



# COMMUNITY HANDBOOK

Year 2018 - 2019

FRANCIS W. PARKER CHARTER ESSENTIAL SCHOOL  
& THEODORE R. SIZER TEACHERS CENTER

49 Antietam Street • Devens, MA 01431-5231

Telephone: (978) 772-3293 • Fax: (978) 772-3295

[www.theparkerschool.org](http://www.theparkerschool.org)

*What Defines Us?*

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## The Parker Glossary

The following are some words and phrases that, over the years, have become commonly used:

**Advisor:** A Parker teacher who serves as a mentor, friend, and/or supporter of 10-15 students in their advisory. Every student has an advisor.

**Advisory:** A group of 10-15 students that meets daily with their advisor at the beginning and end of the day, as well as at other times during the week. This sets up a foundation for strong relationships between students and teachers.

**Buddy Advisor:** Two advisories partnered for the purpose of fostering cross-divisional relationships for fun, information, or for addressing community themes and issues.

**Chalk talk:** A group brainstorming session based on a reading, previous discussion, or other class activity, where participants write their thoughts/ideas on the board.

**Choice block:** A one hour period during the school week, in which students may pursue individual interests through organized classes led by teachers or other students.

**Moderators:** Two students elected by and representing the entire student body in the Community Congress. They oversee much of the school governance and meet with the principal weekly. (This is explained in more detail later.)

**Community Congress (CC):** A legislative committee of students, each representing his/her advisory, or a percentage of the whole student body. There are also teacher representatives.

**Connections/Reflections:** Sharing one's own news, school or otherwise, in advisory time.

**Divisions:** Three levels of a Parker student's education (replaces traditional grades). Each level has certain standards, which each student must achieve in order to graduate.

**Domain:** An area of study, such as Arts/Humanities (A/H), Math/Science/Technology (MST), Spanish and Wellness.

**Essential Question:** A broad question around which the year's main curriculum is based. It helps to focus and connect work across the domains.

**Essential Schools:** Members of the Coalition of Essential Schools, a national school reform organization built around a list of ten common principles.

**Exhibition:** A public presentation usually accompanying written work, explanation and/or defense by a student of his or her work.

**Feedback:** A response to an idea or a piece of work; comes in warm, cool and other varieties.

**Fishbowl:** A form of discussion where one group is circled around another. The purpose is for the inside circle to discuss and the outside circle to observe.

**Gateway:** An exhibition where students are asked to show why they are ready to move forward to the next division either through the displaying of past work or a new independent project.

**Habits of Learning:** Qualities and characteristics identified as important to effective learning (e.g., organization, critical thinking).

**I.E.P.:** Individual Educational Plan, required by the state for students with diagnosed special educational needs, developed with the Office of Student Services.

**Justice Committee (JC):** A judiciary committee of students, representing the entire student body. There are also teacher representatives.

**Just Beginning/Approaches/Meets/Exceeds:** How a student's work is judged against the standards of his/her Division, indicating where he/she is on his/her journey to Gateway.

**P.L.P.:** Personal Learning Plan, a student's individual academic and social goals for a certain period of time, worked out with his/her advisor and parents, as a guide to his/her work and life for the year.

**Portfolio:** A collection of one's work that has been assessed. Students have one portfolio for each class.

**Rights and Responsibilities:** A set of basic school norms for students to follow.

**Rubrics:** Guides for students in determining how to attain the expectations for a specific project or for the whole Division in general. The criteria used to assess your work.

**Service Learning:** Work done for others or for the environment that is integrated into the curriculum. This work emphasizes the social and academic benefits for the worker as well as for those being helped.

**Socratic Seminar:** Discussions based on commonly known texts, which emphasize wide participation; ways for students to gain further insight on a given topic.

**Task Forces:** Small groups of faculty/students/parents who devote time to organize solutions or programs for community issues.

**Team-teaching:** A pair of teachers who teach one class, dividing the students for assessment purposes.

**Whip:** The practice of asking each member of a class or meeting to give a brief response to a question.

## The Ten Common Principles

The Ten Common Principles are basically the goals and beliefs of the Coalition of Essential Schools, which the Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School is a part of. They determine what the Coalition schools base themselves around and how they set up their programs. Developed by Dr. Theodore R.Sizer, one of Parker’s Founders, and the founder of CES, this is an articulation of what we believe and try to do every day at Parker.

1. The school should focus on helping adolescents learn to use their minds well. Schools should not attempt to be “comprehensive” if such a claim is made at the expense of the school’s central intellectual purpose.
2. The school’s goals should be simple: that each student masters a limited number of essential skills and areas of knowledge. While these skills and areas will, to varying degrees, reflect the traditional academic disciplines, the program’s design should be shaped by the intellectual and imaginative powers and competencies that students need, rather than necessarily by “subjects” as conventionally defined. The aphorism “Less is More” should dominate: curricular decisions should be guided by the aim of thorough student mastery and achievement rather than by an effort merely to cover content.
3. The school’s goals should apply to all students, while the means to these goals will vary as those students themselves vary. School practice should be tailor-made to meet the needs of every group or class of adolescents.
4. Teaching and learning should be personalized to the maximum feasible extent. Efforts should be directed toward a goal that no teacher has direct responsibility for more than eighty students. To capitalize on this personalization, decisions about the details of the course of study, the use of students’ and teachers’ time and the choice of teaching materials and specific pedagogies must be unreservedly placed in the hands of the principal and staff.
5. The governing practical metaphor of the school should be student-as worker, rather than the more familiar metaphor of teacher-as-deliverer-of-instructional-services. Accordingly, a prominent pedagogy will be coaching, to provoke students to learn how to learn and thus to teach themselves.
6. Students entering secondary school studies are those who can show competence in language and elementary mathematics. Students of traditional high school age but not yet at appropriate levels of competence to enter secondary school studies will be provided intensive remedial work to assist them quickly to meet these standards. The diploma should be awarded upon a successful final demonstration of mastery for graduation – an “Exhibition.” This Exhibition by the student of his or her grasp of the central skills and knowledge of the school’s program may be jointly administered by the faculty and by higher authorities. As the diploma is awarded when earned, the school’s program proceeds with no strict age grading and with no system of “credits earned” by “time spent” in class. The emphasis is on the student’s demonstration that they can do important things.

7. The tone of the school should explicitly and self-consciously stress values of unanxious expectation (“I won’t threaten you but I expect much of you”), of trust (until abused) and of decency (the values of fairness, generosity and tolerance). Incentives appropriate to the school’s particular students and teachers should be emphasized, and parents should be treated as essential collaborators.
8. The principal and teachers should perceive themselves as generalists first (teachers and scholars in general education) and specialists second (experts in but one particular discipline). Staff should expect multiple obligations (teacher-counselor-manager) and a sense of commitment to the entire school.
9. Ultimate administrative and budget targets should include, in addition to total student loads per teacher of eighty or fewer pupils, substantial time for collective planning by teachers, competitive salaries for staff and an ultimate per pupil cost not to exceed that of traditional schools by more than 10 percent. To accomplish this, administrative plans may have to show the phased reduction or elimination of some services now provided to students in many traditional comprehensive secondary schools.
10. The school should demonstrate non-discriminatory and inclusive policies, practices, and pedagogies. It should model democratic practices that involve all who are directly affected by the school. The school should honor diversity and build on the strengths of its community, deliberately and explicitly challenging all forms of inequity.

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Coalition for Essential Schools

# The Parker Constitution

*Ratified by the Student Body 03-08-06*

*Amended June 2013; Amended January 2016*

During the first month of the operation of Parker, the students met together to create a school constitution. Their task was to create a document that would describe how the students, teachers and parents would work together to make a fair, democratic and safe school. The students were divided into four committees: the executive, legislative, judicial, and preamble committee. Each group spent two to three days writing the document that would bring the students together as a community. In 1997-98, the constitution was looked over and amended. Most of it remained the same, but a list of Rights and Responsibilities was added and the judicial branch was modified. In 1998-99, a “Decision making process” was amended to the constitution. In 2005-06, the Parker Constitution was once more amended with several revisions regarding the realistic operations of the CC & JC in Parker. Another revision occurred in 2015-2016, with the major change being the Community Congress and Moderators sections. The current Parker Constitution reads as follows:

## **PREAMBLE**

We, the members of the Parker community, in order to form an outstanding learning environment, hereby write this Constitution to establish equality, to encourage educational and verbal freedom, and make this school a safe place where the members feel respected. As a whole, we maintain the balance between order and freedom and grant each individual his or her own respect, rights and responsibilities, in order to attain this exceptional environment we call the Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School.

## **BILL OF RIGHTS**

We, the Bill of Rights committee, establish the Bill of Rights to ensure students and teachers understand their rights and recognize that they are equal.

### **Student and Teacher Rights**

1. The Community Congress cannot make laws against rights of free speech, religion and others, such as respect, fairness and equal treatment.
2. People have the right to defend themselves at Justice Committee hearings. The difference between defensive action and offensive action shall be decided by the Justice Committee.
3. People cannot be searched and belongings cannot be taken from them without reasonable proof.
4. People have the right not to answer questions that incriminate them or put them in danger.
5. People have the right to have their case be heard by the Justice Committee.
6. No consequences may be given that are cruel or unreasonable.
7. People have the right to a safe learning environment.
8. People have a right to vote on all school wide elections and to be represented in the CC.
9. Students have a right to learn at their own pace.

## **Parent Rights**

1. The right to give any type of input.
2. The right to remove their children from Parker.

## **COMMUNITY CONGRESS**

The Community Congress (CC) is a representative body, responsible for creating and attending to the norms and policies that affect students and student life in the Parker community. The CC expresses the voice of the student body in matters of school policy and in communication with the Principal and faculty.

### **Representatives:**

Each Division elects six (6) representatives. Elections are held in September and representatives serve for one year. If a representative is no longer able to serve, a special election will be held at a time deemed appropriate by the moderators.

### **Terms Limits for Representatives:**

All representatives are allowed to serve unlimited terms, provided that the student body vote the representatives into office each year.

### **Moderators:**

The Moderators are elected representatives of the Parker student body and represent the student body at various formal and informal school events. The Moderators are ambassadors, representing the school to the external world. The Moderators are responsible for facilitating the meetings of the Community Congress and are voting members.

- Three (3) people run as a group to be the Moderators for the CC. Moderators are elected by the student body in May of each academic year. These elections are facilitated by the JC.
- Moderators serve for a one (1) year term.
- Term Limits for Moderators: An individual may not serve as a Moderator more than two (2) times during his/her time at Parker.

## **JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

The Justice Committee (hereafter 'JC') of the Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School is the judicial branch of the government. Its main purpose is to maintain peace and civility in the Parker community.

### **A. The Justice Committee**

1. The JC will be run by students with 2-3 faculty members in an advising role.
2. The JC is responsible for resolving and/or mediating violations of Parker rules, community norms of safety and respect, and personal conflicts.
3. The JC does not have jurisdiction in certain areas that are regulated under state and/or federal law (i.e. Weapons, sexual harassment, and controlled substances). All inappropriate cases will not be handled by the JC.

4. The JC does not have the authority to suspend or expel students. However, if the JC decides that a student has committed a suspendable or expellable offense, they may recommend that consequence to the principal for a suspension/expulsion hearing (for a list of the suspendable and expellable offenses, see Suspension and Expulsion Policy for the Parker School).
5. The JC is responsible for interpreting the Constitution in a hearing when there is a disagreement over the meaning of a part of the Constitution.
6. The JC is responsible for ensuring that the Constitution is upheld at all times during a hearing.
7. The JC is responsible for administering all school-wide elections.
8. The JC will provide a yearly written report to ensure that the Parker community is kept informed of JC decisions and business. To ensure that confidentiality is maintained, this report will not contain the names of any offenders.
9. The JC has the authority to assign detentions. (See Detention Policy included in this Handbook)

#### **B. Hearings/Mediation**

1. The JC will have hearings where a member(s) of the Parker community can bring another member(s) of the Parker community to have a case heard in front of a group of JC and faculty member. (Members will include all students and faculty members in the Parker School.)
2. There will be no more than four and no less than two student JC representatives sitting on a case. There will be one faculty member per case.
3. All JC members will be trained in mediation and counsel hearings.
4. All JC members will take an oath of confidentiality.
5. Attendance at JC hearings is mandatory. The accuser and the accused must be present at the hearing. Any other parties/witnesses will be determined by the JC on a case-by-case basis.
6. Individual students participating in JC hearings have the right to bring another person to the hearing or mediation with them as a witness, faculty member or JC representative, to the proceedings.
7. Consequences will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
8. All parties must agree to mediation if the JC determines that mediation is appropriate.
9. Mediation will be done on a case-by-case basis. Community members involved in the mediation may decide whether they require JC members and/or the guidance counseling staff.

### **C. Membership**

1. Elections for the JC Leaders, by secret ballot, will take place in the month of May.
2. The JC will meet once a week.
3. The faculty will select 2-3 teachers interested in serving on the JC in any way that they choose.

### **D. Impeachment**

1. Any member of the Parker Community may recommend the impeachment of a JC member. This recommendation should be made to a JC Leader.
2. Possible reasons for the impeachment recommendations:
  - a. A member breaks his/her oath of confidentiality.
  - b. A member breaks the Parker community norms and/or is brought to the JC repeatedly.
3. Members of the JC may be asked to resign if a majority of the JC finds a violation of the standards listed in the above section. They will be impeached if there is a lack of cooperation.
4. Impeachment votes must be done by secret ballot, which all members vote on.

## **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. General Rights and Responsibilities**

At the beginning of each school year, all members of the Parker community are asked to sign the Parker Community Contract of Rights and Responsibilities. This document is meant to serve as a compilation of norms by which the Parker community members agree to abide. These are “guidelines” for appropriate behavior (not “rules”, for which punitive consequences exist).

1. Every member of the Parker community has the right to be treated with courtesy by all members of the community and the responsibility to treat all faculty, parents, visitors, and students with courtesy.
2. Every member of the Parker community has the right to believe what s/he wants and the responsibility to employ thoughtful habits of mind/learning.
3. Every member of the Parker community has the right to express concern and the responsibility to do so using an appropriate time, place, tone and attitude.
4. Every member of the Parker community has the right to have their personal belongings respected by others.
5. Every member of the Parker community has the right to enjoy and participate in the Parker community and the responsibility to not disrupt the enjoyment and the participation of others.
6. Every member of the Parker community has the right to be supported in his/her learning style and the responsibility to do his/her own work well, ask for help, and give appropriate help.

7. Every member of the Parker community has the right to use materials in the classroom and resources at Parker and the responsibility to use them wisely and return them in the same condition in which they were found.
8. Every member of the Parker community has the right to have his/her voice heard and the responsibility to listen to others.

