

North Providence School Department

North Providence, Rhode Island



Elementary School Handbook

2020/ 2021

Approved by the School Committee August 5, 2015

Revised 2020

North Providence School Committee Members

Dr. Frank Pallotta, Ed.D Chair
Roderick E. DaSilva, Vice Chair
Steven M. Andreozzi, Clerk
Arthur Corsini
Anthony R. Marciano, Sr. Esq.
Gina M. Picard, M.Ed.
Charles Pollock

frank.pallotta@npsd.k12.ri.us
roderick.dasilva@npsd.k12.ri.us
steven.andreozzi@npsd.k12.ri.us
arthur.corsini@npsd.k12.ri.us
anthony.marciano@npsd.k12.ri.us
gina.picard@npsd.k12.ri.us
charles.pollock@npsd.k12.ri.us

North Providence School Department Central Office Administrators
Telephone (401) 233-1100
Fax (401) 233-1106

Joseph B. Goho, Superintendent of Schools	joseph.goho@npsd.k12.ri.us
Louise K. Seitsinger, M.Ed, Assistant Superintendent of Schools	louise.seitsinger@npsd.k12.ri.us
Lisa Casinelli, Director of Finance	lisa.casinelli@npsd.k12.ri.us
Cynthia Vanavery, MA, Director of Special Education	cynthia.vanavery@npsd.k12.ri.us

Elementary School Information

Centredale Elementary School
41 Angell Avenue
North Providence, RI 02911
(401) 233-1145

Principal: Donna Hanley
donna.hanley@npsd.k12.ri.us

Secretary: Gloria DeNicola
gloria.denicola@npsd.k12.ri.us

Greystone Elementary School
100 Morgan Avenue
North Providence, RI 02911
(401) 233-1130

Principal: Stefanie Lafleur
stefanie.lafleur@npsd.k12.ri.us

Secretary: Brenda Corcelli
brenda.corcelli@npsd.k12.ri.us

James L. McGuire Elementary School
55 Central Avenue
North Providence, RI 02911
(401) 233-1135

Principal: Bruce Butler
bruce.butler@npsd.k12.ri.us

Secretary: Lisa Lizotte
lisa.lizotte@npsd.k12.ri.us

Stephen Olney Elementary School
1378 Douglas Avenue
North Providence, RI 02904
(401) 233-1160

Principal: Janine Napolitano
janine.napolitano@npsd.k12.ri.us

Secretary: Dawn McNeil
dawn.mcneil@npsd.k12.ri.us

Dr. Joseph A. Whelan Elementary School
1440 Mineral Spring Avenue
North Providence, RI 02904
(401) 233-1180

Principal: Amanda Donovan
amanda.donovan@npsd.k12.ri.us

Secretary: Christine Shabo
christine.shabo@npsd.k12.ri.us



RETURN THIS PAGE TO SCHOOL

Parent / Guardian Receipt of Elementary School Handbook 2020/2021

Student's Name _____

School _____

I have read the North Providence School District's Elementary Handbook. I agree to comply with all the policies listed within and I have discussed the information contained in this handbook with my child. I shall do everything possible to support my child's education and work with my child's teachers to make this a successful school year.

**Parent / Guardian
Signature** _____

By signing this agreement, I agree to comply with all the policies listed within and I undertake to always act in a manner that is respectful to myself and others, to act appropriately in a moral and ethical manner.

Student's Signature _____

Teacher _____ **Grade** _____

INTRODUCTION

We are happy to have your child in our schools. This handbook has been compiled to ensure mutual understanding between home and school. It will acquaint you with the various policies which affect the school's operation. If it does not answer all your questions, or if you wish more detailed information, please feel free to meet with the principals and the teachers. For your convenience, important telephone numbers are located on the front cover of this handbook.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

The North Providence School Department must provide a comprehensive program of education to meet the needs of all students. It must offer a meaningful program of studies for those whose formal education terminates with high school and for those who will go on to further education.

The process of education is a cooperative endeavor involving all those who are committed to educational growth: Parents, students, teachers, administration, staff and community. The foundations of this effort are mutual respect and responsibility. Its goal is the total development - cognitive, social, physical, emotional and ethical - essential in an ever changing world.

In North Providence we believe that learning is not a mere accumulation of facts. It is, rather, the acquisition of basic skills, the understanding of fundamental structure, the development of ability to see relationships, and the strengthening of the powers of judgment. Moreover, learning requires an involvement with past, present and future. Investigating the past reveals the achievements and failures of our social and cultural history. A study and critical evaluation of the present enables us to sense new values while retaining those which still have validity and worth. Knowledge of the past and present gives us the potential to shape a future in which the individual and society can reach higher levels of achievement.

In all areas of learning we are guided by the principles that each student is a distinct individual with a distinct personality.

If the learning process is to be effective, the motivating factors should be the interests, needs and abilities of the learner. Accordingly, we have the responsibility of striving for flexibility in content, materials, and techniques in order to challenge each individual to realize his or her fullest potential and afford the opportunity for success.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the North Providence School District, as an urban ring community with a strong neighborhood identity which recognizes its individual and cultural diversity and its sensitivity to the needs of the community, is to educate its students in a safe, nurturing and challenging environment for successful entry into industry, business, or higher education by providing them with 21st century skills in academics, communication, technology, and the humanities, holding them to high expectations, by recognizing the needs of individual students in order to ensure they become productive and contributing members of a global society.

BELIEFS

- Children who receive support from family members, teachers, and society are more successful.
- Everyone is an individual who views and functions in the world from his/her own perspective.
- All children will have the opportunity to succeed.
- Schools are an essential component of a successful society.
- Higher expectations will lead to greater individual achievement.
- The school system that recognizes and adapts to the needs of its students, rather than forcing students to adapt to the system is more successful.
- Everyone has the right to a safe and comfortable environment.
- Everyone has the right to be treated fairly.
- Individuals whose self-worth is supported and potential fostered are more likely to succeed.
- Making changes can be difficult, but is necessary.
- Community wide respect, integrity, and accountability are essential components for successful schools.

EDUCATIONAL GOALS

In accordance with RIGL G-12-4.1, the North Providence School Department will create and sustain high quality learning environments that meet the standards set forth in the BEP.

Basic Skills

- To acquire information and meaning through observing, listening and reading.
- To share information and express meaning through speaking, writing and non-verbal means.

Personal Growth

- To grow toward self-understanding and self-acceptance by determining what one's personal goals, values and attitudes are and by recognizing their influence on one's behavior.

Understanding Others

- To learn to use the accumulated knowledge of the humanities and of the sciences in order to understand and deal with the world.

Continuous Learning

- To develop a desire for the understanding of the need for lifelong learning required by the inevitability of change.

Mental and Physical Well-Being

- To understand and practice good principles of mental and physical health.
- To develop a concern for one's safety and safety of others.
- To develop habits and interests leading to the satisfying use of leisure time.

Economical and Occupational Readiness

- To select and pursue career opportunities consistent with social and personal needs and capacities.
- To make informal consumer decisions based on appropriate knowledge of products, needs and resources.

Responsible Societal Membership

- To develop an awareness of civic rights, responsibilities, and the process of group relationships in our society.
- To act in accordance with a basic ethical framework incorporating values contributing to harmonious group living.

Creativity

- To generate a range of imaginative responses to life's situations.
- To entertain and value the imaginative actions of others.

Coping With Others

- To develop an awareness of a changing world and ability to adjust to its problems by selecting workable alternatives.

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

To be admitted to kindergarten or first grade in elementary school, the following requirements are necessary:

Mandatory attendance in kindergarten became effective in September 1989 (General Laws of Rhode Island, 16-1-27). In September of 2004, a new law went into effect that there shall be a kindergarten program, and that every child who has attained or will have attained **five years of age on or before September 1** of any school year shall be eligible to attend kindergarten during all the days of kindergarten are in session during said school year.

1. To enter kindergarten, a child must be five years of age on or before September 1st of the enrollment year.
2. To enter first grade, a child must be six years of age on or before September 1st of the enrollment year.
3. The child's birth certificate must be submitted at the time of enrollment.
4. The child must have all required immunizations and lead screening before enrollment; an immunization certificate must be presented at the time of registration.
5. Legal proof of residency (two forms) must be presented at the time of registration.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENT FOR KINDERGARTEN

When enrolling a child for kindergarten, the parent **MUST** show: proof of residency, the child's birth certificate, acceptable evidence of completion of immunization, and lead test.

