

Section I Contents

ACADEMIC FREEDOM	3
SCHOOL YEAR / CALENDAR.....	4
SCHOOL DAY	5
ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION	6
SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAMS.....	7
CURRICULUM ADOPTION	8
BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM	9
OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION.....	10
HEALTH EDUCATION	11
HEALTH EDUCATION EXEMPTION PROCEDURE.....	12
PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION.....	13
TEACHING ABOUT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUGS.....	14
SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS	15
PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES	16
OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS	17
COMPENSATORY EDUCATION (TITLE I).....	19
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS.....	20
HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION	21
HOME SCHOOLING	22
HOME SCHOOLING REQUIREMENTS	23
ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS	24
SUMMER SCHOOLS.....	25
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS	26
RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES.....	27
LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION.....	28
LIBRARY RESOURCES.....	29
ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES (ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY)	31
INTERNET PUBLICATION	37
FIELD TRIPS.....	39
COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/ SPEAKERS	40
SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS	41
STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS	42
PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS.....	43

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS..... 44
EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS..... 45
TEACHING ACTIVITIES/PRESENTATIONS 46
TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS..... 47
SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES..... 49
ANIMALS IN SCHOOL..... 50

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IB
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The School Committee believes in educating students in the values of a democracy, to foster recognition of individual freedom and social responsibility, to inspire meaningful awareness of and respect for the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

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

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 76:5

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SCHOOL YEAR / CALENDAR

Section I; CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION	File: IC
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The school calendar for the ensuing year will be prepared by the Superintendent and submitted to the School Committee for approval annually. The number of days or instructional hours scheduled for the school year will be determined in accordance with the following standards set by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education:

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

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

References:

Source: MASC

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 4:7; 69:1g; 71:1; 71:4A; 71:73;136:12
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SCHOOL DAY

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: ID
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The length of the school day is established by the Superintendent to meet the educational goals of each building, and is subject to collective bargaining with the various school unions. The specific opening and closing times of the schools will be recommended by the Superintendent and set by the School Committee.

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

Parents and guardians will be informed of the opening and closing times set by the School Committee. To help ensure the safety of all children, students are expected to come to school at the start of the official day unless bus schedules have been altered, or the student is excused according to building practice.

Occasionally certain students or groups of students may be released early for out-of-school activities, these exceptions must be kept to a minimum to ensure continuity of learning and be aligned with the educational goals.

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [15:1G](#); [69:1G](#); [71:59](#)

603 CMR [27.00](#)

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ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IE
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The District offers a diversified educational program compatible with the needs of the community and state standards.

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

The structure will consist of multiple levels (for example, Elementary, Middle and Secondary levels).

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

Services for students with special needs (IEP, 504 plans, etc.) are provided across each grade level in all schools.

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

CROSS REFS: IC/ICA School Year / School Calendar

LEGAL REFS: 603 CMR [27.00](#)

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

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SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAMS

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IGB
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To support the classroom activities and other instructional needs of the District, various educational services as listed shall be provided. The Student Services staff will work in cooperation with building staff and the administration of the District in the coordination and the supervision of the curriculum implementation of the instructional program, and support services programs.

The Director of Student Support in conjunction with the building Principal, shall be responsible for all services for students who are not eligible for special education assistance but may require support services. such as counseling, homebound and hospital teaching, and such other programs as may be assigned.

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

CROSS REF.: [ACE](#), Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap

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CURRICULUM ADOPTION

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IB
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The School Committee will rely on its professional staff to design and implement instructional programs and courses of study that will forward the educational goals of the school system.

The Superintendent or designee will have authority to approve new programs and courses of study after they have been thoroughly studied and found to support educational goals. The Sub Committee on Curriculum, Instruction and Evaluation shall be responsible for reviewing the implementation of new curricula and establishing goals and assessments for each new program.

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

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:1](#); [69:1E](#)

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BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IHA
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State law requires that schools:

. . . shall give instruction and training in orthography, reading, writing, the English language and grammar, geography, arithmetic, drawing, music, the history and Constitution of the United States, the duties of citizenship, health education, physical education and good behavior...

The law further states that American history and civics, including the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, local history and government will be taught as required subjects in the public schools.

Physical education is compulsory for all students, except that no student will be required to take part in physical education exercises if a physician certifies in writing that such exercises would be injurious to the student.

The Fundamental Skills

The business of the schools is to equip all children with the skills, tools, and attitudes that will lay the basis for learning now and in the future. This means giving highest priority to developing skills in literacy, numeracy, communication, problem solving, creative thinking and collaboration. So that they reach all students, in all neighborhoods, and from all homes.

The first claim of the community's and School Committee's resources will be made for the realization of these priorities. School dollars, school talent, school time, and whatever innovation in program is required must be concentrated on these top-ranking goals

Standards and Curriculum Frameworks

The School Committee considers the state DESE standards and Frameworks to be the threshold of our curricula, The Newburyport School District will embrace more rigorous standards where appropriate. The Curriculum Frameworks issued by the DESE will be considered guides for content and sequencing.

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

CROSS REFS: ADF, School District Wellness Program

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:1,2,3](#); [71:13](#)

603 CMR [26:05](#)

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OCCUPATIONAL EDUCATION

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IHAI
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The School Committee recognizes that students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 should:

1. Be afforded the opportunity to be informed about the world of work.
2. Be aware of the many vocations available to them.
3. Develop a respect for the dignity of work.
4. Be allowed the opportunity to develop an understanding regarding the technical, consumer, occupational, recreational and cultural aspects of industry and technology; they should also be afforded the opportunity to develop skills related to these aspects through creative problem solving experiences.

