

Stoughton Elementary Schools



Student and Parent Handbook

2011-2012

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**STOUGHTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2011 – 2012 SCHOOL CALENDAR**

Sept. 1 School Opens for Unit A & Nurses Pre-K-12 (Full Day)
 Sept. 2 Professional Development Day - No school - Students
 Sept. 5 Labor Day - No School
Sept. 6 School Opens for all Students Gr. 1-12 (Full Day)
 Sept. 6 & 7 Kindergarten Screening by Appointment
 Sept. 8 First Day for Kindergarten
 Sept. 29 & 30 Rosh Hashanah - No School
 Oct. 10 Columbus Day - No School
 Nov. 11 Veterans Day - No School
 Nov. 23 Early Dismissal - Gr. 6-12 at 11:00 - K-5 at 11:45
 Nov. 24 & 25 Thanksgiving Break - No School
 Dec. 25 - Jan 2 Vacation
 Jan. 2 New Year's Day celebrated - No School
 Jan. 3 School Reopens
 Jan. 16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - No School
 Feb. 19 - 25 Vacation
 Mar. 6 Presidential Primary Election - No School
 Apr. 6 Good Friday - No School
 Apr. 15 - 21 Vacation
 May 28 Memorial Day - No School
 June 7 SHS Graduation
 June 19 Last Day (180 student days)
 June 26 Last Day (5 snow days)

Early Release Dates

Thursday, October 20, 2011
 Thursday, November 17, 2011
 Thursday, December 15, 2011
 Thursday, January 26, 2012
 Thursday, March 8, 2012
 Thursday, April 5, 2012
 Thursday, May 3, 2012
 Thursday, June 7, 2012

School Hours for Early Release Days

SHS & OMS 7:35 a.m. - 11:32 a.m.
 Elementary Schools 8:30 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.

Message from the Superintendant

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the Stoughton Public Schools! We look forward to an exciting and successful school year. We have prepared this handbook to assist in developing an understanding between the school and the home so that together we may provide your child with a rewarding and enriching educational experience.

We hope the information contained in this booklet will provide you with an understanding of our schools. Should you have any questions regarding the information contained in this booklet, please contact your elementary principal.

Sincerely,

Marguerite C. Rizzi, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

STOUGHTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to challenge individuals to reach their potential in an educational environment that promotes excellence.

A PARENT'S PLEDGE

**I KNOW THAT CHILDREN LEARN BEST WHEN FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS WORK TOGETHER.
AS A PARENT, I PLEDGE TO DO THE FOLLOWING:**

Set aside some time for talking with and listening to my child every day.

Praise my child for good work in school and good behavior at home.

Help my child develop self-confidence and self-discipline.

Talk with my child's teacher about how my child is doing in school.

Talk with my child about schoolwork.

Set a regular time and place for schoolwork. During this time, there will be no television, no radio, no phone calls.

Encourage reading. I will read to my child, and I will listen as my child reads to me.

Make sure my child gets healthy meals, enough sleep and good exercise every day.

Love my child enough to say NO when necessary.

Help my child discover the joy that learning and thinking can bring at any age.

"Tis the good reader that makes the good book."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

System-wide Goals and Professional Development Plan

Stoughton Public Schools Professional Development Plan

The Stoughton Public School System's Professional Development Plan was implemented to provide a comprehensive professional development program that meets the individual needs of educators as well as the district's system-wide goals in an atmosphere that promotes best practices and innovative instructional strategies.

Goals of the Professional Development Plan:

- *To provide professional development opportunities that promote high standards for student learning and achievement.*
- *To differentiate professional development by providing a variety of high-quality options for professional development and recertification for staff.*
- *To respond to the changing needs of the Stoughton professional learning community and the diverse student body we serve.*
- *To develop a common core of understanding about teaching and learning.*
- *To enhance the content knowledge of teachers.*
- *To provide opportunities for educators to collaborate in the planning, development, and implementation of standards-based instructional practices, assessments, and initiatives.*
- *To increase the effectiveness of teachers in using technology as an instructional tool.*
- *To promote research-based programs and practices.*

Our Plan was developed with input from the district's Professional Development Team, administrators, and the system-wide ACCESS Team. The Professional Development Plan is available in hard copy and may also be accessed through our website, www.stoughtonschools.org.

Our current theme and focus for Stoughton's professional development program is **Using Data to Inform Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment**. Other related focus areas include special education policies and procedures, differentiated instruction, diversity, assessment, technology integration, and reading and writing across the curriculum. All professional development program offerings are designed to address the diverse learning needs of the students and are planned collaboratively through the Professional Development Team.

In partnership with the Stoughton Teachers Association, the district will also continue its very successful year-long Mentoring/Induction Program for new teachers and administrators.

GENERAL INFORMATION

TELEPHONE/FAX SERVICE All numbers preceded by (781)

Location	Telephone	Nurse	Fax
Superintendent's Office	344-4000		344-3789
Senior High School	344-7001	344-3914	341-6041
Adult Evening School	341-8701		344-3789
Robert G. O'Donnell Middle School	344-7002	344-4065	297-5263
Edwin A. Jones School	344-7003	344-4116	344-2782
South School	344-7004	344-5514	344-2876
West School	344-7005	344-2558	344-2973
Helen H. Hansen School	344-7006	341-8446	344-4927
Joseph R. Dawe, Jr. School	344-7007	344-6657	344-8271
Joseph H. Gibbons School	344-7008	341-3915	344-2653
Central Switchboard	344-4000		344-3789

Stoughton Public Schools website

<http://www.stoughtonschools.org>

SCHOOL HOURS

Grades K-5 (Note: Kindergarten hours are the same.)

8:30 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

Arrival and Dismissal Times

Classes begin at 8:30 a.m. No students should arrive earlier than 8:00 a.m., when supervision begins. Please be aware that additional staff members are not on duty until 8:15 a.m. **Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. will be considered tardy.**

Regular dismissal time is 2:45 p.m. Emergency dismissal may occur due to unforeseen circumstances. Information on emergency dismissal must be up to date and on file in the office. Verbal permission will be acceptable only under these circumstances.

According to state law students arriving at school after 11:30 or leaving school before 11:30 are considered absent for the day.

Entering the Building

All school building exits will be locked during school hours. The main entrance to each school has a monitoring system. All visitors must report immediately to the school office upon entering a school building and wear a Visitor's Pass while in the building.

Dismissal During School Hours

It is in the best interest of your child's education to schedule your child's doctor, dental and other appointments after school hours. If this is not possible, please send your child with a note to his/her teacher indicating who will be coming for dismissal and at what time. This note will be forwarded to the office. For your child's safety, if someone other than a known parent or guardian will be coming to pick up your child, **we will require identification.**

Attendance Policy

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Committee does recognize that parents of children attending our schools have rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children between the ages of 6 and 16 attend school regularly, in accordance with State law. State law requires the school system to investigate cases of excessive school absence. For this purpose, the Committee defines excessive absence as more than eleven (11) unexcused absences per school year. All absences (even those authorized by parents) are considered unexcused unless the required documentation is provided.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons:

- Illness or quarantine (with a doctor's note)
- Bereavement or serious illness in family
- For observance of major religious holidays
- Legal (with documentation from the court, lawyer etc.)
- Other – a student may be excused for other absences with approval from the school administrator.

Documentation for the above absences should be provided to the school principal or designee within five (5) school days of the absence. Documentation provided after ten (10) school days may require a meeting with a principal or designee.

Clear communication between parents and the school is imperative to ensure the safety of students and to reinforce a student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork. Accordingly, parents should provide a written explanation for the absence of a child. This should be provided in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible.

Family vacations are not considered excused absences. The School Committee strongly discourages families from taking vacation during the school year. When children are absent from school for the purpose of family vacations, their learning is interrupted and their progress may be affected. Teachers will not be required to provide work prior to a student leaving for vacation. The student will be required to make up all missed work upon their return to school.

Unexcused absence from school is considered truancy and will be treated as such. This includes absence from any class or activity during the school day for which the student is scheduled. It also includes any after-school special help session or disciplinary session that the student has been directed to attend by a teacher or administrator. Disciplinary action shall be taken in such case, beginning with notification of parents. Continued violation may lead to more serious repercussions, up to and including suspension from school.

If a child is absent, he or she cannot participate in after-school or evening events on the day(s) on which he or she is absent. The principal will have the authority to excuse a student's absence and allow the student to participate, based on the principal's understanding of the events surrounding the absence.

Excessive unexcused absences will require assessment and intervention by the school administration. Interventions may include contact with parents, school conferences, case management services and service referral. In situations in which attendance does not improve despite intervention by the school administration, the school may take one or more of the following actions:

- A Failure To Send, Criminal Complaint, against the parent will be sought at the Stoughton District Court
- A 51A for parental neglect will be filed with the Department of Children and Families
- A Child in Need of Supervision (CHINS) petition will be sought at the Dedham District Juvenile Court.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 76:1; 76:2; 76:16; 76:20; 119:39E; 119:51A

Approved by School Committee 7/12/11

Notes for Tardiness, Absence, or Dismissal

When is a note needed from a doctor?

1. If a child has been absent due to illness for five or more consecutive days, a doctor's note is required.

When is a note needed from a parent or guardian?