1. Parents of all children entering kindergarten must present copies of their child's (5) doses of

Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis vaccine; (4) doses of Polio vaccine; (3) doses of Hepatitis B vaccine;
(2) Doses of MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine; (1) dose of varicella (chickenpox) vaccine and proof of a lead screening test. The child must have all the required immunizations before enrollment. Acceptable evidence of completion of immunization consists of the date, including the day, month and year, each dose was administered. This immunization record must be signed by a health care provider.
2. If your child is missing any of the required immunizations please contact your Certified School Nurse-Teacher as soon as possible.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ASSIGNMENT

A child must attend the neighborhood school within his/her district. Any request for exemption to this policy must be sent to the Superintendent of Schools in a letter describing the particular circumstances requiring special consideration. In addition students may be transferred upon enrollment to a different school due to over enrollment at the discretion of the Superintendent. For further information regarding this matter, please contact the building principal.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The School Calendar can be found on the last page of this handbook and on the district's website.

STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Elementary hours are: 8:55 am to 3:12 pm.

Students must leave school grounds promptly at dismissal.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

At the start of school parents will receive a bus application if eligible for bus transportation. School bus transportation should be treated as a privilege, not as a right. A student's misconduct at a bus stop or while on a bus may provide sufficient reason to discontinue providing this service. Children are expected to ride only on their assigned bus and to get off at their assigned stop. A copy of the bus rules and procedures will be given to bus pass recipients during the first month of school.

BUS POLICY DUE TO IMPASSABLE SIDEWALKS AFTER HEAVY SNOW

Emergency bus routes will be placed in effect whenever the sidewalks are deemed impassable. All students may walk to the main road where they will be given a bus ride to school.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Policy

School attendance is mandated by Rhode Island General Law 16-19-1 which requires, “*every child who has completed or will have completed six (6) years of life on or before September 1 of any school year and has not completed eighteen (18) years of life shall regularly attend some public day school during all the days and hours that the public schools are in session in the city or town in which the child resides.*”

Research supports, (www.attendanceworks.org), positive academic outcomes when a student attends school regularly. It is the responsibility of a student’s parent/guardians to ensure school attendance, report absences according to this attendance policy and work together with school personnel to address any issues preventing daily school attendance.

Procedure

All student absences, late school arrivals and early dismissals are recorded in the district’s student information system data base. It is the responsibility of a student’s parent/ guardian to notify the school regarding their child’s absence or late arrival prior to the start of school on the day of the absence/tardiness. Absences and lateness to school are recorded as excused and unexcused and are defined as:

Excused Absence:

Excused absences include an illness or injury documented in writing by a medical professional, religious holidays, approved school sponsored activities, suspensions, court appearances, death in the family, military deployment event or verified college visits.

Unexcused Absences:

Unexcused absences include all other absences not covered in the definition of an excused absence.

Excused Lateness:

Excused lateness to school shall include a doctor’s appointment as documented in writing by a medical professional and provided upon a student’s arrival at school the day of the appointment, religious holidays, approved school sponsored activities, suspensions, and court appointments.

Unexcused Lateness:

Unexcused lateness includes all other late school arrivals not covered in the definition of an excused lateness.

Intervention Procedures for Unexcused Absences:

All schools will implement a school wide positive incentive program to reduce absences

A student shall not miss ten percent (10%) or more unexcused absences. Once a student has missed 10% of unexcused absences the following procedure will be followed:

- A letter will be automatically generated from the district's student information system and be mailed home to the student's parent informing them of the excessive absences
- School Principal will follow up with the parent/guardian and arrange a meeting with the appropriate school personnel and truancy officer
- A plan to improve school attendance and chronic absenteeism will be developed and monitored by the school principal or designee
- If unexcused absences still continue, the school principal will complete a nonattendance form and send it to the district's truancy officer
- The truancy officer and school social worker will conduct a home visit as a last attempt to resolve the issue before sending the case to truancy court

Intervention Procedures for Unexcused Lateness:

All elementary schools will implement a positive school wide incentive program to reduce lateness to school

Students are allowed three unexcused lateness to school per year. Once a student has exceed this number of late school arrivals the following procedure will be followed:

Secondary Level: Grades 6-12

- Students will receive one hour of detention for each late arrival
- If unexcused lateness still continues, the school principal will arrange a meeting with the parent/guardian, appropriate school personnel and truancy officer
- A plan to improve school promptness and chronic tardiness will be developed and monitored by the school principal or designee
- If unexcused lateness persists, the truancy officer and/or school social worker will conduct a home visit as a last attempt to resolve the issue before sending the case to truancy court

Elementary Level: Grades PK-5

- School principal or social worker will contact the parent/guardian to discuss the excessive number of late arrivals to school
- If unexcused lateness still continues, the school principal will arrange a meeting with the parent/guardian, appropriate school personnel and truancy officer
- A plan to improve school promptness and chronic tardiness will be developed and monitored by the school principal or designee
- If unexcused lateness persists, the truancy officer and/or school social worker will conduct a home visit as a last attempt to resolve the issue before sending the case to truancy court

EARLY DISMISSAL

An early dismissal is the release of a student from school prior to the end of the official school day. A student may only be dismissed early with the permission of a parent/guardian with a written note submitted to the office at the start of the school day. A student must attend school for a minimum of three hours or the day will be recorded as an absence.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Discipline Philosophy

The North Providence School Department is committed to a process of discipline and behavior management that maintains a balance between the needs of the educational system and the needs of individuals who are being served. The rules and regulations that exist are intended to prevent acts of disruption and violence, to ensure safety, to maintain an appropriate educational environment and to encourage active student involvement in personal growth and development.

A review of the research indicates that the primary concerns of education are developmental. The developmental needs of students must be addressed if significant student growth is to occur. In view of these needs the North Providence School Department recognizes the importance of an appropriate learning environment and supports the maintenance of a positive school climate that emphasizes:

Self-Control

Regular Attendance

Order and Organization

Proper Safety and Security

All North Providence students are expected to accept the responsibility for their actions. They must realize that their actions should promote the positive educational process of the school. Actions or conduct of any student affect the atmosphere in which all must work. Therefore, every student should treat all members of the educational community with respect and courtesy.

School Rules and Regulations

It is expected that all students will obey the rules of behavior necessary to ensure that a proper learning environment exists in all North Providence schools. The following list, while not inclusive, specifies offenses for which students will receive disciplinary action.

For policy purposes K-5 will be designated as elementary. Grades 6-12 will be designated as secondary.

Scope

This code applies to the school day which covers pre and post school time in school buildings and on school grounds. The discipline code also pertains to any school function or any school related or sponsored activity, whether off or on school grounds.

Disciplinary Action

There are three types of disciplinary action:

- A. Detention – which is the loss of free time before or after school and lunch detention.
- B. Short Term Suspension – which is the removal of the student from school or in school from classes, including activities for ten (10) days or less.
- C. Long Term Suspension – which is the removal of the student from school and its activities for more than ten (10) days. School Committee approval is required, including an alternate education plan of continued services according to RI General Law 16-21-27

DETENTION OFFENSES

1. Inappropriate behavior in school buildings, buses, or other areas of the school and its grounds, or at school sponsored events on/off campus. Such conduct is defined as conduct which is disruptive to the education process, activity, event and/or rights of other individuals as described in each school's handbook.
2. Frequent lateness (more than 3 times) to class (grades 6-12).
3. Frequent unexcused lateness (more than 3 times) to school
4. Failure to report after school for a Teacher or Administrator (all levels).
5. Unauthorized absences from class, assemblies, detention, or other assigned activity (all levels).
6. Unauthorized absence from school.

Parents are expected to cooperate with referrals that are made by the Principal or his/her designee. Students must receive 24 hour notice prior to detention assignment date.

SUSPENSION OFFENSES

A parent conference is required prior to the student being reinstated from any suspension.

1. Conduct which endangers persons or property, or is seriously disruptive of the educational process. Included within, but not limited to, such prohibited conduct are the following acts:

- a) Conduct causing a threat of danger to the physical well-being of himself/herself, or other people, including threats made through social media or other electronic methods (1-3 days - elementary, 5-10 days - secondary). Student may be referred for a risk assessment prior to reinstatement at the discretion of the building administrators.
- b) Physical assault on another person on school premises, bus stops, buses, or at school sponsored events/activities. (1-3 days - elementary, 5-10 days -secondary with SRO/police involvement).
- c) Being under the influence of, the use of, or possession of alcoholic beverages, narcotics, marijuana, etc. on school property, on buses, during school or at any school function on/off campus. Therapeutic assistance is required.
- d) Tampering with, accessing, or providing entrance/exit through any unauthorized door of the school building (1-5 days all levels).

