further recognize that these reports are a vital form of communication between the schools and parents/guardians. The Committees also believe that all progress reports must be based upon full information, accurately and honestly reported with the proper maintenance of confidentiality.

A report depicting the student's progress will be issued periodically following an evaluation by the appropriate teacher, teachers, or other professional personnel.

In addition to the periodic reports, parents/guardians will be notified when a student's performance requires special notification.

Grading and promotion will be based on improvement, achievement, capability of the student, and the professional judgment of the teacher and Principal.

Major changes in the reporting system shall be preceded by a cooperative study and evaluation by teachers, principals, parents/guardians, and the Assistant Superintendent, who will submit the proposal to a School Committee for consideration and approval.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

**RANK-IN-CLASS**

Dover-Sherborn Regional High School discontinued reporting class rank starting with the Class of 2003. The headmaster uses a student's GPA in determining eligibility for the Dover-Sherborn Honor Society.

FIRST READING:            January 25, 2011  
SECOND READING:        May 22, 2012  
ADOPTED:                 May 22, 2012  
SOURCE:                    Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The School Committees are 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 to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

In evaluating student achievement, each teacher will make use of all available information, including results of teacher-made tests 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 principal.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to graduate from Dover-Sherborn Regional High School, a student must have earned at least 140 credits according to the following:

All students must earn 140 credits. Students should choose at least 39 credits but not more than 45 credits per year. All students must take:

Four years of English (24 credits)

Four years of Mathematics (24 credits)

Three years of Science (18 credits)

Three years of Social Studies (18 credits)

World History and  
United States History

Three years of World Language (18 credits)

Educational Technologies (6 credits)

**Physical Education and Health** (12.5 credits)

*\*9<sup>th</sup> Grade: Two semesters of Phys Ed & Health (5.0 credits)*

*\*10<sup>th</sup> Grade: Two semesters of Phys Ed & Health (3.0 credits)*

*\*11<sup>th</sup> Grade: Two semesters of Phys Ed & Health (3.0 credits)*

*\*12<sup>th</sup> Grade: One semester of Phys Ed & Health (1.5 credits)*

Living, Fine and Technical Arts (12 credits)

40 hours of Community Service [see page 20– Community Service]

In addition to Dover-Sherborn's graduation requirements, all students, according to current Department of Elementary and Secondary Education guidelines, must pass MCAS exams.

Credit for Foreign Study: Students who are away for a term or year to participate in a student exchange program or otherwise study abroad may receive credits toward high school graduation when (1) study plans are approved by the school administration in advance; (2) the institution where the study occurred submits a record of the student's work; and (3) study is successfully completed at an accredited institution. In these instances, the principal and student's guidance counselor will evaluate the work and assign credit for it according to standards prevailing at Dover-Sherborn Regional High School.

FIRST READING: October 21, 2014

SECOND READING: Dover School Committee October 28, 2014,  
Dover-Sherborn Regional School Committee November 4, 2014  
Sherborn School Committee November 18, 2014

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

## EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

The School Committees consider comprehensive and objective evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum to be of primary importance. The Superintendent will provide for the translation of the stated instructional goals into objectives and for appraisal of their implementation in order to:

1. Determine educational needs and provide information for planning.
2. Indicate instructional strengths and weaknesses.
3. Check on the suitability of programs in terms of community requirements.
4. Show the relationship between achievement and the system's stated goals.
5. Provide data for public information.

Elements of this evaluation process may include:

1. Testing programs such as nationally standardized general achievement tests, nationally standardized tests in specific subject areas, and tests administered by other agencies.
2. Study of school achievement records.
3. Study of students' high school and drop-out records.
4. Use of outside services, participation in regional research studies, contracted evaluation services; evaluation services at cost to the Schools must be approved in advance by a School Committee.
5. Teacher and parent/guardian evaluation of student behavior.
6. State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education specialists and services.
7. Evaluation by the regional accrediting association.
8. Evaluation by other agencies.

An evaluation of the curriculum and its effectiveness will be made periodically and reported to the Committees by the Superintendent.