1. to indicate a child is going home other than his/her usual way
2. for dismissal during school day
3. if someone other than a parent/guardian is picking up a child
4. for any activity after school
5. for being tardy (or parent accompanies child to office)

PLEASE SIGN AND DATE ALL NOTES.

Conferences and School Visits

By working together, parents, guardians and school staff can help to promote children's academic, social and emotional growth. Teachers and principals welcome conferences with parents and guardians throughout the school year. Arrangements for such conferences may be made by contacting the teacher and/or principal to schedule a mutually convenient and agreeable time.

Parent-Teacher Conferences for this year will be held on Early Release Thursdays on October 21, 2011 and March 8, 2012.

Volunteers/CORI

Parent volunteerism is a critical component of the education of Stoughton's children. There are many opportunities throughout the year for parents to volunteer in our schools. If you are interested in volunteering at your child's school, please fill out and return the volunteer request form that is sent home to every family in the fall.

Along with the volunteer form, we will be sending a CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information). **Please be aware that the Massachusetts State Law requires every volunteer to fill out a CORI before he or she can participate in our volunteer programs, classroom activities or field trips. A CORI must be completed every year.**

Notices

Your child will be bringing home many notices as the year progresses. Please find time to read each one. This is our means of communicating with you regarding milk money, school policies, parent-teacher conferences, and other special events.

Report Cards

Several years ago, as part of a sweeping Education Reform Act in Massachusetts, Curriculum Frameworks in English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Engineering/Technology, History/Social Science, Fine Arts, Health/Physical Education, and Foreign Language were created to set Learning Standards for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level.

Report cards will be issued three times a year. They will include many specific items related to the knowledge and skills your child should attain by the end of the school year. Our marking system is standards-based. This means that the students will be assessed as to the progress they are making in achieving standards based on grade level expectations and state/federal guidelines for what is developmentally appropriate. As always, if parents/guardians have any questions regarding the content or categories of report cards, they are encouraged to contact the classroom teacher.

Instead of letter grades, we will use four numbers to reflect your child's progress. The numbers are as follows:

- 4 Exceeding the grade level standard. Producing quality work consistently.
- 3 Meeting the grade level standard. Producing quality work.
- 2 Progressing toward the standard. Producing required grade level work with direction and assistance.
- 1 Beginning to develop the standard. Not yet able to produce required grade level work.
- M Modified work or program. Student is accessing the curriculum at his/her identified level of ability.
- N/A Standard not addressed this term.

Teams of teachers and administrators have also created "rubrics" or criteria to help teachers assess your child's level of proficiency. Here is an example from Grade 3 Mathematics matching the report card statement, "Solves two and three digit addition and subtraction problems."

- 4 Solves addition and subtraction problems with more than three digits accurately.
- 3 Solves two and three-digit addition problems.
- 2 Solves some two and three-digit addition and subtraction problems with minimal assistance.
- 1 Solves two and three-digit addition and subtraction problems with teacher assistance.

An information guide regarding the standards-based report card, rubrics and a copy of the report card are available on line at stoughtonschools.org or a hard copy can be requested so that you can see how your child is progressing toward achieving the standards. Please keep in touch with your child's teacher to find out how you can be helping at home as well.

Money

Money may be collected for various reasons by school personnel. All money should be put in an envelope and sealed. The child's name, room number, amount, and the purpose for which the money is being sent should be clearly written on the envelope. Money should be sent promptly. Correct change is much appreciated.

Only cash or bank checks (**not personal checks**) can be used for payment of bus transportation, lost books, preschool tuition and summer school.

Pets

Students are not allowed to bring animals to school.

Clothing

All students from Kindergarten through Grade 5 have art and physical education classes once a week. To protect their clothing, children should bring in an old smock or shirt that can be left in school for art classes or arts and crafts projects done in their classroom. All students are required to wear sneakers for their physical education classes.

Children often benefit from having an extra sweater or sweatshirt in their backpack for changes in temperature both inside the building and at recess time.

A label with your child's name should be clearly marked on any outer wear such as jackets, coats, sweaters, hats, boots, mittens. Please also label your child's lunch box.

Lost and Found

The collection site is maintained in the hallway near the lobby. Please remember to check here for missing items. If clothing and lunch boxes are labeled, your child is more apt to arrive home with his/her own.

Items lost on the school bus remain on the bus to be claimed on the next trip. Eyeglasses and musical instruments are the exceptions. These are taken immediately to the "Lost and Found" at the bus company.

Gifts to School Personnel

Students and their parents are discouraged from the presentation of gifts to school employees on holidays and at the end of the school year.

The State Ethics Commission has provided new amendments to the regulations on gift-giving and acceptance. In a nutshell, public employees cannot accept gifts that add up to more than \$50.00 during the course of the whole year. Disclosure of the gift may be required if the appearance of a conflict of interest exists. Although teachers appreciate your generosity, they are bound to the state regulations. Teachers are allowed to accept a gift with an aggregated value of up to a maximum of \$150 per year from current students/parents as long as the gift is identified only as being from the class and the identity of givers and the amounts given are not identified to the recipient. A teacher may accept a gift to the classroom that is to be used for the class and which will become the property of the school district.

The most appreciated gifts are those which the children make themselves or the writing of letters which express your gratitude or appreciation.

Food

Students are encouraged to bring a healthy and nutritious snack and lunch. Soda, gum and glass containers are not permitted.

GENERAL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Tobacco Free Zones

All Stoughton Public School buildings and grounds are ***tobacco-free zones***. This includes, but is not limited to the prohibition of cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco and smokeless cigarettes.

Vital Information

Copies of ALL legal documents related to the child (e.g. custody, restraining orders) must be filed in the office at the registration of the child and again when any changes are made.

Emergency Forms, completed yearly by parents and kept on file in the Principal's Office, supply information in emergency situations when parents cannot be reached. Adults designated by parents will be contacted; if these persons are unable to supply information that will put school officials in touch with the parents, then the emergency form will be accepted as parental permission for treatment in medical emergencies. Notations concerning a child's allergies should be specifically mentioned on this form.

Telephone numbers on the emergency form must be kept updated. In addition to your home, work, and cell phone numbers, please list at least two other names and numbers of people who may be contacted in case we cannot reach you and who live or work in close proximity to the school. We also need to know the telephone numbers related to change of employment.

Devices in School

Cell phones, toys, and electronic devices are a hindrance to students' attention and safety during the school day, and possession of these items by students is prohibited in school.

Dress Code/Appearance

We realize that style of dress is a matter of personal taste. However, we do expect that students will dress in a neat, clean, safe, and modest manner. Concern for personal appearance is an indication of self-respect and of courtesy toward others.

Clothing or jewelry that displays obscene or profane language, offensive images, and/or illegal substances is not acceptable in school. Clothing such as halter tops, half shirts, and tube tops are not allowed.

For safety purposes, children should not wear shoes without backs or open toe sandals, as these may cause children to slip and fall during recess and on stairwells. Footwear, such as heellies, that would scratch, discolor or mar any floor in the school is not acceptable. **Sneakers are highly recommended.**

If any items of clothing/footwear are deemed to be inappropriate or offensive, the principal may ask the student to change his/her clothing and/or call home to obtain more suitable attire.

Homework Guidelines

Recognizing that children learn at different rates and need different amounts of time to complete independent assignments at home, the homework guidelines for elementary school students are as follows:

Grades 1-5	Students will bring home assignments Monday through Thursday evenings. Assignments generally will not be given over the weekend unless students are working on a long-term project.
Grade 1:	Approximately 10 minutes per night
Grade 2:	Approximately 20 minutes per night
Grade 3:	Approximately 30 minutes per night
Grade 4:	Approximately 40 minutes per night
Grade 5:	Approximately 50 minutes per night

Nightly assignments may include spelling and vocabulary work; reading and writing assignments related to fiction, non-fiction, poetry, science, math, and social studies; comprehension questions; math practice and problem-solving.

Homework assignments are valuable for several reasons: 1) they continue to strengthen students' reading and writing skills; 2) they provide students the opportunity to practice their understanding of what they have learned in class; and 3) they ask students to respond to problems by integrating the content and skills they have learned in different areas of the curriculum.

We encourage you to set aside time each evening for your child to complete the assigned homework in a quiet place and to take an active interest in what he or she is learning in school.

If your son or daughter is spending an excessive amount of time on their homework that far exceeds the time guidelines listed above, please call your child's teacher.

In addition to homework assignments, students should read or be read to for at least 15 minutes each night. Your support in making reading a lifelong habit will help your child progress in every content area.

Policy on Parent Notification Regarding Sexual Education

The Superintendent of Schools shall ensure that parents/guardians are notified whenever curriculum involving human sexual education or human sexuality is implemented or maintained. Parents may exempt their children from any portion of said curriculum through written notification to the school principal. There shall be no penalty toward any child because of the exemption.

The Superintendent of Schools shall ensure that the program's instructional materials for said curriculum are reasonably accessible to parents, guardians, educators, school administrators, and others, for inspection and review.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied 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 dispute.

Adopted by School Committee, May 28, 2002

Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy

The Stoughton Public School System is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, or disability. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors, and other individuals at school or at school-sponsored events is unlawful and is strictly prohibited. The Stoughton Public School System requires all employees and students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect for their fellow employees, students and all members of the school community.