IN SCHOOL SUSPENSION

- a) Taking or attempting to take personal property/money from another pupil, staff member. (1-3 days elementary, 1-5 days - secondary).
 - b) Causing/attempting to cause damage to school property or disruption to the school environment. (No less than 3 days all secondary). Offense may result in SRO/police involvement and may require restitution.
 - c) Use of personal electronic devices and cell phones without the consent of teacher and/or administration.
1. Defiance of authority, insubordination, or verbal abuse to an Administrator, Teacher, or staff member. (1-5 days secondary).
 2. Leaving school grounds without permission. (First offense - 1 day, increasing after the first offense).
 3. Smoking (including electronic, vapor, or other tobacco products) in any area on school property during school, on buses, or at any school function on/off campus. (First offense- 1 day, increasing after the first offense). Therapeutic assistance is required.
 4. Accessing inappropriate websites or content during the school day or during school sponsored activities utilizing a personal or school device (1-5 days secondary).

5. Repeated violations of offenses, which have resulted in detention, may result in In-School Suspension for insubordination. (1-5 days secondary).

WEAPONS AND VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

With this policy, the North Providence School Department will not tolerate weapons in our schools. All cases will result in SRO/police involvement.

Items in the following categories are defined as **weapons**:

- Any firearm of any description, whether or not it can be fired, (e.g., pistol, blank pistol, signal pistol, starter pistol, revolver, rifle, shotgun, etc.).
- Any ammunition which could be used in a firearm.
- Any explosive device of any nature, including firecrackers.
- Any knife or similar bladed item dangerous to others, (e.g., Bowie, Dirk, lock blade, hunting, pen, pick, switchblade, utility, razor, etc.).
- Any martial arts device, (e.g., Chinese stars, nunchaku, etc.).
- Any defensive weapon, (e.g., gas repellent, mace, stun gun, pepper gas, etc.).
- Any other object which school administrative staff could reasonably conclude is capable of inflicting bodily harm, (e.g., blackjack, chair club, knuckles, night stick, pipe, studded bracelet, etc.).
- Any other item by virtue of its shape or design give the appearance of any of the aforementioned, (e.g., air pistol, air rifle, BB gun, look alike, etc.).

Assault is defined as an act of physical violence or an aggravated threat of physical violence by a student on another student or staff member.

When considering what constitutes aggravated assault, the factors to be weighed include: age of student(s) involved, seriousness of bodily injury, the state of mind of the individual(s) involved and other factors deemed relevant to the principals or their designee.

No student will possess a weapon or demonstrate an act of violence as defined herein on any school grounds, vehicles or property on which a school activity occurs before, during or after school hours.

POLICE INVOLVEMENT

1. In all cases where weapons or aggravated assault in schools or on school grounds or at authorized school activities on/off campus, local police must be called, and all confiscated weapons are to be turned over to the police department.

2. A log of all confiscated weapons will be kept by the school administration and will be available to be reviewed by the local police on a regular basis.
3. If a student is a special education student, verbally inform police of student's disability if deemed necessary and appropriate. Send incident report to Director of Special Education.

STATEMENT OF ENFORCEMENT

1. This policy will be implemented according to the due process provisions applicable to regular and special education students. For students with disabilities and 504 Plans, the implementation of this policy will be in accordance with approved local procedures, as well as state and federal regulations governing the suspension or removal of special education students from school programs. Serious offenses must immediately be reported to the Director of Special Education.
2. Decisions regarding the specific length of a student's suspension will be made by the appropriate authority or the School Committee. Any student suspended from school may not participate in school functions or be on school premises without express permission from the Superintendent.
3. Each school will undertake activities designed to develop a school wide acceptance of desirable behavior standards, particularly as they relate to school violence and bullying.
 - It is expected that all students report violations of weapons, bullying, assaults and/or violence.
 - Schools are encouraged to keep open communications with parents and the community to support positive behavior.
4. In the enforcement of this policy; building Administrators may authorize, with good and just cause, search lockers and vehicles as follows:
 - Students have full responsibility for the security of their lockers, and for vehicles parked on school property. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that lockers and vehicles are locked and that the keys and combinations are not given to others. Students shall not place, keep, or maintain any article or material that is forbidden by District policy in lockers or in vehicles parked on school property.
 - School officials may search lockers or vehicles parked on school property if there is reasonable cause to believe that they contain articles or materials prohibited by

District policy. Students shall be responsible for any prohibited items found in their lockers or in vehicles parked on school property.

- If a vehicle subject to search is locked, the student shall be asked to unlock the vehicle. If the student refuses, the District shall contact the student's parents. If the parents also refuse to permit a search of the vehicle, the District may turn the matter over to local law enforcement officials.

5. A parent conference is required prior to the student being reinstated from any suspension.

DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES

Short-Term Suspension (Up to ten (10) days)

1. Short-term suspension shall be preceded by an informal conference between a School Administrator, student and any staff member involved. At this time the student can present his/her case.
2. The Administrator will contact parent(s) or guardian(s) immediately to inform them of the length of the suspension and to arrange a parent conference.
3. The Administrator shall, when feasible, within 24 hours of the beginning of the short-term suspension, send a notice to the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the suspended student stating the specific act(s) for which the suspension was imposed.
4. A student will be granted reinstatement after a suspension contingent upon a conference with the Administrator and the student(s)' parent(s) or guardian(s).
5. A reinstated student is expected to make up all assignments that were missed during the suspension.
6. For suspensions of special education students exceeding 5 days, the Director of Special Education must be notified.

Long Term Suspension (Ten (10) days or more)

Prior to suspensions or expulsion, except for such times as not feasible, as where the student's presence endangers persons or property or their disruption of the academic process, thus justifying immediate removal from school, the necessary notice or hearing will follow as soon as practicable, the student will be afforded:

1. A clear, written statement of the reason for suspension or expulsion;
2. Notice of the right to prompt public or private hearing at the student's election and the right to be represented by counsel at such hearing; and
3. If a hearing is requested, the student will be given a prompt notice setting the time and place to be reasonably set, so as to allow sufficient time for preparation, without undue delay.
4. If no hearing is requested within seven (7) days of written notice, the School Committee may act upon the request to suspend or expel at earliest convenience without further notice to parent or guardian.
5. For 504 or special education students, the Director of Special Education must be notified before this action is taken.

In the event a student has not attained the age of majority (18 years), the parent or guardian will be afforded the procedures stated in sections 1, 2, 3 & 4 above. Such notice shall be written in the parent's spoken language, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.

The student will be afforded a hearing at which the student will have the right to:

1. Representation and participation by counsel; and
 2. Cross-examine witnesses and to present witnesses in his or her behalf.
- There will be a complete and accurate (stenographic or electronic) record of the hearing including all exhibits. The record will be preserved for transmission to the Commissioner of Education, as soon as possible, in the event of an appeal.
 - The student will be furnished a copy of the record without cost.
 - A written decision will be rendered, within a reasonable time, based exclusively on the record detailing the reasons and factual basis therefore.
 - The student will be promptly provided with a copy of said decision.
 - A copy of the decision, together with the record, will be promptly forwarded to the Commissioner of Education if there is an appeal.

BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS:

School Bus Transportation should be treated as a privilege, not a right, and is an extension of the school system. A student's misconduct at a bus stop or on a bus could lead to his/her transportation being withdrawn, in cases of persistent behavior. Parents and students are encouraged to report any dangerous or hazardous situations which they may observe at the bus stop or on the bus.

Please refer to the Transportation Policy for Bus Procedures and Code of Conduct for Pupils.

NORTH PROVIDENCE SCHOOLS' DRESS CODE

DRESS CODE K-12

In order to enhance the educational environment and promote proper personal growth habits, a dress code has been established for the North Providence Public Schools. The purpose of this code is to remove distracting, disruptive, inappropriate, offensive, and unsafe clothing, footwear, accessories, and apparel from the educational environment. The code has been written not to infringe upon the individuality of the students, but rather to create a safe climate conducive to teaching and learning.