FIRST READING: January 25, 2011

SECOND READING: May 22, 2012

ADOPTED: May 22, 2012

SOURCE: MASC

## **DISTRICT PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS**

A program of testing for assessment/evaluation shall be coordinated throughout the Schools by the appropriate administrator who shall be responsible for scheduling, disseminating, and collecting tests and for reporting and interpreting all group test results.

Measurements of educational achievement shall be prepared so that data is consistent for comparison purposes within the Schools from year to year and with other school districts to the extent required by rules of the State Board of Education.

FIRST READING:                    January 25, 2011

SECOND READING:                May 22, 2012

ADOPTED:                         May 22, 2012

SOURCE:                         MASC



**DISTRICT PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS  
INTEGRATED LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PLAN  
Roles and Responsibilities**

**SCHOOL SYSTEM**

- Identify general Integrated Learning Outcomes
- Provide parameters, standards, models, prototypes
- Provide staff development training and technical assistance
- Encourage the use of multiple indicators
- Monitor accountability
- Report Schools' progress using a qualitative and quantitative format
- Educate the Schools' community about the Integrated Learning Outcomes and their measurement
- Review the process and recommend change
- Facilitate articulation between levels

**SCHOOL**

- Define or make clear what the general Massachusetts Public Schools Integrated Learning Outcomes mean at the school site
- Educate the school community about the Integrated Learning Outcomes and their assessments
- Assess the Integrated Learning Outcomes by developing instruments and procedures or select from the Schools' "offerings" or other sources
- Bring about the internalization of the Integrated Learning Outcomes by the school community
- Report individual student progress
- Report school progress
- Provide opportunities for parents/guardians to be involved in ILO assessment
- Collect a variety of evidence, both qualitative and quantitative, regarding the Integrated Learning Outcomes
- Provide meaningful articulation between levels utilizing assessment information
- Review assessment progress and recommend appropriate changes

**CURRICULUM EVALUATION PROCESS STEERING COMMITTEE**

- Develop Schools' assessment reporting format
- Monitor assessment process
- Encourage accountability
- Encourage the use of multiple assessment indicators
- Develop and maintain a curriculum review process that emphasizes the Integrated Learning Outcomes and incorporates an honors subject area expertise and knowledge
- Review the assessment process and recommend changes

FIRST READING:            January 25, 2011

SECOND READING:        May 22, 2012

ADOPTED:                 May 22, 2012

SOURCE:                  MASC

## **TEACHING ACTIVITIES/PRESENTATIONS**

It is the desire of the School Committees that the best available strategies for bringing about learning be utilized in schools. The instructional staff shall be expected to keep abreast of new and promising instructional ideas and practices developed in schools throughout the nation and to apply those which have potential for improving the learning program in the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools.

An educational climate shall be established which shall be conducive to rational thought, inquiry, and respect for the dignity of the individual. This educational climate will assist students in learning how to think rather than what to think and shall provide students the opportunity to identify, express, and defend their opinions without penalty or fear of reprisal or ridicule.

Nothing in this policy shall limit a parent/guardian's right to file a complaint to challenge the use of teaching activity or presentation.

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ADOPTED:                         May 22, 2012

SOURCE:                         MASC

## TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

Academic freedom may be defined as the right of a qualified scholar to pursue the search for truth in its many forms and to make public his/her methods and findings. It is the right of a qualified teacher to encourage freedom of discussion of controversial questions in the classroom and to develop in his/her students a love of knowledge and a desire to search for truth. The teachers should keep in mind that academic freedom is not a political right guaranteed in the Constitution, but rather a necessary condition for the successful practice of the academic progression in a free society.

It is recognized that the application of the principle of academic freedom at the public school level involves consideration which are not equally present in a college or university. The teachers should take into account the relative maturity of their students and the need for guidance and help in studying the issues and arriving at balanced views.