#### **B. Classroom Responsibilities**

1. Students have the responsibility to turn in assignments when due and teachers have the responsibility to return assessed work within a reasonable period of time. If assessed student work is not returned in a reasonable time, additional time for revision of work should be provided to students.
2. Both student and teachers should show effort to participate fully in class.
3. Both students and teachers should show sufficient effort to be on time for class.
4. A *reasonable* break time should be provided to both students and teachers during full-block classes.

## The Community Congress

The CC serves as the legislative branch of the Parker School student government. It is made up of eighteen elected representatives, with each Division electing six representatives at the beginning of the school year, and representatives serving for the school year. This group meets on a weekly basis to discuss and vote on proposals sent to it by anyone in the Parker community. Proposals are made by filling out a proposal sheet and submitting it to the Moderators or any CC member. Proposals need majority approval to pass. The CC is facilitated by the Moderators (see below) and follows modified Roberts Rules of Order to conduct its meetings. The majority of the policies and norms that make up the Parker Community Handbook have been created by the CC.

## The Justice Committee

The Justice Committee's function is to serve as the judicial branch of the Parker Government. The JC is made up of students and teachers. Students may sign up for JC, which meets on a weekly basis. The JC's job is to maintain a tone of trust and decency in the school, enforce norms and rules, and interpret the gray areas of the constitution and the school's norms. All JC proceedings are confidential.

The JC holds disciplinary hearings and mediations; both of these are facilitated by students. The JC hears disciplinary cases that arise when a member(s) of the Parker community feels that another member(s) of the community has violated a Parker rule or norm. The JC has three or four students and one faculty member on each case. The JC members hear each party's arguments and are allowed to ask questions afterwards. Then, the two parties involved in the case are asked to leave while the JC members deliberate whether the individual(s) was in violation of any rules or norms. If so, the JC devises a consequence appropriate for the violation. The JC does not have the power to suspend any students, but in the event that they decide a student should be suspended, the members could recommend suspension to the school principal.

The JC also hears appeals to disciplinary consequences made by other authorities in the school (e.g. detention, lateness, unfair consequences). Hearings are structured in a pattern as mentioned above. The JC has the authority to change the original consequence or uphold it. Students or teachers can appeal consequences in previous JC hearings.

Mediation is a form of conversation between two or more people in a conflict. The role of the mediator is to stay neutral and to help both parties work through their anger, disappointment, conflict and other problems that could come up during school. Mediation is an option for all students and teachers at the Parker school. It is a confidential environment where members of the Parker community can work through their problems. Students can also request that the school's counseling staff conduct the mediation instead of student mediators.

## Moderators

At most middle and high schools across the country, each grade has its own class officers with the senior class president sitting at the head of the Student Council. Since Parker doesn't have separate grade levels, there are no such positions. Instead, we have Divisional representatives in our Community Congress and Moderators.

The student body elects three Moderators (who run together as a team) in May, and the Moderators serve until the May of the following school year. Moderators play many different roles in our community. They work with the school principal to make decisions about which pathway proposed policies, submitted by members of the community, should follow, as they become school policy. They are ambassadors to visitors who come to the school and represent the student body at formal events. Because the student body elects them, they are expected to work with the students to better the school community. Their actions as Moderators should be solely in the best interest of the other students.

Any student may run for the position of Moderator. If one Moderator leaves during his/her term, the remaining Moderators will nominate a replacement within two weeks. The CC will vote on the replacement, and a majority of the representatives must approve the nominee. If more than two of the Moderators leave during their term, new elections will be held.

## The Parker Community Decision-Making Process

Here is our system for making decisions as a community. Some decisions we will make all together and some will be made by specific groups. It relies completely on people making proposals. The entire community needs to share their good ideas in the form of written proposals submitted to the principal who, along with the Moderators, will find a path for them. Not all proposals will be approved but we will follow this process for deciding which ones will.

### How a Proposal Becomes a Decision:

1. Anyone in the community raises an issue in the form of a proposal or simply a description of the problem.
2. The Principal and the student Moderators pick a path for the proposal.
3. The selected decision-making body discusses and decides, or it creates a process, or it forms a task force.
4. If the task force or committee then creates a proposal, it goes back to the path-picking step (#2).

5. Whatever decision-making body gets selected, that body has full authority to make the decision.
6. \*\*Decisions will stand for at least 3 months before changes can be proposed.

**What a Proposal Should Include:**

7. A description of the problem or issue.
8. The specifics of what is proposed.
9. Possible advantages and disadvantages of the proposal.
10. Suggested pathway.

**The Pathways:**

Decision-Making	Jurisdiction
#1 The Board of Trustees	State Law, the Charter, the decision-making process, core program issues, budget, major school policy, long-term initiatives
#2 The Principal or designate	The overall operation of the school, teaching and learning
#3 Domains or Divisions	Elements of the instructional program that require professional design and do not have substantial impact on other domains or divisions
#4 Staff (2/3 majority)	Elements of the instructional program that require professional design and affect the whole school
#5 Representative Body (Majority by constituency)	Whole school issues around student life and setting norms - not a huge, core, whole community issue
#6 Divisions	Issues around student life and setting norms that can be different for the different divisions
#7 Referendum (2/3 majority by constituency)	Big issues that affect core aspects of school life or the school program - needs whole community consensus
#8 Committee with Power	Involves design after whole group instructions have been given: trust and authority given to the small group

## Community Congress Student Funds

Passed by CC June 2018

Community Congress Student Funds (CCSF) are generated in the following ways:

- 100% of profits from the vending machines will be put into the CCSF
- Any money not spent by graduating classes on their class gift will be put into the CCSF
- Periodically, any money from inactive student activity accounts (as defined by the Business Manager) will be put into the CCSF
- Money from the CCSF may be spent in the following ways:
  - The CC may vote to disperse funds to Student-Teacher Activity Fund (STAF) Grants
  - At the mid-point of each year, the CC may propose, discuss, and vote on proposals to allocate funding to a project of its choice which benefits the Parker community
  - The CC must maintain a balance of \$1000 when funding these larger projects
  - The business manager may draw from the CCSF to pay for repairs to the vending machines without a CC vote
  - The faculty advisors to the CC will be responsible for signing-off on expenditures from CCSF.

# Parker Community Expectations

## Rationale

Parker, as it has grown older, has developed a unique set of expectations and norms. It is the conclusion of the CC [review committee] that neither dozens of written laws nor simply “hoping for the best” will allow these core community ideals to persist and remain strong in the future.

It is by drafting a general document/resolution regarding these norms and ideals that they will be preserved. This document is a consolidation of the community expectations and serves to replace numerous CC policies regarding homework, class and school attendance, vandalism, equipment, etc. The following is a draft.

## Parker Community Expectations

As members of the Parker community all students (as well as faculty, trustees, and the administration) are expected to uphold the ideals of the school, particularly those outlined in the seventh common principle:

*Certain standards are simply expected at Parker, to make the community a better place for all. If Parker is to be the open and caring community that it should be, every member of the community must adhere to the ideals expressed in the seventh principle. Whether it is being on time to class or respecting school property, a community member is expected to act in a responsible, caring, and respectful manner at all times.*

A community member *must* follow all state and federal laws, as well as the specific policies of the school. Obviously this document cannot cover every incident that may arise at Parker. **Above all a community member is expected to observe the spirit of both specific policy, and the seventh common principle.** The Parker School can only be what we, as a community and as individuals, make it. Ignorance of a rule or expectation is no excuse. Community members are expected to be able to judge for themselves what is correct behavior. Aside from any specific punishment, anyone who violates the community expectations is hurting the rest of the community as well as themselves.

When a teacher or other faculty member asks a student to do something (or to cease doing something) the student is *always* expected to obey in a respectful manner. If the student believes the request to be unfair or incorrect, that student may go to the JC or another appropriate body to deal with the issue later, after obeying the faculty member’s request.

## Consequences

Any member of the community who violates the expectations set out above is violating school policy. They can be brought to the JC, which will deal with the community member on a case-by-case basis. The JC has the authority to recommend detention, suspension, or expulsion to the principal for a hearing. A teacher also has the right to give a student a detention, but only for lateness or tardiness. Other incidents must be referred to the JC.

## **Specific Policies**

### **Homework Policy:**

- Specific homework policies are decided upon by each teacher and class.
- All students are expected to do their homework, on time. This is the only mandatory prerequisite of any class homework policy.

### **School and Class Attendance:**

- Students are expected to attend school. (Except as excused by student attendance policy.)
- Students are expected to attend their classes. (See class attendance policy.)
- A student who cuts class, or is habitually late, may be given a detention by their teacher.
- Minor lateness penalties are decided by the class and teacher.

### **Room Closure:**

- Any advisory or teacher may close their room for lunch.
- If a room is to be closed, a sign must be posted informing the community of this, as well as including a reason for the room's closure.
- If a community member does not believe a room should be closed or disagrees with the posted reason, they may bring the matter to the JC.

### **School Cleanup:**

- Community members are expected to help keep the school clean.
- Advisories must clean their rooms and all community members should pick up trash, leave the bathrooms neat, etc.

### **Vandalism:**

- Anyone who vandalizes school property or the property of another person is subject to consequences from the JC and/or principal. Their parents may be called, and they can be forced to clean, repair, or pay for the object(s) that have been damaged. See Parker Suspension/Expulsion policy.

### **Theft:**

- Anyone who steals the property of another member of the community is violating a basic trust. They may be brought to the JC or the principal.

### **Unsupervised Spaces:**

- Areas such as the gym, stage, and the back of the school are off limits to students at all times unless they are being supervised by a teacher or trained students.

### **Audience Standards:**

- All members of the Parker community are expected to behave in an intelligent, responsible, caring, and respectful way. This is *especially* true when they are part of an audience.
- Students who are unable to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner can be brought to the JC, or be the subject of an incident report.

**Lunch:**

- A member of the community may eat lunch anywhere on campus they wish, with the exception of closed rooms. (See room closure.)
- Please note that rooms such as the Teachers Center, teacher's room, and the office are off-limits to students.
- Students are responsible for keeping rooms clean and clean up.

**Sports Equipment:**

- School sports or wellness equipment can only be used if a teacher or trained student is supervising.

**Laws:**

- All members of the Parker community **MUST** follow all state and federal laws when at school.

## School Rules and Norms

Even though Parker students are given a lot of freedom, certain boundaries are still set for behavior. Some of these boundaries are imposed by the state. For instance, Parker's policies on sexual harassment, substance abuse, and violence are state mandated. Other policies, such as the Lateness Policy or the Parker Student Driver Policy were designed by the school. You are expected to abide by these policies during your time at school.

Scanning this lengthy list of disciplinary policies, you might become a bit disillusioned. Don't be! Despite the many rules set out before you, you as a student are still entitled to many freedoms. One of these freedoms is the power to change these rules if you don't like them. The majority of school policies are set by the Community Congress. The CC is made up of both students and teachers, so if you want something changed in the school policy, you can communicate your idea via your CC representative. This is not a guarantee that your idea will be implemented, but you will definitely be heard.

The primary goal of these policies is simply to preserve an atmosphere of respect. Believe it or not, their sole purpose is not to make our lives miserable (well, maybe a few). Clearly, respect is not something that can just be legislated. It's really up to everyone in the community to be respectful, courteous, etc. These are just a few community norms so that the expectations for behavior are clear.

# Belief Statement on Student Protests and Demonstrations

June 2018

The Parker School supports students in exercising their first amendment rights to protest and demonstrate.

These demonstrations/protests should follow the usual Parker norms of respect and behavior and, therefore, not compromise the safety of community members, disrupt the learning experience of other students, or damage school property.

Student participation is optional, and all students will be supported in their choice to abstain or protest, before, during, and after the demonstration.

Missing class due to protesting/demonstrating will be treated like any other absence, with students being held accountable for work they missed.

## Academic Integrity

*Passed by the JC 5-13-04*

### PLAGIARISM

The definition of plagiarism for the purposes of this policy is: to copy another piece of work, either a published piece or another student's work when the offender was not a part of the creation of that work, and to submit the work as one's own. If a teacher or student is aware that another student has plagiarized then they are expected to bring the student to the JC. To notify their teacher or advisor, or a trusted member of the staff who will advise the Academic Dean.

While every case will be handled individually, the following guidelines will be used to structure the consequence when a student is found to have plagiarized.

#### **The first time that a student is suspected of plagiarizing:**

1. The student meets with Academic Dean or Principal and is issued a warning. The dean may take the following actions.
2. The advisor of that student will notify their parents/guardians\*.
3. There will be a meeting organized between the advisor, the parents/guardians\*, the teacher and the student.
4. The student will have to complete the project or a comparable project to a level of the teacher's satisfaction.
5. This piece will be marked as complete but will not be eligible for the student's portfolio.
6. After the above consequences have been fulfilled, the student and their advisor will sign a contract outlining the seriousness of plagiarism.

#### **The second time that a student plagiarizes:**

1. The Academic Dean will meet again with the student and notify parents.\*
2. Disciplinary consequences will be determined in consultation with the principal.

\*If the student is over 18, they may be considered as their own guardian and notified in this case.

*While the above consequences may be considered as harsh or unfair, it must be kept in mind that the purpose of Parker is to prepare students for the real world. Thus, the seriousness of plagiarism must be completely understood as soon as possible because plagiarizing later in life can result in much more serious consequences.*

## **COLLABORATION**

The Parker School values collaboration—among students, among teachers, and between students and teachers—and it is one of the school’s Habits of Learning. For students, acceptable collaboration involves working together on group assignments, peer editing and assisting peers in understanding concepts.

There are times when students are expected to work independently. Unacceptable forms of collaboration are: directly copying another’s work or working together when it is specifically stated by the teacher that collaboration on work is not acceptable.

Collaboration in a way that a teacher deems unacceptable will be brought to the Academic Dean, and all students involved in the “over collaboration” will attend a case.

### **First Offense:**

- One or all students must redo the project, on terms decided by the Academic Dean and the teacher’s recommendation.
- The project will be considered late and non-revisable.
- The eligibility of the piece for the student’s portfolio will be determined depending on the individual case.
- After the above consequences have been fulfilled, the student and their advisor will sign a contract outlining the seriousness of unacceptable collaboration.

### **Second Offense:**

The process outlined in the General Plagiarism Policy apply.

## **USE OF INTERNET TRANSLATORS POLICY**

At the Parker School on-line Spanish translators are to be used as an aid for translating individual words (similar to using a dictionary) and not as a means to completing ideas in the Spanish language. This policy concerns the use of Spanish to English translation as well as English to Spanish translation. The act of translating a word using an online dictionary is a different act from translating phrases, sentences, or paragraphs. This distinction is one that the JC wishes to enforce using this policy.

Although the use of teachers and dictionaries as learning aids is encouraged, the use of Internet translators should be limited and is strongly discouraged. We hope that Parker students push themselves to use the Spanish that they have learned rather than the Spanish of an on-line translator. The use of [diccionarios.com](http://diccionarios.com) is recommended by teachers to define individual words.

Using an Internet translator in a way that violates the school’s accepted translator uses will be considered plagiarism.