A. Definition of Harassment

1. In General

Harassment includes communication such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct which offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

Individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to school administrators when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

2. Sexual Harassment

While all types of harassment are prohibited, sexual harassment requires particular attention. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- a) Acceptance of or submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term of condition of employment or education.
- b) The individual's response to such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting an employee or as a basis for educational, disciplinary, or other decisions affecting a student.
- c) Such conduct interferes with an individual's job duties, education or participation in extra-curricular activities.
- d) The conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment.

B. Harassment and Retaliation Prohibited

Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. In addition, retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of the school or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Stoughton Public Schools. Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the administration and/or school committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

C. Investigation

Any individual who believes he/she has been harassed or who has witnessed or learned about the harassment of another person in the school environment, should inform the principal or the civil rights representative for the school building as soon as possible. The individual may also contact the civil rights coordinator.

The Stoughton Public Schools will promptly investigate every complaint of harassment as set forth in Section A. If it determines that harassment has occurred, it will take appropriate action to end the harassment and to ensure that it is not repeated. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law and under applicable collective bargaining agreements. In certain cases, the harassment of a student may constitute child abuse under state law. The Stoughton Public Schools will comply with all legal requirements governing the reporting of suspected cases of child abuse and will report suspected criminal activity to the appropriate authorities.

D. Closure of a Complaint

When an investigation has been completed, administrators will inform the complainant of the results and a report of the investigation will be on file with the civil rights coordinator. The Stoughton Public School System urges all individuals in the school community to bring any concerns or complaints of harassment or discrimination to the attention of school principals or the building civil rights representative or the civil rights coordinator so that they can resolve the issue. Individuals may also contact the state agencies responsible for enforcing laws prohibiting harassment or discrimination in schools: the Massachusetts Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA (781-388-3300) and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA (617-727-3990). The agency responsible for enforcing the federal law prohibiting harassment on the basis of sex is the Office of Civil Rights within the United States Department of Education, which is located at the John W. McCormack Building, Post Office Square, Boston, MA (617-223-9662)

E. Appeals

A party may appeal the administrator's decision in writing to the superintendent of schools within 15 days after receiving a copy of the finding of the Level II investigation. The civil rights coordinator's decision will be reviewed to ensure the adequacy of the investigation and conclusions. Parties will be given an opportunity to submit additional relevant information. The superintendent of schools will make a final decision and provide it in writing to the respective parties within 30 days.

F. Notice of Non-discrimination

The Stoughton Public Schools provides equal education and employment opportunity without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, or sexual orientation.

The Stoughton Public Schools complies with all applicable State and Federal Laws, including but not limited to, Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Massachusetts General Laws, c.151B, c.151C, c.76, §5, and c.71B.

The Stoughton Public Schools has duly appointed individuals responsible for the overall monitoring, auditing, and ensuring compliance with this policy. For compliance issues regarding employment activities, employees should contact: Superintendent of Schools, Stoughton Public Schools, 232 Pearl Street, Stoughton, Massachusetts 02072. For compliance issues regarding educational activities, contact the assistant superintendent. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against in any of the district's educational or employment, activities can file a written grievance with the appropriate officer.

Bullying/ Harassment Prevention/Intervention

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed into law comprehensive legislation to address bullying in public schools. An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools, Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, requires school leaders to create and implement strategies to address bullying promptly and effectively when it occurs. This law is broken down into four parts: internet safety, bullying prevention instruction, professional development, and requirements for students with disabilities.

The Stoughton Elementary Schools have already adopted a Harassment Policy (see Appendix B of handbook) and have established clear guidelines for students to report bullying/harassment concerns and consequences for students in violation of the policy. Additionally the "Second Step" guidance curriculum includes lessons designed for students to better understand the impact of bullying and harassment and how to deal with it appropriately.

Students, parents and guardians have many options available to them when reporting a bullying (including cyber-bullying) or harassment incident:

1. Contact the administrative principal by phone or e-mail **as soon as possible**.
2. Contact the building guidance counselor.
3. Students are also strongly encouraged to notify a teacher or staff member if they are being bullied or harassed.

When necessary, the Stoughton Police Department and student resource officer will be contacted.

Any student in violation of the bullying/harassment policy will be dealt with severely. **Parents are encouraged to monitor their child's online behavior.** Reminder: children must be 13 years or older to have a Facebook account.

Updates and addendum to the Bullying Policy, based on the upcoming state regulations, will be available on the Stoughton Public Schools website, at the Elementary School offices and as handouts when finalized.

SCHOOL BEHAVIOR POLICIES

We believe in encouraging consistent behavior by rewarding positive student behaviors. Our effort is to "catch them being good". In this way, we hope to help children develop good decision-making skills and become a credit to their families, school, and community.

To this end, the faculty and staff of the Stoughton Elementary Schools pledge themselves to make every opportunity available for students to be successful each day and to develop behaviors that are good for themselves and others.

GOOD MANNERS THAT PROMOTE RESPECT AND COURTESY

To continue fostering the good manners parents teach their children at home, we encourage students to respond politely to their classmates and to staff members with words like "please, thank you, and excuse me." We also expect them to apologize when they have done something to upset or hurt someone else.

We expect children to use the following behaviors as part of their daily routine at school:

1. Greet others in a friendly way.
2. Talk softly.
3. Walk quietly everywhere in the building.
4. Save running for gym or recess activities.
5. Listen and follow directions.
6. Raise your hand to speak.
7. Speak one at a time. Do not interrupt when someone else is speaking.
8. Do not borrow unless you have asked permission.
9. Treat all people and property with respect.
10. Take pride in how your school looks. Help to keep classrooms, bathrooms and the cafeteria clean.
11. Use bathrooms with respect for other peoples privacy.
12. Use all school equipment with care.

CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR

1. Reasonable behavior is expected at all times.
2. Students are expected to be polite and use appropriate table manners.
3. Students are to use a normal tone of conversation.
4. Cafeteria supervisors and student volunteers are to be shown respect and listened to carefully.
5. Students are to stay seated unless permission is given to move about the room.
6. Students are expected to clean up after themselves.

PLAYGROUND BEHAVIOR

We realize that time on the playground allows children an opportunity to release their energy. Lunch recess is supervised by staff members who monitor the safe use of equipment and are there to help anyone who is injured.

Safety is the key word at recess.

Students are expected to follow all school rules at recess and to pay special attention to these behaviors to maintain safety on the playground:

1. Students should know the boundaries of the play area and should not go beyond them.
2. Students should "play fair" and share the playground facilities and equipment.
3. Students are not allowed to handle or throw dangerous objects such as rocks, sticks and snowballs.
4. Students should immediately report any injuries to the recess supervisors.
5. Students should line up promptly when the bell rings to end recess or when it is announced.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

School rules need to be established and followed in order to promote a safe, orderly, and productive learning environment. Unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated. School rules apply to all behavior in the classroom, within the school, on school grounds, on school buses, and at all school-sponsored activities. Parents and guardians should be aware that some offenses may be a violation of law, as well as of school policy.

All student discipline is intended to conform to Mass General Laws, especially Chapter 71, sections 37H and 37H 1/2. The degree of discipline will depend on the prohibited conduct. For most offenses, the policy of the schools is to attempt corrective action before taking more extreme disciplinary action. In addition, the decision-maker will consider any information which he/she feels is relevant, including prior disciplinary record, academic progress, seriousness of the incident, mitigating circumstances, and any other facts which are relevant.

Generally, the policy of the school is to begin with discussing the prohibited conduct with the student(s), which may be followed by notification of parents and/or guardians, loss of privileges, detention, suspension from school, and exclusion or expulsion from school.

Expulsion, exclusion, and suspension are very serious disciplinary actions. Expulsions and exclusions can only be acted upon by the School Committee upon recommendation of the principal/superintendent. However, certain offenses require that suspension, expulsion, or exclusion be done by the principal in the first instance, and may not be delegated to any other person. Those offenses for which a Principal may suspend or recommend the expulsion of a student include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Damaging or destroying school property, the property of other students or staff.
2. Assault and/or battery on a student, principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher assistant, teacher aide, or other staff member. This may include using physical or verbal violence to settle difference and/or threatening the safety of oneself or others in school, on school property or on the bus.
3. Bringing inappropriate or potentially dangerous items to school, as discussed in the section of "Dangerous Items and Weapons."
4. Pulling fire alarms, calling in false alarms or tampering with the defibrillator.
5. Calling in a bomb scare.
6. Staying out of school without permission of a parent or legal guardian (truancy).
7. Leaving the classroom, the school building or the school grounds without permission.
8. Possessing and/or distributing unauthorized medications or like substances.
9. Possessing selling, and/or using drugs and/or alcohol.
10. Using obscene, abusive, disrespectful, inappropriate language or actions.
11. Cheating and/or plagiarism.
12. Circumstances in which a student has been charged with or convicted of a felony.
13. Harassing another member of the school community or retaliating against anyone who has brought harassment or inappropriate behavior to the attention of school personnel (See Appendix B).
14. Gathering as group to harass or injure other students.(See Appendix F)

DISCIPLINARY DUE PROCESS

1. Short Term Disciplinary Sanctions: Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in a student's suspension from school for ten (10) consecutive school days or less, the student will be given oral notice of the offense with which he/she is charged and an opportunity to respond. In the event that the principal determines that the student will be suspended from school, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by telephone and/or in writing.