The presentation and discussion of controversial issues in the classroom should be on an informative basis. The teachers should guard against giving their personal opinions on sectarian or political questions or any other controversial issues until the students have had the opportunity to find, collect, and assemble factual material on the subject; to interpret the data without prejudice; to consider assumptions and claims and to reach their own conclusions. By refraining from expressing personal views before and during the period of research of study, the teacher is encouraging the students to search after truth and to think for themselves. The development of an ability to meet issues without prejudice and to withhold judgments while facts are being collected, assembled, weighed, and relationships seen before drawing inferences or conclusions, is among the most valuable outcomes of a free educational system.

The policy can best be described by listing four basic rights of the student:

1. The right to study controversial issues which have political, economic, or social significance on which, at his/her level, he/she should begin to have an opinion.
2. The right to study under competent instruction in an atmosphere free from bias and prejudice.
3. The right of access to all relevant information freely available in the school or public libraries.
4. The right to hear outside speakers present both sides of an issue.

Emotional criticism and the promotion of a cause within the classroom are inappropriate and unscholarly. The teacher's attitude should be that of the true scholar which is truth-seeking, open-minded, and tolerant.

### Teacher-Planned Classroom Discussions

1. Controversial issues selected by teachers for classroom discussion must relate directly to the objectives and content of courses approved by the School Committees for inclusion in the curriculum.
2. The teachers' right to introduce controversial issues in classroom presentations does not include the right of advocacy. Teachers must refrain from using their positions to express partisan points of view.
3. The approach to discussion of these issues in the classroom must be objective and scholarly with minimum emphasis on opinion and maximum emphasis on intelligent analysis.

1 of 2

File: IMB

4. Teachers must ensure that the reasoned arguments of all sides of an issue are given equal presentation and emphasis in classroom discussions.

5. Teachers may invite visitors from outside the schools to give presentations on controversial issues when the visitors offer qualifications and resources not available in the schools. All visitors are to be guided by the standards of language usage that prevail in the classrooms and by the standards of scholarly inquiry set forth above. Whenever possible, teachers who invite visitors to present one side of an issue will also invite visitors to present the other side(s).
6. In all cases teachers must obtain from the appropriate principal permission to invite visitors for classroom presentations. Permission must be requested at least 48 hours before the scheduled time of presentation.

Student-Initiated Forums on Controversial Issues

Student groups may request permission to conduct forums on controversial issues in the schools. The principal may grant such requests under the following conditions:

1. Preparation for presentation of a forum will not cause any student or teacher to miss class and will not cause the cancellation of any class.
2. Adequate advance planning must be conducted for each forum. A request to hold a forum must be received by the principal at least three weeks before the scheduled date of presentation. For each request the principal will appoint, after consultation with the requesting student group, an adult advisory group consisting of at least two parents/guardians and two faculty members.
3. The standards for approach to discussion, style of presentation, and use of visitors as defined above will apply to student-initiated forums.

Requests from Groups or Individuals Outside the Schools

No permission will be granted to non-school groups or individuals to make presentations on controversial issues in the schools during school hours. Requests for after-school or evening use will be processed in accordance with the Committees’ policy on community use of school facilities.

No permission will be granted to outsiders for distribution of literature on controversial issues to students in general or to class groups.

A principal may grant an outside group or individual permission to post one notice of a public meeting for discussion of issues if the language of that notice conforms to the standards that prevail in the community. The principal will determine the appropriate bulletin board for such notices.

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rulings clearly establish the concept of "church and state separation" and the "preclusion of sectarian

instruction in public schools."

In order to help staff members abide by the spirit and letter of the law, and to avoid compromising any student's religious or conscientious beliefs or freedoms, the following guidelines have been established:

The observance of religious holidays is not the responsibility of the public schools.

While it is recognized that many activities are initiated with the approach of major holidays in order to capitalize on the readiness and interest that is generated at these times, it should be understood that such occasions frequently have religious underpinnings. Care should be taken to relate only to secular aspects of these holidays.

Music programs given at times close to religious holidays should not use religious aspect of these holidays as the underlying motive or theme. Although religious music is appropriate in the schools to the extent that it is sung or presented for musical rather than religious content, its use should not violate the secular nature of the school. Pageants, plays, recitals, and other literary or dramatic activities should not be used to convey religious messages. While the holidays represent a valid source of ideas for meaningful school art experiences, teachers should avoid assigning or encouraging art work that promotes religious aspects of such holidays. If, however, individual students choose to use a religious personage, event, or symbol as the vehicle for an artistic expression, they should be allowed to take this action.