An infringement of our Internet translator plagiarism policy includes:

- Translating phrases, sentences, or paragraphs
- Using articles or on-line essays written in English and translating them to Spanish without citing them as sources (See General Plagiarism Policy)
- Solely using on-line translators to complete Spanish projects
- Directly violating the direction of your teacher regarding on-line translators

When the use of Spanish translators is in violation of the accepted uses, the following is a guideline for consequences to be given to the infringer:

All consequences under general Plagiarism Policy apply.

## Academic Standing

A student in good academic standing is a student who is making satisfactory progress in all areas of the curriculum. Satisfactory progress is based on the expectations we hold for every student that he or she will treat every new assignment as an opportunity to learn and to move nearer to meeting division standards. Evaluation of student progress is also measured against the goals for each student outlined in the PLP.

A student who is not in good academic standing is a student who is failing to make satisfactory progress in one or more areas of the curriculum. Students who are not fulfilling the basic requirements of one class as outlined will be identified as failing to make satisfactory progress and may be placed on Academic Probation. Students failing to make satisfactory progress in more than one area will be placed on Academic Probation.

## After School Activity Rules

*Passed by CC January 22, 2003*

- No drugs, alcohol, mind-altering substances or weapons of any kind. If a student arrives “under the influence,” he/she will be sent home immediately.
- Student must stay in the areas designated by the event sponsors.
- All areas will have lighting.
- No making out, unwanted touching or overtly sexual behavior.
- If a student leaves the designated areas, he/she will not be allowed to re-enter the event.
- Students should be polite and responsive to adult volunteers!
- Breaking a rule will be cause for immediate removal from the event.
- All guests to student-oriented activities (dances, fun nights, etc.) must have a signed note from their parent/guardian with an emergency contact telephone number.
- For all student-oriented activities, all guests must be pre-registered with the sponsors of the event.

There is a check list which is available from the Assistant to the Principal to be used when planning an after-school activity.

## After School Policy

Revised 5/23/16

Students who stay at school after dismissal times have a variety of options:

### Supervised spaces:

- It is acceptable to work in a classroom if a teacher is supervising you (the teacher has to be in the room with you).
- It is acceptable to work in the library if the library is open and an adult is supervising the area.
- You may also work in the main lobby or the courtyard.
- Students returning from a sports game or practice must wait in the main lobby or outside the building and must be supervised by their coach until they are picked up.
- If a student would like to be in a room that is unsupervised, they must complete an after school room use form with the signatures of their parent/guardian, the student in question, and the teacher(s) of the room.
- No students may be in the corridors or other non-classroom spaces unless under the direct supervision of an adult.

## Attendance Policy

At Parker School every student is expected to attend school on a regular basis and be on time for advisory and classes. The academic expectations of Parker are rigorous and regular, timely attendance is vital to ensure academic progress. In addition, each student's interaction with her or his classmates and advisory peers on a daily basis is a critical component of the learning process.

### Excused Absences

Reasons accepted by the Parker School for excused absences include illness of the student, death in the family, religious holidays, school-sponsored activities, medical appointments, court appearance, and family emergencies (the last as approved by the Principal or her designee.) An excused absence shall allow a student to make up and submit work missed.

***The School Nurse must be informed of any prolonged medical absences due to illness, surgery or other health related concerns.*** Special requests for an approved absence e.g. study day or off-site learning experience must be approved by the principal or a designee.

### Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences shall include skipping school or cutting class, suspension and failure to provide proper documentation of reasons for an excused absence. Work missed during an unexcused absence may not be made up or submitted without prior approval of the teacher in question and the principal's office. Failure to attend and participate in class regularly and in a timely manner adversely affects student learning, assessment and progress in school. Being absent or tardy is discourteous to the teacher and members of the class. Students who have multiple unexcused absences should expect to be referred by school faculty or staff to the principal.

Parents should be aware that the school health office policy states that students may not be dismissed early without parental authorization. This applies to ALL students, including those who may drive themselves to and from school. If a student becomes ill or injured at school, they should report to the nurse's office, where, if necessary, transportation home will be arranged. If the student has driven themselves to school, the school nurse will make an assessment of the student's health status and notify a parent when dismissal is recommended. If the student is considered too ill or injured to drive home safely, a parent must arrange alternate transportation home before the student can be dismissed. This is also necessary because of the danger of a student being home alone without parental knowledge and his/her health condition worsening. Because of these and other health and safety risks, no student, including Division III students, will be dismissed early from school without receiving parental permission. A blanket statement for such permission is not acceptable. Parental cooperation with this policy is appreciated.

For the same health and safety concerns, it is school health office policy that a parent or guardian must notify the school of a student's known absence, or late arrival to school on a **daily** basis. It is **not** appropriate for a student under the age of 18 to call him or herself in late or absent. Prolonged absences due to health concerns should be reported to the school nurse. Parents are notified if their child is not present and the school has not received any prior notification from a parent or guardian regarding the absence. If you have any questions or concerns, please notify the school nurse.

If a student accumulates five (5) or more unexcused absences in a school year or misses two (2) or more classes due to unexcused tardies on five (5) days in a school year, the parents will be sent a written notice and will be given the opportunity to meet with the Principal, or a designee, to discuss the student's status, and to develop an action plan to address the Student's attendance.

## Procedures

School attendance is taken and records are reviewed daily. **Parents or guardians must notify the school of a student's known absence, or late arrival to school on a daily basis.** In the case of a prolonged absence the student's parents should notify the principal or designee in a timely manner by contacting the Main Office at 978.772.3293. It is **not** appropriate for a student under the age of 18 to call him or herself in late or absent. Parents are notified if their child is not present and the school has not received any prior notification regarding the absence. Teachers take attendance in every class and notify the Main Office of unaccounted for students.

Any student who is absent more than 10% of the number of school days to date is brought to the attention of the School Nurse who documents any health concerns and ensures that the student's Advisor is aware of the situation. If the student is making satisfactory academic progress and meeting obligations (e.g., service) despite the absenteeism, no further action is taken. However, if the student is not making satisfactory academic progress or not meeting other obligations as determined by the Advisor, then the student's Advisor informs the parents or guardians in writing of the concerns and states that subsequent absenteeism related to health concerns must be documented and confirmed by a healthcare provider. If a student's absences exceed 20% of the school days to date and the student is not making academic progress and there are no known health concerns documented, then the absenteeism is referred to the Principal.

There is a sign-in/sign-out clipboard in the Main Office. Students arriving late to school must sign in. A parent or guardian must sign out students leaving before the regular dismissal time. Students may sign themselves out only if the Main Office has received specific written permission.

Students who have reached the age of 18 years old may be granted permission to sign themselves out at their own discretion. Both the student and the parent must sign for this permission. These students must still abide by the Parker School attendance policy and may be referred for disciplinary action if they abuse the policy. A form will be available in the Main Office for student and parent to sign.

### **Consequences for Tardiness for Student Drivers**

This policy is to address the tardiness of students who drive themselves (and others!\*) to school. Advisory is the beginning of the school day and it starts at 8:30AM. It is expected that all students arrive in their advisory room by that time. Any student arriving in their advisory after 8:30 AM will be marked late and will face the following consequences:

#### **Sequence of Consequences**

1. A student who is late without a reasonable explanation loses her/his off-campus privileges on each day on which s/he arrives late. For a student who does not yet have off-campus privileges, the date on which s/he will become eligible for said privileges will be pushed back one day for each day on which the student is late. (The office tracks lateness and this will be used to determine the date on which students become eligible for their off-campus privileges.)

#### **How this will be enforced:**

The office will highlight the names of all students marked late on the off-campus sign-out sheet in the window in the lobby. If a student's name is highlighted on this list, s/he is not eligible for off campus privileges for that day. (This means they may not sign-out during discretionary time, lunch, or to leave early.) The advisor will check this list at the end of the day to see if their students have signed out that day. Students who sign out in spite of having their privilege revoked will lose their discretionary time the next day (see #2 below). Students who leave without signing out in order to get around this will face further appropriate consequences. \*\*

2. If the pattern continues (more than three consecutive weeks with an unexcused lateness), instead of losing her/his off-campus privileges, the advisor will have a conference with the student and other relevant people (e.g., principal, parents, etc.) in order to determine appropriate consequences for the pattern of lateness. The advisor will notify the student's parents of this pattern of lateness.

\* If a carpool is late and it becomes apparent that it is consistently the fault of one member of the carpool (a driver or otherwise) the first set of consequences will be skipped for that person and s/he will immediately move to a conference rather than just lose his/her off-campus privileges. If it is clearly the fault of one person the other members of the carpool will not face consequences. Otherwise, the normal sequence applies to all members of the carpool.

\*\* Students who leave campus without signing out in order to get around the withdrawal of their privileges are truant and will be reported directly to the Principal for appropriate disciplinary action.

## **Tardiness Policy**

*Revised and Passed May 2016*

### *Expectations:*

- A student is late if they are not in the room of their first class at 8:30 AM.
- A student's late arrival is excused if the parent/guardian has given appropriate notice (to the front office and the advisor) by calling the attendance line before 9:00 AM or sending in a signed note.
- Teachers are required to be in their first class on time in order to mark students' attendance and to provide a quality learning experience. Teachers must submit attendance for the first class by 8:45 AM.

### *Consequences:*

If a student is late 15 times, there will be a meeting between the advisor and the student addressing the root of the problem and coming up with a solution before tardiness becomes a habit.

If the student reaches 20 tardies, they will serve a detention. For each additional 5 tardies, another detention will be assigned. Detentions may be scheduled during lunch, during a student's discretionary time, or after school.

If the student feels that the detention is undeserved, they may appeal to the Justice Committee.

## **Age of Majority**

Under Massachusetts State Law, students are considered adults and competent to make many of their own decisions at age 18 (Age of Majority). Students at age 18 years old have the right to make their own educational and health decisions and must sign all consent forms. Students who have reached the age of majority become the primary participant in developing their educational program and are held responsible for making other decisions that are required of adults in our society.

In accordance with these state regulations, the Parker School must ask each student to complete a form stating their understanding of these rights and to make some choices about exercising them. You will be asked to complete the enclosed form when you turn 18 years old. You can find more information concerning this law under: G.L. c. 71, s. 34E and at the Department of Education website at:

[http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr23/cmr23\\_qa.html#](http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr23/cmr23_qa.html#).

If you would like to discuss how this impacts you specifically, please contact your advisor.

## Audience Standards

*Passed by the CC 98-99.*

Students who demonstrate an inability to be appropriate audience members will lose the privilege of being able to choose their seat at the next presentation they attend. Their actions demonstrate that they either need to be sitting near a faculty member who can model appropriate behavior or simply away from friends who are a distracting influence.

**When does this policy apply?** In any situation where a student is in the role of audience member (e.g. community meeting, class presentations, lectures...).

**What is inappropriate audience behavior?** Behavior that distracts other audience members (talking, kicking chairs...) and/or is disrespectful to the speaker (e.g. sleeping, playing video games...).

**Who decides if the behavior is inappropriate?** A faculty member makes the call. If a student disagrees with the judgment of the faculty member, the student can take the matter to the JC.

**How long will the consequences last?** The student must prove himself/herself in at least one presentation to earn the privilege to choose his/her seat.

## Break Policy

*Passed by CC on 12-6-00*

### Definitions

1. Break shall be defined as a pause or recess *during* any class at the Parker School.
2. Passing Time shall be defined as time *between* classes, which students can use to do things like travel from classroom to classroom.
3. Out of Class shall be defined as outside the classroom, that is, anything that is deemed out of class means that the students and teachers involved may leave the classroom for all of break, but do not have to.

### Policy Rules

1. All classes longer than one (1) hour must have a five (5) minute break at some point. This break may not begin during the first or last ten (10) minutes of the class. By default, the break will be out of class, however, teachers are granted broad discretionary powers over all aspects of break (see Provision two (2)).
2. The teacher may at his or her discretion shorten, make in class, or cancel break (for example, if the class is watching a 2-hour video, the teacher may cancel break in order to finish the video).
  - If the teacher consistently shortens, makes in class or cancels breaks for illegitimate reasons or reasons the students deem as unfair, the students can take the issue to the Justice Committee for mediation and resolution.

- Legitimate reasons for modifying break include, but are not limited to: class lateness, guest speakers, punishment for behavioral problems, inability of class to demonstrate responsibility during out of class breaks (distracting other classes, etc.) and extended presentations.
3. Breaks are not required on field trips or other off-campus activities.
  4. Breaks are not passing time. Passing time should not be counted as break time. The five (5) minutes of break time shall not be counted as passing time. They are separate. A teacher cannot claim that since a student has ten minutes passing time after a class, she/he does not need a break.
  5. Assuming that the Parker School maintains 180 days of school every year, state class time requirements are still exceeded when each class gets a five (5) minute break.

## Campus Boundaries

During the school day (from the time a student arrives in the morning until the time they leave in the afternoon), students stay within the Parker School boundaries. Students will only be able to leave the school boundaries if you are on an approved and supervised field trip away from school or if you are a Division III student with off-campus privileges.

### Out of Bounds Areas in the Building

Students may not go into any of the following areas:

- The cafeteria kitchen
- All storage closets
- The faculty room
- The furnace rooms and the electrical service areas
- Any locked space
- The stage in the auditorium
- The Main Office - please come to the window if you need help. Service students are allowed in the Main Office when they are working

### Special rules for certain rooms

Students may only use the gym and any gym equipment, the stage, the music room and or music equipment and the art room when a faculty member or, in the case of the gym, a student gym supervisor(s) is present to supervise.

### Outside Boundaries

Please refer to the map in the Main Office for our actual property boundaries. When outside the building at break, lunch, or before and after school, students may gather in areas that are easily visible to the faculty. This means you cannot gather near or behind the garage, in any of the parking areas, or in the wooded areas at the edges of the school property. Students are never allowed near or on the loading dock, near the gas pipes at the rear of the building, or in any area labeled "Off Limits." Students who drive to school must park in the lot to the north of the building (beside the library). All students must enter and exit the building by using the main (front) door unless they are with a class and accompanied by a teacher.

Our “next door-neighbor” is the Shriver Job Corps Center. There is a fence between our two properties. The Job Corps Center is off limits to Parker students except when accompanied by a teacher.

Students who use sports equipment outside must do so in a safe area where they cannot injure others or damage the building. Do not throw things against the building or near any windows. Athletic equipment may not be used in the courtyard. Please ask first if you have any questions about this.

## Computer Game Policy

*Passed by the CC on 4-25-01*

*This policy is under review during the 2016-2017 school year*

### **What computers can be used?**

All school computers can be used to play games on with the following exceptions:

- All library computers
- All computers used by administrative staff

### **What games can be played?**

Games must be passed on an **Individual** basis by the Community Congress. Individuals who want to submit a game to the Community Congress for a vote must do it through the Computer Game Group. Screenshots/pictures and a description **MUST** accompany the proposal. The system requirements must also be included in the description. A vote regarding the game should take place on the day of its introduction to the Community Congress.