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:37K](#); [71:38A](#) through [71:38E](#); [74:I](#) et seq.

603 CMR [4.00](#)

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HEALTH EDUCATION

The School Committee believes that the greatest opportunity for effective health education lies within the public schools because of their potential to reach children at the age when positive, lifelong health habits are best engendered and because the schools are equipped to provide qualified personnel to conduct health education programs. Good health also depends upon continuous life-long attention to scientific advances and the acquisition of new knowledge.

The School Committee is committed to a sound, comprehensive, research-based health education program as an integral part of each student's general education. Health education will be taught as a separate academic discipline in grades 4 through 12 . Healthy habits will be taught in a multidisciplinary approach in grades K-3.

The health education program will emphasize the 40 Developmental assets as the foundation for healthy lifestyles including the presentation of health information, skills, and the knowledge necessary for students to understand and appreciate the functioning and proper care of the human body. Students also will be presented with information regarding complex social, emotional physical and mental health issues, which they might experience or encounter in society. In an effort to help students make intelligent choices of serious personal consequence, health education will examine the potential health hazards of social, physical and mental problems existing in the larger school-community environment.

In order to promote a relevant, dynamic approach to the instruction of health education, the School Committee will continue to stress the need for curricular, personnel, and financial commitments that are necessary to assure the high quality of the system's health education program.

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:1](#)

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HEALTH EDUCATION EXEMPTION PROCEDURE

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction

File: IHAM-R

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

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

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

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

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:1](#)

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PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IHAMA
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In accordance with law, the School Committee has adopted this policy on the rights of parents and guardians of our students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

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

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

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

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

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

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. [71:32A](#)

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TEACHING ABOUT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND DRUGS

Section I: Instruction

File: IHAMB

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

The alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention program shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, with emphasis on nonuse by school-age children. The program also shall include information about effective techniques and skill development for delaying and abstaining from using, as well as skills for addressing peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.

- The objectives of this program, as stated below, are rooted in the School Committee's belief that prevention requires education, and that the most important aspect of the policies and guidelines of the District should be the education of children and youth on healthy decision-making:
- To prevent, delay, and/or reduce alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among children and youth.
- To increase students' understanding of the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.
- To teach students self-management skills, social skills, negotiation skills, and refusal skills that will help them to make healthy decisions and avoid alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.

In addition, students in grades 7 and 9 will be assessed for substance abuse through the use of a verbal screening tool by trained district nursing or counseling staff and will use recommended Department of Public Health tools.

- The district must inform parents about the verbal screenings using multiple modes of communication with a reminder just prior to the screening.
- Students or parents/guardians may opt out of the screenings at any time prior to or during the process in writing.
- Students and parents/guardians must consent in writing on a DPH approved consent form prior to disclosure of any information obtained during the screening. Students and parents should sign a separate release relative to referrals.

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

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

SOURCE: MASC March 2016

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:1](#); [71:96](#)

CROSS REFS: [GBEC](#), Drug Free Workplace Policy

[JICH](#), Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

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SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IHB
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The goals of this school system's special education program are to allow each child to grow and achieve at his own level, to gain independence and self-reliance.

The requirements of law and regulation will be followed in the identification of children with special needs, in referrals for their evaluation, in prescribing for them suitable programs and in assessing their educational progress. In keeping with state requirements, all children with special needs between the ages of three to twenty-two who have not attained a high school diploma or its equivalent will be eligible for special education.

The School Committee believes that most children with special needs can be educated in the regular school program if they are given special instruction, accommodations and the support they need. These children should also be given the opportunity to participate in the school system's non-academic and extracurricular activities.

The School Committee recognizes that the needs of certain children are so great that special programs, special classes or special schools may be necessary. When appropriate programs, services, or facilities are not available within the public schools, the School Committee will provide these children with access to appropriate instruction programs or accommodations.

It is the desire of the School Committee that the schools work closely with parents in designing and providing programs and services to children with special needs in accordance with applicable law. Parents will be informed, and conferred with, whenever a child is referred for evaluation. In event of any disagreement concerning diagnosis, program plan, special placement, or evaluation, the parents will be accorded the right of due process.

The School Committee will secure properly trained personnel to work with children with special needs. Since the financial commitment necessary to meet the needs of all of these children is extensive, the School Committee will make every effort to obtain financial assistance.

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

LEGAL REFS.: The Individuals with Disabilities Ed. Act (PL 108-446, adopted 12/03/04)

Rehabilitation Act of 1973

M.G.L. [71B:1](#) et seq.

603 CMR [28:00](#) inclusive

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PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IHBA
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In keeping with the intention of the state of Massachusetts to offer educational opportunities to all students that will enable them to lead fulfilling and productive lives, the District shall provide appropriate educational opportunities to all resident students in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes.