2. Long Term Disciplinary Sanctions: Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in the student's suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expulsion, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given written notice of a hearing at which they may be represented by an attorney at their expense and may examine and present witnesses and documentary evidence. Following this hearing, the decision maker (principal/school committee) will issue a written decision. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will have the right to appeal any decision imposing a long-term exclusion from school. Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, the student shall have ten (10) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the superintendent of schools. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H1/2, the student shall have five (5) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the superintendent. For exclusions imposed by the school committee in accordance with M.G.L. c.76 §17, the student shall have the right to file a written request for reconsideration by the committee within ten (10) days of the effective date of the exclusion. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect. M.G.L. c. 76 §17, M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, M.G.L. c. 71 §37H1/2.

3. Students with Disabilities: Students who have been identified as students with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or who the school has reason to believe might be eligible for special education services are entitled to additional procedural protections when a disciplinary exclusion is considered. Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that would result in a change in placement, the student's Team will meet to determine whether the student's conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability. If the Team determines that the conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, shall review any existing behavior plan or, if no such behavior plan exists, conduct a functional behavioral assessment. In many cases, a student with a disability will be entitled to services identified by the student's Team as necessary to provide the student with a free appropriate public education during periods of disciplinary exclusion exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. For additional information regarding the rights of students with disabilities in the context of school discipline please contact the Stoughton Public Schools' Director of Special Education or the building principal.

DISCIPLINE AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. Federal Law and Regulations require that additional provisions be made for students with disabilities. The principal shall notify the Administrator of Special Education of the suspendable offense of a student with either an IEP or a Section 504 Accommodation Plan.

School personnel may exclude a student with a disability from school for a disciplinary violation for not more than 10 consecutive days (to the extent those alternatives are applied to students without disabilities), and for additional removals of not more than ten days in the same school year for separate incidents of misconduct (as long as those removals do not constitute a change in placement) equivalent to discipline imposed on students without disabilities for the same offense. IDEA 2004, Section 615 (k) (1) (B). After a child with a disability has been removed from his or her placement for ten school days in the same year, during any subsequent days of removal, the child must continue to receive services that enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and the child must receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. See 34 CFR 300.530(d).

Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the district, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the district) must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine if:

- (a) If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
- (b) If the conduct in question was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP.

The conduct must be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability if the district; the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that a condition in either paragraph (i) or (ii) of this section was met. The TEAM will make a finding, a, manifestation determination, as to the relationship between the student's misconduct and his/her disability condition, conduct a functional behavioral assessment if appropriate, and modify or amend the IEP to provide special education services during the suspension, or to include a behavioral intervention plan. If the district, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team must:

1. Either:
 - (a) Conduct a functional behavioral assessment, unless the district had conducted a functional behavioral assessment before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child;
 - or
 - (b) If a behavioral intervention plan already has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and
2. Except as provided in 34 CFR 300.530(g) of this section, return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the district agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

There are some special circumstances in which the district may unilaterally remove a student and place them in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability. Specifically, school personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, if the child:

1. Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the district;
2. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the district; or
3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the district.

On the date on which the decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the district must notify the parents of that decision, and provide the parents the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR 300.504. The building principal will notify the Administrator of Special Education; then will notify the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as required by law as to the course of action. Subsequent amendments to state or federal law will supersede contrary handbook provisions.

A student not yet eligible for Special Education may be protected under IDEA 2004 regulations if the district can be deemed to have had knowledge that the student had a disability. The district must be deemed to have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability if before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred:

1. The parent of the child expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the appropriate educational agency, or a teacher of the child, that the child is in need of special education and related services;
2. The parent of the child requested an evaluation of the child pursuant to Sec. Sec. 300.300 through 300,311; or
3. The teacher of the child, or other personnel of the district, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to the director of special education of the agency or to other supervisory personnel of the agency.

The district would not be deemed to have knowledge if;

1. The parent of the child:
 - a. Has not allowed an evaluation of the child pursuant to 34 CFR 300.300 through 300.311; or
 - b. Has refused services under IDEA; or
2. The child has been evaluated in accordance with Sec. 300.300 through 300.311 and determined to not be a child with a disability under this part.

If the district does not have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability (in accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section) prior to taking disciplinary measures against the child, the child may be subjected to the disciplinary measures applied to children without disabilities who engage in comparable behaviors. If a request is made for an evaluation of a child during the time period in which the child is subjected to disciplinary measures under 34 CFR 300.530, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner.

Until the evaluation is completed, the child remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services. If the child is determined to be a child with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation conducted by the agency and information provided by the parents, the agency must provide special education and related services in accordance with this part, including the requirements of 34 CFR 300.530 through 300.536 and IDEA 2004 section 612(a)(1)(A).

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement in this context or the manifestation determination under or a district that believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others, may appeal the decision by requesting a hearing from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau of Special Education Appeals. See <http://www.doe.mass.edu/bsea>

SCHOOL BUS POLICIES

Students Entitled To Transportation

Elementary students who live two or more miles from the school are eligible for free bus transportation.

Kindergarten students will not be dropped off at a bus stop unless a parent is present or a responsible adult or older student who has been designated by that parent/guardian is present. If parents/guardians want to give permission for an adult and/or older student to be responsible meeting their kindergarten student, they must submit name(s) of that person(s) in writing to the school office. Copies of these permission slips will be provided to the bus company. Throughout the year, please remember to keep this information updated.

Students not entitled to transportation may apply to ride as a Pay & Ride Student. You can pay online at www.stoughtonschools.org by using a credit card, or pay with cash or a money order at your child's school office. Pay & Ride transportation service is limited to space availability.

To avoid confusion or overcrowding on the buses, students must use their assigned stop for pick-up and drop-off. Non-bus students are not allowed to ride the bus, and bus students are not allowed to ride a bus other than the one to which they have been assigned. Exceptions to these rules will only be made in emergency situations with the expressed permission of the principal or his/her designee, provided there is space available.

Please be patient with bus pick-up and drop-off times during inclement weather. Severe rain/snow or other traffic conditions may cause buses to arrive at stops later than their usual times.

Rules and Behavioral Expectations for Bus Students

These policies are intended for daily riders as well as students on field trips. Many people have responsibilities for safety when students ride buses:

The **bus contractor** maintains equipment, hires and trains drivers. The **driver** is in charge of bus and students and may reprimand a child for any action that might cause harm to himself or others. **Parents** should assist school personnel in encouraging safe riding habits. **Students** will behave in a manner conducive to the safety of all passengers.

If questions arise, parents are encouraged to contact the school principal regarding school transportation policies.

Students riding the bus are expected to cooperate in the following ways:

1. Arrive at bus stop at least 10 minutes before scheduled pick-up time. Please understand that times of bus arrival may vary depending upon traffic or weather conditions.
2. Wait on sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, then stand well off the road.
3. Wait until approaching bus stops and doors are opened before moving toward the bus.

4. When boarding or leaving the bus, cross the street in front of the bus at a distance of about ten feet and only cross the street with the signal of the bus driver.
5. Enter the bus in an orderly fashion.
6. Remain seated until bus reaches its destination.
7. Board and leave bus only at designated stops.
8. Ride assigned bus only.
9. Refrain from throwing snow while waiting for or disembarking from the bus.
10. Have written permission from home if student is to be excused from riding his/her bus.
11. Maintain conduct and courtesy expected in any school situation.

Only the Principal or Superintendent or his/her designee may deny transportation as disciplinary action.

If a behavioral problem on the school bus is reported to the Principal, the student will be spoken to, there may be a loss of privileges (e.g. recess), and the parent or guardian may be contacted. Bus privileges may be suspended immediately if the first offense is of a serious nature.

If a student persists in inappropriate behavior on the school bus, which is excessively rude or disrespectful or which endangers his/her own or other's safety, the student's parent or guardian will be contacted and his/her bus privileges may be suspended.

Bus Evacuation Situations

There are situations that require evacuation of a bus. These include:

1. Fire or danger of fire
2. Fuel spill or smell of fuel
3. Unsafe position due to accident/mechanical failure
4. Possibility of bus rollover
5. Bus is likely to struck by other vehicles

Evacuation of a bus may be accomplished by:

1. Front (main) door evacuation
2. Rear door evacuation
4. Front and rear evacuation

There are several important facts to remember when evacuating the bus:

- Getting everyone off the bus in the shortest time possible is the most important part of evacuation.
- Once off the bus, move at least 100 feet from the bus to a safe location.
- Do not take books, backpacks, instruments or other belongings, except for identification.
- When exiting through the rear door, do not jump! "Sit and slide" off the bus.
- The first two students out through the exits (front and rear) should station themselves to assist the remaining students off the bus.
- Bus evacuation drills will be performed annually with all students participating.
- During any evacuation, everyone must pay attention to the driver or whoever is in charge. Everyone must follow instructions and cooperate in order to complete the evacuation quickly and safely.

