

Elm Street School

Student/Parent/Guardian Handbook

2011-2012

Table of Contents

Vision Statement
Principal's Letter/Signature Page
Web Page

ACADEMICS

Instruction.....	1
Open House	
Parent-Teacher Conferences	
Homework Guidelines.....	2
Quiet Room Policy.....	3
Make-up Work/Family Vacations	
Academic Update.....	4
Extra Help	
Report Cards	
Incomplete	
Restricted List	
Promotion Policy	
Student Recognition	5
Typical Student Day	

ACTIVITIES

Activity Period.....	6
Art Club	
Chorus	
Fundraising Activities	
Intramural Athletics	
Recorder Club	7
School Play	

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Attendance/Absences.....	7
Tardiness to School.....	8
Dismissal From School (during the school day)	
Arrival to School	
Leaving School (at end of school day).....	9
Crosswalks	
Safety Patrol	
Waiting for Buses	
Bus Rules and Regulations.....	10
Bus Code of Conduct	
Bicycles	
Assemblies	
Breakfast Program.....	11
Class Parties	
Dress Code	
Electronic Devices/Valuables.....	12
Entrance/Enrollment Requirements	
Equal Education	
Extracurricular Activities	

Field Trips	13
Fire Drills	
Homeroom	
Lockers	
Lost and Found	
Lunch/Breakfast	14
Lunch Room Rules	
Lunch Times	
Medication	
“No School” Announcements	15
Notes from Parents/Guardians	
Recess	
Student Records	
Travel in Halls	16
Visitors	
Withdrawals and Transfers	
<u>SERVICES</u>	
Computer Lab.....	16
Counseling and Guidance.....	17
D.A.R.E. Program	
Library	
Nurse	
Guidelines for staying home when ill.	18
<u>COMMUNICATIONS</u>	
Calendar/Newsletter.....	18
Telephone Calls By Students.....	19
Telephone Calls to Teachers	
<u>STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES</u>	
Student Behavior and Discipline Guidelines.....	19
<u>DEFINITION OF DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS</u>	
Detention.....	21
Suspensions.....	22
Expulsion	
<u>DISTRICT POLICIES</u>	
District Policies.....	22
Appendix	
Harassment	23
Sexual Harassment.....	24
Bullying.....	27
Hazing.....	33
School Calendar	
Harassment Grievance Procedures.....	23
Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures.....	26
Special Education Discipline.....	31
AHERA Requirement	
Voice Mail/Phone Extensions	

Handbook Signature Page

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Welcome to Elm Street School. Our professional and support staff look forward to working with you in the exciting and dynamic process of educating our children.

This handbook provides important information regarding the rights and responsibilities of our school citizens. Please read the following handbook carefully. It has been prepared by the Elm Street School Council to insure that each and every student at Elm Street School has a safe and enjoyable educational experience.

After reviewing this handbook with your child, please fill out the form below and return it to his/her homeroom teacher by **Friday, September 2, 2011**. Thank you for taking the time to review its contents.

Joyce Swedberg

For the ESS Staff

.....(Please return bottom portion to your homeroom teacher.).....

My signature below indicates that I have reviewed and discussed this handbook with my child.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Student's Name

Homeroom #

Student's Teacher

Date

ELM STREET SCHOOL

160 Elm Street

Gardner, MA 01440

Tel: 978 632-1673 Fax: 978 632-4382

Joyce R. Swedberg, Principal

Paul A. Guerin, Assistant Principal

August 29, 2011

Dear Parent /Guardian,

Asbestos management laws are meant to protect people attending, working at, and visiting schools and other public buildings from exposure to asbestos hazards. The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act, or "AHERA," requires school administrators to identify and manage asbestos-containing materials in schools and to take preventative measures against the release of asbestos fibers. The law requires schools to use licensed asbestos abatement professionals to carry out response actions. The law also requires schools to survey asbestos-containing materials, conduct periodic inspections of these materials, train personnel on asbestos and asbestos laws and make asbestos management plans available to the public upon request.

Gardner Public Schools adheres to each of the requirements noted above and maintains records of the most recent inspections and management plans in the administrative offices located at 70 Waterford Street, Gardner, MA and at each school.

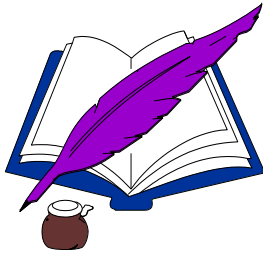
If you would like to schedule an appointment to review asbestos inspection/management plan documents, please contact your school or the Superintendent's Office at (978) 632-1000.

Sincerely,

Joyce Swedberg
Principal

ACADEMICS

Instruction

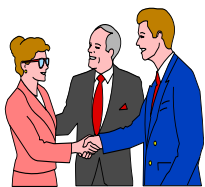


Elm St. School students are educated in a broad range of subject matter as mandated by the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and local standards. All students receive regular instruction in the following core subject areas: Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Students also receive an average of 55 minutes of instruction in Art, Music, and Physical Education per week from specialists in these areas. All fifth graders take part in the DARE program. For the most part, all third and fourth grade classes are self-contained i.e., the children remain with their homeroom teacher for instruction in the core subject areas. Fifth-grade students change classes for math, science, and social studies. The primary reason for changing classes in grade 5 is to help prepare the children for the Middle School schedule format in the sixth grade.

Open House

An Open House will be held on Thursday, September 8, 2010, to provide parents with an opportunity to meet their child's teacher and become familiar with their performance and behavioral expectations for the coming school year. All parents are strongly encouraged to attend this event.

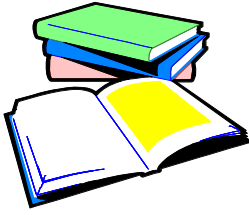
Parent-Teacher Conferences



Formal parent-teacher conferences are held each November. This year they are scheduled for November 21 [day] and 22 [night], 2010. A written notice is sent home in advance with the child informing parents of the opportunity to schedule a brief 10-minute conference. Parents are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to interact privately with their child's teacher.

Parent-teacher conferences concerning a student's academic performance and behavior are encouraged at any time during the school year, not just during formal conference times. A home-school partnership is critical to the academic and social development of your child. If a teacher or a member of the administration thinks a conference is in the best interest of the child, the parent/guardian will be notified. If a parent/guardian wishes to arrange a conference, the parent/guardian should call the school to arrange an appointment in advance. The parent/guardian is encouraged to meet with his/her child's teacher on a proactive basis.

Homework Guidelines



Homework is an important part of Elm Street School's curricula. The Elm Street staff believes that homework assignments serve to fulfill several important objectives as follows:

1. To encourage student initiative
2. To develop independent learning/thinking skills
3. To allow time for practice and application of what has been learned in school
4. To prepare students for future study
5. To allow time to complete tasks not finished in school
6. To individualize instruction
7. To teach responsibility for task completion
8. To build learning and study skills

Further, homework is an integral part of the report card grade in all subjects at Elm Street but may be weighted differently among the teachers. Homework grading may vary depending on the purpose of the assignments as follows:

- * Practicing skills are sometimes the focus of the children's homework, so it may not be appropriate to grade every assignment.
- * Meeting completion dates are essential to the children's learning; therefore, the timely completion of homework assignments is crucial to their developing into responsible, independent learners.
- * Collaborating on projects helps to develop the children's sense of social responsibility and enhances their ability to work cooperatively with their peers.