LEGAL REF.: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504

SOURCE: MASC

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OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction

File: IHBA

In accordance with Massachusetts special education law, the Newburyport Public School district permits parents/guardians and their designees (defined by law as parent designated independent evaluators and educational consultants) to conduct in-school observations of their child's current or proposed special education program. When a parent/guardian or designee wishes to conduct such an observation, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. The parent/guardian shall contact the Special Education office at the building level and indicate that an observation is requested. The parent/guardian will indicate the name of the person who will conduct the observation and the affiliation of that person to the child and/or parent/guardian.
2. If the request for the observation comes from someone other than the parent/guardian, the school district will need to confirm with the parent/guardian the identity of the observer and ensure that the parent/guardian consents to the observation. If the observer is not the parent/guardian, the parent/guardian must sign a release for the individual to observe. If the designee wishes to observe the student's records, the school district must obtain written consent from the parent/guardian before allowing the designee to access the student's record in accordance with the Massachusetts student record regulations.
3. Upon notification of the request for the observation, the school district will provide timely access to the student's current or proposed educational program. The school district will contact the parent/guardian and/or designee to schedule a mutually convenient time for the observation.
4. The school district will also discuss with the parent/guardian and/or designee in advance of the observation a reasonable time allotment for the observation. The number, frequency, and duration of observation periods will be determined on an individual student basis in accordance with law and regulation. The start and end time of observation periods and a schedule of observation periods will be stated in advance. The observer will be permitted to observe both academic and non-academic activities if requested. Approval for such observations may be withheld for the reasons outlined within law and DESE regulations. The number of observers at any one time may be limited.
5. The Newburyport Public School district is responsible to ensure the safety of its students at all times. If, in the opinion of the school district, the observation threatens to compromise the safety of the students in the observed program, the integrity of the program during the observation, or if there is the threat of disclosure by the observer of confidential or personally identifiable information he or she may obtain while observing the program, the school district may impose reasonable limitations and restrictions on the observation. The school district will discuss these concerns with the observer prior to the observation, and the school district will make reasonable efforts to work with the observer around these issues to ensure a safe and productive observation. Any limitation and restrictions imposed pursuant to this paragraph will be done on a case by case basis.
6. The Newburyport Public School district may exercise its discretion at any time to reschedule or terminate an observation in the event of a building emergency or a significant disruption that impacts the physical or emotional well-being of the students in the school or the program being observed.
7. The observer will be informed that he/she is not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom. If his/her presence presents a problem, he/she will be asked to leave. This notice is particularly important, since the presence of parents/guardians can influence both the performance of their student and those of others.
8. The observer will be asked to submit his/her report of the observation in advance of any follow-up TEAM meeting.
9. The observer will be informed that he/she is there to evaluate the appropriateness of a specific educational program to meet the needs of an individual student. He/she is not there to evaluate a teacher's ability to perform his or her contractual job duties.
10. The observer will be instructed regarding the disclosure of confidential or personally identifiable information relating to other students. Staff must be mindful of removing materials which may be part of students' records from plain view. In the event that removal is not possible the observer may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.
11. A school administrator, or designee, also will observe at the same time and take notes as to what is observed, paying particular attention to note anything that is non-typical concerning the period.

LEGAL REF.: MGL [71B:3](#)

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COMPENSATORY EDUCATION (TITLE I)

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IHBD
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Title I funds shall be used to provide educational services that are in addition to the regular services provided for District students. By adoption of this policy, the School Committee ensures equivalence in the provision of curriculum materials and supplies.

LEGAL REF.: Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended

SOURCE: MASC

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Section I; CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

File: IHBEA

The Newburyport Public Schools shall provide language instruction programs that are equitable, educationally sound, and researched based. Programming will be provided for English Learners in grades K through 12 in accordance with state and federal regulations and guidance.

Identification and Assessment

The district shall administer a Home Language Survey to all incoming students to identify the home primary language. Students who have a home language other than English will be assessed to determine if they are English Language Learners in accordance with applicable laws and regulations established by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

EL Programming

The district will use assessment data to plan and implement educational programming for students at different instructional levels. English Learners will be provided with language instruction by a certified ESL teacher until English proficiency is determined. All core academic teachers who teach English Learners will hold a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) Teacher Endorsement. All administrators who evaluate the teachers teaching English Learners will hold an SEI Administrator Endorsement.

Parent School and Community Involvement

The district will include parents or guardians of English Learners in communications and events that pertain to their child's educational experience within the Newburyport Public Schools. Supports will be provided to ensure that English Learners have equal access to all non-academic programs and extracurricular activities.

To the maximum extent possible, reports cards and other school information will be sent to parents or guardians of English Learners in their preferred language.

Reporting

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

The District shall provide additional information as required by the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education to comply with federal law.

References:

Source: MASC

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71A; 71A:5
603 CMR 14.07; 603 CMR 7.15(9)(b)

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HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IHBF
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The schools may furnish homebound instruction to those students who are unable to attend classes for not less than 14 consecutive days in any given school year due to a physical injury, medical situation, or a severe emotional problem. The instruction is designed to provide maintenance in the basic academic courses so that when a student returns to school he/she will not be at a disadvantage because of the illness or the hospitalization.

To qualify for the program the student needs a written statement from a medical doctor requesting the homebound instruction, and estimating the time the student will be out of school. The physician's statement must include the medical reasons for the confinement, the medical needs of the student that should be considered in planning the home education and whether the student's health will affect the provision of educational services during this period. This statement needs to be sent to the Director of Student Services.

Homebound instruction is offered in basic elementary subjects and in secondary subjects which do not require laboratories and special equipment, subject in all cases to the availability of qualified teachers. Certified teachers shall be assigned to homebound instruction by the Superintendent or designee.

SOURCE: MASC

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HOME SCHOOLING

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IHBG
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The Massachusetts General Law requires the School Committee to determine that a Home Schooling program meet with the minimum standards established for public schools in the Commonwealth prior to approving such a program.