The above statements should not be interpreted to preclude the factual and objective teaching about religions, religious holidays, and religious differences. Such instruction will be permitted in the schools since insights in this area can enhance the mutual understanding needed by all the people in a pluralistic society.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

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SOURCE: MASC

## **OBSERVANCE OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

The Dover-Sherborn Public Schools are places for persons of all faiths and none. They are committed to respecting the rights of individual religious beliefs and expressions by fostering sensitivity and understanding toward religious differences and the role of religion in a diverse, contemporary society.

The United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Massachusetts and related court rulings have established the concept of "church and state separation" and the "preclusion of sectarian instruction in public schools." In adherence to the law, the observance of religious practices and holidays is not the responsibility of the public schools.

To assist the administration and teachers, the following guidelines have been established:

Schools shall not permit decorations, religious or non-religious, to be displayed on the outside of the school buildings.

Curricula may include the study of religions and religious holidays in educating students about communities, history and traditions. Symbols pertaining to a religious holiday may be utilized as a teaching aid or resource on a temporary basis. As part of academic instruction, religious holidays may be addressed in the classroom with the distinction being made between "teaching about" a holiday as opposed to "decorating for" or "celebrating" a holiday. Teachers should refrain from teaching about only one religion or religious holiday at a particular time.

A student may choose to use a religious personage, event, or symbol as the vehicle for an artistic or literary expression. A teacher may not promote or inhibit such expression.

Music programs given at times close to religious holidays should not use the religious aspect of these holidays as the underlying motive or theme nor focus on the celebration of one particular holiday. Although religious music is appropriate in the schools to the extent that it is sung or presented for musical rather than religious content, its use should not violate the secular nature of the school.

Teachers should use good judgment and be especially sensitive to the feelings of students who might not wish to participate for religious reasons. Requests for excusal in school activities associated with these holidays should be granted.

When students are absent from school for the purpose of religious observance during religious holidays, it is expected that:

1. teachers should not, in good faith, conduct special or unique activities which will cause those students to miss out on an important curriculum event;
2. teachers should not, in good faith, administer quizzes/tests on that day;
3. teachers will keep homework expectations reasonable and the due date will be extended as needed to allow for religious observances;
4. teachers will provide opportunity and time to make up any work missed on that day as defined in the student handbook;



5. teachers will give extra help and additional support to those who require such attention;
6. teachers will not, in good faith, require projects or long term assignments due on the day of or the day after a religious holiday.

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SOURCE: Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## **DOVER-SHERBORN RELIGIOUS DAY OBSERVANCES**

When students are absent from school for the purpose of religious observance during religious holidays, it is expected that:

- \* teachers will not conduct special or unique activities which will cause those students to miss out on an important curriculum event
- \* teachers will not administer quizzes/tests on that day
- \* teachers will keep homework expectations reasonable and the due date will be extended as needed to allow for religious observances
- \* teachers will provide opportunity and time to make up any work missed on that day as defined in the student handbook
- \* teachers will give extra help and additional support to those who require such attention
- \* teachers will not require projects or long term assignments due on the day of or the day after a religious holiday

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students are expected to be responsible for getting extra-help, making individual arrangements with teachers, and making up work that may be missed because of an absence.

### **TEACHERS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

Teachers are expected to implement the procedures noted above. Teachers are also expected to support students who may miss school because of important out-of-school obligations.

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SOURCE:	Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## **PERIOD OF SILENT MEDITATION**

Each teacher in charge of the room in which the first class of each day is held shall announce that a period of silence not to exceed one minute in duration shall be observed for meditation, and during any such period silence shall be maintained and no activities engaged in.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:1 A; Periods of Silent Meditation Approved May 12, 1980

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SOURCE: Dover-Sherborn Regional Committee

## **ANIMALS IN SCHOOL**

No animal shall be brought to school without prior permission of the building Principal.

The Schools are committed to providing a high quality educational program to all students in a safe and healthy environment.