Students are required to comply with the following:

1. Articles of clothing must cover the torso, to be appropriate to the school environment and/or non-disruptive in the classroom. No tank tops, muscle shirts, halter-tops, shorts or short skirts having lengths that are above fingertips when arms are by student's side, etc.
2. Sunglasses may not be worn in school, unless medical reasons exist.
3. No hats, hoods, or any other type of headwear, may be worn within the building by any student, unless medical reasons exist.
4. No clothing that promotes alcohol or drugs, violence, profanity, illegal activity, or is obscene, as the word is construed by the United States Supreme Court decisions, shall be worn in a school building.
5. Coats and/or gloves worn as outerwear may not be worn within the building during school hours.
6. Any electronic device including, but not limited to, lasers, cell phones, gaming devices, music players with headphones/earbuds, and games/toys are not allowed to be used in schools without permission of the Principal.

7. **No flip-flops or backless shoes should be worn at the elementary level for safety reasons. All students must wear appropriate footwear for physical education class.**

The School Committee recognizes that a student may be exempt from the provisions of the dress code if granted by the building Principal upon presentation of substantive evidence. All exceptions will be reviewed periodically by the Principal.

MATERIALS

Basic school materials are provided without additional charge. It is important for children to learn to be responsible for their materials. Therefore, it is expected that payment will be made for lost or damaged school property. Books taken home should be covered.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

The School Department makes available a low cost child accident policy which may be purchased on a voluntary basis by a child's parents. This policy provides coverage for all accidents to school children injured at school, while going to or coming from school, and while engaged in specified school activities and athletics. A form may be obtained on the North Providence School Department website at www.northprovidenceschooldept.net under the *STUDENTS* tab.

LOST AND FOUND

Each year a large amount of clothing and other articles turn up in our Lost and Found Department. Each school has an area set aside for these items, and children and parents have an opportunity to look through these items at any time during the course of the school year.

Parents can be helpful by labeling their children's articles of clothing and lunch boxes.

CLOSING OF SCHOOL

On extremely stormy days it may be necessary to close or delay school. If such is the case, an automated computerized all-call system as well as radio/TV stations WPRO AM, WWBB, WWLI, WHJJ, WSNE, WPRO-TV (Channel 12), WJAR-TV (Channel 10), WLNE-TV (Channel 6) will make the announcement from 6:30 A.M. to 8:45 A.M.

It will be the policy of the School Department to close school only in cases of extreme weather conditions; otherwise, regular sessions will be held. ***Parents are urged, therefore, when schools are open on stormy days, to exercise their personal judgment as to the wisdom of sending their children to school.***

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING (Early Dismissal)

Official announcements will be made over the same automated computerized all-call system, radio and television stations. Since it is impossible to contact families individually, parents are advised to make provisions for an alternate emergency location should the parents not be at home.

SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAM

The elementary schools participate in the School Breakfast, Milk and Lunch Programs which make daily breakfasts, milk and lunch available to the pupils at a very low cost. Applications for free or reduced price breakfasts and lunches are sent home at the beginning of the school year and are available at the school anytime thereafter.

REPORT TO PARENTS

Pupils in Kindergarten-5th Grade receive report cards three times a year, in November, March and at the end of the school year. Report cards are standard based.

Unsatisfactory progress reports are sent to the parents at the completion of the fifth week of each quarter or as deemed necessary by the teacher.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

The School Department desires and encourages parents' visits to schools. These visits will ultimately result in establishing friendly relations between teachers and parents, which in turn, will benefit your child. Parents must call the school during the day to arrange for a conference, thus insuring that the teacher will be free to devote complete thought to the situation. Conferences between teachers and parents are a part of our reporting-to-parents program.

There may be times when the teacher or principal will request parents to come to school to discuss some phase of the child's work. These meetings or conferences should be viewed as a means for both parents and teacher to get to know each other and thus to reach a common understanding of the child's abilities and limitations. We work on the principle that the more we know about your child the more we can help him/her.

GRADING POLICY

NPSD GRADING POLICY K-12

Grades are an important measurement of a student's success in school and should represent a student's academic achievement of state standards. Student work habits will not be calculated in student grades and will be reported separately.

At the secondary level, a variety of assessment methods including formative assessments, interim assessments, and summative assessments will be used to monitor and evaluate a student's depth of understanding of course content and standards. Grade marks on the report card will be a numerical average based on assessments/assignments taken throughout each quarter.

At the elementary level, all student work evidence available for each standard assessed with formative assessments, interim assessments, and summative assessments will be reviewed each trimester. Grade marks on the report card will reflect the student's individual growth towards or mastery of state standards (or other content standards for non-core areas).

Grading Scale:

Elementary level (grades K-5) grading scale:

- 4 – Exceeds the Standard/Expectation
- 3 – Meets the Standard/Expectation
- 2 – Approaches the Standard/Expectation
- 1 – Does Not Meet the Standard/Expectation
- N/A – Not Assessed at this Time

Secondary Level (grades 6-12) grading scale:

- A 100-90
- B 89-80
- C 79-70
- D 69-65
- F 64 and below.

A final average of 65 or greater is considered passing the course. Successful completion of courses aligned to state and local content standards is the core indicator of student proficiency. Students are considered meeting proficiency on individual assignments/assessments when scoring a 70 or greater.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATIONS

Only through parent-school teamwork and effort toward consistent goals can a child gain full benefit from a school program. Elementary schools have separate Parent-Teacher organizations. It is our sincere hope that every family with children in the schools will become active members in the school's Parent-Teacher group.

HEALTH

Before your child enters school, teach him the basic health habits such as: bathing, combing and brushing hair, cleaning nails, going to the toilet without help, washing hands after using the toilet before lunch, using a handkerchief correctly, eating three well- balanced meals daily and getting enough sleep each night.

The supportive parent will see to it that the child is in the best health before sending the child off to school and that the child is properly clothed for weather conditions. Layers of clothing are best to allow for adjustments to heat the building.

Please keep your child home when he shows any deviation from normal health. If you plan to be away from home, kindly provide a place for your child to stay until you return in the event the child becomes ill in school. **Notify the school immediately of changes in emergency numbers.**

The school Department makes every effort to control the spread of communicable diseases. If your child has any of the suspicious symptoms, he /she will be sent home as protection to all. You should call the child's school for information on the confinement periods for contagious diseases.

School nurses are assigned to each school. She/he makes arrangements to have your child's eyes and ears tested. The nurse will be happy to talk about any health problem concerning your child. However, the nurse will not diagnose a child's illness.

VISION, HEARING, DENTAL SCREENING

Beginning with the first year of enrollment, all children are given, hearing, and dental screenings. Children are tested annually for sight and periodically for hearing. Parents will receive notification if their child fails. It is recommended that parents consult with their family physician for any recommendations that he may offer regarding remedial treatment. Each classroom teacher is made aware of vision and hearing deficiencies in order that consideration may be given to seating the child advantageously in the classroom.

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

Boys and girls physically unable to attend school are provided home instruction under certain conditions of prolonged absence. The parent should inform the school nurse and principal when it is known that a pupil is going to be unable to attend school for a lengthy period.

MEDICATIONS

Medications may only be taken in school when prescribed by a physician and only after the parent has contacted the school nurse and provided the appropriate documentation. In addition, parents are advised not to send any type of medication to school with a child unless the form for Dispensing Medicine in School has been filed with the nurse. **Only the school nurse or child's parent or legal guardian may dispense medication.**

SPECIAL SERVICES

Classroom teachers alone cannot assume the responsibility for the many services that children need. Specialists include the school nurse, the doctor, the dentist, school psychologist, social worker, the reading teacher and the librarian who assist the classroom teacher in attempting to meet the educational needs of each child.

Specialists also contribute to the curriculum in such fields as art, library, science, music and physical education. They serve to help teachers in units of work in which particular equipment or special skills may be needed.

The administration and teachers believe by working together, we insure the best education for all children.

The Special Education Department services special needs children who qualify for this program. These children are provided a full range of services. Referrals to Special Education are initiated through the school Educational Evaluation Team.

Every student during the first year of enrollment in the school shall be screened for speech defects by a trained and qualified person.

The English Language Learners (ELL) provides language experiences for foreign students who are not fluent in English.

LIBRARIES

Each elementary school has a central school library and classroom book collections. The school libraries provide reference materials which support and supplement the school curriculum, teach proper library procedure, and provide material for the development of independent reading.