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

Prior to removing the child from public school:

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

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

The Superintendent shall give the notice to produce records required by law if there is probable cause to believe the program is not in compliance with the law. Factors to be considered by the Superintendent or School Committee in deciding whether or not to approve a home education proposal may be:

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

A student being educated in a home-based program within the District may have access to public school activities of either a curricular or extracurricular nature upon approval of the Superintendent.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [69:1D](#); [76:1](#), Care and Protection of Charles

Care and Protections of Charles - MASS. Supreme Judicial Court 399 Mass. 324 (1987)

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HOME SCHOOLING REQUIREMENTS

- I. Requirements for approval of home instruction will include:
 - a. The parent or legal guardian must request permission to hold home instruction on an annual basis.
 - b. A home instruction application form will be provided to the parents or legal guardian. This form must be completed and returned to the Superintendent before approval may be granted.
 - c. The School Committee delegates the approval of home instruction to the Superintendent.
2. Children in home instruction may, at the discretion of parents or guardian and with the agreement from the Superintendent, attend the public schools on a part-time basis and within regular school schedule to attend specialized classes (electives) in the public school, but not core content. They may also participate in extracurricular activities.
3. Parents or a legal guardian in charge of home instruction should make provision for regular testing or use of other indicators of student progress such as standardized achievement tests. As an alternative to home testing and at the request of those in charge of the home instruction, the School District will make provision for inclusion of home-taught children in the annual achievement test battery, which is usually administered in February or March of each school year. The home instruction summary form must include either a summary of home testing results for each required subject for each child or the results of the achievement test that is administered through the School District.
4. Upon completion of the agreed upon home school program, parents/guardians will submit all student assessment data and a letter stating intent for home schooling or in school instruction for the following school year. Educational plans for home instruction for the new school year must be submitted for review and approval no later than August 1.
5. The Superintendent will act in a responsible, cooperative manner to ensure that all children in the School District receive competent, adequate instruction. This concern includes children in home education. If the Superintendent determines that a home instruction situation is inadequate, a conference between the parents or legal guardian and the Superintendent will be scheduled to find mutually acceptable ways to correct any deficiency.
6. If deficiencies in a home education situation are not corrected or the proper annual application or summary is not completed by the parents or legal guardian, an appropriate referral will be made.

SOURCE: MASC

Version Control

Action	Date
First Reading	12/18/2017
Second Reading	2/5/2018
Adopted	2/5/2018

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

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

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

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

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:37J](#); [71:37I](#)

603 CMR [17.00](#)

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SUMMER SCHOOLS

The school system shall make available summer sessions as a supplement to the instruction offered during the school year, when funding for such programs is available. The focus of the program will be remedial work.

To attend summer school, students must have the recommendation of their classroom and/or special subject teachers.

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

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

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:28](#)

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INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IJ
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The School Committee believes that materials appropriate to the needs of the school program must be available to each student and teacher. These will be furnished by the School District subject to budgetary constraints.

The task of selecting instructional materials for programs will be delegated to the professional staff of the school system. The district reviews all educational materials for simplistic and demeaning generalizations, lacking intellectual merit, on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin and sexual orientation to avoid bias and stereotyping. Appropriate activities, discussions and/or supplementary materials may be used to provide balance and context for any such stereotypes depicted.

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [30B:7](#); [71:48](#); [71:49](#); [71:50](#)

BESE regulations 603 CMR [26.00](#)

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

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RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IJ-R
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Material that is challenged usually belongs to one of the three basic categories: religion, ideology, or profanity/obscenity. Board policies regarding these areas shall be as **follows**:

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

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

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

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

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

These challenges of materials will be reviewed by a committee convened by the Superintendent, and the findings will be communicated. If within three years a substantially different point of view is advanced, it will be investigated.

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

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

SOURCE: MASC

Version Control

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LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IJL
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The School Committee endorses the School Library Bill of Rights, as adopted by the American Library Association, which asserts that the responsibility of the school library is to:

1. Provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the students served.
2. Provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.
3. Provide a background of information that will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.
4. Provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.
5. Provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.
6. Place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library.

Initial purchase suggestions for library materials may come from all personnel--teachers, coordinators, and administrators. Students will also be encouraged to make suggestions. The librarian will recommend materials to be included in the school library. Final approval and authority for distribution of funds will rest with the building Principal subject to the approval of the Superintendent.

Gifts of library books will be accepted in keeping with the above policy on selection. Complaints about library books will be handled in line with School Committee policy on complaints about instructional materials.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR [26:05](#)

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

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LIBRARY RESOURCES

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

Definition of Library Resources

Library resources are those print, non-print, and digital materials found in school libraries which support curricular and personal information needs.

Criteria for Selection of Library Resources

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

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

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

Disclosure of Information/Privacy of Circulation Records

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

Re-evaluation (Weeding) of Library Resources

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

Among the reasons for withdrawing an item are the following:

- Curricular changes have rendered superfluous some materials (or multiple copies of materials) formerly used but no longer in demand.
- Some materials contain factual material that is no longer accurate nor current.
- Some materials intended for recreational reading have become dated or unattractive and are no longer in demand. (Some such books, which are deemed "standards" or "classics", will be retained even though they rarely circulate).
- Some materials have become worn out, damaged or physically deteriorated and have lost utility and/or appeal.
- Some materials have been superseded by newer items, which present the same information, but in superior format.