Students are required to keep their daily planning books with them in every class to record each homework assignment. Each child is given a planner on the first day of school to assist in the organization of their studies. All homework assignments are expected to be completed by each student, as it is an integral part of the learning process.

It is recognized that students work at different rates of speed and that the amount of homework assigned increases as students progress through school. The amount of time that homework assignments are intended (maximally) to take should fall within the following time frames:

Grade 3 = 20-30 minutes

Grade 4 = 30-40 minutes

Grade 5 = 40-50 minutes

Each teacher will provide students with feedback on the quality of their homework via through class discussion, constructive comments, or assessments. It is recognized that teachers should communicate with each other to ensure that students are not facing several unrelated projects, lengthy assignments, or major tests at the same time.

Studies have repeatedly shown that homework, when completed properly, increases academic achievement. It is also important that assignments be completed on

time. Failure to do so only slows the student's educational progress. Parents can and should play a significant role in their child's education. Some suggestions for assisting with your child's homework are as follows:

1. Ask about homework daily.
2. Have your child carefully write down all assignments in his/her school planner.
3. Provide a location and an atmosphere that is conducive to study.
4. Establish a homework routine. Make homework, not TV, a priority. Children usually like it when they know what to expect.
5. Make the time to check the work that your child brings home to ensure that he/she understands the assignment.
6. Let the teacher know of any difficulties that your child may be encountering.
7. Praise your child for his/her effort and for a job well done. When in doubt, praise some more.

Quiet Room Policy

ESS students are held accountable for daily class work and homework. During their assigned recess time, students are sent to quiet room to complete unfinished homework and/or class work. This room is designed to teach ESS students about academic accountability and to help ensure steady academic progress. Students may also be sent to the quiet room by administration or their teacher as a consequence for inappropriate behavior.

Make-Up Work/Family Vacations

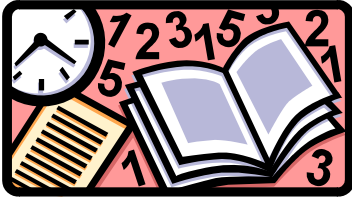
Absence from school does not excuse students from their academic responsibilities. If a student's absence from school is deemed to be excused by the teacher or principal, that student will have the same amount of time as he/she was absent to make up work missed. For example, a student is absent Monday, returns to school Tuesday, and receives make-up work. The work is due Wednesday. If a student is absent Monday and Tuesday, he/she will receive two days to make up the work (Wednesday and Thursday). The work is due on Friday. This applies to tests/quizzes as well as homework assignments.



Please allow 5 days advanced notice when requesting class and homework assignments, from your child's teacher, to take on a family vacation. Some assignments will be provided, however, these assignments may not be all inclusive of what the child would miss in class. All assignments must be passed in within two days of the students' return in order to receive credit. Students are required to follow-up on any additional assignments, missed quizzes, and/or tests by speaking with their teachers.

Work missed due to truancy or other unexcused absences will result in a grade of zero for that work.

Academic Updates/Progress Reports



All students will be issued academic update/progress reports, at the approximate midpoint of each marking term. Please review the report, sign it, and return it to your child's homeroom teacher within three school days of its issuance. Progress reports will be distributed on October 21, 2011, January 27, 2012 and May 11, 2012.

Extra Help

A student who is having difficulty in a subject or who has received a poor progress report may receive additional assistance from his/her teacher at a time designated by the teacher...usually recess, lunch, or after school.

Report Cards

The most important purpose of a grading system is to provide meaningful information and feedback concerning a child's school performance to parents. Report cards are issued quarterly. They should be signed and returned to their child's teacher within one week of issuance. Tentative report card issuance dates are: December 2, 2011, March 9, 2012 and June 12, 2012 (projected last day for the 11-12 year).



Incomplete

Incomplete report card grades must be made up within two weeks of the end of the marking term. The principal may approve extensions should unusual circumstances warrant.

Restricted List

Students are placed on the restricted list because of poor academic performance and behavior. They may not participate in any school-sponsored activities until they earn their way off the list. Two weeks is the minimum period of time that a student may be on the list.

Promotion Policy



The following general guidelines are utilized in the determination of grade promotion. The judgment and educational expertise of the classroom teachers and the principal will take precedence over any specific criteria.

1. All students will be placed into classes in which it is felt they will be most successful determined by the principal and assistant principal.
2. All special needs students will receive full promotions except in situations where their performance in the resource room has been sub-standard.
3. A transfer is a pupil who would normally be retained but will not remain in their current grade for reasons of age, maturity, physical handicap, emotional difficulty, lack of academic aptitude, or social reasons.
4. Decisions about promotion will not be announced without the permission of the principal. The principal retains the singular authority to determine student status.

Student Recognition

In an effort to further encourage responsible and appropriate social and academic behavior, Elm St. School students may be recognized for their efforts on a daily, monthly, or quarterly basis.

Gold Book: Any Elm St. staff member can have a deserving student sign the Gold Book located in the main office for performing a good deed. Gold Book certificates are issued on a weekly basis.

Student of the Month: Each month every teacher may nominate one of their students as Student of the Month for exemplary performance and behavior. Recipients have their picture displayed in the school lobby and receive a special certificate.

'E' List: The one thing that all students can control is their level of academic effort at school. Effort is the key ingredient of academic success. It is fair and equitable to all students to recognize their quarterly academic effort at ESS by placing their name on the "E" List. Nominated students exhibit consistent effort in all graded disciplines, complete all assignments promptly, are consistently prepared for class activities, and are always striving to improve their performance.

Typical Student Day

State law requires elementary students to have a minimum of 900 hours of direct instruction during each school year. Elm St. School students easily exceed that number. The typical student day might look like this:

- 8:20-8:30 = Homeroom
- 8:35-9:30 = Special
- 9:35-11:45= Academics
- 11:45-12:05= Recess/Lunch
- 12:05-1:40 = Academics
- 1:40 -2:40 = Academics/AR
- 2:40- 2:45 = Clean up/Dismissal



ACTIVITIES

Enrichment Period

Enrichment periods may be observed each from 2:00-2:30. Students may participate on a rotating basis in one or more of the following enrichment activities such as art, chorus, recorder club, guitar club, drama program and physical education. This time period is also used for students to participate in the Accelerated Reader Program or Enrichment classes.

Art Club



The Art Club meets on a regular basis throughout the school year. Student projects have included candle making, batik, painting, plaster, and clay. Creative expression is emphasized through various mediums. A limited number of selected students may participate.

Chorus



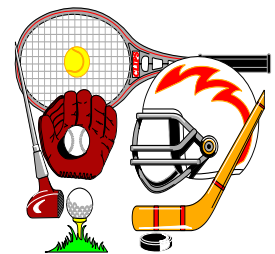
Participation in the chorus is open to any student in grades 4 and 5. Previous vocal training or choral experience is not required. Various styles of choral literature are included during chorus rehearsals in preparation for special performances.