### **Responsibilities of school**

Games must be installed by the computer game group in a timely manner following any game’s passing by the Community Congress.

### **Rules**

**Allowable times** - The computers **will** be open for the use of entertainment software up until five minutes before advisory and may resume five minutes after school, with the exception of lunchtime - during which games may be played. Division III discretionary time can be used to play games.

**Relinquishing use** - Work or academic purposes will **ALWAYS** takes priority over games. A user who is employing a computer for entertainment purposes should relinquish the said computer.

**Allowable games** - Only games that have been approved by the Community Congress can be played. In all gaming areas the Computer Game Group will post a list of approved games.

## Computer Use Policy

*The Parker School offers Internet access to its students, faculty, and staff. Access to the school network and Internet service is a privilege, not a right. The intent of this policy is to ensure that users utilize this access in a manner consistent with the purpose of providing this Internet service.*

As a member of the Parker School community, I will:

- Respect the privacy, safety and confidentiality of myself and others by neither disclosing nor disseminating personal information on the Internet. This shall include email, chat rooms, and all forms of direct Internet communications.
- Respect computer and network equipment. I will not alter or access computer or network configurations without the knowledge and consent of the Network Administrator(s).
- Not download or install software, music or other programs from the Internet onto a school computer.
- Understand that software piracy is a federal offense, and that Parker's network may not be used for copying, downloading, distributing, or storing commercial software not licensed by the Parker School.
- Abide by copyright laws and not plagiarize the works of others.
- Understand that I am a representative of Parker on the Internet and so will display the decorum, control, and respect necessary to maintain credibility and respectability for both the school and myself.
- Understand that I will not use my account, school computers or the school network to bully or harass others.
- Understand that I am responsible for all activity on my account, even if I am not the one behind the keyboard; and for this reason I will keep my account secure and not share my password with anyone else. I will not knowingly use someone else's computer account.
- Understand that Parker is an educational community, and that as such our educational function is our paramount mission. Therefore I will defer my recreational activities to times outside academic hours and to any fellow students or staff needing access for academic work or projects.
- Understand that my actions on the Internet can have far-reaching consequences. I will therefore make deliberate decisions not to engage in behavior that might adversely affect the safety, security, or well-being of myself or be perceived as harassment by others.
- Abstain from accessing inappropriate web sites or computer games that include pornography, obscene images or language or are considered harmful to minors as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act (aka CIPA).

- Ask questions regarding computer procedures when I do not know how to do something. Further, if I am unsure of what the consequences of a particular process might be, I will ask before acting.

It should be further understood that users of Parker computing and networking resources cannot assume absolute privacy. Users should expect that network connections will be monitored and computer files may be inspected.

### Comments

CIPA requires that all computers in a school or library must install and use Internet filters to protect users against visual depictions that are harmful, as defined by the Act. Minors, defined as children under the age of 17, cannot for any reason, request that the filters be turned off.

The Parker School has installed filters to comply with this mandate. In addition, faculty members do monitor student use of the computers, and proactively guide students to make appropriate choices. The School, however, does not warrant the effectiveness of the Internet filter and cannot be held liable for damages.

*Violations of this policy include but are not limited to:*

- *Deliberate access to inappropriate material on the Internet and World Wide Web*
- *Unauthorized online access including “hacking” and other unlawful activities*
- *Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information*
- *Persistent non-academic use of e-mail, chat rooms, and instant messengers*

The Parker School reserves the right to deny, revoke or suspend specific user privileges and/or to take other disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion from school, for violations of this policy. Additionally, all handbook regulations apply to the use of the school’s Internet service. In the event that there is a claim that a student has violated any of the guidelines in this policy he or she will be provided with written notice of the suspected violation and an opportunity to be heard. The Parker School will advise appropriate law enforcement agencies of illegal activities conducted through the school’s Internet service. The Parker School also will cooperate fully with local, state and/or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the school’s Internet service.

## Detention Policy

*Revised by the JC 2006*

- Teachers can assign detentions directly to students for repeated tardiness and skipping class.
- Teachers can also bring a student to JC and request a detention as part or all of the consequence.
- If an incident report is filed and the student appears before the JC, the JC can determine a detention the proper consequence and then assign one to the student.
- The JC can also assign projects directly related to the case for the student to complete during the time of the detention. (Possible reasons for a detention are, but not limited to consistent tardiness, skipping class, consistent disrespect, defacing school property, and horseplay. For example, if the student vandalized a wall the student will then clean up the wall during his/ her detention.)

- Detentions will be held in Nicky’s office or in an agreed upon location and arranged individually. If the student assigned a detention skips the assigned detention the case will go directly to the principal.
- If a student habitually gets detentions the JC will request a meeting with the principal, however the JC will deal with that on a case by case basis.

## Election Policy

*Passed by the CC 04-07-03*

1. Advisory JC representatives conduct all elections, unless otherwise noted. Ballots are counted by an election committee made up of JC members and chosen by the JC.
2. For elected positions where one candidate or one ticket is to be elected, a candidate/ticket must receive a majority of the ballots cast to be elected. If no person/ticket receives a majority, a runoff between the top two candidates/tickets will be held.
3. For elected positions where more than one candidate is to be elected, the candidates with the most votes will take the position.
4. On the school day following the counting of ballots, the candidates will be informed of the percentages of votes received by each candidate.
5. After all candidates have been notified of the results, the percentages of votes received by each candidate will be publicly announced to the students and faculty.

### JC Leaders

Three members of the JC are elected internally by the JC to run and organize meetings and to schedule JC hearings. JC leaders are elected in May and serve until May of the following year.

### Regional Student Advisory Counsel

Two students are elected by the student body to represent the Parker school at monthly regional meetings. RSAC representatives are elected in March and serve until March of the following year.

## Expectation of Decency Policy

*Passed by the JC 3-15-06*

If a member of the community believes that the behavior or appearance of another community member is offensive or distasteful, they have the right to bring a case to the JC. This includes public displays of affection, “skimpy clothing” and obscene messages on clothing. Community members are expected to use discretion.

Any community member has the right to respectfully disagree with another community member’s decision on whether their appearance is offensive or distasteful. Disagreements will be handled by the JC, in a case or mediation.

## Gym Use at Lunchtime

The Gym is primarily used by Wellness classes during the school day. It can be signed out by Parker community members during times not dedicated to Wellness classes by contacting the front office.

The Gym is open for free play during lunch time. A faculty member or student supervisor must be present when students are using the Gym at lunch time. Student supervisors have the right and responsibility to enforce all school rules and are responsible for maintaining a safe environment in the Gym at lunchtime. Student supervisors will contact the faculty member on lunch duty in the Gym if they need help with any behavior problems. In case of accident or injury, the student supervisor will stay with the injured person and will send someone to the nurse or the Main Office for help. Everyone else will stop playing and move away from the injured person.

Specialized equipment, such as the climbing wall, are off limits unless being used as part of a Wellness class.

When the Gym is not in use by a class, the Gym is available for students at break time with teacher supervision and for Division 3 students during discretionary time.

## Prohibition Against Bullying and Retaliation

The Parker School strictly prohibits the bullying, harassment and Teasing of students.

**Bullying**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

1. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
2. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
3. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
4. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
5. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

**Hostile environment**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Acts of bullying, which include cyber bullying, are prohibited:

- on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school
- at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

## Policies for Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation

### Reporting bullying or retaliation

- **Reporting by staff:** Parker staff members are required to report immediately any instances of suspected bullying or retaliation, and are also expected to intervene appropriately in the moment. Even if the staff member believes the situation was appropriately addressed, the documentation is critical to determining whether there is a larger pattern or problem to address.
- **Reporting by students:** Students may make a report either for themselves or on behalf of others. They may request assistance from a staff member to write a report, or they may report verbally to an adult who writes on their behalf. Reports may be made anonymously, but no formal disciplinary action can be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint.
- **Reporting by parents, guardians, or others:** Parker believes members of our community who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying will want to take action to keep our students safe. Reports can be made verbally or in writing to any staff member whom the witness feels comfortable contacting, and can be anonymous, although no disciplinary action can be taken on the basis of an anonymous complaint.

Any reports to the school will require the school to conduct an investigation of the incident, and will be documented. All reports are reviewed by the principal or designee to determine the appropriate response. Reporters need to understand that while the school will follow up with any report, strict confidentiality laws prevent Parker from revealing information about students to adults other than their parents.

### Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation

#### **Safety**

The first priority in responding to an incident will be to restore a sense of safety and protect the alleged target from any further incidents while the circumstances are investigated.

### ***Obligations to notify others***

All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00. Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of each student involved, and will share with them Parker's procedures for responding. If the reported incident involves students from other schools, public or private, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) so that each school may take appropriate action. At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the state police on Devens.

### ***Investigation and Determinations***

The principal or designee will promptly investigate reported incidents. This will include conversations with students, staff, parents/guardians, and others as necessary. To the greatest extent possible, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigation. A written record of the investigation shall be kept. The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps aimed at preventing recurrence and ensuring that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. Actions will include both educational/therapeutic steps aimed at preventing future occurrences and disciplinary action as appropriate. The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and what action is being taken. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

Parker is a deliberately small school where students are known well by many adults and where education is personalized to the maximum feasible extent. The responses taken in any situation where it is determined that bullying has occurred will necessarily be highly tailored to the particular needs of the student(s) involved.

For the targeted student(s), the highest priority will be promoting a sense of safety and personal strength and resilience. The school principal and/or counselor will meet with the targeted student to assess whether or not s/he feels safe or needs protection. The student's parents may also be consulted while making this determination. Depending on the circumstances, specific arrangements may be made to provide increased adult supervision, schedule adjustments or other plans for keeping students separated, or a change in routines or plans that eliminate the situations that exacerbate the problem. The targeted student may also receive coaching and practice in how to face future challenges, and will identify a trusted adult to approach as needed.

For the aggressor(s), the response will seek a balance between discipline and education/intervention, as required in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370(d)(v). Disciplinary responses will vary with the severity of the situation and the circumstances surrounding the incident. Interventions may include required counseling sessions, referrals for evaluation, behavior contracts, or classes to teach social skills.

Once a reasonable amount of time has passed, the principal or designee will follow up with the students, and determine whether additional action is needed.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

## Homework Policy

*Passed by the CC 98-99*

At any school, homework completion is usually a problem. Teachers assign it, but students don't always do it. Some schools give out detentions; others simply fail you if you don't complete your homework. Here at Parker, over the years, we have tried many different homework policies, always trying to find something that will work for students, teachers and parents. The Community Congress has made this current policy for two reasons. The first is the fact that every class is run differently. The second is that every teacher likes to deal with problems differently.

### General Policy

1. Homework policies should be by class.
2. Homework policy must be discussed with students and teacher(s) by the first week of class or within one week of the implementation of the policy in class.
3. The policy must be given to the JC.
4. The policy must be enforced by either the JC or the teacher depending on the severity.
5. Parents must be notified of the policy as soon as it is implemented.

### Guidelines

- Guidelines are meant as suggestions
- Punishments are intended to be punitive
- Punishments are recommended to be cumulative
- Punishments are supposed to punish the student, not the parents or teachers

## Horseplay Policy

*Passed by the JC 97-98*

Horseplay is any behavior, which is perceived as unsafe, either by a participant or an observer. Some of the behaviors that are considered unsafe are:

- Picking students up so that both feet are not on the floor.
- Hitting or punching.
- Pushing or kicking.
- Knocking students against the wall.
- Swinging anything at another student that might result in injury.
- Fooling around near breakable objects.

Behaviors that are considered unsafe may actually or potentially harm someone. It is considered a violation of the school rule of “No Horseplay” if there is any behavior, which is potentially unsafe, even if no one gets hurt at the time it is observed. Teachers are asked to warn all students if horseplay is observed.

The Horseplay Policy was instituted in the interest of student safety. One important aspect of any school is that students should be able to walk down the halls safely, without having to worry about being accidentally bumped into or knocked over. This policy is not the strictest one at the school, and it is usually only called into effect if you are fooling around in a manner that other people find obstructive or dangerous. Students pretty much have the freedom to act how they want, as long as they are aware of the safety of themselves and of others.

## Motor Vehicles Driven by Parker School Students

**Updated and passed by the CC June 8, 2018**

The Parker School has the responsibility to monitor and regulate students’ use of motor vehicles in the immediate vicinity of the school. Motor vehicles include, but are not limited to, cars, trucks, motorcycles, motorized bicycles, and mopeds. Students must have permission from a staff member in order to go to their car in the school parking lot at any time during the school day. All students are expected to use school provided transportation on field trips, athletic events or other school-sponsored activities, unless exceptions are granted from parents and faculty. It is the student’s responsibility to drive in a safe and courteous manner. A student’s privilege to drive in the vicinity of the Parker School or to park in the student parking lot may be revoked at any time. The student and parents will be notified of the reasons for such revocation. Students must park in spots designated to their grade from before school to 3:30. Students are allowed to park in the lower lot if given permission by the principal or their designee.

## Off-Campus Privilege Policy

Eligible students\* in good standing in Division III are able to apply for Parker’s Off-campus Privilege. “Off-Campus Privilege” is defined as school and parent permission to be off-campus during unscheduled class time during the school day. Parker rules shall apply while students are off-campus during school hours under this policy.

Students may apply for the Off-Campus Privilege by providing the school with written parent permission to do so. Parents must provide proof of family medical and health insurance for their child. Also, written Advisor permission, based on verification of academic and behavioral good standing is required. Parents and Advisors may revoke a student’s permission for the Off-Campus Privilege at his/her discretion by so notifying the Main Office in writing.

Consequences for violations of the Off-Campus Privilege Policy and Procedures shall be determined by the Justice Committee and the Principal and shall range from a warning to temporary or permanent loss of the Off-Campus Privilege. Also, student behavior that is in violation of school rules while off-campus under this policy may include suspension or expulsion as possible disciplinary consequences.

Procedures for implementing this policy are developed by the Division III advisors and must be followed by all students who are exercising their off-campus privilege. Permission forms are available in the Main Office and must be completed and signed before the student may exercise this privilege. Students must use the sign-out/sign-in forms at the window outside the Main Office.

*\*For purposes of this policy, “eligible students” are defined as those who are in Division III advisories and are seniors, or are mid-year juniors - who are enrolled in Division III A/H and MST classes. In extenuating circumstances the Principal, at her discretion, may waive one or more of these requirements.*

## Parking Policy

Revised 2017

The Parker School has the responsibility to monitor and regulate students’ use of motor vehicles in the immediate vicinity of the school. Motor vehicles include but are not limited to cars, trucks, motorcycles, motorized bicycles and mopeds. It is a student’s responsibility to drive in a safe and courteous manner. A student’s privilege to drive in the vicinity of the Parker School or to park in the student parking lot may be revoked at any time. The students and parents will be notified of the reasons for such revocation.