SCHOOL SAFETY POLICIES

Emergency Safety Procedures

The elementary schools have developed a set of procedures/protocols to be followed in the event of one of a variety of emergency situations. Those "events" are 1) Shelter in Place/Lockdown, 2) Safe Zone within Building, 3) Emergency Re-Entry into the building, 4) Evacuation/Fire. These procedures are practiced periodically, sometimes with the assistance of the Stoughton Fire Department. During a Shelter in Place drill, no one will be allowed to enter or exit the building. As always, the children's emotional safety is equally important to their physical well-being, therefore, all attempts are made to handle drills and actual situations in a developmentally appropriate, supportive fashion. A copy of the protocols is kept in each office and reviewed periodically by school personnel.

Dangerous Items and Weapons

Potentially dangerous or hazardous items, which could threaten the safety of children and/or adults, are prohibited in school, on school grounds, and on school buses. These items include, but are not limited to, guns, knives, razor blades, slingshots, baseball bats, laser pointers, or any toy weapons that might appear to be real. Students who bring such items to school may face disciplinary action.

The Stoughton Public School System is a chemical-free and weapons-free district. The guidelines for student behavior and the discipline code adopted for each building are designed to protect students from the irresponsible behavior of others. Most importantly, all students are directly accountable for the consequences of their behaviors.

To ensure the safety and security of all students into the schools, the Stoughton Public School System reserves the right to conduct warrantless searches of students, their possessions, and school lockers, providing that there is a reasonable basis for the search. Therefore, students should have no expectations of privacy in these areas. The School Committee also authorizes unannounced searches using drug-sniffing dogs in any one of the school buildings to make certain that illegal drugs are not being brought onto school grounds and into the schools. (Adopted by the Stoughton School Committee, May 9, 2000.)

Bicycle Safety and Youth Helmet Law

According to the Massachusetts Youth Helmet Law MGL, Ch. 85, Sec. 11B, **Any person 16 years of age or younger must wear a properly fastened bicycle helmet when riding as the driver or passenger of a bicycle, a skateboard, in-line skates or a scooter.**

This law applies to riding on streets, bike paths, sidewalks and in parks, parking lots or other public ways. The helmet must fit the person's head and be secured by straps at all times.

Students must provide written permission from a parent or guardian in order to be allowed to ride a bicycle to and/or from school.

Students must have a means of securing their bicycle safely during school hours. The school accepts no responsibility for bicycles that are stolen or damaged when left unattended on school grounds.

Skateboards, Rollerblades, Scooters, Motorized Vehicles, Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Students may not bring skateboards, rollerblades, scooters, or any motorized vehicles to school. They are prohibited on school property.

Students are not allowed to bring cell phones or electronic devices (e.g. games, I-pods, CD players, Discman, Gameboys or MP-3's) to school. The school will not be responsible for their loss or damage. Trading cards are not allowed in school. Cameras are not allowed in school without the permission of the teacher or the principal.

Fire Alarms, Bomb Threats, and other Threats of Violence

Pulling a fire alarm, calling in a bomb threat or making threats of violence endangers the safety of students and staff. They are very serious offenses and may be grounds for suspension and possible expulsion.

Restraint Policy

According to MGL, Chapter 71, each school is to have trained staff in current restraint techniques. These staff will be called on during crises; however, all staff have a responsibility to protect students when their safety is at risk. Procedures and limitations for restraint are outlined in each office.

SCHOOL SERVICES/SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Special Services

The Stoughton Public Schools provide complete evaluation services - a diagnostic assessment of the student's educational needs. When a student referral is received, parents are immediately notified concerning the need for a full or intermediate evaluation. They are also provided with a description of both processes and a delineation of their rights with a consent form with which to indicate their permission for an evaluation. The student is then evaluated by a team of specialists from the Stoughton Public Schools. Following this evaluation, the team meets with the student's parents to present its findings, to determine what auxiliary services are needed, and to develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). If necessary, specialists from approved facilities are contacted to provide additional specialized diagnostic services. When the plan is approved by the parents, it is immediately implemented.

Building Based Support Team

When a question arises about a student's success in school, teachers may request that the student is discussed by a team of teachers whose job it is to help the teacher provide the best environment for that child. Building Based Support Teams are an integral part of supporting all students, regardless of specific disabilities or services by bringing professionals together to brainstorm, offer suggestions and initiate accommodations to the curriculum or classroom environment. Parents/guardians will be informed when their child is brought up to a BBST meeting.

Services under Section 504

Section 504 is an Act prohibiting discrimination against anyone with a handicap in any program receiving federal financial assistance. The act defines a person with a handicap as anyone who

1. has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, including activities such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working;
2. has a record of such an impairment or;
3. is regarded as having such an impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligations under Section 504, the Stoughton Public Schools recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a handicap will knowingly be permitted within any of the programs and practices of the school system.

The Stoughton Public School System has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and, if the child is determined to be eligible, to afford access to educational services. If the parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the Stoughton Public Schools, she or he has a right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer. If you have any questions about Section 504, please feel free to call your building principal.

Guidance and Counseling

The elementary school guidance counselors work with parents, pupils, and teachers to develop open lines of communication. The purpose of counseling is to clarify personal, social, and academic issues.

Counseling may take place in a one-to-one, small group, or classroom setting. The nature of the information discussed is held in strict confidence. The opportunity to participate in counseling may be initiated by parent, teacher, or pupil. All pupil participation in ongoing guidance programs must be approved by the child's parent(s). However, the counseling staff may be brought in at any time, to help resolve conflicts or help maintain a positive climate in the school.

Testing

Throughout the year, teachers use a variety of tests to assess student progress. Elementary students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 participate in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) testing. Students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 take both Language Arts and Math tests. Students in Grade 5 will also be tested in two other curriculum areas: Science and Technology/ Engineering, and History and Social Science.

General Curriculum

The general curriculum of the Stoughton Elementary Schools follows the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. English/Language Arts, Math, Science/Technology and Engineering, and Social Studies are all taught in ways intended to provide the maximum learning experiences for children. Curriculum guidelines and frameworks are available from your school's principal.

Services and Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Some students with disabilities require specialized instruction and/or supportive services to help them make effective progress in school. These services can include, but are not limited to, speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, specialized instruction, or placement in a special classroom. Parents or teachers may refer students they are concerned about to the Special Education Department. Within five (5) school days of such a referral, a consent form authorizing an evaluation of the student will be forwarded to the parent(s). Upon receipt of the parent(s)' consent, an evaluation will be conducted and a TEAM meeting will be held to determine if the student is eligible for special education services. If the student is found eligible for special education services, the Team will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) identifying the necessary services.

In some cases, the evaluation Team determines that a student with a disability may require only individual accommodations as opposed to specialized instruction and /or related services. Such students are then referred for an evaluation of their eligibility for an individual accommodation plan in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

For more information regarding the services available to students with disabilities please contact the school guidance counselor, school principal, or the Stoughton Public Schools' Administrator of Special Education.

SPECIAL SUBJECTS

Within each of our elementary schools, students participate in five specialty areas. They have a forty-two minute class each week in library, music, art, physical education and computers. In each area, specific skills are taught in coordination with grade level themes and state standards.

Computer Education

The pace and growth of our computer education program is dramatically visible in the accomplishments of our young students. The children benefit from regularly scheduled instructional periods each week as they gain a broad array of skills: keyboarding, word processing, composition, programming, exploring databases, and responsible use of the Internet. Computer learning is also integrated into all areas of the curriculum.

Music Education

The Music Program at the elementary level is divided into two categories, instrumental and vocal. The scope of the instruction extends from classroom to small groups of instrumental lessons and to various performing groups.

Every child is encouraged to participate and to develop his or her musical skill through the multi-faceted program. All areas of instrumental class instruction are provided at no charge through grade five. Woodwinds, brass, and percussion classes begin at the fourth grade level. Students in grades 4 and 5 who are participating in band either rent or purchase their instruments. Recorders are purchased by students in grade 3 at a nominal cost.

Art Education

Art is a natural and necessary part of our daily lives. Art expression promotes the development of the individual. At all levels, opportunities are provided to appreciate many techniques and to experience a variety of media. In the kindergarten, the manipulation and the use of art materials are a major factor in developing readiness skills. Students in grades K-5 receive art instruction weekly with a specialist.

Library Program

The literate elementary school student reads widely beyond the basic reading required in classroom subjects. Magazines, newspapers, and library books are all critical parts of the reading menu for a child.

Each elementary school has a library that contains a large, varied collection of books, periodicals and audiovisual articles. A staff of five library assistants coordinates library services in the five elementary schools.

Students have the opportunity to make use of the library when they meet the library staff on a weekly basis with their class. The library program also offers students time for research or to work on projects.

Physical Education

Physical Education classes in Stoughton Elementary Schools are an integral part of the child's educational experience. Skills, knowledge and attitudes are developed in many areas. The atmosphere in the gym is much like any other class and requires the same type of attention, concentration, cooperation, and 100 percent effort that is expected in other subjects.

Since students do not change clothes for the movement lessons, it is important that on their gym days, they come to school dressed to move. It is important that your child wear comfortable clothes that permit freedom of movement on all playing surfaces. Students must wear sneakers to participate.

OTHER PROGRAMS

Health Education

Health education seeks to protect, promote and improve the health status of students.