Fund-Raising Activities

Fund raising is conducted by and through our P.T.O. to raise necessary monies for our school programs. The principal shall approve all fund-raising ventures. The Elm St. P.T.O. conducts one major whole-school fund-raiser at the beginning of each school year. There may be smaller fundraisers throughout the year to benefit specific causes.

Intramural Athletics

Elm Street School offers a wide variety of opportunities for students to participate in positive athletic activities that foster team cooperation and personal growth. Participation oriented programs are held in the following order: gymnastics, basketball, volleyball, floor hockey, and outdoor games in the spring. Intramurals are held after school, as per the announced schedule. These activities conclude at 3:45 p.m. and parents are responsible for transportation home.



Recorder Club

The Recorder Club is open to all students in grades 4 and 5 who have an interest in becoming more proficient playing this instrument. A wide variety of music is chosen and performed. Students will learn how to play solo and as an ensemble.



School Play



The School Play is an enjoyable event that is open to all students at Elm St. School in grades 4 and 5. The play affords an opportunity to those with dramatic skills and to those who wish to put their artistic, musical, manual arts, and other creative skills to use.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Attendance/Absences

One of the most important records that a student establishes in school is his or her attendance record. Regular attendance and punctuality are absolute necessities in attaining an education. Elm Street School students are expected to attend school on a regular basis. Under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, every child between the ages of 7 and 16 is compelled to attend school.

When a student is absent from school, a parent or guardian must call the school (978-632-1673) by 8:45 a.m. that day to report the absence. It is important that your child's whereabouts be known and accounted for. By calling the school office, you are assuring us that your child is safe. If you do not call the office, you will receive a call from us. We want to work with you to ensure that you do not mistakenly believe that your child is in school when he/she is not.

When returning to school from an absence, the student must bring a note signed by the parent/guardian explaining the reason for his/her absence to the homeroom teacher. This is in addition to the telephone call on the day of the absence.

THE FOLLOWING REASONS FOR ABSENCE MAY BE EXCUSABLE:

1. Illness with MD note
2. Family emergency
3. Death in the family
4. Medical, dental, or other appointments
5. Religious observances

Please Note

Medical, dental, and other personal appointments, whenever possible, should be made during non-school hours. The Principal has the final say whether or not an absence is excused. **We may take legal action when the student amasses more than 7 unexcused absences.**

Awards are given at the end of the school year to all students who achieve perfect attendance. Perfect attendance is just that, meaning no dismissals or tardies. -- on time, in school, every day.

Tardiness to School

Students are considered tardy after the 8:30 bell rings signifying the beginning of the school day. Students must report to the office when tardy. Students need to have a note, written by the parent/guardian, explaining their tardiness. Excessive tardiness will result in after school make-up time and could result in legal action after amassing 10 unexcused tardies. **This is very disruptive** to the learning environment when a student enters a class late.



Dismissal from School (during the school day)

Parental contact by telephone, (978-632-1673), and/or note is necessary for every dismissal. The approved person picking up the student **must** come into the school and sign the dismissal book. A reason for dismissal must always be given.

Arrival to School

Bus students will be dropped off at Cross Street next to the H. M. Sauter School. They should walk in front of the Sauter building and report directly to the recess area at the rear of Elm St. School. Use the driveway/sidewalk on the Sauter School side of Elm St. School only! Elm Street School may be entered only from the rear center doors of the school and only with permission. The recess area is reserved for the children, and vehicles are not allowed in this area from 8:00 a.m. through 3:15 p.m. At 8:20 a.m., a bell will ring which signals the time for homeroom lines to form.

Students are not allowed into the building before 8:20 a.m., except in the following instances:

- * During inclement weather, students are allowed into the auditorium upon arrival. They will be seated by grade and homeroom in assigned sections. Students may not leave their seat without permission. All school discipline policies apply at all times. Dismissal will be by class as each homeroom teacher arrives.
- * Students may enter the building with special permission from any teacher or paraprofessional but only if an adult is present to supervise the student.
- * Students are allowed to enter the building beginning at 8:00 a.m. to purchase lunch tickets or for the breakfast program.
- * In all other cases, the school administration will determine when students should enter the building earlier than usual.

Students who walk to school or are dropped off should not arrive before 8:00 a.m. Students who arrive before this time are unsupervised on the playground...a

potentially dangerous situation. Walkers and drop-offs should use the sidewalk/driveway on the Sauter School side of the building only. Stay away from the teacher parking lot. All other procedures remain the same.

Leaving School (at end of school day)

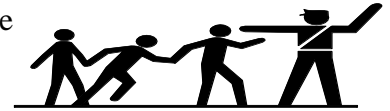
ALL STUDENTS WILL LEAVE THE BUILDING IN A PATROL, I.E., BUS, WALKING, PICK-UP!!!!!!! Students are expected to go right home unless other arrangements have been made.

At dismissal time (2:45 p.m.), buses will pick up students in the rear of the building at the cafeteria door and auditorium doors. **Riding the school bus is a privilege, which may be revoked for misbehavior (see bus rules and regulations).**

Students who are picked up at dismissal time MUST have a note from home in order to join the walking/pick-up patrol. Pick-up students will leave the building with the walking patrol. Students headed down Elm St. will cross at the walkway in front of the school. Students headed up Elm St. will cross at the Cross St. walkway. Parents are to wait outside the building at dismissal time.

Crosswalks

Students should cross Elm Street only where the crossing guards are located. Students should not use the south driveway or sidewalk near where the teachers park their cars.

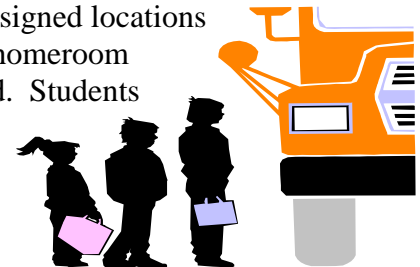


Safety Patrol

The Gardner Police Department provides a safety officer to work closely with school personnel to help ensure safe travel to and from school for all students. Walking students should remain on sidewalks and cross only at crosswalks. Students being picked up by their parent/guardian must also cross at the crosswalk. Bus students must obey all rules of conduct outlined in the bus section. **ALL STUDENTS ARE SUBJECT TO SCHOOL RULES FROM THE TIME THEY LEAVE THEIR HOME TO COME TO SCHOOL UNTIL THEY ARRIVE HOME AT THE CLOSE OF SCHOOL.**

Waiting for Buses

Students who are bused to and from school must wait at pre-assigned locations during this time. The children are dismissed to this area by their homeroom teachers and are expected to wait quietly for their bus to be called. Students are expected to use this waiting time to do homework assignments or to read. It is a good idea to encourage your child to carry a book in his/her backpack to read.