EDUCATIONAL TRIPS

Students have the opportunity to take school sponsored educational trips to further some educational activity or to answer some curricula need. Most of the educational trips take place during the regular school day. Permission forms are sent to all parents stating the times of each trip.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

This Acceptable Use Agreement has six conditions or facets of being a Digital Citizen.

Respect Yourself. I will show respect for myself through my actions. I will select online names that are appropriate, I will consider the information and images that I post online. I will not post personal information about my life, experiences, experimentation or relationships. I will not be obscene.

Protect Yourself. I will ensure that the information I post online will not put me at risk. I will not publish my personal details, contact details or a schedule of my activities. I will report any attacks or inappropriate behavior directed at me. I will protect passwords, accounts and resources.

Respect Others. I will show respect to others. I will not use electronic mediums to flame, bully, harass or stalk other people. I will show respect for other people in my choice of websites, I will not visit sites that are degrading, pornographic, racist or inappropriate. I will not abuse my rights of access and I will not enter other people's spaces or areas.

Protect Others. I will protect others by reporting abuse, not forwarding inappropriate materials or communications; and not visiting sites that are degrading, pornographic, racist or inappropriate.

Respect School Property. I will take care of any school equipment or tools that I use. I will let a teacher know if any equipment is not working properly or needs to be repaired.

Don't Steal. I will not steal content, media or information. I will only use properly purchased and licensed content, media and software. I will properly purchase my music and other media, and refrain from distributing these.

Honor Intellectual Property. I will request permission to use resources and suitably cite any and all use of websites, books, media etc.

Respect District Safeguards. I will respect and honor the safeguards put in place by the district to protect the safety of the school community. Bypassing internet filters, utilizing keyloggers, etc.

I, agree to follow the principles of digital citizenship outlined in this agreement and accept that failing to follow these tenets will have consequences.

STUDENT POLICY

Use of the Internet and Electronic Communications

All users of the North Providence School District computer systems by either students or employees are subject to this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). This bulletin will undergo periodic review to ensure District data systems are used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner, and such use must be in support of the District's business and education objectives.

Teachers, administrators, and other school personnel should ensure District data systems are used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner, and such use must be in support of the District's business and education objectives.

Philosophy of use

Access to computers, computing equipment, e-mail and the Internet enables students to

explore thousands of libraries, databases, and Web sites while exchanging messages with Internet users throughout the world. The district provides students with computing and Internet access to further educational goals and objectives. However, students may find ways to access materials that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people. The district believes the benefits of access to the Internet in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed any disadvantages.

Student rights and responsibilities for using the district network

The district provides a computer network for students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner. The network is available to conduct research, save student work and files, and communicate with others via email.

Access is a privilege, not a right, and therefore, entails responsibility. Students are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or school hallway. All users will comply with all district regulations and will honor signed agreements. Students and parents shall be required to sign the North Providence School District Acceptable Use Policy annually before Internet or electronic communication accounts shall be accessed and be allowed.

Personal Internet use, Students' home use, and personal Internet use can have an impact on the school and on other students. If a student's personal Internet expression - such as a threatening message to another student or a violent Web site – creates a likelihood of material disruption of the school's operations, the student may face school discipline and criminal penalties.

TEACHER SUPERVISION

During the instructional day, teachers make reasonable efforts to supervise student use of the district's Internet system in a manner that is appropriate to the student's age and circumstances of use.

Student IDs and passwords

The district may provide any student with a unique Internet ID and password for that student's use only. All secondary students will receive an email account and elementary students by request for Teacher led projects. Students shall not share their passwords with anyone else, nor shall students use anyone else's password, regardless of how the password is obtained. Students who suspect that someone has discovered their password should contact a teacher at their school immediately. Students shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users.

Protection of identifying information

When sending electronic messages on the district's network or to users outside the network, students shall not include information that identifies themselves or other students. Identifying information includes, but is not limited to, last names, addresses, telephone numbers, family information, or any other personal information that could be used inappropriately. Students shall not arrange face-to-face meetings with persons met on the Internet or through electronic communications.

Students shall identify themselves by first names only.

Students shall not meet in person anyone they have met only on the Internet; and Students must abide by all laws, this Acceptable Use Policy and all District security policies.

Using proxy sites to bypass district filters

Any use of school systems to bypass the established proxy server will result in disciplinary action.

Access to restricted use and physical computer damage

Student use of school district computer equipment and network is limited to the educational purposes. Improper uses include, but are not limited to, gaining illegal access to school district records, files, computer programs, student records, and other information maintained by the school district.

Students shall not damage district or outside computing devices, systems or networks or interfere with another's ability to use a computing system or network. Students shall not bypass or disable district network security systems.

Use of non-district software and applications

Students shall not install any non-district approved application software on the district network or school workstations.

Students may NOT download inappropriate files onto district network resources, district accounts, onto devices. Inappropriate files include, but are not limited to, games, music, video or audio files, or material protected by the district's filtering or blocking software.

Filtering software

In compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the district has installed filtering and/or blocking software to restrict access to Internet sites containing material harmful to minors, such as sexually explicit or other inappropriate materials. The software works by scanning for objectionable words or concepts as determined by the school district.

However, no Internet filter is foolproof. A user who incidentally connects to an inappropriate site must immediately disconnect from the site and notify a teacher or supervisor. If a user sees another user accessing inappropriate sites, he or she should notify a teacher or supervisor immediately.

Students shall not use the school district's network system to access material that is obscene, pornographic, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, harmful, or otherwise inappropriate. Students shall not tamper with the filtering service.

Cyber bullying

North Providence School District does not tolerate bullying and harassment.

Students shall not use any Internet or other communication device, such as cell or telephone to intimidate, bully, harass, or embarrass other students or staff members. Students who engage in such activity on school grounds or who engage in such activity off campus and create material disruption of school operations shall be subject to the penalties outlined in the NPSD Safe

School Act Statewide Bullying Policy as well as possible criminal prosecution.

Intellectual Property

I will request permission to use resources and suitably cite any and all use of websites, books, media etc. I will not steal content, media or information. I will only use properly purchased and licensed content, media and software. I will properly purchase my music and other media, and refrain from distributing these.

For more information about copyright, please see <http://www.copyright.gov>

District Access to Student Files and Emails

Students should have no expectation of privacy or confidentiality in the content of electronic communications or other computer files that they send or receive on the school computer network or store in student directories.

The Director Technology or other designated district employee may, at any time, review the subject, content, and appropriateness of electronic communications or other computer files and may remove them, if warranted.

Personal Mobile Technology

HS/MS students may bring cell phones, tablets, e-readers, and other communication devices to school as long as they do not disrupt the educational process. Individual schools and teachers may impose additional restrictions. The district is not responsible for the loss, theft, damage, or vandalism to student cell phones or other student electronic devices.

Elementary students are not allowed to bring cell phones into school, as we use Chromebooks for educational purposes.

Inappropriate Photos/Videos/Media

It is an explicit part of this policy that a student may not possess, view, send, or share pictures or text having sexual content while the student is on school grounds, at school sponsored events or on school buses or other vehicles provided by North Providence Schools. This policy strictly prohibits sexual material in electronic or any other form and includes but is not limited to the sexual material contained in a cellular telephone, camera phone, or personal digital assistant and sexual material transmitted by text message, e-mail, or any electronic communication device. A student who violates this policy is subject to suspension or expulsion.

School personnel are required to report to law enforcement or child protective services whenever there is reason to believe that any student or other person is involved with child exploitation or child pornography. Students and parents need to be aware of the consequences - some of them life-altering - of having sexual material at school, including on your cell phone or other electronic communication device.

Discipline

North Providence School District may apply discipline up to and including suspension and/or expulsion for specific student violations of the Internet and Electronic Mail Permission and

Use Regulations. Students who violate the Internet-use rules set forth in this regulation will be subject to the penalties established in the Code of Student Conduct.