A Parent/Daughter Night is held annually, for fifth grade girls, during which time adolescent health information is provided. Parent/Son nights are held in the sixth grade.

Early Childhood Programs

The Stoughton Public Schools offer a variety of services for the children of Stoughton who are 3, 4 and 5 years old.

Preschool: Integrated preschool classes for 3 and 4 year old children are located at the Jones School. Enrollment in an integrated class includes special needs children and peer models. Special needs children are enrolled in the classes based on an evaluation and the recommendation of the Team that determines eligibility of a child for these classes. Peer models are selected for classes through a screening process and a lottery system.

Screenings: If a parent suspects his/her child may have a delay in cognitive, speech/language skills, and/or motor skills, he/she should contact the preschool office to obtain more information on a screening. Screenings are available annually for children 2.9 to 4 years old. Kindergarten children are also screened annually in the areas of readiness, speech/language, motor and play skills. Parents are always notified about their child's screening results.

Special Education Services: Evaluations of children ages 3, 4 and 5, who are referred for testing, will be conducted by the staff of the Special Education Department. Evaluations determine eligibility for services under MGL, Chapter 766 or Federal Section 504.

Other services: The Early Childhood department also offers itinerant special education services, a Therapeutic Learning Center for children with significant delays, and parent workshops. Please call the Assistant Administrator of Special Education, at the Jones School at 781-344-7003 Ext. 7321 with any questions.

Daily Hot Lunch Program

The Stoughton Elementary Schools offer a lunch program to all students each day. Lunches vary from a main menu choice to lunchables, salads and cereals and include milk. Menus are sent home monthly. Milk and/or dessert can be purchased separately. Free and Reduced lunch is available to qualified families. Applications are sent home at the beginning of each year, upon registration or request.

All elementary schools are now operating a computerized tally system with student PIN numbers. Prepaying up to a month at a time is welcome and encouraged to speed up the lunch lines. You can also pay by credit card at www.stoughtonschools.org. Questions can be directed to Edward Gilbert, Director of Food Services at 344-4000 x1051.

REGISTRATION

Children must be five (5) years of age on or before August 31 of the ensuing school year to be admitted to kindergarten.

Children should register in the district where they live. Registration for kindergarten will be conducted in the various districts for two days in March each year. A child may accompany the parent at the time of registration, but it is not necessary.

You must provide the child's birth certificate, immunization record, and two proofs of residency (mortgage or lease statement and utility bill). The school department reserves the right to confirm actual living arrangements by home visits. See appendix E for the Residency Policy.

The hours for registration in March are 9:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M. to 2:00 P.M. at these locations:

H. H. Hansen School	Main Lobby
South School	Main Lobby
West School	Library
J.R. Dawe School	Main Lobby
J.H. Gibbons School	Main Lobby

Grade One Admission

Only children who will be six (6) years of age on or before August 31 will be admitted to grade one on the opening of school in September.

Transfers

New students transferring into the Stoughton Public Schools will be required to submit a transfer card from a certified school for enrollment at the appropriate grade level, and a certificate of immunization, according to School Immunization Law, Chapter 76, Section 15, of the General Laws of Massachusetts.

Parents/guardians must also submit proof of residency including but not limited to rental/ownership agreements, utility bills, notarized affidavits from homeowners. (See Appendix E)

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

School Insurance

Forms for purchasing insurance are sent home with each child early in the school year. If you are interested, fill out the forms then mail them directly to the company in the envelope provided.

Stoughton Parent Advisory Council on Special Education

The Stoughton Parent Advisory Council (PAC) on Special Education is a Chapter 766 mandated organization which includes parents of children who have Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs), teachers, and other interested parties. Monthly support meetings, workshops, a lending library, and newsletters help provide information and support to families and teachers. For membership information, call the Administrator of Special Education (344-7003 ext. 7321).

Birthdays

Different schools and different teachers within them celebrate birthdays in their own individual ways. **Please do not send birthday party invitations to school unless ALL of the children in the class are invited.** We also discourage birthday party conversations at school so that children do not feel left out.

District Curriculum Accommodation Plan

To further meet the needs of all students, school districts across Massachusetts including Stoughton, have developed a plan to help ALL students succeed in school. For more information on this plan, please contact your building principal or assistant superintendent.

HEALTH INFORMATION

In accordance with the Massachusetts General Law 603 CMR 23.06(3), all students' health records will be destroyed within five years of the date a student withdraws from the Stoughton Public School System. The only exception is that the health record of any student who received an immunization in the Stoughton School System will be kept for at least ten years following the end of the calendar year in which the vaccination was administered.

Inspection of Hair for Signs of Head Lice

Children are not routinely screened for head lice in school. If you discover that your child has head lice, please notify the school nurse as soon as possible. The nurse may conduct a check of classrooms if there is an outbreak, and parents will be notified if their child is found to have head lice. The child may return to school after receiving the appropriate treatment and being rechecked by the school nurse.

Vision/Hearing and Height/Weight Screening

All students entering kindergarten are required to show proof of a pre school vision screening examination by their Primary Care Physician. This examination should include screening for stereopsis. Annual examinations for students may include a check of hearing, vision, height and weight. The parents of any child who fails the hearing and vision examinations will be notified. In addition, parents of students in grades 1 and 4 will receive a letter with the student's height, weight, BMI and BMI percentage recorded. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's hearing, vision, height or weight, please call your school nurse. At your request, she will be glad to monitor any child who is under or overweight.

Scoliosis Screening

Scoliosis screening will begin after the winter vacation. This screening is mandated by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for grades five through nine. Notices will be sent to parents before screening begins informing them of the entire screening procedure.

Immunizations

Records are continually inspected so that all children will be immunized according to the requirements and standards set up by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Requirements include diphtheria/tetanus/pertussis, measles/mumps/rubella, polio, hepatitis B, and varicella vaccines. In addition, children entering kindergarten are required to have proof of a lead-screening test. Your school nurse will notify you if your child is due for immunizations.

Physical Examinations

Physical examinations done within the previous calendar year are required for all students entering kindergarten and those entering the Stoughton Public Schools from outside of Massachusetts. This examination must be done by the child's primary care physician and the forms sent to the School Nurse for our health records. In addition, parents of students in Grade 4 are asked to complete an "Interval Health History Form" to update the School Nurse of any medical issues that may have developed.

Mantoux Testing

A policy adopted by the Stoughton School Committee states that any student entering the Stoughton Public Schools from a country deemed to have a high prevalence of tuberculosis (determination made by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health) be tested for evidence of tuberculosis before entering the school system.

Medicines

Medicine of any kind, prescription or over-the-counter, cannot be brought to school by a child. Medicine should be delivered to school in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container by a parent or a responsible adult.

When medicine must be given in school, please contact your school nurse to be advised of the proper procedure. The same procedure will be followed from grades K-12. No over-the-counter medicine will be given in school that does not come from home with a note from the parent. Prescription medicines are given by the nurse or designated person only if they are sent in their properly labeled container and with a note from the parent.

Prescription medication requires the following: 1) signed Medication Order from physician, 2) signed Administration Plan/Parent Consent form, 3) No more than a thirty-day supply of medicine should be delivered to the school.

Additional Health Information

For your child's welfare and for the protection of others, we would like to ask your cooperation in keeping your child home from school if he/she exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- is not feeling well - for example, has a headache, ear ache or stomach ache
- a fever within the last 24 hours
- a sore throat with swollen glands
- other contagious symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, frequent productive cough, thick, nasal discharge or red, draining eyes
- undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions
-

If your child is ill and will not be attending school, please call the school to let them know.

It is important that you keep all emergency information up to date. If you have a new address or telephone number, please notify the school. If you depend on a cell phone, please make sure that the School Nurse has that number so that she may reach you if your child is ill or injured.

If your child is not covered by health insurance, please speak with your School Nurse. She can provide you with information about the Children's Medical Security Plan, a health insurance plan for children under the age of 18.

Appendix A:

Student Computer, LAN and Internet Use Policy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth policies and guidelines for: access to the Stoughton Public School's district computer system; acceptable, safe use of the Internet; and implementation of the requirements of CIPA (the Children's Internet Protection Act).

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

In making decisions regarding access to the school district computer system and to the Internet, the school district considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives. Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. Access to the school district computer system and to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards, and other resources while exchanging messages with people around the world. The school district expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the school district computer system and the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in their use.

III. LIMITED EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

The school district is providing students and employees with access to the school district's computer system, which includes Internet access. The purpose of the system is not to provide students and employees with general access to the Internet. The school district system has a limited educational purpose, which includes use of the system for classroom activities, professional or career development, and limited high-quality, self-discovery activities. Users are expected to use Internet access through the district system to further educational and personal goals consistent with the mission of the school district and school policies. Uses which might be acceptable on a user's personal account on another system may not be acceptable on this limited purpose network.

IV. USE OF SYSTEM IS A PRIVILEGE

The use of the school district system and access to use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. The school district has the right to place reasonable restrictions on the use of equipment, resources and material students and employees access or post through the system. Students and employees are also expected to follow the rules set forth in the district's rules and regulations governing conduct, disciplinary code, and the law in their use of the district's equipment and network. This access has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. All access and rights are privileges granted by the district, and users should expect no privacy rights. Depending on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations, unacceptable use of the school district system or the Internet may result in one or more of the following consequences: suspension or cancellation of use of access privileges; payments for damages and repairs; discipline under other appropriate school district policies or collective bargaining agreements, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion or termination of employment; or civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws.