Bus Rules and Regulations

Students are expected to behave in the same polite, compliant, and courteous manner while waiting at the bus stop and riding the school bus as they do while attending school. Inappropriate behavior at the bus stop or on the bus may result in the loss of bus riding privileges and/or additional disciplinary action by the school. Parents/guardians will be charged for any damages caused by their children to buses.

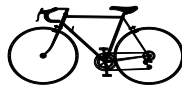
It is a privilege to ride the bus. Please don't abuse this convenience.

Students are to ride only the bus that they have been assigned. NOTES FROM HOME TO RIDE A BUS/ANOTHER BUS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED BY THE SCHOOL. If you wish to have your child ride a different bus, you must have permission from the bus company. Permission to ride a bus other than the one that goes to your home address is granted on a space available basis. To be eligible for free busing, you must live at least 1.0 mile from the school.

Bus Code of Conduct

1. Obey the bus driver at all times.
2. Upon entering the bus, find a seat quickly, sit down, and remain seated.
3. The aisle should be clear at all times...keep your belongings next to you.
4. Never put any part of your body out the window.
5. Never throw anything.
6. Never deface or vandalize the bus in any manner.
7. No smoking or eating.
8. No pets.
9. Always be kind and courteous to everyone.
10. Always report any instances of poor behavior to an adult...It's the right thing to do!!

Bicycles



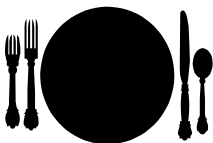
Bicycles and all other forms of wheeled travel (skateboards, roller blades, heelies, etc.) are not allowed at Elm St. School at any time due to the heavy traffic in the area at arrival and dismissal times. The safety officer and the school administration feel that it is too dangerous for bicyclists. Please do not allow your child to ride his/her bike to school. It will be confiscated and released only to the parent/guardian of the student.

Assemblies

Throughout the school year, special assemblies are scheduled with the intent to enhance student learning. Participation in or attendance at assembly programs is a privilege that will be taken away for poor behavior. Students are expected to show the utmost level of respect for their fellow human beings at all times. Booming, or anything of the sort, is not allowed.



Breakfast Program



A breakfast program is available at Elm St. School every school day from 8:00 to 8:30 a.m. in the cafeteria. Generally, the menu consists of juice, entree, and milk. All students are eligible to participate. The cost is \$1.25 for paid, \$0.30 for reduced and free.

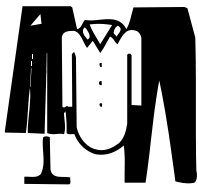
Students eating breakfast are to enter the building by the rear, center doors to go to the cafeteria. When they have finished eating, they are to return to the recess area by the same door. After 8:20 a.m., they should go directly to their homerooms. Breakfast is over at 8:25 a.m. All students should be in their homeroom by 8:30 a.m.!!

Class Parties

There may be restrictions on the nature and types of food that are allowable in certain classrooms due to the potential existence of food allergies among some of the students of the class. Your child's teacher will provide that information at the start of the school year.

Please note that we do not allow party invitations to be distributed in school. Too many hurt feelings result from children being left out.

Dress Code



Students are expected to be neat, clean, and orderly in their appearance. We make every attempt to go outside for recess every day, and students are expected to wear appropriate clothing. In the winter, coats, hats, mittens/gloves, and boots are necessary. In warmer weather, shorts of a suitable length (at least mid-thigh) are permissible. Students will not be allowed to wear the following: half shirts, tank tops (alone), mesh clothing, short shorts, and revealing clothing. Hats may not be worn in the building.

Any teacher who feels that the attire of a student is inappropriate for school and/or is disrupting the learning process may give that student a pass to the office for a second opinion by the school administration. Students whose clothing is deemed inappropriate will be required to alter their clothing or call home for a change. The student will remain in the office until such change occurs. Once dress code compliance is reached, the student will be sent back to class.

Any form or manner of attire that connotes any association or affiliation with any inappropriate social group is prohibited. Clothing which depicts any illegal activity or encourages the use of controlled substances is prohibited.

The administration will make the final determination in all dress code inquiries.

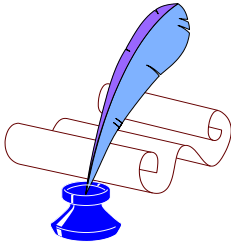
Electronic Devices / Valuables



Electronic communication/entertainment devices (Ipods, hand-held video games, MP3 players, CD player, etc.) are not allowed in school. The device will be confiscated and returned to the parent/guardian.

Cell phones may be carried with permission from the principal. Cell phones may not be turned on during school hours. Under no circumstances should items considered valuable be left in school lockers. **Elm St. School is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items or goods.**

Entrance/Enrollment Requirements



New students need to register for school when they move into the school district. We need the following information in order to enroll your child:

- * The child's immunization record
- * A completed emergency card with telephone numbers / addresses
- * A copy of most recent report card
- * Proof of residency
- * A state birth certificate (for new enrollees)

The entrance process may take up to three days. This allows the school staff to receive and process student records, place each student in the appropriate class, notify teachers, and locate books and classroom furnishings. Please tell us about any special services your child has received (I.E.P.s,(Individual Education Plans), 504 accommodations, REAP, etc.) as well as any other unusual circumstances (medical, legal, etc.). The parent/guardian will need to sign a release form giving us permission to send for the child's complete school record. **If there are any court documents that we need to have, such as, a restraining order, or a custody/guardian matter, please make sure we get a copy. Do not assume that a sending school has sent us all your personal information.**

Equal Education



The Massachusetts Equal Education Opportunity statute, General Laws Chapter 76, section 5, ensures that all students have the right to equal educational opportunities in the public schools regardless of their race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability.

Extracurricular Activities

Students who wish to participate in any school program must have parental permission and be in good school standing with regards to behavior and academic performance. Students on the restricted list are ineligible for participation in any school-sponsored activities beyond those that occur in the classroom. Participation in extracurricular activities always takes second place to detentions, teacher sessions, or any other academic obligations unless specific permission has been given. All students participating in after school programs must be picked up promptly at the end of the activity. **There is no adult supervision after the program.**

Field Trips

Various classes and groups go on out-of-school field trips throughout the school year. Students will not be allowed to go on a field trip without the expressed written permission of the parent/guardian and the approval of the school administration.

Fire Drills



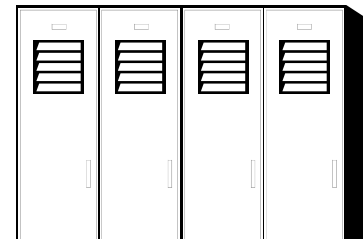
Fire drills are held at regular intervals throughout the school year. Building evacuation procedures will be explained, by teachers, on the first day of school for their classrooms and posted in writing by the exit doors. When it becomes necessary to evacuate the building students should leave the building with their teacher or aide as quickly and as orderly as possible. The elevator is not to be used. The safety of everyone is at stake during an evacuation emergency (fire drill) and as such there is no talking, no running, and no fooling around of any kind.

Homeroom

Homeroom is from 8:20 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. All students must report to homeroom each day for recording attendance. A flag salute and a moment of silent meditation are conducted each day during daily announcements at 8:30.