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

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

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

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

Version Control

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ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES (ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY)

Introduction

The Newburyport Public Schools (NPS) and the School Committee recognizes that access to technology in school gives students greater opportunities to learn, engage, communicate, collaborate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life, and citizenship. Our goal is to promote educational excellence by encouraging and facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. We are committed to helping students develop 21st-century technology and communication skills. To that end, we provide the privilege of access to technologies for student and staff use. Internet use that is integrated into the school curriculum fosters the development of research and information skills, encourages critical and higher level thinking and provides expanded educational opportunities for both students and staff. While supporting the rights of students and staff to use all available tools, the NPS recognize that there is material on the internet that is objectionable or devoid of educational value in the context of a school setting. The NPS have taken steps to restrict access to inappropriate or controversial material. In addition to utilizing an internet content filter, NPS staff will closely supervise students' use of the internet. Although guidelines cannot totally eliminate the possibility of inadvertent or intentional access to such information, we believe that they can significantly limit such possibilities. The NPS believe that the access to valuable resources on the Internet far outweighs the concerns that the users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the NPS, and we intend to maximize the Internet's educational value.

NPS will ensure that it adheres to the most recent Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA, <http://ifea.net/cipa.pdf>) requirements of 2001 and 2011 by:

- Implementing an Internet filter for the purpose of blocking access to visual depictions deemed obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors. It may be disabled for adults engaged in bona fide research or other lawful purposes.
- Providing for educating minors (in this case 'minors' refer to school aged children up to the age of 17) about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

This Acceptable Use Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviors that all users are expected to follow when using school technologies or when using personally owned devices on the school campus, including:

- The NPS network is intended for educational purposes.
- All activity over the network or using district technologies may be monitored and retained.
- Access to online content via the network may be restricted in accordance with our policies and federal regulations, such as the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).
- Users are expected to follow the same rules for good behavior and respectful conduct online as offline.
- Misuse of school resources may result in disciplinary action.
- NPS makes a reasonable effort to ensure users' safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from use of school technologies.
- Users of the district network or other technologies are expected to alert IT staff immediately of any concerns for safety or security.

Technologies Covered

NPS may provide the privilege of Internet access, desktop computers, mobile computers or devices, video conferencing capabilities, online collaboration capabilities, message boards, email, and more. This Acceptable Use Policy applies to both school-owned technology equipment utilizing the NPS network, the NPS Internet connection, and/or private networks/Internet connections accessed from school owned devices at any time. This Acceptable Use Policy also applies to privately owned devices accessing the NPS network, the NPS Internet connection, and/or private networks/Internet connections while on school property. As new technologies emerge, NPS will seek to provide access to them. The policies

outlined in this document cover all available technologies now and into the future, not just those specifically listed or currently available.

Usage Policies

All technologies provided by the district are intended for educational purposes. All users are expected to use good judgment and to follow the specifics as well as the spirit of this document: be safe, appropriate, careful and kind; don't try to get around technological protection measures; use good common sense; and ask if you don't know.

Web Access

NPS provides its users the privilege of access to the Internet, including web sites, resources, content, and online tools. Access to the Internet will be restricted as required to comply with CIPA regulations and school policies. Web browsing may be monitored and web activity records may be retained indefinitely. Users are expected to respect the web filter as a safety precaution and shall not attempt to circumvent the web filter when browsing the Internet. The determination of whether material is appropriate or inappropriate is based solely on the content of the material and the intended use of the material, not on whether a website has been blocked or not. If a user believes a site is unnecessarily blocked, the user should submit a request for website review through the **RT PROCESS**.

Email

NPS may provide users with the privilege of email accounts for the purpose of school-related communication. Availability and use may be restricted based on school policies. If users are provided with email accounts, the account(s) should be used with care. Users should not send personal information; should not attempt to open files or follow links from unknown or untrusted origins; should use appropriate language; and should only communicate with other people as allowed by the district policy or the teacher. Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Email usage may be monitored and as a school department, all email communications are archived for seven (7) years.

Technology Specialists who operate the system have access to all mail, including deleted messages. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities. All communications and information accessible via the network should be considered public property; however, the use of another person's intellectual property without that individual's prior written approval or authorization is prohibited. The school district will completely and periodically delete information from the system.

Legal Implications of Electronic Mail (Email)

For the purpose of this policy email is defined as messages created and received on an electronic mail system. The email message may be text or word processing documents, spreadsheets or other data compilations transmitted through such a system. Email created or received by an employee of a government unit is a public record. In Massachusetts, the term "public record" is broadly defined to include all documentary materials or data created or received by any officer or employee of any governmental unit, regardless of physical form or characteristics. G.L. c. 4, sec. 7(26). Email is therefore a public record and subject to the requirements of the Public Records Law G. L. C. 66.

Email messages are subject to public access through the Public Records Law G. L. C. 66. Sec.10. A determination as to whether an email message is exempt from disclosure depends upon the content of the message. G. L.C. 4. Sec. 7(26)(a-m).

Email messages may be sought through the discovery process in litigation and may be admissible in evidence. Like all electronically created and stored records, email is subject to the rules of evidence and a judge will rule on its admissibility. Refer to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Public Records Division SPR- Bulletin No. 1-99 dated February 16, 1999 for additional information.

Network Accounts

Do not use another individual's account or password. Do not give your password to others. Attempts to log-on to the system as another user may result in cancellation of user privileges.

Network Use Limitations

The district's computer network may not be used to disseminate commercial or personal advertisements, solicitations, promotions, destructive code (e.g., viruses, self-replicating programs, etc.), or any other unauthorized materials. Staff and students may not use the school system's Internet connection to download games or other entertainment software or to play non-educational games over the Internet. Additionally, you may not use the computer network to display, store or send (by email or any other form of electronic communication such as bulletin boards, chatrooms, Usenet groups, etc.) material that is fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, intimidating, defamatory or otherwise inappropriate or unlawful.