Students are expected to review the student handbook before using school computers or the district network. In addition, violations also may result in:

- Immediate removal from the computer network at any time without warning.
- Removal from the computer network for a specified period of time as determined by the principal, if the violation is limited to one computer and/or is contained in the school building.
- Removal from the computer network for a specified period of time as determined jointly by the principal in consultation with the Director of Technology and the other district staff, if the violation significantly threatens or damages district wide network resources, i.e., Web site, e- mail network, online grading system, etc.
- Permanent removal from the computer network for the duration of a student's enrollment in the district as determined by district administration.
- District retains right to terminate access
- North Providence School District technology staff may terminate a user's network access and this agreement at any time without warning.
- Unauthorized computer or network use subject to prosecution.
- Students who engage in unauthorized computer or network use may be subject to imprisonment, fines, and civil liability under applicable state and federal laws. Unauthorized computer or network use may also result in disciplinary measures consistent with the school district's policies and regulations, including suspension and expulsion.

Nothing herein shall be deemed to prevent a teacher or instructor from establishing additional rules and conditions, subject to the ultimate control of the district administration and the District's School Committee.

POLICIES

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION/ANTI-HARRASMENT POLICY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The North Providence Public Schools (the "District") is committed to maintaining and promoting an educational environment free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment. The civil rights of all school community members are guaranteed by law, and the protection of those rights is important to the District. Discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, genetic information or testing, sex, sexual orientation,

age or disability (hereinafter “membership in a protected class”) will not be tolerated. Retaliation against any student or any other individual who has complained of discrimination, including harassment, or individuals who have cooperated with an investigation of such complaint, is also unlawful and will not be tolerated. The District will promptly investigate, remedy any harm, seek to protect students and/or employees, and to prevent recurrence of such conduct. This policy applies to conduct directed toward students and other persons associated with the educational community by all other persons associated with the educational community including, but not limited to, students, District employees, the School Committee, school volunteers, parents and independent contractors. (For a complaint of disability discrimination that is NOT harassment, please refer to the District’s Section 504/ADA Prohibition Against Discrimination Based on Disability policy/procedure.)

I. What is Discrimination, including Harassment?

A. Discrimination: Treating persons differently, or interfering with or preventing them from enjoying the advantages or privileges afforded to others because of their membership in a protected class.

B. Harassment: Oral, written, graphic, electronic, or physical conduct relating to a person’s actual or perceived membership in a protected class that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit that person’s ability to participate in the District’s programs or activities by creating a hostile educational environment.

Harassing conduct based on a person’s protected status may include, but is not limited to:

- Degrading, demeaning, insulting, or abusive verbal or written statements;
- Taking personal belongings, taunting, teasing, name-calling, or spreading rumors;
- Drawing or writing graffiti, slogans, visual displays, or symbols on school or another’s property;
- Telling degrading or offensive jokes;
- Unwanted physical contact of any kind;
- Physical violence, threats of bodily harm, physical intimidation, or stalking;
- Threatening letter, emails, instant messages, or websites that come within the scope of the District’s disciplinary authority;
- Defacing, damaging, or destroying school or another’s property.

- Harassing conduct does not have to be directed towards a particular individual. Other members of the same protected class may be considered the victim of harassment by virtue of being exposed, even indirectly, to the harassing conduct.

II. Sample of Conduct Which May Constitute Specific Types of Harassment

The following is not intended as an inclusive list of conduct that may violate this policy.

Disability Harassment:

- Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a person based on his/her disability or perceived disability, including damaging or interfering with use of necessary, equipment, intimidating manner of movement, using disability-related slurs, or invading personal space to intimidate.

National Origin Harassment:

- Unwelcome verbal, written or physical contact directed at a person based on his/her national origin, ancestry, or ethnic background such as negative comments about surnames, customs, language, accents, immigration status or manner of speaking.

Racial Harassment:

- Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a person based on his/her race or color, including racial slurs or insults based on characteristics of a person's race or color, racial graffiti or symbols, hostile acts based on a race, nicknames based on racial stereotypes, negative comments about appearance, imitating mannerisms, taunting, or invading personal space to intimidate.

Religious Harassment:

- Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a person based on his/her religion, including derogatory comments about religious beliefs, traditions, practices (includes non-belief), or religious clothing.

Sexual Orientation Harassment:

- Unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, directed at a person based on his/her actual or perceived sexual orientation, such as anti-gay slurs or insults, imitating mannerisms. Taunting, or invading personal space to intimidate.

Sexual Harassment:

- **Quid pro quo sexual harassment** occurs when a person in a supervisory position explicitly or implicitly conditions participation in a program or activity or bases a decision concerning another on the other person's submission to unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, whether or not the other person submits to the conduct. *Quid pro quo* sexual harassment, occurs, for example when a school employee causes a student to believe s(he) must submit to sexual advances to receive a better grade than deserved, or is threatened with a loss of a promised college application recommendation unless the student dates the employee.

- **Hostile environment sexual harassment** occurs when unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature by a student, a school employee, or a third party on school property or at a school related activities is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the District's programs or activities by creating a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive educational environment. A victim may also be someone affected by conduct directed toward another individual.

- **Sexual harassment may occur adult to student, student to student, student to adult, adult to adult, male to female, female to male, female to female, and male to male.**

Depending on the circumstances, sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- ***Verbal forms of sexual harassment***, including repeated unwanted requests for dates, sexual rumors, sexually explicit jokes, howling, whistles, catcalls, soliciting conversation regarding sexual activity and experiences, making unwanted gender-based references to a person's physical characteristics;

- ***Written forms of sexual harassment***, including offensive gestures following or stalking another, cornering or blocking a person, leering, pressuring for sexual activities;

- ***Nonverbal forms of sexual harassment***, including offensive gestures, following or stalking another, concerning or blocking a person, leering, pressuring for sexual activities;

- ***Visual forms of sexual harassment***, including displaying sexually suggestive or sexually provocative photographs, pictures, objects, cartoons, or posters; or

- ***Unwelcome physical touching***, including grabbing, groping, squeezing, sexual fondling, kissing, brushing against another's body, body hugs, and other unwelcome contact.

III. Responsibilities of all Persons Associated with Educational Community

Each member of the educational community is personally responsible for ensuring that his/her conduct does not in any way harass or discriminate against any other person that h/she has contact with in the performance of his/her duties or studies or while acting as a member of the school community. In addition, each member of the educational community is required to fully cooperate in any investigation of alleged discrimination, including harassment. Further, District employees are obligated to intervene and stop any discrimination, including harassment that they witness and to immediately report to the building principal instances of discrimination, including harassment that are reported to them, they observe, or of which they otherwise learn.

IV. Designated Officials for Addressing Discrimination and Harassment Complaints

In each school building, the Principal is responsible for receiving and investigating reports and complaints of violations of this Policy at the school level. Individuals may file a report or complaint of discrimination, including harassment, with the Principal. In the event that the Complaint alleges violations against the principal, the Complaint shall be delivered to the Superintendent, who shall appoint an individual to conduct the investigation.

V. Procedure for Reporting Discrimination and Harassment

The following complaint procedure has been established to ensure prompt and effective investigation into allegations of discrimination, including harassment. (For a complaint of disability discrimination that is NOT harassment, please refer to the District's Section 504/ADA Prohibition Against Discrimination Based on Disability policy/procedure.)

A person who believes that he or she had been harassed or otherwise discriminated against, is encouraged to report the situation to the Principal immediately. Reports/complaints are to be filed within ninety (90) days after: the discriminatory conduct or the individual reasonably becomes aware of the conduct. (Note: this filing period may be extended for good cause.) The report can be written or oral and should consist of the following:

1. the specific conduct objected to,
2. the date(s) and time(s) such conduct took place,

3. the name(s) of the alleged harasser(s) or person believed to be discriminating against them,
4. the location(s) where the conduct occurred,
5. the name(s) of any witness(es),
6. action sought to remedy the situation, and
7. any other details or information requested by the investigating official.

In addition, the person should provide the Principal with any documentation (emails, notes, pictures, electronic or recorded media, etc.) or other information in support of the allegation of discrimination, including harassment.

VI. Investigation of Complaints

Upon receipt of a report or complaint, the Principal shall facilitate a prompt investigation. The investigation must allow for the complainant, the subject of the complaint, and the alleged harasser to provide information, including the names of witnesses or other evidence, relevant to the investigation of the complaint. The principal will also endeavor to promptly interview and obtain detailed written statements from the complainant, the subject of the complaint, the alleged harasser, as well as any potential witnesses. The principal will also review any other documents or information that he or she believes is relevant to the investigation.

In the event that an investigation reveals that the alleged action or actions do not constitute discrimination or harassment as defined in this policy, but that the underlying conduct may meet the definition of bullying or cyberbullying as set forth in the District's Bullying Policy, then the results of the investigation should be forwarded and/or reviewed in conjunction with the provisions of that policy. If necessary, the investigation may be re-opened under the parameters of that policy.