Guidelines:

- All Parker students may park in the Antietam Field lot.
- Seniors may park in the marked spaces (between the white lines) in the first parking lot on the right when you drive in.
- Seniors may also park in the allotted spaces to the right side of the school.
- Students may not park in teacher parking spots, visitor parking spots, or in unmarked spaces such as the grass.
- This policy is only enforced during school hours.

Any person who violates this policy will be subject to the Justice Committee.

## Portable Computers, Phones, and Other Electronic Devices Policy

*Passed by C.C. on 3.21.12*

In addition to published policies governing computer games (p. 26 of Community Handbook), general computer use (p. 27 of Community Handbook), and on-line translators (p. 17 of Community Handbook), the Community Congress has adopted this policy (replacing an earlier policy passed in 2004) to address the use of cell phones and other portable electronic devices at Parker. The intent is to establish clear standards by which specific uses can be judged, in context, to be appropriate or inappropriate. Provided that such use does not interfere with one’s own learning, interrupt or degrade the learning environment, infringe on the rights of other community members, or pose a risk to the health or safety of community members, mobile phones and other portable electronic devices may be used during the school day at Parker. Teachers have broad discretion to define what constitutes an interruption or degradation of the learning environment and may confiscate electronic devices or issue other consequences if students do not use them appropriately in class.

The Community Congress believes these standards contribute to a tone of decency and trust at Parker and hopes that students will consider hard-to-police behaviors (e.g., texting, tabbing between screens, et al) as corrosive, eroding one of the Ten Common Principles upon which Parker is built. The Community Congress encourages teachers to be explicit about appropriate use during academic time in each classroom. Students, teachers, and other community members may use incident reports and the Justice Committee when someone uses or regulates cell phones or portable electronic devices in ways that infringe on the rights of other community members or pose health or safety risks. Mobile phones, MP3 players, and other personal electronic devices are explicitly forbidden in all MCAS, SAT, AP, ACT, and other standardized testing environments. At no time should a student or teacher be using such devices when in a standardized testing environment.

## Public Art at Parker Policy

**Definitions:** For the purpose of these proceedings, **public art** is defined as artworks that are a) installed at Parker for a duration longer than one academic year; b) mounted in common public areas of the school (e.g., hallways, auditorium, courtyard); AND c) offered as a benefit to the Parker community. Artworks produced as part of the curriculum and displayed temporarily are explicitly not subject to these procedures, nor is The Rock.

**Decision pathways** refers to Parker’s published decision-making process diagram (a copy is mounted on the wall near the principal’s office).

### Process for Creating Public Art at Parker:

1. The artist(s) develop a proposal for the public art project. Initially, the proposal is vetted at the conceptual level by the principal or principal’s designee (Pathway #2--principal). Primary considerations at this stage are safety, maintenance, appropriateness in a school setting, legality, impact on the physical plant, expense, consistency with established norms.
2. Once a proposal has received initial approval from the principal or principal’s designee, the proposal is entertained by the Committee on Public Art (CPA) (Pathway #5—representative body). The CPA shall be constituted each school year for a term of one school year: three members shall be appointed by the Community Congress (CC); three members of the faculty shall be appointed by the principal. The CPA will review the proposal, solicit community feedback on the proposal during a formal public comment period, recommend adjustments to the proposal in light of public comment or other considerations, and, in the end, make a recommendation to the principal based on the merits of the piece within ten school days of receiving the formal written proposal. During the ten school day consideration period, the CPA should strive to foster a respectful conversation among the artist(s) and members of the Parker community interested in the proposal. The CPA should be deferential to the artist’s vision and should seek not so much to adjudicate matters of taste or eliminate controversy as to ensure that the best possible proposal—informed by public comment and democratic processes—goes forward (or not).

3. Upon receiving the CPA's recommendation, the principal may accept the recommendation, reject the recommendation, or take other action within five school days of receiving the recommendation. In some cases where minor modifications or adjustments are requested, a revised proposal can be resubmitted directly to the principal for final approval.

## School Business Policy

*Passed by the CC 98-99.*

- Any student interested in forming a "business" at the school must register with the school by completing a registration form. Businesses currently in operation must have a completed form.
- School Businesses must have their sales schedule approved by the School Business Manager.
- School Businesses must have their product(s) approved by the CC.
- Every business must have a faculty advisor. The responsibilities of the faculty advisor are to make sure the businesses are operated in a safe manner, abide by this document, existing school policies and state and national laws. The faculty advisor is also responsible for the storing of revenue. Students may not store the money in the building.
- A tariff of 5% of revenue will be presented to the school in return for the privilege of operating on school property. This payment will be presented with a total financial analysis of the company on the first Tuesday of the month.
- All money will be labeled, counted, and, if coins, wrapped.
- School Businesses must keep full financial records of cash flow, tariffs, sales, profits, paychecks, and records of the date of all audits/tariff payments.
- School Businesses will be subject to audit at any time by the Business Manager.
- Violations of this policy will result in the closing of the business at the discretion of the Justice Committee.

## School Closing Policy

On the occasion of inclement weather, the Parker School's closing and two-hour delayed openings a call will go out to all those who have signed up to be notified and it will be announced on WCVB TV5, WBZ (Radio AM 1030 and TV 4), and WHDH TV 7. It will also be posted on the web site and there will be a message on the schools answering machine. Please use good judgment when deciding whether or not your parents (or yourself) should drive to school. It is difficult for us to be aware of weather conditions in all the 40+ communities where our students reside. We try to make the decision before 6:00 a.m.

Parker will not typically close school early because of bad weather, due to the complications of carpools and pick-ups. When bad weather develops during the day, parents should always feel free to come to school early and pick up students (or to call the school and have your driving student dismissed).

### **For Driving Students**

Students and their parents are responsible for making all decisions about whether or not a student should drive in inclement weather. Please discuss this now, before the first flakes fall. Remember that when a sudden snowfall begins, our school telephones may become busy. We will give student drivers priority in making calls, but there may still be difficulty in reaching parents. Student drivers may not leave school early until we get permission from a parent.

## **Hoverboard and Skateboard Policy**

*Passed by the CC 98-99*

Skateboarding, like other activities in which wheels are substituted for feet, can lead to serious injuries. On the other hand, the risk of injury can be reduced by certain precautions:

- Skaters are required to wear, at minimum, a bicycle-type safety helmet. Other protective gear is encouraged, but not required.
- Responsible behavior on the part of the skaters is the most important factor in avoiding injury. No horsing around, no pushing or interfering with other peoples' skating, always skating in control and within the limits of your abilities.
- Never skate around traffic or in crowded areas. This includes the streets and walkways, 15 minutes before the school day is scheduled to begin, 15 minutes after the completion of the school day, (during drop off and pickup time), the school porch and the stairs at all times.
- Skating should never pose a risk to other people.
- Skaters should arrange for appropriate adult supervision.
- No skateboarding in the courtyard.
- Parents should understand and be willing to accept the risk of injury. They should provide written permission for their child to bring skateboards and skate while at school.

## **Student-Teacher Activity Fund Policy**

1. There shall be a permanent committee of the Community Congress to be called the Student-Teacher Activity Fund. Its purpose will be to distribute any money raised by the Community Congress as mini-grants for student, advisory and faculty endeavors, including (but not limited to) capital for fundraisers and funding for advisory trips and senior projects.
2. From any money raised by the Community Congress through various forms of revenue, ten percent of this profit must be set aside in a reserve fund for maintenance property under the administration of the STAF or any other emergency expenses and five percent of this project must be donated to the school pursuant to the School Business Policy. The remaining eighty-five percent will be used for mini-grants at the discretion of the Student-Teacher Activity Fund. From any other money raised by the Community Congress, the entire amount raised will be donated in mini-grants.

3. The Treasurer of the Community Congress will serve as the fund's chair and will present a statement of the Community Congress' assets and liabilities to the Student Teacher Activity Fund for review in advance of its presentation to the entire Community Congress.
4. Between five and eight members to the Student-Teacher Activity Fund will be elected by the Community Congress at least on an annual basis in a manner to be decided at the discretion of the Community Congress. CC representatives that have had experience on the STAF will receive priority placement. In addition, an adult supervisor will be appointed to aid the STAF.
5. The Student-Teacher Activity Fund will distribute an application for students and teachers to apply for mini grants. Submissions of applications will be accepted at any time and meetings will be scheduled to review these applications on a regular basis. There will be at least one Student-Teacher Activity Fund meeting for reviewing applications every two months. Additional meetings may be scheduled if there are a substantial number of applications submitted.
6. The Student-Teacher Activity Fund will have meetings during CC work time after the submission of applications to determine whether or not to fund the grants requested. The date and time of this meeting will be announced to the applicants for grants. Applicants for grants will be invited but not required to attend this meeting.
7. The Student-Teacher Activity Fund will disapprove, approve in part, or approve in full, every application submitted before the meeting. An application will be approved if it wins by a 2/3 majority vote. Any application that is disapproved may be revised and resubmitted to be considered at a later meeting.
8. It shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer of the Community Congress to ensure that any grants approved in full or in part will be paid promptly after their approval. In addition, documentation must be provided that shows the funds were used for their designated purpose.
9. No grant will be approved by the Student-Teacher Activity Fund for an amount in excess of \$200 unless approved by the principal.
10. Should any party abuse these guidelines (i.e. embezzlement) they will be required to pay back double the amount taken and be subject to a JC hearing.

## User Fee Discount and Waiver Policy

*Passed by the Board of Trustees June 2012*

Common Principle 9 addresses “**Resources dedicated to teaching and learning.** Ultimate administrative and budget targets should include student loads that promote personalization, substantial time for collective planning by teachers, competitive salaries for staff, and an ultimate per pupil cost not to exceed that at traditional schools by more than 10 percent. To accomplish this, administrative plans may have to show the phased reduction or elimination of some services now provided students in many traditional schools.”

Common Principle 10 addresses “**Democracy and equity**. The school should demonstrate nondiscriminatory and inclusive policies, practices, and pedagogies. It should model democratic practices that involve all who are directly affected by the school. The school should honor diversity and build on the strength of its communities, deliberately and explicitly challenging all forms of inequity.”

With resources focused on teaching and learning, it is Parker’s policy to assess user fees for sports, field trips, and some elective student activities (e.g., jazz band, Model UN) that defray some of the cost of these valuable programs. It is the policy of the school to maintain and make known the procedures by which families can apply to have all or part of these fees waived. Federal Eligibility Guidelines for free or reduced price meals will serve as the basis for such procedures.

## Vending Machine Policy

### *Interim Policy 06-02*

#### **I. Vending Machine Responsibilities**

1. All food and beverage stocking responsibilities will be delegated to specific members of the Parker community. No third party company will be responsible for the welfare of the vending machines.
2. Regular maintenance of the vending machines will be performed by the members of the community whose task it is to stock the vending machines. When necessary, maintenance may be performed by other individuals within the community and/or third parties outside the community.
3. Stocking of the vending machines will be the duty of two Division III students. This job will be performed as the students’ required service responsibilities. The students will be responsible for buying food, stocking the machines, keeping the machines in working order, arranging maintenance work and any other issues involving the vending machines. The students will be reimbursed for necessary expenses.

#### **II. Vending Machine Profits**

Profits generated through vending machine sales will be allocated to several funds:

1. Five percent of all profits will go directly to the Parker School.
2. Twenty percent will be put into a new vending machine fund. This fund will eventually provide the capital to purchase new machines.
3. Ten percent will be put into a maintenance fund.
4. Sixty-five percent will go to the Student Activity fund, the student activity endowment of the Community Congress.

## Visitors Coming to Parker

*Passed by the CC 98-99*

In the event that a student would like to bring another student/adult to visit during a school day, the following format should be followed.

1. Students need to obtain a permission form from the front office and all of their teachers need to give permission for the visit. This must happen at least three days in advance of the visit.
2. You need a letter from the parents of the student that will visit the school saying that their child will visit with their permission and a telephone number where they can be reached during the day in case we need to call them.
3. You need a letter from your parents saying that you have their permission to have a friend come and visit the school.
4. Let your advisor know three (3) days in advance.
5. The same visitor cannot come more than twice

## Visitor Policy for CC Meetings

*Passed 12-12-01*

**The guidelines for non-CC members visiting CC meetings are as follows:**

- Students need permission from the teacher whose class they will be missing in order to visit the CC meeting. A signed permission slip will be needed. Also, a Co-Advisor should be consulted a week in advance if a student is interested in visiting. There is also an option of speaking to one's advisory CC representative and having them speak to a Co-Advisor.
- If a visitor's behavior is unacceptable and/or is somehow slowing the CC meeting's progress, that visitor can be told to leave.
- There are certain norms for visitors that differ from a CC member. They are as follows: The visitor may give his/her own input during the meeting. This may include ideas for a committee, ideas for improving an existing policy, etc. However, the visitor may not vote during the CC meeting.
- There is a limit of five non-CC members visiting a CC meeting, (per meeting).

## Wellness Policy

### **Wellness Policy for Physical Activity and Nutrition**

The Parker School recognizes the relationship between good health and a student's ability to learn and is aware of the national trend of increasing obesity, the negative health effects of obesity, and the causes of obesity. This trend in obesity is associated with an increased incidence of type II diabetes and hypertension in adolescents and is expected to increase the prevalence of cancer, heart disease, and strokes as well. If this trend continues, the younger generation may be the first to have a decrease in their life expectancy. Since health habits

established in adolescence continue throughout their lifetime, this is an important time to help students establish and follow healthy habits. To meet this end, Parker will take a coordinated approach addressing nutrition education, physical activity, and the types of food made available to students while at school.

### **Nutrition Education**

Our goals for nutrition education are that students will be able to discern what constitutes a healthy diet, know what all the nutrients necessary for a healthy diet are, understand the role a healthy diet has in disease prevention, and will incorporate what they have learned here into a life-long healthy diet and lifestyle. Students are taught two units on nutrition as part of the school's Wellness program; once during Division I (grades 7-8) and again in Division II (grades 9-10). Nutrition education, in keeping with the school's mission, is designed to engage students in active learning about food, food preparation, and food consumption. The classes are shaped by students' questions, and the units culminate in independent nutrition projects designed and presented by students.

### **Physical Activity**

The school's long-term goal is for students to incorporate the physical skills they have learned at Parker throughout the rest of their lives. Physical Activity classes in Division I and II (grades 7-10) ensure that every student is physically active for one hour a day, three days a week. Physical activities are designed to promote life-long skills as well as team skills. Students also set their own goals by evaluating their fitness level at the beginning and end of the school year, and over several years, using assessments that measure flexibility, strength, and endurance. Students in Division 3 (grades 11 and 12) are given more choices, and can participate in five physical activity sessions per semester or work on an independent Wellness project. Parker also encourages students to participate in the after school sports program and to participate in physical activities in their advisory groups. Potential future activities include non-competitive physical activities after school for students, and a school-based program for faculty and staff.