Lockers

Lockers are the property of the school and not of any individual student and, as such, are subject to inspection when the welfare of the school and its occupants are potentially jeopardized. The administration has the right (via *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* 469-U.S. 325, 1985) and the responsibility to search lockers for and confiscate any items that are deemed harmful or stolen. This includes, but is not limited to, drugs or drug paraphernalia, alcohol, tobacco products, and weapons.



Items of value should be stored with the homeroom teacher.

Lost and Found

Items that have been found in the building are to be brought to the main office. Items of clothing or lunch containers are placed in a box by the rear center door. In the event of a loss, please check this area. The school does not accept responsibility for lost items. Please put the child's name or some form of identification on all items that are of value.

Lunch and Breakfast

Lunch and breakfast are served on every full day of school. Prices are as follows:

Regular lunch	\$ 2.35	Regular breakfast	\$1.25
Reduced lunch	\$0.40	Reduced breakfast	\$0.30
Milk/Juice	\$0.40		

Each student eligible for a free or reduced meal must have a completed form signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the school in order to receive the price benefits. Lunch tickets may be purchased in the cafeteria during breakfast time. All lunch tickets (regular, reduced, and free) are given to the homeroom teacher on a daily basis.

Lunch Room Rules

1. All students are expected to have a lunch ticket or cash when going through the lunch line.
2. All lunches are to be eaten in the cafeteria. All trash and garbage are to be disposed of properly.
3. Paraprofessionals will seat students at the lunch table and dismiss students to the lunch line when ready.
4. When an adult in the cafeteria raises his/her hand, this is a signal for the students to raise their hands and be immediately silent. The adult has something important to say and full attention is necessary. Failure to cooperate will result in immediate disciplinary action.
5. Lunch time is primarily for eating. Quiet talking is usually allowed.
6. Dismissal is by table and at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Leave the lunch area as you found it....CLEAN!!
7. Exit the cafeteria with your homeroom teacher.

	<u>Recess</u>	<u>Lunch</u>
Grade 5 (307,308,309,310)	11:05- 11:25	11:25-11:45
Grade 5 (302,303,304,305)	11:25-11:45	11:05-11:25
Grade 4 (201,202,204,205)	11:45-12:05	12:05-12:25
Grade 4 (203,207,208,210)	12:05-12:25	11:45-12:05
Grade 3 (All)	12:45-1:05	12:25-12:45

Medication

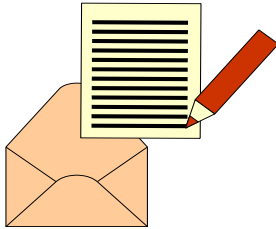
Our nurse is able to dispense prescribed and over-the-counter medication to your child under specific conditions. We are unable to comply with any requests without written and signed notification (Mass. General Laws, 112, 80b). Please refer to the Services section under **Nurse** for more details.



“No School” Announcements

“No school” announcements are broadcast over radio stations WBZ (1030 am), WTAG (580 am), and WXLO (104.5 fm), and television channels 4, 5 and 7. You can get this information on line at www.gardnerpolice.org. We have the “One Call” system. The Superintendent of Schools will make a “No School” call that will go to each home telephone number and cell phone number that we have on record. Please remember to update your numbers with the school.

Notes from Parents/Guardians



WRITTEN NOTES ARE REQUIRED FROM PARENTS/GUARDIANS IN THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS:

- 1) When your child has been absent or is late for school.
- 2) When your child is to be dismissed during the school day.
- 3) When there is a change in your child’s transportation from school.
- 4) If your child is picked-up after school.

Recess

Recess begins outside of the building and NOT in the hallway or stairs. Teachers will escort their students to the outside doors. When the bell rings at the end of recess, stop what you are doing and report to your homeroom line immediately.

Proper play is expected of all students at all times. When out on the playground students:

1. Must get permission from an adult to enter the building.
2. Must use all equipment in a proper and safe manner.
3. Must not engage in rough play ...keep their hands to themselves!
4. Must not throw objects, like stones or snow that are not intended to be thrown on school grounds.
5. Must report to their homeroom line immediately when the bell rings. Show their teacher that you are ready to enter the building by being orderly.

Play it
Safe

In the event of inclement weather, recess will be held indoors in the auditorium. They will watch a DVD or read AR book.

Student Records

Upon request, the parent/guardian may inspect the contents of their child’s permanent record. This record may be inspected routinely and in conjunction with our guidance counselor and/or homeroom teacher. Questions related to interpretation of data or other documents should be referred to the counselor. We will not release student record information without a signed release form.

Travel in Halls

Hall travel should be kept to a



minimum during the school day.

Teachers will allow an entire class to use the bathroom only on their way to and from lunch and/or recess. Teachers will escort their class to and from lunch, recess, and all specials. Classes must stay together and PASS SILENTLY so as to not disturb others.

Individual students leaving the classroom for any reason must first sign the daily class log sheet and have a travel pass in their possession. Unauthorized hallway travel may result in disciplinary action. The only exceptions are students going to band lessons, activity period participants, office summons, or medical situations requiring immediate attention.

Visitors

During school hours, visitors must report directly to the main office through the center entrance (all others are locked). If you wish to drop something off or leave a message, we will be happy to do it for you, or we can call your child down to the office. If you need to go to your child's room, you will be issued a guest badge you must display. These measures are necessary to help insure the safety of all students and staff at all times. Please also note that parents wishing to assist with school activities will have to submit to a CORI (criminal background) check.

Withdrawals and Transfers

Parents wishing to withdraw their child from Elm Street School must do so in person by coming to the main office to fill out the necessary forms. All issued books or other school property must be returned at this time. Any monies owed to the school for lost books, owed fund-raiser money, etc., need to be paid in full by the time of withdrawal.

Students wishing to transfer into Elm Street School will not be enrolled before all health records and other pertinent information are on file with the school.

SERVICES

Computer Lab



Elm St. School has two and half updated computer labs. Each homeroom is scheduled for one instructional session per week. Teachers may also schedule additional class time. The Accelerated Reader Program and Study Island is available in all classrooms. We have added computer Smart Boards to each floor and computer lab.

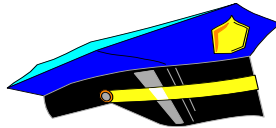
Counseling and Guidance

Counseling and guidance services, a vital component of the educational process, assist Elm Street School students in realizing their full potential in their personal and educational lives. A proactive program, The Second Step, dealing with topics such as substance abuse, child abuse, peer and interpersonal relationships is delivered to students by the homeroom teachers in grades three through five on a regularly scheduled basis. This program models skills for the children to employ in building and sustaining positive interactions with their peers. Our guidance counselor will support the Second Step program through bullying lessons and crisis management.

Parents are encouraged to meet with our guidance counselor early in their child's Elm St. career. To arrange for an appointment, please call the school. The counselor is generally available for meetings between 8:30 a.m. and 2:45 p.m.

D.A.R.E. Program

In conjunction with fifth- grade students receive



the Gardner Police Department, all trained instruction in Drug Abuse Resistance Education. Students learn that they have a right to say no to drugs, alcohol, and tobacco. They are also taught to have a positive self-image and an optimistic outlook on life.