Conclusion of Investigation

A written determination regarding the complaint and any resolution will be provided by the principal to the complainant and the accused within thirty (30) school/working days of the complaint.

If a violation is found to have occurred, the District will take steps to prevent reoccurrence of the violation and correct its discriminatory effect on the person(s) affected. Such steps may include appropriate disciplinary action (including but not limited to suspension of student(s) and termination of employee(s)), counseling, development of a safety plan and other remedies, as appropriate.

Appeal Process

The complainant may request reconsideration of the determination and/or resolution of a complaint by notifying the Superintendent in writing or verbally within seven (7) school/working days of receipt of the written determination of the Principal. The Superintendent or his/her designee will respond to such request within thirty (30) school/working days of receipt of the request for reconsideration; his/her decision is final.

VII. Confidentiality

Investigations of discrimination, including harassment complaints shall be conducted in such a manner as to disclose information only to those who need to know and as necessary to gain information pertinent to the investigation. Please note, some level of disclosure may be necessary in the course of conducting interviews in connection with investigation of any complaint under this policy. The North Providence Public Schools shall endeavor to keep such information as confidential as it can without compromising the thoroughness of the investigation.

IX. State and Federal Authorities

In addition to the process described above, the complainant may, at any time, file a complaint with to the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, or other appropriate federal or state agency charged with enforcement of state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination, including harassment based on membership in a protected class.

U.S Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights
John W. McCormack Building
5 Post Office Square, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02109
Telephone: (617) 289-0111
<http://www.ed.gov>

Rhode Island Department of Education
255 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903
Telephone: (401) 222-4600
<http://www.ride.ri.com>

NORTH PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT SECTION 504/ADA

PROHIBITION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION BASED ON DISABILITY

Pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”) and their implementing regulations, no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity in the North Providence School Department (“District”). The District does not discriminate in admission or access to, participation or treatment, or employment in, its programs or activities. As such, the District’s policies and practices will not discriminate against students and employees and with disabilities, will provide equal opportunity to employment, and will make accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities its facilities, programs, and activities. Disability discrimination will not be permitted in any of the programs, activities, policies, and/or practices in the District.

As used in this policy and as defined under Section 504/ADA (as the same may be amended from time to time), “an individual with a disability” means a person who has, had a record of, or

is regarded as having, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Major life activities are functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.

The Section 504 regulations also require a school district to provide a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) to each eligible student who has a disability and is in the school district's jurisdiction. Under Section 504, FAPE consists of the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet the student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met and are based upon adherence to the applicable Section 504 and Title II regulations.

1. Free and Appropriate Public Education for Students

The District is committed to identifying, evaluating, and providing a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to students within its jurisdiction who are disabled within the definition of Section 504.

Under Section 504, the District must provide a free appropriate public education to each qualified disabled child. A free appropriate public education, under Section 504, consists of regular or special education and related aids and services that are designed to meet the individual student's needs and based on adherence to the regulatory requirements on educational setting, evaluation, placement, and procedural safeguards. 34 CFR 104.33, 104.34, 104.35, and 104.36. A student may be handicapped within the meaning of Section 504, and therefore entitled to regular or special education and related aids and services under the Section 504 regulations, even though the student may not be eligible for special education and related services under IDEIA.

Parent(s)/guardian(s)/custodian(s)/ ("parents") are invited and encouraged to participate fully in the evaluation process, 504 plan development, 504 meetings, etc.

The District will provide non-academic extracurricular services and activities in such a manner as is necessary to afford qualified persons with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation in such services and activities. The District will verify that persons with disabilities participate with persons without disabilities in such activities and services to the maximum extent appropriate.

Any parent who disagrees with a decision made by the District or the disagrees with the student's 504 team may follow the "Grievance Procedure for Addressing Discrimination" set forth below **OR** may request a hearing before an impartial hearing officer at the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) **OR** may file a complaint with the United States Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Contact information for RIDE and OCR can be found at the end of this policy.

2. Employment Practices

Discrimination Prohibited

In accordance with Section 504/ADA, no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be subjected to discrimination in employment under any of the District's programs or activities. Further, the District will take positive steps to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities. The District will not limit, segregate or classify applicants or employees in any way that adversely affects their opportunities or status because of disability. Additionally, the District will not participate in any contractual or other relationships that have the effect of subjecting qualified individuals with disabilities who are applicants or employees to discrimination on the basis of disability.

Reasonable Accommodation

The District will make reasonable accommodation to the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is an applicant or employee, unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the District's program and/or activities.

3. Facilities and Programs

No qualified person with a disability will, because the District's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by persons with disabilities, be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity to which Section 504/ADA applies. This includes, but is not limited to, providing accommodations to parents with disabilities necessary for them to participate as other parents are allowed to participate in their child's educational programs or meetings pertinent thereto.

For facilities constructed or altered after June 3, 1977, the District will comply with applicable accessibility standards. For those existing facilities constructed prior to June 3, 1977, the District is committed to operating its programs and activities so that they are readily accessible to persons with disabilities. Programs and activities will be designed and scheduled so that the location and nature of the facility or area of the program will not deny a student with a disability the opportunity to participate on the same basis as a student without disabilities. The District will meet its obligation through such means as redesign of equipment, reassignment of classes or other services to accessible buildings, assignment of aides to beneficiaries, alteration of existing facilities and/or construction of new facilities, or any other method that results in making its programs and activities accessible to persons with disabilities. In choosing among available methods for meeting its obligations, the district will give priority to those methods that serve persons with disabilities in the most integrated setting appropriate.

Designated Officials for Addressing Discrimination Complaints

In each school building, the Principal is responsible for receiving and investigating reports and complaints of violations of this Policy at the school level. Individuals may file a report or complaint of discrimination with the Principal. In the event that the Complaint alleges violations against the principal or the Director of Special Education, the Complaint shall be delivered to the Superintendent, who shall appoint an individual to conduct the investigation.

Grievance Procedure for addressing Discrimination

The following complaint procedure has been established to ensure prompt and effective investigation into allegations of disability discrimination. If the complaint pertains to allegations of disability-based harassment, refer to the District's Anti-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment Policy and Grievance Procedure.

A person who believes that he or she had been discriminated against is encouraged to report the situation to the Principal immediately. Reports/complaints are to be filed within ninety (90) days after the conduct complained of occurred or the time the individual reasonably becomes aware of the conduct. (Note: this filing period may be extended for good cause.) The report can be written or oral and should consist of the following:

1. The specific action objected to, including but not limited to a team decision, action, or refusal to take an action requested by the parent or alleged denial of FAPE
2. the date(s) and time(s) such action or refusal to take an action or alleged denial of FAPE took place,
3. the name(s) of the District staff or other persons believed to be discriminating against them,
4. the name(s) of any witness(es),
5. action sought to remedy the situation, and
6. any other details or information requested by the investigating official.

In addition, the person should provide the Principal with any documentation (emails, notes, pictures, etc.) or other information in support of the allegation of discrimination.

Investigation of Complaints

Upon receipt of a report or complaint, the Principal shall facilitate a prompt investigation. The investigation must allow for the complainant, the subject of the complaint, and the individual alleged to have discriminated to provide information, including the names of witnesses or other evidence, relevant to the investigation of the complaint. The principal will also endeavor to promptly interview and obtain detailed written statements from the complainant, the subject of the complaint, the individual alleged to have discriminated, as well as any potential witnesses.

The principal will also review any other documents or information that he or she believes is relevant to the investigation.

A written determination regarding the complaint and any resolution will be provided by the principal to the complainant and the accused within thirty (30) school/working days of the complaint.

Appeal Process

The complainant may request reconsideration of the determination and/or resolution of a complaint by notifying the Superintendent in writing or verbally within seven (7) school/working days of receipt of the written determination of the Principal. The Superintendent or his/her designee will respond to such request within thirty (30) school/working days of receipt of the request for reconsideration; his/her decision is final.

If a violation is found to have occurred, the District will take steps to prevent reoccurrence of the violation and correct its discriminatory effect on the person(s) affected.

If the violation involves the denial of a free and appropriate public education to a student or students, such steps may include re-convening of the 504 team, revision of a 504 plan, compensatory services, development of a safety plan and other remedies, as appropriate.