### **Cafeteria and Vending Matching Guidelines**

All foods available from the cafeteria will meet the current Federal and State requirements. A USDA approved lunch will be available to those students without lunch money, and efforts will be made to ensure that students receiving a free lunch are not stigmatized. School vending machines will be stocked with healthy and nutritious foods according to standards agreed on by the Health Advisory Committee.

### **Guidelines for Other Times Food is Available**

Parker will encourage all members of the school community to consider healthy and nutritious foods when they bring food into school, and alternatives to food for fundraising and other events. The Health Advisory Committee will provide information and recommendations to staff and families.

### **Implementation and Evaluation**

The Health Advisory Committee will be responsible for implementing, establishing specific guidelines for, monitoring, and assessing the Wellness Policy.

## Policies mandated by the State and the Board of Trustees Student Health Information

*The school nurse is available during the school day to assist students with their health concerns. Except in emergency situations, students should obtain permission from their teacher before visiting the nurse's office. All accidents and injuries that occur during the school day should be reported to the school nurse. Students who are returning to school after an extended illness or surgery should see the school nurse before returning to classes.*

Every student must have a physical examination upon entering the Parker School. The State of Massachusetts also requires that immunizations be up-to-date when entering school. Mandated periodic health screenings for vision, hearing, posture and growth checks are done during the school year.

Medications (including inhalers and EpiPens) must not be brought to school or used by any student without a health care provider's written order and the written permission of the student's parents/guardians and the school nurse. If a student requires over-the-counter medication or prescription medication while in school, it should be brought to the nurse's office at the beginning of the day in the original container by a responsible adult. Acetaminophen (Tylenol), Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) and antacids (Tums) are available with parental permission in the nurse's office. Students over the age of 18 years of age do not need parental permission but must comply with the school's medication policy. A brief health assessment will be done by the nurse to determine need. This will include checking for fever, pain from an injury or orthodontic procedures, headache, etc. Other medications must be supplied by the student's parents for his/her use at school. Students should contact the school nurse with any other questions or concerns.

Parents should be aware that school health office policy states that students may not be dismissed early without parental authorization. This applies to ALL students under the age of 18 years old, including those who may drive themselves to and from school. If a student becomes ill or injured at school, they should report to the nurse's office, where, if necessary, transportation home will be arranged. If the student has driven themselves to school, the school nurse will make an assessment of the student's health status and notify a parent when dismissal is recommended. If the student is considered too ill or injured to drive home safely, a parent must arrange alternate transportation home before the student can be dismissed. This is also necessary because of the danger of a student being home alone without parental knowledge and his/her health condition worsening. Because of these and other health and safety risks, no student, including Division III students, will be dismissed early from school without receiving parental permission. Students over the age of 18 years of age should also contact the school nurse so that an assessment of their ability to drive can be done prior to be dismissed. A blanket statement for such permission is not acceptable. Parental cooperation with this policy is appreciated.

For the same health and safety concerns, it is school health office policy that a parent or guardian must notify the school of a student's known absence or late arrival to school.

## Parker School Staff Statement: Regarding Student Health, Safety and Welfare Issues

Parker School staff, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, crafted the following statement in order to protect the welfare of our students during the school year:

1. **Abuse/Neglect** - By law, information about child abuse and neglect must be communicated by school employees to the Massachusetts Department of children and families (DCF) (DCF) according to DCF protocol. Parker School Student Services personnel are knowledgeable about this protocol and teachers must communicate such information to them immediately.
2. **Alcohol and Other Drugs** - The Parker School Handbook details disciplinary policies and procedures regarding infractions that involve use and possession of alcohol, drugs and drug paraphernalia on campus or at school events. Casual conversation at the Parker School about the use of alcohol and drugs is to be discouraged. However, responsible, educational dialogue at the Parker School about these topics is to be encouraged.

Personal revelations by students to staff regarding their own use of alcohol or drugs or their first hand concerns about others' use shall result in action by a Parker staff member. Upon hearing such information, a Parker staff member will consult with Student Services personnel. Together, based on their best judgment, the staff member and Student Services personnel will decide which of the following is the best course of action:

- Staff member continues to talk with and monitor student for a limited period of time to more clearly determine the nature of the situation;
- Student Services personnel make an educational/therapeutic intervention by contacting student directly;
- Parents of student are contacted by most appropriate staff member;
- Student is referred to Principal's Office for possible disciplinary action.

No Parker School staff member should bear sole responsibility for the knowledge that a student is experimenting with, using or abusing alcohol or drugs. For the protection of the student and all concerned, a consultation between the staff member and Student Services personnel must take place.

3. **Other Information about Possible Illegal, Dangerous or Problematic Actions by Students** - While it is impossible to articulate and list all possibilities, Parker staff should be wary of conspiring with students to deny parents certain kinds of information. School staff members are adults who are entrusted to work with other people's children. Information about student illegal activities, dangerous undertakings or other "scary" (to staff) revelations about what kids are doing needs to be evaluated against possible worst-case scenarios. At the very least, a staff member will seek the counsel of other, appropriate school personnel regarding possible courses of action in problematic situations with students. It is the health, safety and welfare of the student that is at the heart of this matter.

*The Parker School must be pro-active with respect to student drug and alcohol experimentation, use and abuse, as well as other potentially dangerous situations. The*

*Parker School staff actions in these situations must communicate to the Parker School community and the larger community that the Parker School does not foster a school culture where alcohol and drug use is regarded as “okay,” or that to be “cool” at Parker one needs to be involved with alcohol or drugs, or illegal or dangerous activities.*

## Concussion Policy

### **Policy for the Prevention and Management of Head Injuries and Concussions in School and Extracurricular Athletic Activities**

*Passed by the Board of Trustees 06-12-2012*

#### **Policy:**

It is the policy of the Parker School to provide a standardized procedure for persons involved in the prevention, training, management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities, including but not limited to interscholastic sports, in order to protect their safety and health.

In accordance with 105 CMR 201.006 this policy will be revised as needed and reviewed at least every two years by a team consisting of, at a minimum, of the school principal, school nurse, school or team physician if on staff, athletic director, neuropsychologist if available, guidance counselor (at Parker this role is performed by the Academic Dean), and teacher in consultation with any existing school health/wellness advisory committee.

The principal shall be responsible for the implementation of this policy and related procedures.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. c. 111, § 222 105; CMR 201.000

## Condom Availability Policy

*Passed by the Parker School Board of Trustees 6-19-00*

Due to the continually rising rate of HIV infections and other sexually transmitted disease among adolescents, the need to address infection prevention in all ways possible is critical. While the Parker staff will continue to encourage abstinence from sexual intercourse as the safest and surest way of avoiding pregnancy, HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, condoms will also be made available to students at their request. Condoms will only be available through the School Nurse or other specifically designated and trained school staff. Students will be taught how to use condoms properly, according to the Massachusetts State Public Health Fact Sheet on Condoms. Counseling will be provided on a one-to-one basis by designated Parker staff to include appropriate information and support regarding open communication and the avoidance of high risk behaviors. Although Parker staff are prohibited by state confidentiality laws from informing parents that specific students have requested condoms or any other form of reproductive health care, the staff will encourage the students themselves to communicate as openly as possible with their parents.

## Sex Education: Parent Notification Policy

Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 32A *Sex Education: Parent Notification* Specifies that parents be notified when a school's curriculum includes human sex education and human sexuality issues. At Parker, such issues are addressed in the school's Wellness curriculum; prior notification will be communicated to parents via Friday Announcements. Any parent may exempt their children from any portion of Parker's human sex education and human sexuality issues curriculum through written notification to the school's principal. No child shall be penalized by reason of such exemption.

## Counseling Services

Counseling is available to all Parker School students. In addition to the School Counselor, our Coordinator of Student Services and the School Nurse are experienced in addressing issues of adolescent development. Students are encouraged to speak with Student Services regarding any situation at home or at school that may be affecting their lives at Parker. An appointment can be made by stopping by the Counseling/Nurse's Office or by putting a note in their boxes in the Main Office.

Parents and guardians are also encouraged to speak with members of Student Services when family or health issues may be affecting their child's ability to focus at school. The School Counselor provides referrals to area mental health professionals when needed. Topics that are often discussed with Student Services include, but are not limited to: family problems, friendships and social issues, schoolwork and teacher relationships, gender or sexuality concerns, depression and suicide, sexual harassment, drugs and alcohol, self-harm, race and religion.

## User Fee Discount and Waiver Policy

*Passed by the Board of Trustees June 2012*

Common Principle 9 addresses "**Resources dedicated to teaching and learning.** Ultimate administrative and budget targets should include student loads that promote personalization, substantial time for collective planning by teachers, competitive salaries for staff, and an ultimate per pupil cost not to exceed that at traditional schools by more than 10 percent. To accomplish this, administrative plans may have to show the phased reduction or elimination of some services now provided students in many traditional schools."

Common Principle 10 addresses "**Democracy and equity.** The school should demonstrate nondiscriminatory and inclusive policies, practices, and pedagogies. It should model democratic practices that involve all who are directly affected by the school. The school should honor diversity and build on the strength of its communities, deliberately and explicitly challenging all forms of inequity."

With resources focused on teaching and learning, it is Parker's policy to assess user fees for sports, field trips, and some elective student activities (e.g., jazz band, Model UN) that defray some of the cost of these valuable programs. It is the policy of the school to maintain and make known the procedures by which families can apply to have all or part of these fees waived. Federal Eligibility Guidelines for free or reduced price meals will serve as the basis for such procedures.

## State and Federal Laws

### Drugs/Weapons/Assaults (as per Massachusetts Statute)

According to the provisions of The Gun Free Schools Act of 1994 possession of a firearm at school or at a school sponsored event will result in a mandatory one year expulsion which can be reviewed on a case by case basis by the Principal.

- 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; a controlled substance as defined in Section 94c, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine and heroin may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- b) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher aides or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing. The student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, the principal may use his/her discretion to decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b) provided however, that the principal who decides that said student should be suspended shall state in writing to the school committee his reasons for choosing the suspension instead of the expulsion as the more appropriate remedy. In this statement, the principal shall represent that, in his opinion, the continued presence of this student in the school will not pose a threat to the safety, security and welfare of the other students and staff in the school.
- d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the principal. The expelled student shall have ten (10) 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 service.
- e) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section and applies for admission to another school for acceptance, the superintendent of the sending school shall notify the superintendent of the receiving school of the reasons for the pupil's expulsion.

Massachusetts's law provides for a mandatory minimum sentence of two (2) years imprisonment and a fine of not more than \$10,000 for anyone convicted of selling controlled substances within 1000 feet of school property.

In addition, any student who has been (or is) involved in the sale, use, possession, and/or distribution of drugs or has been (or is) involved in the expedition of the sale, use, possession, and/or distribution of drugs or has committed an assault of any type on another student, staff member, or administrator, or has been involved in a weapons violation will be subject to expulsion from school and exclusion from participation in school activities or events.

Furthermore, any person, knowingly or intentionally present at a place where a controlled substance is being kept, or who is in the company of any person knowing said person is in possession of a controlled substance, unless such substance was obtained directly or pursuant to a valid prescription order from a practitioner while acting in the course of his professional practice, or whoever conspires with another person to violate any provision of the Controlled Substances Act, may also be subject to expulsion from school and exclusion from participation in school activities, school or events.

### **Alcohol**

Any person, knowingly or intentionally present at a place where a controlled substance is being kept, or who is in the company of any person, knowing said person is in possession of a controlled substance, unless such substance was obtained directly or pursuant to a valid prescription or order from a practitioner while acting in the course of his professional practice, or whoever conspires with another person to violate any provision of The Controlled Substances Act, may be subject to suspension, arrest, and/or expulsion from school, participation in school activities or events. Alcohol violations could result in expulsion proceedings. The parent(s) or guardian(s) of students involved in such infractions will always be notified.

### **Smoking/Possession of Tobacco Products**

In accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (MGL Chapter 71, sections 2A and 37H and MGL Chapter 90, section 7B), it is the policy of the Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School that smoking or other use of tobacco products by any individual, student or employee, are prohibited in any school building or school facility, anywhere on school grounds and on any school bus. Non-school personnel must comply with this restriction. Smoking or any other use of tobacco products is also prohibited during all school activities off school property.

## **Student Information**

Under Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) regulations, the school may, from time to time, release for publication certain information concerning students without first obtaining their or their parents' consent unless they have notified us that we should not do so. The information, which may be released for publication, includes only students' names, classes, participation in extracurricular activities, degrees, honors and awards and post-high school plans. If you do not wish this information concerning yourself/or your child to be released for publication without your consent during the school year, please contact the Coordinator of Student Services.

## Student Records

The Student Record Regulations adopted by the Board of Education apply to all public elementary and secondary schools in Massachusetts. (They also apply to private day and residential schools that have state approval to provide publicly funded special education services.) The regulations are designed to insure parents' and students' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, appeal and destruction of student records, and to assist school authorities in carrying out their responsibilities under state and federal law.

The regulations apply to all information kept by a school or school district on a student in a way that the student may be individually identified. The regulations divide the record into two parts: **the transcript and the temporary record**. The **transcript** includes only the minimum information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress. This information includes name, address, course titles, narrative evaluations/summary, credits, and grade level completed. The transcript is kept by the school district for at least sixty years after the student leaves the system.

The **temporary record** contains the majority of the information maintained by the school about the student. This may include such things as standardized test results; school-sponsored extracurricular activities; evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons; disciplinary records; health records; and other information. The temporary record is destroyed within seven years after the student leaves the school system.

The following is a summary of the major provisions of the Student Record Regulations concerning the rights of custodial parents and eligible students. Under the regulations, "eligible students" are at least 14 years old or have entered the ninth grade; they may exercise these rights just as their parents may. Noncustodial parents are eligible to obtain access to the student record unless that parent's access to the student or custodial parent has been restricted. In order to obtain access a non-custodial parent must submit a written request to the principal annually. For additional requirements please contact the principal's office.

### Inspection of Record

A parent or an eligible student has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be made available within ten (10) calendar days after the request, unless the parent or student consents to a delay. The parent and eligible student have the right to receive a copy of any part of the record, although the school may charge a reasonable fee for the cost of duplicating the materials. The parent and eligible student may request to have parts of the record interpreted by a qualified professional from the school, or may invite anyone else of their choice to inspect or interpret the record with them.

### Confidentiality of Record

Except where the regulations specifically authorize access by third parties, no individuals or organizations other than the parent, eligible student and authorized school personnel are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent or eligible student. One exception to this general requirement is the Parker Schools' practice and policy of forwarding, without prior consent, a complete copy of the student's record to any public school or school district to which a student transfers or in which the student enrolls.

### **Amendment of Record**

The parent and eligible student have the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written materials to the student record. In addition, the parent and eligible student have a right to request that information in the record be amended or deleted. They are entitled to meet with the principal (or the principal's designee) to discuss their objection to information that is in the record, and to receive a written decision. A parent or eligible student who is not satisfied with the principal's decision may submit a written appeal to the Parker Board of Trustees, who must conduct a fair hearing within four weeks of being notified of the appeal.