Library

The library is located on the second floor. Students may go to the library with their class. Library materials may be borrowed, but must be returned on a timely basis and in proper condition. Encyclopedias and other reference materials are not to leave the library without special permission from administration.



Nurse

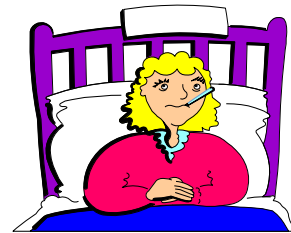
Elm Street School has the services of a school nurse (R.N.) from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. If a student needs to see the nurse, he/she must get a pass from his/her classroom teacher and then report directly to the nurse's office. If a student becomes suddenly ill or injured, he/she may report immediately to the nurse's office located on the first floor. If after examination, the nurse feels that a student should be dismissed, the nurse will contact the child's parents to pick up their child. In a serious emergency, the decision to call an ambulance will be made by the school and any possible payments assumed by the family.



All public health requirements must be met by each student. Physical exams are required for all students going into the fourth, sixth and ninth grades. Immunization records for each student are part of the school health record and are required for entrance to all schools. Mass. Public Health Law requires that students without acceptable health records be withdrawn from school after a 5-day grace period. **The following immunizations are required for admission to Elm St. School: Hepatitis B vaccine (3 doses), DTP (5 doses), Polio (4 doses), Hib (3 doses in preschool), MMR (2 doses measles, 1 dose mumps, 1 dose rubella).**

Guidelines for staying home when ill:

1. Chicken Pox: 5 days after onset or when all lesions are dry.
2. Head Lice: May return after treatment.
3. Hepatitis A: May return 1 week after onset of virus, when jaundice resolves, and/or immune globulin has been given to school contacts.
4. Impetigo: 24 hours after starting treatment.
5. Pertussis: 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment.
6. Pink Eye: 24 hours after initiating treatment.
7. Rash with fever: After a physician has determined it is not contagious.
8. Ringworm: Once treatment has begun.
9. Scabies: After treatment completed.
10. Strep Throat: 24 hours after treatment begins/24 hours without fever.



Please contact the nurse for the medication administration policies and forms, if your child needs to be medicated during school. All medications must be ordered by a licensed prescriber and delivered by a responsible adult in a pharmacy or manufacturers labeled container. The medication dose required to send on field trips needs to be sent in at least 2 days prior in a separate pharmacy labeled container. **All medications must be kept in the school nurse's office. Students may not medicate themselves! Students are not allowed to carry any medication without the nurse's consent. If special circumstances exist, the parent/guardian must make arrangements with the school nurse.**

Height and weight are measured and recorded and vision and hearing tests are done annually to all students. Postural screening is also done annually but only to fifth-grade students.

Teachers will be apprised of health problems that may affect their student's educational progress or require special health monitoring or services in school. If you do not wish to have your child's medical information shared with the teaching staff, please contact the nurse.

Please keep your child's emergency card up-to-date. Advise us of any changes in address, phone number, or emergency contact as soon as possible.

COMMUNICATIONS

Calendar/Newsletter

A monthly school calendar/newsletter is sent home with each student. It provides information on school activities, classroom news, and a listing of the Students of the Month. Each classroom also send home information regarding academic topics being studied at least twice a month.

From time to time, special notices regarding upcoming events are sent home with your child.



Telephone Calls By Students

Students may use the office telephone with the permission of their teacher and the office secretaries during recess/lunch times, not class time. Phone calls should be only of an urgent nature and not interrupt instructional time.

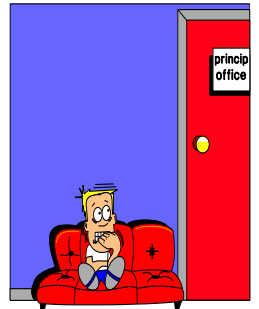
Telephone Calls To Teachers

Teachers cannot receive calls during class time. The office secretaries will be happy to relay your message either in writing or through voice mail. A list of opportune times to call your child's teacher is made available at Open House.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

The behavior expected of all students at Elm St. School is no different from that expected by the vast majority of society in all aspects of life. These guidelines are issued for two primary reasons:

1. To help to ensure that all members of the Elm St. School Community are fully aware of these expectations.
2. To help make Elm Street School a safe, positive, and a pleasant place in which to work and learn.



Elm St. School is committed to ensuring equal educational opportunities for all students and does not discriminate on the basis of students' disability, race, color, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

Our school is a learning community that demands respect for the rights and property of its members. As such, proper student behavior at Elm St. is guided by these five basic principles:

- * Safety: Are my actions safe for myself and for others?
- * Respect: Do my actions show respect for myself and for others?
- * Honesty: Do my words and actions represent truth?
- * Responsibility: Do my actions meet the expectation to take care of myself and be a dependable member of the community?
- * Courtesy: Do my actions help make Elm St. School a nice place where people feel welcome and accepted, and where they can learn without disruptions?

Discipline is an extension of an adult's concern for a child's welfare. It establishes behavioral limits for the children so that they know what is and is not acceptable. Discipline is enforced through mutual trust ... trust that is established through a recognition of the dignity and value of each individual. Disciplinary action is intended to modify the child's behavior in an appropriate direction. Disciplinary action should ensure the rights of those in the school to teach and learn productively.

School rules are in effect at all school activities, programs, events, and functions, both on and off school grounds. It is important to note that the Principal may apply and

enforce disciplinary actions against student conduct occurring after school hours and off school grounds. (Nicholas B. V. The School Committee of Worcester - 2/24/92)

Any act not herein specified which is unfavorable to the best interests of the school and its community may result in disciplinary action.

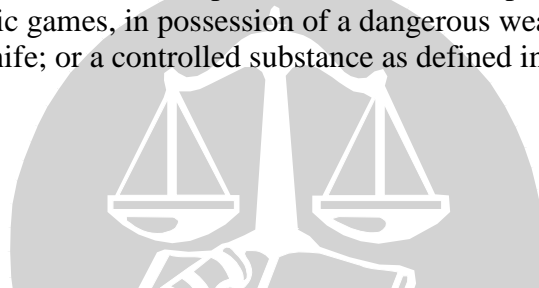
It is expected that all students understand the acceptable standards of behavior that will be expected of them at all times. They are expected to:

1. Refrain from the use of obscene, abusive, or improper language.
2. Not threaten, create, or carry out any action of potential physical or mental harm to themselves or others.
3. Be in their assigned building location at all times.
4. Not leave their assigned location without the permission of a staff member.
5. Never bring any objects or substances to school which are inappropriate or unsafe in a school setting e.g., cigarettes, matches, lighters, alcohol, weapons, etc.
6. Always keep their hands, feet, and mouth to themselves.
7. Always be truthful to themselves and to others.
8. Always respect and obey their classroom teachers' rules.
9. Always be respectful of school property and the property of others.
10. Walk quietly in the hallways.
11. Practice random acts of kindness.