If the violation involves an employment issue, such steps may include appropriate discipline up to and including possible termination of any employee violating this policy and/or such other remedies as are appropriate.

Confidentiality

Investigations of discrimination complaints shall be conducted in such a manner as to disclose information only to those who need to know or those who may have information pertinent to the investigation. Please note, some level of disclosure may be necessary in the course of conducting interviews in connection with investigation of any complaint under this policy. The North Providence Public Schools shall endeavor to keep such information as confidential as it can without compromising the thoroughness of the investigation.

State and Federal Authorities

In addition to the process described above, the complainant may, at any time, file a complaint with to the Office for Civil Rights, Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, or other appropriate federal or state agency charged with enforcement of state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination.

U.S Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights
John W. McCormack Building
5 Post Office Square, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02109
Telephone: (617) 289-0111
<http://www.ed.gov>

Rhode Island Department of Education
255 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903
Telephone: (401) 222-4600
<http://www.ride.ri.com>

NORTH PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT SAFE SCHOOL ACT STATEWIDE BULLYING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

This **Statewide Bullying Policy** is promulgated pursuant to the authority set forth in §16-21-34 of the General Laws of Rhode Island. Known as the Safe School Act, the statute recognizes that the bullying of a student creates a climate of fear and disrespect that can seriously impair the student's health and negatively affect learning. Bullying undermines the safe learning environment that students need to achieve their full potential. The purpose of the Policy is to ensure a consistent and unified statewide approach to the prohibition of bullying at school.

Nothing in this policy prohibits the North Providence School Department from complying with federal antidiscrimination laws

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1. DEFINITIONS

BULLYING means the 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 student that:

- a. Causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
- b. Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- c. Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or abusive educational environment for the student;
- d. Infringes on the rights of the student to participate in school activities; or
- e. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

The expression, physical act or gesture may include, but is not limited to, an incident or incidents that may be reasonably perceived as being motivated by characteristics such as:

Race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or mental, physical, or sensory disability, intellectual ability or by any other distinguishing characteristic.

If the expression, physical act or gesture includes an incident or incidents that may be reasonably perceived as being motivated by characteristics or harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, genetic information or testing, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability then the matter should be investigated under the District's Anti-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment Policy and Grievance Procedure.

Bullying most often occurs as repeated behavior and often is not a single incident between the bullying/cyber-bullying offender(s) and the bullying victim(s).

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

Forms of cyber-bullying may include but are not limited to:

- a. The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- b. The knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages; or

- c. The distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of materials on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the creation, impersonation, or distribution results in any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (a) to (e) of the definition of bullying.

AT SCHOOL means:

- a. on school premises,
- b. at any school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises,
- c. on a school-transportation vehicle,
- d. at an official school bus stop,
- e. using property or equipment provided by the school, or
- f. acts which create a material and substantial disruption of the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

2. SCHOOL CLIMATE

Bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation against any person associated with a report of bullying or the investigation thereof is prohibited in all schools that are approved for the purpose of the compulsory attendance statute (§§16-19-1 and 16-19-2). School staff shall take all reasonable measures to prevent bullying at school. Such measures may include professional development and prevention activities, parental workshops, and student assemblies among other strategies. School faculty, administration and staff, at all times, will model courteous behavior to each other, to students, and to school visitors. Abusive or humiliating language or demeanor will not be accepted. Additionally, students and their families are expected to exhibit courteous behavior to all members of the learning community in school and at school sponsored events.

3. POLICY OVERSIGHT and RESPONSIBILITY

The school principal, director, or head of school shall be responsible for the implementation and oversight of this bullying policy.

The school principal, director, or head of school shall provide the superintendent, school committee and/or school governing board with a summary report of incidents, responses, and any other bullying-related issues at least twice annually.

For public schools, the prevention of bullying shall be part of the school district strategic plan (§ 16-7.1-2(e)) and school safety plan (§16-21-24).

4. INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

The school principal, director or head of school shall ensure that students, staff, volunteers, and parents/legal guardians are provided information regarding this Policy. This information shall

include methods of discouraging and preventing this type of behavior, the procedure to file a complaint, and the disciplinary action that may be taken against those who commit acts in violation of this policy.

This policy shall be:

- a. Distributed annually to students, staff, volunteers, and parents/legal guardians
- b. Included in student codes of conduct, disciplinary policies, and student handbooks
- c. A prominently posted link on the home page of the school /district website

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5. REPORTING

The school principal, director or head of school shall establish, and prominently publicize to students, staff, volunteers, and parents/guardians, how a report of bullying may be filed and how this report will be acted upon (See attached sample Report Form).

The victim of bullying, anyone who witnesses an incidence of bullying, and anyone who has credible information that an act of bullying has taken place may file a report of bullying.

Any student or staff member who believes he/she is being bullied should immediately report such circumstances to an appropriate staff member, teacher or administrator.

Parents/Guardians of the victim of bullying and parents/ guardians of the alleged perpetrator of the bullying shall be notified within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident report. When there is a reasonable suspicion that a child is either a bully or a victim of bullying, the parents/ guardians of the child will be notified immediately by the principal, director or head of school.

Responsibility of Staff: School staff, including volunteers, who observe an act of bullying or who have reasonable grounds to believe that bullying is taking place must report the bullying to school authorities. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Responsibility of Students: Students who observe an act of bullying or who have reasonable grounds to believe that bullying is taking place must report the bullying to school authorities. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. The victim of bullying, however, shall not be subject to discipline for failing to report the bullying. Student reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously, provided, however, that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Prohibition against Retaliation: Retaliation or threats of retaliation in any form designed to intimidate the victim of bullying, those who are witnesses to bullying, or those investigating an incident of bullying shall not be tolerated. Retaliation or threat of retaliation will result in the imposition of discipline in accordance with the school behavior code.

False Reporting/Accusations: A school employee, school volunteer or student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be disciplined in accordance with the school behavior code.

Reports in Good Faith: A school employee, school volunteer, student, parent/ legal guardian, or caregiver who promptly reports, in good faith, an act of bullying to the appropriate school official designated in the school's policy shall be immune from a cause of action for damages arising from reporting bullying.

6. INVESTIGATION/RESPONSE

The school principal, director or head of school shall promptly investigate all allegations of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. If the allegation is found to be credible, appropriate disciplinary actions, subject to applicable due process requirements, will be imposed. The School Resource Officer or other qualified staff may be utilized to mediate bullying situations.

The investigation will include an assessment by the school psychologist and/or social worker of what effect the bullying, harassment or intimidation has had on the victim. A student who engages in continuous and/or serious acts of bullying will also be referred to the school psychologist and/or social worker.

Police Notification: Immediate notification of the local law enforcement agency will be made when circumstances warrant the pursuit of criminal charges against the perpetrator.

Protection: If a student is the victim of serious or persistent bullying:

- a. The school principal, director or head of school will intervene immediately to provide the student with a safe educational environment.
- b. The interventions will be developed, if possible, with input from the student, his or her parent/guardian, and staff.
- c. The parents/ guardians of a victim shall also be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

7. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The disciplinary actions for violations of the bullying policy shall be determined by the school/district appropriate authority. Disciplinary actions for violations of the bullying policy shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The severity of the disciplinary action shall be aligned to the severity of the bullying behavior.

The range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. Admonitions and warnings

- b. Parental/ Guardian notification and meetings
- c. Detention
- d. In-school suspension
- e. Loss of school-provided transportation or loss of student parking pass
- f. Loss of the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities
- g. Loss of the opportunity to participate in school social activities
- h. Loss of the opportunity to participate in graduation exercises or middle school promotional activities
- i. Police contact
- j. School suspension: No student shall be suspended from school unless it is deemed to be a necessary consequence of the violation of this Policy.

8. SOCIAL SERVICES/COUNSELING

Referral to appropriate counseling and/or social services currently being offered by schools or communities shall be provided for bullying victims, perpetrators and appropriate family members of said students.

9. SOCIAL NETWORKING

Students shall be prohibited from accessing social networking sites in school, except for educational or instructional purposes and with the prior approval from school administration.

10. OTHER REDRESS

This section does not prevent a victim of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation from seeking redress under any other available law, either civil or criminal. This section does not create or alter any tort liability.

11. ADOPTION OF POLICY

The North Providence School Committee hereby adopts this policy, in its entirety effective immediately.