### **Destruction of Records**

The regulations require school authorities to destroy a student's temporary record within seven (7) years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the school system. School authorities are also allowed to destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information in the record from time to time while the student is enrolled in the school system. In each case, the school must first notify the parent and eligible student and give them the opportunity to receive a copy of any of the information before it is destroyed.

### **Transfer of Records**

Under section 37L of G.L. c.71, any student transferring into a new school district must provide the new district with "a complete school record," including but not limited to, "any incidents involving suspension or violation of criminal acts or any incident reports in which such student was charged with any suspended act." 603 CMR 23.07(4)(g) allows a school district to release the entire student record of a transferring student to the new school without prior consent, provided that it gives notice that it forwards student records to the other school in which the student seeks or intends to transfer.

### **Non-Custodial Parents**

Unless there is a court order to the contrary, a non-custodial parent (parent without physical custody of the student) of any public school student has the right, subject to certain procedures, to receive information regarding the student's achievements, involvement, behavior, etc. A non-custodial parent who wishes to have this information shall submit a written request annually to the child's school principal. Upon receipt of such a request, the principal shall send written notification to the custodial parent by certified and first class mail that the records and information will be provided to the noncustodial parent in twenty-one (21) calendar days unless the custodial parent provides documentation of the non-custodial parent's ineligibility to access such information. In all cases where school records are provided to a non-custodial parent, the electronic and postal address and other contact information for the custodial parent shall be removed from the records provided. Any such records provided to the noncustodial parent shall be marked to indicate that they may not be used to enroll the student in another school. Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school will notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent. M.G.L. c.71, §34H, 603 CMR 23.07.

## Directory Information

Federal and state regulations authorize school districts to disclose appropriately designated “directory information” without written consent, unless you have advised the district to the contrary in accordance with district procedures. Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy, if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent’s prior written consent. The Parker School has designated the following as directory information: *a student’s name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major fields of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, post-high school plans and other information such as advisory, class and team assignments.*

The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Parker School to include this type of information from a student’s education records in certain school publications.

Examples include but are not limited to:

- A playbill, showing your student’s role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Gateway schedules or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy, if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent’s prior written consent. As required by federal law, Parker School may also be required to release the names, addresses and telephone listings of students to military recruiters and institutions of higher education upon request for recruitment and scholarship purposes without prior consent.

**If you do not want directory information from your child’s education records disclosed without your prior written consent, please notify the Principal in writing by the end of September of each school year.**

The above is only a summary of some of the more important provisions of the Student Record Regulations that relate to the rights of parents and eligible students. The Student Record Regulations are included in the Code of Massachusetts Regulations at 603 CMR 23.00. For more detailed information or to obtain a copy of the Code of Massachusetts Regulations 603 CMR 23.00, please contact the Main Office.

## Anti-Discrimination Policy

The Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School is committed to equal employment and educational opportunity for all members of the school community and prohibits discrimination on the basis of the basis of race, color, gender, religion, gender identity, age, national origin, sexual orientation, homelessness, or disability, in the operation of the educational programs, activities, or employment policies. The Parker School complies with all applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to, Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Massachusetts General Laws, c.151B, c.151C, c.71, c.76, §5 and c.71B.

Students are protected from discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age and disability in areas such as: admission to school, classroom assignment, participation in courses or support services, assessments, school sponsored extra-curricular activities and competitive athletics, graduation requirements and student rules.

The school is also committed to maintaining a school and work environment that is free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age or disability. Harassment includes physical or verbal conduct that is derogatory; this may include jokes, gestures, unsolicited remarks or other behavior that creates an intimidating or offensive working or learning environment.

If you have a concern about discrimination or harassment you should inform an adult in the school community. You may feel comfortable discussing your concern with your advisor, teacher, or school counselor. That person will take the appropriate steps to attempt to resolve the situation. This may include discussion with involved persons, identifying and questioning of witnesses and other appropriate steps. You may also bring your complaint to and obtain assistance from the Principal. In most cases, a resolution will be achieved. However, if it is determined that a hearing is warranted, a hearing will be held before the Principal or a person that he or she may designate.

The goals of the above grievance procedures are to resolve complaints in a fair and timely manner and to ensure compliance with nondiscriminatory practices. Additionally, reprisals or retaliation against any individual who reports on, or files a discrimination or harassment complaint is strictly prohibited. Any employee or member of the school community found to have engaged in harassment will be subject to sanctions, including but not limited to, a warning, or suspension for students, and a warning, suspension or termination of employment for staff.

If you wish to discuss your rights, would like further information or would like to obtain help with filing a complaint you may contact the Principal at the Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School. The telephone number is (978) 772-3293. Any questions concerning the Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADA, or Chapter 622 is to be directed to Todd Sumner, Principal, The Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School, 49 Antietam Street, Devens, MA 01434-5231. The Principal coordinates the school's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADA, and Chapter 622. Or you can write to:

Office for Civil Rights,  
John W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse  
5 Post Office Square,  
Boston, MA 02109

# Harassment Policy

*Passed by the CC 95-96*

There is to be no mental, physical, and/or verbal form of abuse and harassment towards another person. If you observe an incident involving harassment it is your responsibility to tell a teacher or counselor and they can bring the issue to the Justice Committee. Anyone reporting an incident of harassment has the right to have his/her identity remain secret. You can also report an incident of harassment by writing an anonymous letter to the Justice Committee.

The harassment policy is a policy that Parker takes very seriously. Any incidents of verbal or physical abuse are serious, especially given that we all have to live with each other in such a small space.

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The above policy was one of the first policies created by the Community Congress, and attests to the school's commitment to provide faculty, staff and students with an environment in which they may pursue their careers and studies free from all forms of harassment. All persons associated with the school including, but not limited to, the Board of Trustees, the Principal, staff and students are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from harassment. Any person who engages in harassment while acting as a member of the school community will be in violation of this policy.

Harassment is against the law. It is the responsibility of all members of the Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School to ensure that our school is free from harassment. If harassment involves a minor child in a school setting, it can also be considered a criminal offense under laws relating to child abuse, MGL Chapter 119, Section 51A. (Staff are reminded of their duty to report suspected abuse to the proper authorities as stated in Part IV).

## Definitions of Harassment

Harassment includes any verbal or physical behavior directed toward someone that is experienced as degrading, unwanted or intentionally provocative. Harassing behavior is: any conduct that negatively affects another person's employment, academic status or progress, and conduct which creates an environment that is intimidating, hostile or offensive or which affects, benefits, services, honors programs or activities available to an individual in the educational setting.

## Sexual Harassment

For purposes of this policy, "sexual harassment" is defined for student-to-student interactions as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature. "Sexual harassment" is defined for adult/student interaction as any sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is also defined as: conduct of a sexual nature that affects an individual's employment, academic status or progress; conduct of a sexual nature that has a negative impact on an individual's work or academic performance; conduct of a sexual nature that creates a work or educational environment that is intimidating, hostile or offensive or which affects benefits, services, honors programs or activities available to an individual in the education setting. **Examples of Sexual Harassment may include:**

1. Verbal behaviors such as unwanted sexual or lewd comments, suggestions, jokes, innuendoes, offensive name-calling, pressure for sexual favors or dates, offensive sounds such as whistling or making kissing sounds, talking about or calling attention to another's gender or sexuality in a negative or embarrassing way and spreading sexual rumors.
2. Unwanted non-verbal behaviors such as suggestive looks or leering, staring, facial expressions and gestures, blocking a person's path, following a person, laughing at a person who is being harassed or displaying nude or sexual pictures, cartoons and calendars.
3. Unwelcome physical behaviors such as pats, squeezes, touching a person's clothing, hair or body, pinching, brushing against another's body, forced physical contact of any kind and attempted rape.

### **Procedures for Dealing with Harassment**

The Parker School will take an assertive and active role in protecting its staff and its students from harassment. A person who believes she or he is being harassed may inform the harasser that the behavior is offensive and request that it stops. If this is not possible, and/or the individual chooses not to raise the matter with the alleged harasser, and/or the behavior has not stopped, then staff and students should immediately report such instances. Staff should bring concerns immediately to a supervisor or an administrator. Students should bring their concerns to a staff member: this could be a teacher, an advisor, the Principal, School Counselor, the School Nurse or any other adult with whom the student has a relationship and feels comfortable. Students are also encouraged to tell their parents of any incidents of harassment, and parents should then notify school personnel. All reports will be taken seriously and an appropriate investigative action will be initiated with the appropriate follow-up. It is never appropriate to tell the person who complains of harassment to ignore it or to make light of their concern.

The Principal will be vested with the authority and responsibility for ensuring that harassment complaints are dealt with in accordance with the procedure outlined below. The Principal will review complaints of harassment and will document and maintain records on all complaints of harassment.

Many times, situations involving non-physical harassment of a student by a student may be quickly and quietly resolved if the harasser and the victim can sit down and talk things over with a third party. However, if this is not possible or appropriate and the investigation concludes that harassment did occur, disciplinary action must follow. Disciplinary actions may include warning that such behavior must cease, verbal and/or written reprimands, suspension and ultimately termination of employment, exclusion from school, and/or referral to the appropriate municipal or state agency.

A staff member who harasses another staff member or a student will be disciplined as in any other case of serious, illegal misconduct.

## **Retaliation**

It is unlawful to retaliate in any form against any person who has filed a complaint for harassment or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint of harassment. If retaliation occurs, it can be considered grounds for dismissal of staff and/or exclusion from school of a student.

## **Confidentiality**

Reports of harassment will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law, involving as few people as possible, with the goal of protecting both parties and stopping the behavior.

Once a member of school personnel receives a complaint he/she must document the incident in a written form and give it to the Principal within one working day of the time of receipt.

Any employee who believes that she or he has been harassed by another, or has knowledge or belief of conduct that occurred that might be harassment, should report the conduct to the School Nurse or the Principal, at (978) 772-3293, 49 Antietam Street, Devens, MA 01432. The procedure begins when the Principal has been notified.

Upon receipt of allegations of harassment, the school will take immediate steps to halt or prevent any behavior that may be construed as harassment.

## **Informal Procedure for Complaints of Harassment**

It may be possible to resolve an offensive situation informally without an extensive and involved investigation. The School Nurse, the School Counselor, the Principal or designee have the authority to conduct an informal investigation of complaints of harassment. However, at any time, the complainant may request a formal investigation by the Principal. Based on the seriousness of the charge, the Principal may decide that a formal investigation is most appropriate to address the issues. If the Informal Procedure is used, the School Nurse, School Counselor, Principal or designee will document the steps taken under this Informal Procedure. The School Nurse, School Counselor, Principal, or designee may conduct the Informal Procedure in a variety of ways. Here are some examples:

- If the complainant agrees, a conversation may be facilitated between the two parties where the complainant may tell the respondent that the behavior is offensive and must stop.
- If the complainant agrees, the complainant may be assisted in writing a letter to the respondent saying that the behavior is offensive and must stop.
- The School Nurse, School Counselor, Principal, or designee may have separate conversations with the complainant and the respondent.

## **Examples of possible resolutions are:**

Verbal statement of apology, letters of apology, assurances that the offensive behavior will end.

The Informal Procedure will be completed within five (5) school days. Within this time, the School Nurse or Coordinator of Student Services or the Principal will notify all involved parties of the results of the Informal Process. Resolution of the situation may or may not occur as a result of the Informal Process. If all the parties involved in this Informal Process feel that a resolution has been achieved, this discussion will remain confidential and no further action

will be taken, except that the Principal will maintain documentation of the process. If any party feels that resolution has not been achieved, participants will engage in the following Formal Procedure. Investigative deadlines may be extended under extenuating circumstances such as illness or an excessive number of individuals to interview.

### **Formal Procedure for Complaints of Sexual Harassment**

A formal investigation is initiated when one of the following three criteria are met:

1. Any of the parties involved requests the Formal Procedure.
2. The School Nurse or Coordinator of Student Services or the Principal initiates the Formal Procedure due to the seriousness of the allegations or repeated behavior.
3. Any one of the parties feels that the informal procedure was either inadequate or unsuccessful.

#### **Level One**

Within twenty (20) school days of receiving the formal complaint, the Principal shall investigate all relevant information pertaining to the matter and shall render a decision. The decision shall be delivered to the parties involved and shall be in writing.

#### **Level Two**

Within twenty (20) school days of receiving the Level One decision, either party may appeal that decision to the Board of Trustees of the Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School. Within twenty (20) school days of receiving that appeal, the Officers of the Board of Trustees of the Parker School shall review and evaluate all relevant information pertaining to the complainant and shall render a decision in writing to the parties involved.

Students and employees are encouraged to utilize the School's Complaint Procedure. However, students and employees are hereby notified that they also have the right to report complaints to:

The United States Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights  
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor  
Boston, Massachusetts 02110-1491  
Telephone: (617) 289-0111  
Fax: 617-289-0150  
TDD: 877-521-2172

OR

Program Quality Assurance Services  
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906  
Telephone: 781-338-3700  
TTY: N.E.T. Relay: 1-800-439-2370  
FAX: 781-338-3710

OR

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (E.E.O.C.)  
One Congress Street, 10th floor  
Boston, MA 02114  
1-800-669-4000

OR

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (M.C.A.D.)  
One Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108  
617-727-3990

## Special Education

Special education services at the Parker School are provided in the context of a philosophy that emphasizes the importance of individualized education for all students. Each student, whether or not he or she is considered eligible for special education services, has a Personal Learning Plan. Similar in many ways to a Chapter 766 Individualized Educational Plan (IEP), the process of developing this plan includes parent and student input in assessing students' current progress and educational goals for the school year. Arrangements are also made to provide individual tutoring on a short-term basis when the need arises.

Within the guidelines of charter school law, traditional special education services are also available for those students who are determined to be eligible by a Chapter 766 Evaluation TEAM. Reflecting the Parker School's inclusive philosophy, most students with IEPs attend all regular classes for the entire school day. Parents interested in discussing the special education program may contact the Special Education Coordinator at (978) 772-3293.

### Student and Parental Rights

Upon reaching the age of eighteen students receiving special education programs and services have the right to make all decisions pertaining to their special education services.

The school continues to send the parent written notices and information, but parents will no longer have decision-making authority except as provided below:

- a. If the parent has sought and received guardianship from a court of competent jurisdiction, then the parent retains full decision-making authority. The parent does not have authority to override any decision made by the student who has reached the age of majority unless the parent has sought and received guardianship or other legal authority from a court of competent jurisdiction.
- b. The student, upon reaching the age of majority and in the absence of any court actions to the contrary, may choose to share decision making with his or her parent (or other willing adult), including allowing the parent to co-sign the IEP. Such a choice is made in the presence of the Special Education team and is documented in written form. The student's choice prevails at any time that a disagreement occurs between the adult student and the parent or other adult with whom the student has shared decision-making.