The consequences for student misbehavior will depend upon the nature of the offense, the circumstances of the violation, prior behavior and disciplinary record of the offender, and the severity and/or frequency of the behavior. All students will be granted due process when involved in any school infractions. They will be informed of the nature of the offense, informed of the evidence supporting the accusations, and given an opportunity to respond to the accusations. Formal actions are listed in the following section. Other procedures include but are not limited to the following: verbal or written warning, loss of recess, social probation.

According to the General Laws of Massachusetts all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

- (a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter 94C,



including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or the school district by the principal.

(b) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or the school district by the principal.

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the student to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(e) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

DEFINITION OF DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Detention

Teachers and administration may keep students after school. Reasons may include but are not limited to poor behavior or missing assignments. Detention will end no later than 3:30 p.m. The parent/guardian will be notified at least one day in advance that their child will be remaining after school.

Suspensions

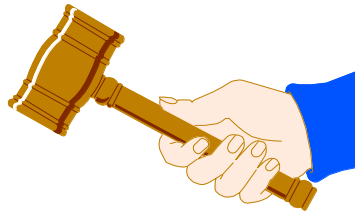
Students will be subject to suspension when involved in acts of significant misbehavior such as:

- * Acts of verbal/physical assault and battery or harassment
- * Not being in their assigned building location at all times
- * Using obscene, improper, or abusive language
- * Defacing or vandalizing school property
- * Stealing

Suspensions are utilized as a last resort to develop appropriate behavior. When a student is suspended from school, he/she is sent home for the duration of his/her suspension period. All work missed may result in a zero. The suspended student will not be allowed to participate in any school-sponsored activities during the suspension period. A reinstatement conference will be held with the student's parent/guardian upon his/her return to school. The suspension of students with special needs may not exceed 10 cumulative days as outlined in Chapter 766 Regulations, Section 338.

Expulsion

Expulsion is the exclusion of a student from school for more than ten school days. Expulsion may be recommended for students committing serious infractions such as the possession and/or use of dangerous weapons; the possession/use/or sale of controlled substances; assaulting a staff member. Expulsions will be administered only after a hearing with the Principal. Expelled students have the right of appeal to the Superintendent of Schools.



District Policies

Please be informed that Elm St. School adheres to all policies and procedures as they appear in the Policy Manual of the Gardner School Committee. The Policy Manual may be viewed in the principal's office, online at www.gardnerk12.org, the office of the Superintendent of Schools and at the Central Fire Station on Pleasant Street. Additional information is delineated in the manual on the following pertinent topics:

Bullying

Use of school facilities and equipment
Transportation (Pre-K to 6)
procedures

Sexual Harassment (page 26)

Civil Rights
materials

Parent notification relative to sex education

Special Ed. Discipline

Physical Restraint policy and

Rights of non-custodial parents

Complaints about instructional

School volunteers

Substance Abuse
Library materials, review and removal
School Choice

Moving out of the city
Gang Activity / Secret Societies
Hazing

Appendix

HARASSMENT

The Gardner Public Schools are committed to equal employment and educational opportunity for all employees and applicants, students, and members of the school community without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or handicap in all aspects of employment and education. The members of the school community include the School Committee, administration, staff, students, and volunteers working in the schools, while they work and study subject to school authorities.

The Gardner Public Schools are also committed to maintain a school and work environment free from harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, or handicap. The Gardner Public Schools expect all employees, students and other members of the school community to conduct themselves in an appropriate and professional manner.

Harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, and handicap in any form will not be tolerated. Such harassment includes unwelcome remarks, gestures, or physical contact, display or circulation of written materials or pictures derogatory to either gender or to racial, ethnic, religious, age, sexual orientation or handicapped individuals or groups.

HARASSMENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Any member of the school community who believes that he/she has been subjected to harassment will report the incident(s) to the grievance officer. The Assistant Superintendent is the grievance officer for the Gardner Public Schools. All complaints shall be investigated promptly and resolved as soon as possible.

The grievance officer will attempt to resolve the problem in an informal manner through the following process:

- The grievance officer will confer with the charging party in order to obtain a clear understanding of that party's statement of the facts, and may interview any witnesses.
- The grievance officer will then attempt to meet with the charged party in order to obtain his/her response to the complaint.
- The grievance officer will hold as many meetings with the parties as is necessary to establish the facts.
- On the basis of the grievance officer's perception of the situation he/she may:

- Attempt to resolve the matter informally through reconciliation;
- Report the incident and transfer the record to the Superintendent or his/her designee, and so notify the parties by certified mail

After reviewing the record made by the grievance officer, the Superintendent or designee may attempt to gather any more evidence necessary to decide the case, and thereafter impose any sanctions deemed appropriate, including a recommendation to the committee for termination or expulsion. At this stage of the proceedings, the parties may present witnesses and other evidence, and may also be represented. The parties, to the extent permissible by law, shall be informed of the disposition of the complaint. All matters involving harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct.

The grievance officer, upon request, will provide the charging party with government agencies that handle harassment matters.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

I. INTRODUCTION

All persons associated with the Gardner Public schools including, but not necessarily limited to, the committee, the administration, the staff, and the students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting as a member of the school community will be in violation of this policy. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated. The Gardner Public Schools will ensure that there will be sexual harassment training each year.

This policy is not intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

II. Definition of Sexual Harassment: in Massachusetts, the legal definition for sexual harassment is this: “sexual harassment” means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:

1. Submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment or educational development.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment or educational decisions affecting such individual.

3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

Under these definitions, direct or implied requests by a supervisor for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised job or educational benefits such as favorable reviews, favorable grades, salary increases, promotions, increased benefits, or continued employment constitutes sexual harassment.

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a workplace **or school** environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to male or female workers **or students** may also constitute sexual harassment.

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct which if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending upon the totality of the circumstances including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances – whether they involve physical touching or not.
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess.
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons.
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments.
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences, and
- Discussion of one's sexual activities.

III. Complaints of Sexual Harassment

If any of our employees believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, the employee has the right to file a complaint. This may be done in writing or orally.

If you would like to file a complaint, you may do so by contacting the Assistant Superintendent or other person designated by the Superintendent. The Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent designee is also available to discuss any concerns you may have and to provide information to you about this policy on sexual harassment and our complaint process.

If a student wishes to file a complaint, he/she may do so with the school guidance counselor. Upon receipt of such a complaint, the guidance counselor will discuss the matter with the Assistant Superintendent or Superintendent designee.

When we receive the complaint, we will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. Where it is determined

that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose corrective action including disciplinary action, where appropriate.

Disciplinary Action

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by one of our employees or students, we will take such action as is appropriate under the circumstances. Such action may range from counseling to termination, and may include such other forms of disciplinary action as we deem appropriate under the circumstances.

V. State and Federal Remedies. In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using our complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim (EEOC – 300 days; MCAD – 300 days).

1. The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), One Congress Street, 10th Floor, Boston, Ma 02114, 617-565-3200.
2. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) Boston Office: One Ashburton Place, Room 601, Boston, Ma 02108, 617-994-6000; Springfield Office: 424 Dwight Street, Room 220, Springfield, Ma 01103, 416-739-2145.