Computer resources are not unlimited. Network bandwidth and storage capacity have finite limits, and all users connected to the network have a responsibility to conserve these resources. As such, the user must not deliberately perform acts that waste computer resources or unfairly monopolize resources to the exclusion of others. These acts include but are not limited to, streaming music or videos for non-educational purposes, sending chain letters, spending, playing online games, or otherwise creating unnecessary loads on network traffic associated with non-educational uses of the Internet.

Social/Web 2.0 / Collaborative Content

Recognizing the benefits that collaboration brings to education, NPS may provide users with access to web sites or tools that allow communication, collaboration, sharing, and messaging among users. Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Posts, chats, sharing, and messaging may be monitored. Users should be careful not to share personally-identifying information online.

Mobile Devices Policy

NPS may provide users with mobile computers or other devices to promote learning outside of the classroom. Users should abide by the same acceptable use policies when using school devices off the school network as on the school network. Users are expected to treat these devices with extreme care and caution; these are expensive devices that the school is entrusting to your care. Users should immediately report any loss, damage, or malfunction to the teacher or to IT staff. Users may be financially accountable for any damage resulting from negligence or misuse. Use of school issued mobile devices off the school network may be monitored.

Personally-Owned Devices Policy

Students in grades kindergarten through eighth, should keep personally-owned devices (including laptops, tablets, smart phones, cell phones, e-readers, iPod touch, gaming devices) turned off and put away during school hours (with the exception of assistive devices) unless in the event of an emergency or as instructed by a teacher or staff for educational purposes. Devices are to be used as part of classroom lessons only upon teacher approval. Because of security concerns, when personally-owned mobile devices are used on campus, they must be used over the school network. High school students need to refer to Section 5- Policies and Procedures in the [Clipper's Compass](#). All personally-owned devices are on a use at your own risk policy. The School District is not accountable for loss, damage, theft, etc.

This Acceptable Use Policy applies to privately-owned devices accessing the NPS network, the NPS Internet connection, and private networks/Internet connections while on school property. Virus protection for PC's is required.

Users who cannot access the NPS network or who may have technical issues with their own technology tool need to take care of this issue by working with the user's manual that came with the device outside of the classroom. These are not NPS devices and the district is not allocating resources to troubleshoot issues.

Individual Use Expectations

Security

Users are expected to take reasonable safeguards against the transmission of security threats over the school network. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs and not opening files or programs of unknown or untrusted origin. If you believe a computer or mobile device you are using might be infected with a virus, please alert IT. Do not attempt to remove the virus yourself or attempt to download any programs to help remove the virus.

You are responsible for any misuse of your account, even if the inappropriate activity was committed by another person. Therefore, you must take steps to ensure that others do not gain unauthorized access to your account. In addition, you may not use your account to breach security of another account or attempt to gain unauthorized access to another network or server.

Your password provides access to your account. Sharing your password and account access with unauthorized users is prohibited. You should take care to prevent others from using your account by keeping your password secure since you will be held responsible for such use. Do not leave an unsupervised computer logged on to the network.

Downloading and Sharing Software

Users may not copy, download or share any type of copyrighted materials (including music or films) without the owner's permission. Users may not copy or download software without the express authorization of IT staff. This includes copying school-purchased software to your home computer. Software is protected by federal copyright law, which says that you can't make additional copies of software without the permission of the software publisher. Users should not download or attempt to download or run .exe programs over the school network without express permission from IT staff. You may be able to download other file types such as images or videos, provided they are allowed by fair use rules or permitted by author or a Creative Commons License. For the security of our network, download such files only from reputable sites, and only for educational purposes. Unauthorized copying or sharing of software (including video and music files), is illegal and may subject the copier to substantial civil and criminal penalties. The school district assumes no responsibility for copyright or licensing violations by students or staff.

Netiquette

Users should always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner. Users should recognize that among the valuable content online there is also unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content. Users should only use trusted sources when conducting research via the Internet. Users should remember not to post anything online that they wouldn't want students, parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see. Once something is online, it's out there—and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways you never intended.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the use of another person's words or ideas without acknowledging the source (by omitting to cite them) and is considered theft. When you pass off ideas, content, computer programs, images, or words from the internet, as your own, it is an act of lying and cheating. Online research needs to be appropriately cited, giving credit to the original author.

Personal Safety

Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission. Users should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others. Users should never agree to meet in real life someone they meet online without parental permission. If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of an adult (teacher or staff if you're at school; parent or guardian if you're using the device at home) immediately.

NPS makes an attempt to protect private information but users who submit personal information online do so at their own risk.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Don't be mean. Don't send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else. Engaging in these behaviors, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained. (*Reference: District Anti-Bullying Policy*)

Social Media Policy

Social Media is defined as any form of publication or presence that allows interactive communication, including, but not limited to, social networks, blogs, internet websites, internet forums and wikis. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Google and Flickr (NYC Dept. of Education).

Communication with Students and Parents

Newburyport employees who work with students and communicate with them through professional social media sites should follow these guidelines:

- a) Professional social media sites that are school based should be designed to address reasonable instructional, educational or extra-curricular program matters.
- b) Newburyport employees should treat social media space and communication like a classroom or professional workplace.
- c) Employees should exercise caution, sound judgement and common sense when using all social media.
- d) No personally identifiable student information may be posted on social media sites unless written permission has been signed by parents.
- e) No photographs or videos may be posted without the teacher's permission.
- f) Teachers will determine how best to communicate with parents via phone, email or social media.
- g) Each teacher will maintain a classroom website where general information may be found regarding instructional practice and classroom expectations. It is expected that websites will be updated throughout the year.