School Principals, in consultation with the Health Services Providers in each building, shall utilize the Department of Public Health publication "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and review student health records to determine which animals may be allowed in the school building. The decision of the Principal shall be final.

### **Educational Program**

Use of animals to achieve specific curriculum objectives may be allowed by the building Principal provided student health and safety is not jeopardized and the individual requesting that the animal be brought to school is responsible for adhering to the "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and any other conditions established by the Principal to protect the health and well-being of students.

### **Student Health**

The health and well-being of students is the District's highest priority. Animals may cause an allergic reaction or otherwise impair the health of students. No animals may be brought to school or kept in the school, classroom, office or common area that may negatively impact the health of any student who must utilize that area. Animals that cause an allergic reaction or impair the health of students shall be removed from the school immediately so that no student shall have his/her health impaired and each student shall have full access to available educational opportunities.

### **Animals Prohibited from School**

Rabies is a growing problem and any fur-bearing animal is susceptible to this very serious fatal disease. Infected animals can transmit this disease to students and staff. Based on the Massachusetts Departments of Health and Education recommendations the following animals are prohibited from schools within the Dover Sherborn Public Schools.

**Wild Animals and Domestic Stray Animals** - Because of the high incidence of rabies in bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes and other wild carnivores, these animals should not be permitted in school buildings under any circumstances (including dead animals).

**Fur-Bearing Animals** (pet dogs,\* cats, wolf-hybrids, ferrets, etc.) - These animals may pose a risk for transmitting rabies, as well as parasites, fleas, other diseases and injuries.

**Bats** - Bats pose a high risk for transmitting rabies. Bat houses should not be installed on school grounds and bats should not be brought into the school building.

**Poisonous Animals** - Spiders, venomous insects and poisonous snakes, reptiles and lizards are prohibited for safety reasons.

**\*Exception: Guide, Hearing and Other Service Dogs or Law Enforcement Dogs** - These animals may be allowed in school or on school grounds with proof of current rabies vaccination.

Exceptions may be made with the prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

### **Service Animals (Guide or Assistance Dogs)**

The School Committees do not permit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including those who require the assistance of a service animal. The District will comply with Massachusetts law concerning the rights of persons with guide or assistance dogs and with federal law and will permit such animals on school premises and on school transportation.

For purposes of this policy, a “service animal includes any dog that has been individually trained to do the work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.” The regulations further state that “a public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with the disability.”

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that individuals with disabilities cannot perform themselves. Service animals are not pets. There are several kinds of service animals that assist individuals with disabilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, animals that:

- assist individuals who are blind or have severe sight impairments as “seeing eye dogs” or “guide dogs;”
- alert individuals with hearing impairments to sounds;
- pull wheelchairs or carry and pick-up items for individuals with mobility impairments; and
- assist mobility-impaired individuals with balance.

The District shall not assume or take custody or control of, or responsibility for, any service animal or the care or feeding thereof. The owner or person having custody and control of the animal shall be liable for any damage to persons, premises, property, or facilities caused by the service animal, including, but not limited to, clean up, stain removal, etc.

If, in the opinion of the School Principal or authorized designee, any service animal is not in the control of its handler, or if it is not housebroken, the service animal may be excluded from the school or program. The service animal can also be excluded if it presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school. The parent or guardian of the student having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the service animal from District premises immediately.

If any student or staff member assigned to the classroom in which a service animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the animal, the person having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by the Building Principal or designee and an alternative plan will be developed with appropriate District staff. Such plan could include the

reassignment of the person having custody and control of the animal to a different classroom. This will also apply if an individual on school transportation suffers an allergic reaction. In this case, an alternate plan will be developed in coordination with appropriate school, District, and transportation staff including the involvement of the parents/guardian of the student.

When a student will be accompanied by a service animal at school or in other District facilities on a regular basis, such staff member or such student's parent or guardian, as well as the animal's owner and any other person who will have custody and control of the animal will be required to sign a document stating that they have read and understood the foregoing.

The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee shall be responsible for developing procedures to accommodate a student's use of an assistance dog in District facilities and on school transportation vehicles.

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