V. UNACCEPTABLE USES

- A. The following uses of the school district system and Internet resources or accounts are considered unacceptable:
1. Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit material.
 2. Users will not use the school district system to transmit or receive obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually explicit language.
 3. Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute materials that use language or images that are inappropriate to the educational setting or disruptive to the educational process and will not post information or materials that could cause damage or danger of disruption.
 4. Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment or discrimination.
 5. Users will not use the school district system to knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization, or to harass another person, or to engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
 6. Users will not use the school district system to engage in any illegal act or violate any local, state or federal statute or law.
 7. Users will not use the school district system to vandalize, damage or disable the property of another person or organization, will not make deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt equipment, software or system performance by spreading computer viruses or by any other means, will not tamper with, modify or change the school district system software, hardware or wiring or take any action to violate the school district system's security, and will not use the school district system in such a way as to disrupt the use of the system by other users.

8. Users will not use the school district system to gain unauthorized access to information resources or to access another person's materials, information or files without the implied or direct permission of that person.
9. Users will not use the school district system to post private information about another person or to post personal contact information about themselves or other persons including, but not limited to, addresses, telephone numbers, school addresses, work addresses, identification numbers, account numbers, access codes or passwords, and will not repost a message that was sent to the user privately without permission of the person who sent the message.
10. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the school district system or any other system through the school district system, attempt to log in through another person's account, or use computer accounts, access codes or network identification other than those assigned to the user.
11. Users will not use the school district system to violate copyright laws, or usage licensing agreements, or otherwise to use another person's property without the person's prior approval or proper citation, including the downloading or exchanging of pirated software or copying software to or from any school computer, and will not plagiarize works they find on the Internet.
12. Users will not use the school district system for the conduct of a business, for unauthorized commercial purposes or for financial gain unrelated to the mission of the school district. Users will not use the school district system to offer or provide goods or services or for product advertisement. Users will not use the school district system to purchase goods or services for personal use without authorization from the appropriate school district official. Users will not use the school district system for political lobbying.
13. Users will not install, update, or modify software or hardware on any component of the district system without the express written consent of the Administrator of Technology.
14. Students will not download files from sources outside the district without specific permission.

- B. If a user inadvertently accesses unacceptable materials or an unacceptable Internet site, the user shall immediately disclose the inadvertent access to an appropriate school district official. This disclosure may serve as a defense against an allegation that the user has intentionally violated this policy. A user may also in certain rare instances access otherwise unacceptable materials if necessary to complete an assignment and if done with the prior approval of and with appropriate guidance from the appropriate teacher.

VI. CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Use of the school district computer system and use of the Internet shall be consistent with school district policies and the mission of the school district.

VII. LIMITED EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

- A. By authorizing use of the school district system, the school district does not relinquish control over any of the components of the system, materials stored in the system, or contained in files in the system. Users should expect only limited privacy in the contents of personal files on the school district system.
- B. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the school district system may lead to a discovery that a user has violated this policy, another school district policy, or the law.
- C. An individual investigation or search will be conducted if school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school district policy.
- D. Parents have the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their child's files and e-mail files. Parents have the right to request the termination of their child's individual access at any time.

- E. School district employees should be aware that data and other materials in files maintained on the school district system may be subject to review, disclosure or discovery under local, state, or federal law.
- F. The school district will cooperate fully with local, state and federal authorities in any investigation concerning or related to any illegal activities and activities not in compliance with school district policies conducted through the school district system.
- G. In the event there is an allegation that a student has violated the District Acceptable Use Policy, the student will be provided with a written notice of the alleged violation and will be provided with notice and opportunity to be heard in the manner set forth in the district's policies. Disciplinary actions may be taken.
- H. Employee violations of the District Acceptable Use Policy will be handled in accordance with law, School Board Policy or collective bargaining agreement(s), as applicable.

VIII. INTERNET USE AGREEMENT

- A. The proper use of the Internet, and the educational value to be gained from proper Internet use, is the joint responsibility of students, parents and employees of the school district.
- B. This policy requires the permission of and supervision by the school's designated professional staff before a student may use a school account or resource to access the Internet.
- C. The Internet/Acceptable Use Agreement form must be read and signed by the user and the parent or guardian. The form must then be filed at the school office.

IX. System Security Obligations

- A. Users are responsible for the use of their individual access account and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account. Under no conditions should a user provide his/her password to another person.
- B. Attempts to log on to the District's private network or any other network as a system administrator, is prohibited without the express written consent of the Administrator of Educational Technology.
- C. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of violating this or any other Acceptable Use Policy may be denied access to the District's private network.
- D. Users will avoid the inadvertent spread of computer viruses by following the School District virus protection procedures and will not disable or otherwise tamper with district anti-virus software.
- E. Users should immediately notify a teacher or system administrator of any possible security problem.
- F. Students will promptly disclose to their teacher or other appropriate school employee any message received that is inappropriate.

X. CONTENT FILTERING

As required by CIPA and in recognition of the need to establish a safe and appropriate computing environment, the district will use content filtering technology to prevent access, to the degree possible, to objectionable or unsuitable content that might otherwise be accessible via the Internet. The district's content filter will be set to prevent access to: obscene material, child pornography, material harmful to minors, and other material that is deemed locally to be "inappropriate for minors". Filtering technology is not foolproof and the use of filtering technology does not relieve employees and students of their responsibilities under this policy.

XI. LIMITATION ON SCHOOL DISTRICT LIABILITY

Use of the school district system is at the user's own risk. The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The school district will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage or unavailability of data stored on school district diskettes, tapes, hard drives or servers, or for delays or changes in or interruptions of service or mis-deliveries or non-deliveries of information or materials, regardless of the cause. The school district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of any advice or information obtained through or stored on the school district system. The school district will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the school district system or the Internet.

XII. USER NOTIFICATION

- A. All users shall be notified of the school district policies relating to Internet use.
- B. This notification shall include the following:
 - 1. Notification that Internet use is subject to compliance with school district policies.
 - 2. Disclaimers limiting the school district's liability relative to:
 - a. Information stored on school district diskettes, hard drives or servers.
 - b. Information retrieved through school district computers, networks or online resources.
 - c. Personal property used to access school district computers, networks or online resources.
 - d. Unauthorized financial obligations resulting from use of school district resources/accounts to access the Internet.
 - 3. A description of the privacy rights and limitations of school sponsored/managed Internet accounts.
 - 4. Notification that, even though the school district may use technical means to limit student Internet access, these limits do not provide a foolproof means for enforcing the provisions of this acceptable use policy.

5. Notification that goods and services can be purchased over the Internet that could potentially result in unwanted financial obligations and that any financial obligation incurred by a user through the Internet is the sole responsibility of the user or, in the case of a minor, the minor's parents.
6. Notification that should the user violate the school district's acceptable use policy, the user's access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.
7. Notification that all provisions of the acceptable use policy are subordinate to local, state and federal laws.

XIII. PARENT RESPONSIBILITY; NOTIFICATION OF STUDENT INTERNET USE

- A. Outside of school, parents bear responsibility for the same guidance of Internet use as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, radio, movies and other possibly offensive media. Parents are responsible for monitoring their student's use of the school district system and of the Internet if the student is accessing the school district system from home or a remote location.
- B. Parents will be notified that their students will be using school district resources/accounts to access the Internet and that the school district will provide parents the option to request alternative activities not requiring Internet access. This notification should include:
 1. A copy of the user notification form provided to the student user.
 2. A description of parent/guardian responsibilities.
 3. A statement that the Internet Use Agreement must be signed by the user, the parent or guardian, and a supervising teacher prior to use by the student.
 4. A statement that the school district's acceptable use policy is available for parental review.

XIV. ADMINISTRATION

1. The administrator of educational technology has the responsibility and authority for the development, publication, implementation and ongoing administration and enforcement of the processes and techniques required to protect the Stoughton Public School District's computer systems from unauthorized access, loss or misuse.
2. School principals have the responsibility to establish a system to ensure adequate supervision of students using the system and to maintain executed user agreements for students. They are also responsible for interpreting and enforcing this policy at the local level.
3. Local management has the responsibility to interpret and enforce this policy for employees including maintaining executed user agreements.

XV. IMPLEMENTATION; POLICY REVIEW

- A.** The school district administration may develop appropriate guidelines and procedures necessary to implement this policy for submission to the school committee for approval. Upon approval by the school committee, such guidelines and procedures shall be an addendum to this policy.
- B.** The administration shall revise the student and parent notifications, if necessary, to reflect the adoption of these guidelines and procedures.
- C.** The school district's Internet policies and procedures are available for review by all parents, guardians, staff, and members of the community.
- D.** Because of the rapid changes in the development of the Internet, the school committee shall conduct an annual review of this policy.