Vandalism

Any verified acts of vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy a physical device, the data of another user, the NPS network, or other networks that are connected to our system through the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

Privacy

Staff and students are given access to computers and the Internet to assist them in furthering the educational process.

Users should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the district's computer equipment. In addition the district, through its designees, reserves the right to monitor, examine, evaluate and disclose all aspects of the technology resources and their use.

NPS is committed to protecting private information of staff and students contained within emails or other online transmissions.

While we cannot guarantee the privacy or confidentiality of information within electronic documents, the following procedures will help to protect the privacy and confidentiality of such information.

1. Remember when sending emails regarding students to use **ONLY** the student identification numbers and the first initial of both their first and last name eg: John Smith would be J.S.#12345.
2. Remember when sending emails regarding staff to use **ONLY** the staff member's initials and job eg: John Smith teacher would be J.S. teacher.

Confidentiality rules apply, following FERPA regulations. (<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/students.html>)

Limitation of Liability

NPS will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware. While NPS employs filtering and other safety and security mechanisms, and attempts to ensure their proper function, it makes no guarantees as to their effectiveness.

NPS will not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for unauthorized transactions conducted over the school network.

Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including:

- Suspension or termination of network, technology, or computer privileges;
- Notification to parents;
- Detention or suspension from school and school-related activities;
- Employment disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment;

The NPS will provide staff with Internet guidelines and training and support in the appropriate and effective use of the internet. The school system will inform parents about Internet guidelines through the use of letters, school newsletters, and handbooks. Additionally, the NPS will continually evaluate tools and software which can potentially assist staff in implementing guidelines, effectiveness, manageability, and any cost for initial purchase and upgrades will be considered.

Cross ReF: Plagiarism

Action	Date
First Reading	3/7/2016
Second Reading	6/9/2016
Adopted	6/9/2016
Updated	2/5/2018
Adopted	2/5/2018

INTERNET PUBLICATION

I. PURPOSE

The School District has established a district-wide web page that links users to web pages for the district's individual schools. The School District maintains these web pages for educational purposes only, in furtherance of the educational mission of the School District. All published pages and corresponding links to other sites must relate to the district's educational mission.

II. SUPERVISION AND APPROVAL OF WEB PAGES

The Superintendent (or his/her designee) may select the person or persons ("the Webmaster") responsible for overseeing the school district's web pages and maintaining the web pages in a manner consistent with this policy and the school district's Access to Digital Resources Policy. The Webmaster must approve all links from the district web pages to other sites on the Internet. The Webmaster will review the links to ensure that the links are related to the district's educational mission.

Staff members may publish web pages related to their class projects or courses on their school's web site. Staff members must submit their material to the Webmaster for approval before the material can be published. Staff members may not publish or link to personal web pages as part of the school district web site.

Student or staff work (e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces and graphic or other artwork) may be published on the district's web pages, as detailed below. All work that is published will be accompanied by a copyright notice written by the Webmaster that prohibits copying the work without the written consent of the copyright holder.

III. CONTENT STANDARDS

All web page materials are expected to be accurate, grammatically correct and free of spelling errors. Student work may deviate from this standard depending upon the age and grade level of the student. Web pages should be well-organized and professional in appearance. Web pages must not contain copyrighted or trademarked material belonging to others unless written permission to display such material has been obtained from the owner and the owner is credited on the school's web page.

IV. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

A. In general

Identifying information about students, such as first and last names, personal phone numbers or home addresses, will not be published. First names or first names and the first letter of the student's last name may be used where appropriate.

B. Student photographs

- Student photographs may be published only with the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.
- Student photographs will not be accompanied by identifying information about the student(s).

C. Student work

Student work, e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces, and graphic or other artwork, may be published only with the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.

D. Staff photographs, identifying information and work

- Photographs of staff members, accompanied by the staff member's full name, may be published only with the staff member's written consent.
- Staff work, e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces and graphic or other artwork, may be published only with the staff member's written consent.

SOURCE: MASC

Version Control

Action	Date
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FIELD TRIPS

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

The Superintendent will establish regulations to assure that:

1. All students have parental permission for trips.
2. All trips are properly supervised.
3. All safety precautions are observed.
4. All trips contribute substantially to the educational program.
5. All trips allow student access without regard of family ability to pay.

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

CROSS REF.: [JH](#), Policy Relating to Field Trips Involving Late Night or Overnight Travel

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

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COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/ SPEAKERS

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IJOB
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Community resources are those individuals or groups who are invited into the schools to present supplementary information and ideas to the classroom course of study. These experiences afford students the opportunity to benefit from a community member's experience and viewpoints. Care should be taken in selecting these speakers so that they are individuals who respect diversity in thinking and varying views and who are not attempting to inappropriately influence points of view.

CROSS REF.: [ADDA](#), C.O.R.I. Requirements fingerprinting

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

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SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

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

CROSS REF.: [ADDA](#), C.O.R.I. Requirements fingerprinting

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STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IK
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The School Committee recognizes the school's obligation to give periodic reports of a student's progress and grades. The School Committee further recognizes that these reports are a vital form of communication between the schools and parents. The School Committee also believes that all progress reports must be based upon full information, accurately and honestly reported with the proper maintenance of confidentiality.

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

In addition to the periodic reports, parents will be notified when a student's performance warrants attention.