Source: Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc.

LEGAL REFS: Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc.;
Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 151A, Section 25 (e) and
Chapter 151B, Sections 1&4.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

All persons associated with the Gardner Public schools including, but not necessarily limited to, the committee, the administration, the staff, and the student, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. It is the policy of the Gardner Public Schools that sexual harassment of a student, teacher, employee, school official, or representative of the school department will not be tolerated.

Because the Gardner School Committee takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Sexual Harassment Complaint Officer

The Assistant Superintendent is the complaint officer for the Gardner Public Schools. He is vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all harassment complaints in

accordance with the procedure outlined below. The Assistant Superintendent's office is located 70 Waterford Street, Gardner, MA 01440, (978) 630-4076.

Process

1. Any member of the school community who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment will report the incident(s) to the complaint officer. All complaints shall be investigated promptly and resolved as soon as possible.
2. The complaint officer will then attempt to resolve the problem in an informal manner through the following process:
 - a. The complaint officer will confer with the charging party in order to obtain a clear understanding of that party's statement of the facts, and may interview any witnesses.
 - b. The complaint officer will then attempt to meet with the charged party in order to obtain his or her response to the complaint.
 - c. The complaint officer will hold as many meetings with the parties as is necessary.
 - d. On the basis of the complaint officer's perception of the situation he or she may:
 - (1) attempt to resolve the matter informally through reconciliation.
 - (2) report the incident and transfer the record to the superintendent or his/her designee, and so notify the parties
 - (3) file a report with the superintendent or his/her designee that includes recommendations.
3. **After reviewing the record made by the complaint officer, the superintendent or his/her designee may attempt to gather more evidence necessary to decide the case, and thereafter impose any sanctions deemed appropriate. The parties, to the extent possible, shall be informed of the disposition of the complaint. All matters will remain confidential to the extent possible.**

State and Federal Remedies.

3. The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), One Congress Street, 10th Floor, Boston, Ma 02114, 617-565-3200.
4. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) Boston Office: One Ashburton Place, Room 601, Boston, Ma 02108, 617-994-6000; Springfield Office: 424 Dwight Street, Room 220, Springfield, Ma 01103, 416-739-2145.

Source: Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc.

LEGAL REFS.: Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 151A, Section 25 (e) and Chapter 151B, Sections 1&4.

BULLYING

The Gardner Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyberbullying.

“Bullying” is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target’s property;
- Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself, or of damage to his/her property;
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

“Cyber-bullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a:

- Wire
- Radio
- Electromagnetic
- Photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents and families are expected.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying, or cyber-bullying.

Bullying is prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds
- At school bus stops;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the Gardner Public Schools

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the Gardner Public Schools if the act or acts in question:

- Create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- Infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- Materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Prevention and Intervention Plan

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school.

Reporting

Students, who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying.

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

A member of a school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or their designee.

Investigation Procedures

The Principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The school principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber-bullying Report Form which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

Support staff shall assess an alleged target's needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.

Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

If the school principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred he/she shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the principal shall consult with the school's resource officer and the Superintendent to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

The investigation shall be completed within fourteen school days from the date of the report. The parents or guardians shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken. At a minimum the Principal or his/her designee shall contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis.

Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and a file shall be maintained by the Principal or designee. A monthly report shall be provided to the Superintendent.

Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law.

Retaliation

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

Target Assistance

The Gardner Public Schools shall provide counselling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as necessary.

Training and Assessment

Annual training shall be provided for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all K to 12 students.

Publication and Notice

Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms.

Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the Gardner Public Schools website.

REFERENCES:	Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan
LEGAL REFS.:	Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended Federal Regulation 74676 Issued by EEO Commission Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 603 CMR 26.00 MGS 71:370 MGL 265:43, 43A MGL 268:13B MGL 269:14A
CROSS REF.:	AC, Nondiscrimination ACAB, Sexual Harassment JBA, Student-to-Student Harassment JICFA, Hazing JK, Student Discipline Regulations

SPECIAL EDUCATION DISCIPLINE

All students are expected to meet the standards of behavior required by the district and the individual schools within the district. There are, however, some specific considerations regarding the discipline of students with disabilities. In general, if a special education student has violated the school's disciplinary code, the school may suspend or remove a student from his or her current educational placement for a period not to exceed ten consecutive school days in any school year. **If A Special Education Student Is Removed For More Than 10 Cumulative Days In A School Year, Some Special Education Services Must Be Provided.** If a special education student possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event or carries a weapon to school or school function, the school district may place a special education student in an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 calendar days. If a special education student has been placed in an interim alternative education setting as a result of a disciplinary action, the student may remain in the interim setting for a period not to exceed 45 days. Thereafter, the special education student will return to the previously agreed-upon educational placement unless either a hearing officer orders another placement or the parent(s) agrees to another placement.

If a special education student is removed from his or her current educational placement for more than ten consecutive days in any school year, or for more than ten cumulative days when a pattern of removal is occurring, this constitutes a "change of placement." A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal special education law. These protections include the following:

1. Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement an Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team meeting must be convened to develop a plan for conducting a functional behavioral assessment that will be used as the basis for developing specific strategies to address the problematic behavior. If a behavioral intervention plan has been previously developed, the Team shall review its implementation and modify the plan as necessary.
2. Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, a full statement of procedural rights will be sent to the parent(s). The parent(s) will be informed that the Team will consider whether the behavior that forms the basis for removal is related to the student's disability. This consideration is called the "manifestation determination" decision. The parent has the right to be part of this Team and the decision-making process.

The Team will consider evaluation and observation information as well as the student's IEP and placement in order to determine whether the behavior prompting disciplinary removal was a manifestation of the student's disability. The Team will consider if the student understood the impact and consequences of the behavior and if the student's disability impaired his or her ability to control the behavior in question.

If the Team determines that the behavior in question was related to the student's disability then the student will not be removed from his or her current educational placement (except in the case of weapon or drug possession or use) until the Team develops a new IEP and decides upon a new placement with parental consent.

If the Team determines that the behavior was not related to the student's disability then the student may be suspended or otherwise disciplined according to the district and school's code of conduct. For any period of removal exceeding ten days, however, the special education student must continue to receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The Team must determine the educational services necessary for FAPE and for the manner and location of these services.

If a parent(s) disagrees with the Team's decision of manifestation determination or with a placement of a student in an interim alternative educational setting or any other disciplinary action, the parent(s) has the right to request an expedited hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals.

HAZING

CH. 269, S.17 CRIME OF HAZING; DEFINITION; PENALTY

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

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Not

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

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

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

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

Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledge or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgement stating that such group organization or individual has received a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each secondary school and each public or private school or college shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education, certifying that such institution has complied with the provisions of this section and also certifying that said school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the organizers and participants of hazing. The Board of Regents and in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such a report.

HAZING

It is the policy of the school committee to prohibit hazing in all schools in compliance with M.G.L. Chapter 269 S17, S18, S19 and abide by the provisions in the Student Handbook.