SAMPLE DOCUMENT: INTERNET USE AGREEMENT**USER**

I have read and do understand the school district policies relating to acceptable use of the school district computer system and the Internet and agree to abide by them. I further understand that any violation of the policies above is unethical and may constitute a violation of law. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

User's Full Name (please print):

User Signature:

Date:

PARENT OR GUARDIAN (required when users are minors)

As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read the school district policies relating to acceptable use of the school district computer system and the Internet. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes. However, I also recognize it is impossible for the school district to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold the school district or its employees or agents responsible for materials acquired on the Internet. I hereby give permission for my child to use the district system and to access the Internet. I certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Parent or Guardian's Name (please print):

Parent or Guardian's Signature:

Appendix B:

PROCEDURE FOR STUDENTS WITH IDENTIFIED DISABILITIES TO ATTEND AND TO PARTICIPATE IN DISTRICT PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, AND SERVICES, INCLUDING NON-ACADEMIC AND EXTRACURRICULAR

All students of the Stoughton Public Schools (District) with identified disabilities, including students in out-of-district placements made by the District, but whose home school is in the District, except in cases described below, may attend and participate in all programs, activities, and services, including non-academic and extracurricular (programs), (1) that the District sponsors; (2) to which the District provides substantial assistance; or (3) with whom the District has a contractual relationship, such as with the Private Industry Council (PIC). Some students are entitled to participate in programs, in order to receive a free appropriate public education (also known as a "FAPE"). For other students, the exceptions are that the District may limit the attendance and participation of a student with disabilities in such programs if the student's placement team determines that:

- a. modification[s] to such programs to allow the student to attend and to participate would fundamentally alter the nature of the program, and,
- b. with or without an appropriate modification to such programs, the student's attendance and participation would reasonably pose a risk of harm to the student or to others,
- c. modification(s) would create an undue financial hardship for the District.

The District will inform parents/guardians (parents) through its usual notices (such as school bulletin boards, calendars, newsletters, newspapers, flyers, and web site) and through local cable television stations of such programs in a manner similar to the notice that it provides to parents of students without disabilities. Once the District provides timely and adequate notice of such programs, the parent's notification to the District of the student's desire to attend/to participate shall not be more burdensome than that required of the parent whose child does not have disabilities. However, the District may require a parent of a student with disabilities to provide advance notice to the District of the student's desire to attend/to participate because of the possibility that the District may be required to make appropriate modifications.

Please direct inquiries about this procedure to

Out-of-District Administrator
Stoughton Public Schools
Special Education Department
137 Walnut Street (Edwin A. Jones Elementary School)
Stoughton, MA 02072
telephone 781.344.7003 Ext. 321 fax 781.341.1952

Appendix C:

Model Notification of Rights under FERPA For Elementary and Secondary Schools

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are the following:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate.

Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the School principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

(3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

[Optional] Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the *School District* to comply with the requirements FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are as follows:

Family Policy Compliance Office
 U.S. Department of Education
 400 Maryland Avenue, SW
 Washington, DC 20202- 4605

[NOTE: In addition, a school may want to include its directory information public notice, as required by § 99.37 of the regulations, with its annual notification of rights under FERPA.]

Model Notification of Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- *Consent* before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education:
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
 3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
 8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

- *Receive* notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following:
 1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screening, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
 3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

- *Inspect*, upon request and before administration or use the following:
 1. Protected information surveys of students;
 2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
 3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

Stoughton will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. Stoughton will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. Stoughton will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. Stoughton will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by the Education Department.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with the following:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

Appendix D

Residency Policy

It is the policy of the Stoughton School Committee that proof of residence must be established by the student and/or his/her parent/guardian in accordance with the following criteria:

New residents will be required to submit two or more of the following as proof of residence:

1. A deed or lease agreement for property in Stoughton
2. A mortgage statement verifying the owner's name and address
3. A rent receipt which includes the name and address of the landlord
4. A residential utility and/or telephone statement
5. Other pertinent information as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent of Schools

Students living with persons other than their parents/guardians will be required to have the persons they are living with submit the following as proof of residence:

1. Court documentation of guardianship;
2. Documentation that the student is maintaining permanent residency with the person(s) indicated at the given address
3. Students with unusual circumstances may appeal to the school committee and all decisions are final.

Students whose residency changes within the community are also required to show proof of residence.

The school department reserves the right to confirm actual living arrangements by home visits. The purpose of such visits will be to determine whether or not the student/family resides at the indicated address. The parent/guardian will be asked to sign the **Residency Statement** detailed within this policy.

In addition, any person who falsely claims that a student lives with them, or the parents of that student, will be required to pay the full cost of the student's tuition to the Stoughton Public Schools for the period of their enrollment, as well as any necessary legal fees. In addition to incurring civil liabilities, any person who knowingly registers or attempts to register a student known by that person to be in violation of the residency requirement will (or may) be referred to the proper agency for criminal prosecution.

The school committee has divided the elementary school attendance areas by geography. As of the 2008-2009 school year, it is necessary for out-of-district students to attend the neighborhood school within their district.

An anonymous Residency Tip Line is available for families, staff and students to report possible residency violations. (781-297-1050) People may also report residency violations to: the building principal, central administration, Administrator of Special Education and athletic director.

Each of these individuals will be responsible for reporting the alleged violation, in writing, to the superintendent. The superintendent will inform the school committee, in writing, of all violations.

Southeastern Regional Technical High School, Norfolk County Agricultural School and the Foxboro Charter School will be notified upon adoption of Residency Policy, as well as receive any future updates/revisions.

This Residency Policy will be included in all Parent/Student Handbooks, as well as distributed to all parents/guardians upon registering a new student in the Stoughton Public Schools.

Adopted by the School Committee: May 22, 2007

Appendix E

Gang and Gang-Related Activities Policy

The Stoughton School Committee does not support or condone gang membership or gang activity. The superintendent/designee shall regularly consult with law enforcement officials to identify gang-related items, symbols and behaviors, and provide each principal with this information.

No student shall commit any act that furthers gangs or gang-related activities. A gang is any ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of criminal acts, or the purposeful violation of any policy, and having a common name or common identifying sign, colors or symbols. Conduct prohibited by this policy includes:

- A. Wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying, or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, visible tattoos and body markings, or other items, or being in possession of literature that shows affiliation with a gang, or is evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang or that promotes gang affiliation;
- B. Communicating either verbally or non-verbally (gestures, handshakes, slogans, drawings, etc.), to convey membership affiliation in any gang or that promotes gang affiliation;
- C. Tagging, or otherwise defacing school or personal property with gang or gang-related symbols or slogans;
- D. Requiring payment of protection, money or insurance, or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person related to gang activity;
- E. Inciting other students to intimidate or to act with physical violence upon any other person related to gang activity;
- F. Soliciting others for gang membership;

Appendix F

Information for Homeless Families and Students

The Stoughton Public Schools, under the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, provide safeguards for all homeless children. Children and youths who “lack a *fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence*” are considered homeless for educational purposes. This includes those who:

- are “doubled up”- sharing the housing of friends or relatives due to the loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason;
- are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- are living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- are abandoned in hospitals;
- are awaiting foster care placement;
- have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;
- are migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above;
- are *unaccompanied youths*- adolescents who are not in the physical custody of their parents.

To the extent feasible, homeless students are encouraged to remain at their school of origin, unless it is against the wishes of the parent, guardian or student. A student who becomes homeless has the right to attend:

- a) their school of origin – either the school the student was attending prior to the loss of permanent housing or the last school the student attended.
– OR –
- b) their local school – any public school that students living in the same attendance area have the right to attend.

Homeless students will be enrolled immediately, even if regularly required documentation is missing. Homeless students will not be kept out of school even if they are missing:

- immunization records
- proof of residency
- proof of guardianship
- previous academic records
- medical records
- social security card

The Stoughton Public Schools will assume responsibility for providing a homeless student(s) with transportation to his / her school of origin, if it is feasible for the student to stay in the school of origin and the parent or guardian request it. This provision applies as follows:

- a) If the student continues to live in the district where the school of origin is located, the district will provide or arrange for transportation.
- b) If the student moves outside of the district but wishes to continue attending the school of origin, the Stoughton Public Schools and the district where the student resides will work out a means of apportioning cost and the responsibility for transportation.
- c) Students who transfer to a school located in the attendance area of their temporary residence will receive comparable transportation services to any other student residing in the district.

Students are allowed to remain in their school of origin for the duration of their homelessness, or if they secure permanent housing, for the remainder of the school year.

Immediate assistance is available at each school from the Principal and the Guidance Department.

Additional assistance is available from the Stoughton Public School's Assistant Superintendent, who acts as the District's Homeless Liaison, at (781) 344 – 4000 x 1229.

The following lines have been printed in many places. Some truths are worthy of repetitions.

CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

If a child lives with criticism,
He learns to condemn.
If a child lives with hostility,
He learns to fight.
If a child lives with ridicule,
He learns to be shy.
If a child lives with shame,
He learns to feel guilty.
If a child lives with tolerance,
He learns to be patient.
If a child lives with encouragement,
He learns confidence.
If a child lives with praise,
He learns to appreciate.
If a child lives with fairness,
He learns justice.
If a child lives with security,
He learns to have faith.
If a child lives with approval,
He learns to like himself.
If a child lives with acceptance and friendship,
He learns to find love in the world.

Dorothy Law Nolte

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