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

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

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PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IKE
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The School Committee is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

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

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

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GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to graduate from Newburyport High School, a student must have earned at least 95 credits and complied with all state accountability requirements. Course requirements are the following:

- Four years of English
- Three years of Mathematics including completion of Algebra II or an Integrated Math equivalent
- Three years of lab-based Science which may include technology/engineering
- Four years of History/Social Science including US History and World History
- Two years of World Language
- Four semesters of Physical Education
- Two semesters of the Arts

Other requirements may be established by the school administration in relation to the particular program, otherwise the additional credits needed for a graduation may be selected from among elective courses. For the total number of credits required please see the high school program of studies or student handbook.

Credit for Foreign Study:

Students who are away for a term or year to participate in a student exchange program or otherwise study abroad may receive credits toward high school graduation when (1) study plans are approved by the school administration in advance; and (2) the institution where the study occurred submits a record of the student's work. In these instances, the Principal and student's guidance counselor will evaluate the work and assign credit for it according to standards prevailing in Newburyport High School.

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EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IL
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The School Committee considers comprehensive and objective evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum to be of primary importance. The Superintendent will provide for the translation of the stated instructional goals into objectives and for appraisal of their implementation in order to:

1. Determine educational needs and provide information for planning.
2. Indicate instructional strengths and weaknesses.
3. Check for bias and stereotyping.
4. Show the relationship between achievement and the system's stated goals.
5. Provide data for public information.

Elements of this evaluation process may include:

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

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

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TEACHING ACTIVITIES/PRESENTATIONS

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IMA
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It is the desire of the School Committee that the best available strategies for bringing about learning be utilized in the District's schools. The instructional staff shall be expected to keep abreast of new and promising instructional ideas and practices developed in schools throughout the nation and to apply those which have potential for improving the learning program in the District's schools.

The School Committee and District establish and model climate that is conducive to rational thought, inquiry, creativity, and respect for the dignity of the overall community and individual students. This educational climate will assist students in learning how to think rather than what to think and shall provide students the opportunity to identify, express, and defend their opinions without penalty or fear of reprisal or ridicule.

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

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TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

An important goal of the schools is to help prepare students for intelligent and conscientious participation as citizens in our democratic society. One step toward meeting this goal is to introduce students to reasoned and dispassionate approaches to the analysis of contemporary social and political issues. To insure that these issues can be examined in an atmosphere as free from emotion and prejudice as the times permit, the School Committee establishes the following guidelines for discussion of controversial issues in the schools.

Teacher-Planned Classroom Discussions

1. Controversial issues selected by teachers for classroom discussion must relate directly to the objectives and content of courses approved by the School Committee for inclusion in the curriculum.
2. The teachers' right to introduce controversial issues in classroom presentations does not include the right of advocacy. Teachers must refrain from using their positions to express partisan points of view.
3. The approach to discussion of these issues in the classroom must be objective and scholarly with minimum emphasis on opinion and maximum emphasis on intelligent analysis.
4. Teachers must ensure that the reasoned arguments of all sides of an issue are given equal presentation and emphasis in classroom discussions.
5. Teachers may invite visitors from outside the schools to give presentations on controversial issues when the visitors offer qualifications and resources not available in the schools. All visitors are to be guided by the standards of language usage that prevail in the classrooms and by the standards of scholarly inquiry set forth above. Whenever possible, teachers who invite visitors to present one side of an issue will also invite visitors to present the other side(s).
6. In all cases teachers must obtain from the appropriate Principal permission to invite visitors for classroom presentations. Permission must be requested at least 48 hours before the scheduled time of presentation.

Student-Initiated Forums on Controversial Issues

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

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

Requests from Groups or Individuals Outside the Schools

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

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

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

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SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

Section I: Curriculum and Instruction	File: IMD
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The United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Massachusetts and related court rulings clearly establish the concept of "church and state separation" and the "preclusion of sectarian instruction in public schools."

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

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

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

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

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

SOURCE: MASC

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ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

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

The School District is committed to providing a high quality educational program to all students in a safe and healthy environment.

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

Educational Program

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

Student Health

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

Animals Prohibited from School

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

- **Wild Animals and Domestic Stray Animals** - Because of the high incidence of rabies in bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes and other wild carnivores, these animals should not be permitted in school buildings under any circumstances (including dead animals).
- **Fur-Bearing Animals (pet dogs,* cats, wolf-hybrids, ferrets, etc.)** - These animals may pose a risk for transmitting rabies, as well as parasites, fleas, other diseases and injuries.
- **Bats** - Bats pose a high risk for transmitting rabies. Bat houses should not be installed on school grounds and bats should not be brought into the school building.
- **Poisonous Animals** - Spiders, venomous insects and poisonous snakes, reptiles and lizards are prohibited for safety reasons.

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

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

Service Animals (Guide or Assistance Dogs)

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

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

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

- assist individuals who are blind or have severe sight impairments as "seeing eye dogs" or "guide dogs;"
- alert individuals with hearing impairments to sounds;
- pull wheelchairs or carry and pick-up items for individuals with mobility impairments
- assist mobility-impaired individuals with balance.
- Provide emotional support as prescribed by a mental health professional.

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

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

If any student or staff member assigned to the classroom in which a service animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the animal, the person having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by the Building Principal or designee and an alternative plan will be developed with appropriate District staff. Such plan could include the reassignment of the person having custody and control of the animal to a different classroom. This will also apply if an individual on school transportation suffers an allergic reaction. In this case, an alternate plan will be developed in coordination with appropriate school, District, and transportation staff including the involvement of the parents/guardian of the student.

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

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

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