- c. The student, upon reaching the age of majority and in the absence of any court actions to the contrary, may choose to delegate continued decision-making to his or her parent, or other willing adult. Such a choice is made in the presence of at least one representative of the school and one other witness, and is documented in written form and maintained in the student record.

## Suspension/Expulsion

The faculty and students of the Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School created a clear statement of the rights of all members of the Parker community to a “safe place where members feel respected” in their Constitution. While students and teachers will work together to ensure an environment that is safe and conducive to learning and teaching, there may be times when the conduct of one or more students requires disciplinary action that excludes the student(s) from the Parker School and community.

The following rules governing the expulsion and suspension of students apply at school and at all school-sponsored activities, events and functions. A student may be removed from the school immediately, and for up to two (2) school days, if her or his continued presence poses either a danger to persons or property, or significantly disrupts the educational practices of the school.

## Expulsion Policy and Procedures

*Revised May 2016*

The following conduct may result in a student’s expulsion from school:

1. Possession of a weapon on school grounds or at school-sponsored or school-related events. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H.
2. Assault on a staff member and/or student on school grounds or at school-sponsored or school-related events. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H
3. Possession of a controlled substance as defined in M.G.L. c. 94C on school grounds or at school-sponsored or school-related events. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H
4. Upon conviction of a felony or felony delinquency or upon an adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to a felony or felony delinquency where the Principal determines that the student’s continued presence in school would have a detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2.

### Expulsion Procedures

#### Definitions:

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

**Written Notice** - Written correspondence sent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

Principal - The primary administrator of the school or the Principal's designee for disciplinary purposes.

### **Disciplinary Process**

For disciplinary offenses involving a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student will be given oral notice of the violation with which the student is charged and an opportunity to respond thereto prior to the Principal's imposition of a short-term/interim suspension of ten (10) consecutive school days or less pending formal disciplinary proceedings. *Goss v. Lopez*, 419 U.S. 565 (1975). Prior to the imposition of a short term or interim suspension of ten (10) consecutive days or less pending further disciplinary proceedings, the student and parents will be provided with written notice of the interim suspension, the basis for the Principal's determination, and the date and time of a formal disciplinary hearing to consider the student's expulsion. Said written notice shall notify the parents of their right to participate in the formal disciplinary hearing, provide for the student and parents to have the opportunity to be represented by an attorney or advocate (at private expense), to examine the evidence against the student, and to provide evidence and testimony in the student's defense. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H; M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2.

### **Principal's Decision**

Based on the evidence presented at the hearing, the Principal will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and the remedy or consequences to be imposed. The Principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense. If the Principal determines that the student will be expelled or subject to a long-term suspension, written notice of the Principal's decision will be sent to the student and parents in English and the primary language of the home identifying the disciplinary offense, the factual basis for the Principal's decision, the beginning and end dates of the expulsion, and the process for appeal. The Principal will also notify the student and parents of the student's opportunity to make academic progress during the period of disciplinary exclusion from school in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, §21.

### **Appeals**

A student expelled or suspended in excess of ten (10) consecutive school days in accordance with M.G.L. c.71 § 37H shall have ten (10) calendar days from the effective date of the expulsion or long-term suspension to file a written appeal with the Chairperson of the Francis W. Parker School's Board of Trustees. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 § 37H1/2, the student shall have five (5) school days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Chairperson of the Francis W. Parker School's Board of Trustees. Pending the Board's decision on the student's appeal, the disciplinary exclusion imposed by the Principal shall remain in effect.

For appeals of expulsions or long-term suspensions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2, the Chairperson shall conduct a hearing within three (3) calendar days of receipt of the student's written appeal and shall issue a decision thereon within five (5) calendar days of the appeal hearing. For appeals of expulsions or long-term suspensions imposed

pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H, the Chairperson shall conduct a hearing within ten (10) school days of receipt of the student's written appeal and shall issue a written decision on the student's appeal within five (5) school days of the appeal hearing. The subject matter of any such appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student committed the offense for which the student was expelled.

The student shall have the right to be represented by an attorney or advocate (at private expense) at the appeal hearing and to present evidence and witnesses in support of the student's appeal. The Board of Trustees shall have the authority to uphold, overturn, or to modify the Principal's decision upon which the student's appeal is based. The Board of Trustees' decision on the student's appeal shall constitute the final decision of the Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School.

### **Academic Progress**

Any student who is expelled or suspended shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. Students expelled or suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive school days shall be provided with the opportunity to select and to participate in alternative education services necessary to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements for graduation during the student's long-term suspension or expulsion, in accordance with the Parker School's Education Services Plan. A copy of the Parker School's Education Services Plan shall be provided to the Student upon the imposition of any suspension or expulsion exceeding of more than ten (10) consecutive school days. Upon the student's selection of an alternative educational service, the Parker School shall facilitate and verify the student's participation in the selected alternative education service. M.G.L. c.76, §21.

### **Legal Refs:**

- M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H
- M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2
- M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4
- M.G.L. c. 76, § 17
- M.G.L. c. 76, § 21

### **Suspension**

The following behaviors may result in a suspension from school of one to ninety (1-90) school days:

1. Fighting or inciting/encouraging others to fight.
2. Threatening or intimidating others.
3. Harassment (including, but not limited to, sexual, racial or ethnic harassment) directed toward any member of the school community (including students, staff, parents and visitors).
4. The use of or possession of alcohol
5. The possession of drug paraphernalia.
6. The possession or use of cigarettes.

7. Theft or vandalism. Restitution will be required.
8. Substantial school disruption, refusal to accept school discipline, willful disobedience or blatant disrespect of staff or adult supervisors.
9. Calling in a false alarm or bomb scare.
10. The use or possession of a pocketknife, matches or lighter without explicit permission from a teacher for an educational purpose.
11. The possession or distribution of pornographic items or materials including via the Internet or a computer.
12. Repeated violations of the norms and expectations of student conduct. (The parents of any student who is consistently violating the norms and expectations of student conduct shall be notified and invited to attend a conference intended to improve the situation prior to any exclusionary action being taken).

## **Disciplinary Due Process**

### **Definitions**

Expulsion - the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) consecutive school days.

In-School Suspension - the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. \* *Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating cumulative days of suspension.*

Long-Term Suspension - the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Written Notice - Written correspondence sent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

Principal - The primary administrator of the school or the Principal's designee for disciplinary purposes.

### **Due Process**

In-School Suspension: Prior to the imposition of an In-School Suspension, the student will be informed of the disciplinary offense and provided with an opportunity to respond. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal will provide oral notice to the student and parent of the length of the In-School Suspension and will make reasonable efforts to meet with the parent. On or before the day of the In-School Suspension, the principal will deliver written notice to the parent of the basis for and length of the in school suspension and inviting the parent to meet to discuss the student's behavior if such a meeting has not already occurred.

Out-of-School Suspension: In the case of disciplinary offenses not involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension. Written notice of the date and time for the hearing will be provided in English and in the primary language of the Student's home and will identify the disciplinary offense with which the student has been charged, the basis for the charge, the potential length of the student's suspension, and shall inform the parent and student of the right to interpreter services if necessary to participate in the hearing. Where a student may be subject to a Long-Term Suspension, the Principal will also notify the student and parent of the student's right to legal representation (at private expense), the right to present and examine witnesses, the right to review the student record and documents that may be relied upon by the Principal, and the right to request that the hearing be audiotaped.

For disciplinary offenses involving a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student will be given oral notice of the violation with which the student is charged and an opportunity to respond thereto prior to the Principal's imposition of a short-term/interim suspension ten (10) consecutive school days or less pending formal disciplinary proceedings. Upon imposition of a short term or interim suspension or an interim suspension of ten (10) consecutive days or less pending further disciplinary proceedings, the student and parents will be provided with written notice of the suspension and the date and time of any formal disciplinary proceedings.

### **Principal's Hearing:**

#### **Short-Term Suspension:**

At the Principal's hearing, the student and parents (if participating) may dispute the charge(s) against the student and present information, including mitigating facts, for the principal's consideration in determining consequences for the student.

#### **Long-Term Suspension:**

In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student will have the following rights:

- the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
- the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
- the right to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not
- the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident;
- the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request.

### **Principal's Decision:**

Based on the evidence presented at the hearing, the Principal will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and the remedy or consequences to be imposed. The Principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense and, in cases not involving possession of a controlled substance, a weapon, an assault on staff or felony charges, shall avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. If the Principal decides to suspend or expel the student, written notice of the Principal's decision will be sent to the student and parents in English and the primary language of the home identifying the disciplinary offense, the factual basis for the Principal's decision, the beginning and end dates of the suspension or expulsion, and the process for appeal. The Principal will also notify the student and parent of the student's opportunity to make academic progress during the period of removal from school in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, §21.

### **Appeals:**

Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. c.71 §37H, the student shall have ten (10) calendar days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the superintendent of schools. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H1/2, the student shall have five (5) school days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the superintendent. And for exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L c.71, §37H3/4, the Student shall have five (5) calendar days from the effective date of the suspension imposed by the Principal but shall be granted an extension of seven (7) calendar days upon request.

### **Academic Progress:**

Any student who is serving a in school or out of school short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, in accordance with the school's education service plan. M.G.L. c.76, §21.

### **Discipline and Students with Disabilities**

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related regulations require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services. Students who have been found to have a disability that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act, are, generally, also entitled to increased procedural protections prior to imposing discipline that will result in the student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or where there is a pattern of short term removals exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

- Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for up to ten (10) school days to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given school year or subjected to a pattern of removal constituting a “change of placement”, building administrators, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and relevant members of the student’s IEP or 504 Team will meet to determine the relationship between the student’s disability and behavior (Manifestation Determination). During days of disciplinary exclusions exceeding ten (10) school days in a single school year, special education students have the right to the receive services necessary to provide him/her with a free appropriate public education.
- If building administrators, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and relevant members of the student’s IEP or 504 Team determine that the student’s conduct was not a manifestation of the student’s disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students but will continue to provide a free appropriate public education to those students with IEPs. The student’s IEP Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan or, where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment.
- If building administrators, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and relevant members of the student’s IEP or 504 Team determine that the conduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student’s disability, the student will not be subjected to further disciplinary removal or exclusion from the student’s current educational program based on that conduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs, or resulting in serious bodily injury to others) until the IEP or 504 Team develops, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent to, a new placement or unless the District obtains an order from a court or from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) authorizing a change in the student’s placement. The student’s Team shall also review, and modify as appropriate, any existing behavior intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment.
- If a special education student possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a weapon, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school function, the District may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. A court or BSEA Hearing Officer may also order the placement of a student who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days.
- All students who are issued a disciplinary consequence for any reason will be placed on the “No Sign Out” list until their consequence has been served.

## Search and Seizure

When there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a search of a student's locker, person, or car will result in evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school, students should be aware that the law allows school officials to search the student's locker, person, backpack, car or other personal belongings. Students who refuse to subject themselves or their property to reasonable search will be subject to suspension from school. Students and parents should be aware that the administration may exercise at any time, the option of obtaining the services of trained dogs in searches. While students have a limited expectation of privacy in their lockers, the school has joint control of the lockers with the students. Therefore, master keys and copies of lock combinations are retained by the school. Certain items may not be stored in lockers. Such items include, but are not limited to, weapons, illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, explosive/flammable materials, and stolen property.

### **Summary of Massachusetts Laws Pertaining to Student Conduct and Discipline M.G.L. c.71, §37H**

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37H:

- (A) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- (B) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- (C) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).
- (D) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
- (E) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

- (F) Districts shall report to the department of elementary and secondary education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the commissioner. The department of elementary and secondary education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the department of elementary and secondary education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.
- (G) Under the regulations promulgated by the department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the commissioner shall investigate and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

**M.G.L. c.71, §37H1/2**

- (1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

- (2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

**M.G.L. c.71, §37H3/4.**

- (a) This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H1/2.
- (b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.
- (c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or headmaster, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal or headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.
- (d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10

school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or a designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.

- (e) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.
- (f) No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

**M.G.L. c.76, §21**

Principals and headmasters shall ensure that students who are suspended from school for 10 or fewer consecutive days, whether in or out of school, shall have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension, to make up assignments and earn credits missed including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed. Principals shall develop a school-wide education service plan for all students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive school days, whether in or out of school. Principals shall ensure these students have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion, to make up assignments and earn credits missed, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed.

Education service plans may include, but are not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, Saturday school, and online or distance learning. In developing the education service plan, principals may seek the cooperation or input of relevant health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies education collaboratives, and other service providers. Any school or school district that expels a student or suspends a student for more than 10 consecutive school days shall provide the student and the parent or guardian of the student with a list of alternative educational services. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent or guardian, the school or school district shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service. Students exempt from attending school under section 1 of chapter 76 shall not be subject to this section.

**M.G.L. c.71, §37L**

Section 37L. The school committee of each city, town or regional school district shall inform teachers, administrators, and other professional staff of reporting requirements for child abuse and neglect under section 51A of chapter 119 and the reporting requirements for fires under section 2A of chapter 148.

In addition, any school department personnel shall report in writing to their immediate supervisor an incident involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises at any time.

Supervisors who receive such a weapon report shall file it with the superintendent of said school, who shall file copies of said weapon report with the local chief of police, the department of children and families, the office of student services or its equivalent in any school district, and the local school committee. Said superintendent, police chief, and representative from the department of children and families, together with a representative from the office of student services or its equivalent, shall arrange an assessment of the student involved in said weapon report. Said student shall be referred to a counseling program; provided, however, that said counseling shall be in accordance with acceptable standards as set forth by the board of education. Upon completion of a counseling session, a follow-up assessment shall be made of said student by those involved in the initial assessment.

A student transferring into a local system must provide the new school system with a complete school record of the entering student. Said record shall include, but not be limited to, any incidents involving suspension or violation of criminal acts or any incident reports in which such student was charged with any suspended act.

**M.G.L. c.269**

Section 17. 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 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.

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

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Section 19. Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of postsecondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

## Listed below are some resources where one may seek further knowledge about student rights:

- American Civil Liberties Union: <http://www.aclu-mass.org/youth/studentrights/stdrgtssmass.html>
- Center for Law and Education: <http://www.cleweb.org>
- Office of MA Attorney General, Tom Reilly: <http://www.ago.state.ma.us>
- Student Press Law Center: <http://www.splc.org>
- MA Trial Court Law Libraries: <http://www.lawlib.state.ma.us>  
<http://www.studentactivism.org>  
<http://www.stopthehate.org>  
<http://www.co-star.net>

Once a student has accessed these resources, he or she is strongly encouraged to assess his or her situation. Through the many committees in the school and the state of Massachusetts that support student rights and issues, students can take action. If a particular kind of committee is not available in the school, students are encouraged to investigate such venues and work to make it a part of the school's extra-curricular activities.

### For more information go to:

Massachusetts State Student Advisory Council:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/stucouncil/sachome.html>

(Created by the Central MA Region of the State Student Advisory Council and its committee for Student Rights.)