

## STUDENTS

## STUDENT BEHAVIOR

No society can endure without reasonable rules and regulations governing the conduct of the members of that society. Respect for the rights of others mandates that there will be adherence to reasonable rules and regulations and that for the violations of such rules and regulations, consequences and penalties may be imposed.

In all instances, students will be expected to conduct themselves in keeping with their level of maturity. Positive behavior is based on the respect for one's self and for the worth and human dignity of others. Development of such positive behavior in students is the dual function of the home and school. All employees will be expected to share the responsibility for supervising the behavior of students.

The North Reading School Committee directs the Superintendent to develop a Student Behavior Code and a Violations of Behavior Code and publish such Codes in student handbooks.

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## STUDENT BEHAVIOR CODE

The North Reading School Committee establishes the following Code of Student Behavior:

### **1. Disruption of School**

No student shall intentionally or recklessly cause the substantial and material disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process or function of the school. Neither shall students engage in such conduct with the deliberate intention of causing the substantial and material disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process or function of the school if such a disruption or obstruction is reasonably certain to result. Neither shall a student urge other students to engage in such conduct if a substantial and material disruption or obstruction is reasonably certain to result.

### **2. Physical Abuse of Students, School Employees, or Persons not Employed by the School**

A student shall not intentionally or recklessly cause or attempt to cause physical injury or intentionally behave in such a way as to cause physical injury to any student, school employees, or person not employed by the school, either on the school grounds or during a school activity, function or event off school grounds. Students who violate this Code may be subject to expulsion under M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H.

### **3. Damage To, Destruction of, or Theft of School Property and/or Private Property**

A student shall not intentionally or recklessly cause or attempt to cause substantial damage to school property, or steal or attempt to steal school property. Neither shall a student intentionally or recklessly cause or attempt to cause substantial damage to private property or steal or attempt to steal private property either on school grounds or during a school activity, function or event off school grounds.

### **4. Narcotics, Alcoholic Beverages and Stimulant Drugs**

A student shall not unlawfully manufacture or possess, use, distribute, dispense, or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage or any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, any other controlled substance (as defined in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 94C) or intoxicant of any kind on school grounds at any time or off the school grounds at any school activity, function or event. Use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription for the user from a registered physician or nurse practitioner shall not be considered a violation of the regulation. Students who violate this Code may be subject to expulsion under M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H.

### **5. A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes, steroids, or any controlled substance. The School Committee prohibits the use or consumption by students of such products on school property or at any school function.**

### **6. A student shall not repeatedly fail to comply with directions of principals, teachers or other authorized school personnel during any period of time when he is properly under the authority of school personnel.**

7. Violations of individual school regulations shall be considered violations of this Code and the student(s) allegedly involved may be suspended or expelled under provisions of **Violations of Code**.

## **VIOLATIONS OF CODE**

### **Teacher's Role**

Teachers shall make every effort to resolve discipline problems as fully as possible within their own classrooms or other areas of responsibility. A teacher may refer a student to the school office when an alleged violation of the rules contained in the Code has occurred or where repeated problems of a less severe nature have occurred and where, despite the personal efforts of the teacher(s) involved, the alleged misconduct has not been satisfactorily corrected.

### **Administrator's Role**

Alleged misconduct shall be dealt with by the administration whenever a teacher considers a problem of classroom discipline to be so serious as to warrant the administration's attention, or whenever the alleged misconduct constitutes a violation of the rules that govern serious misconduct, or whenever the administration deems it advisable that he/she personally deal with the misconduct.

### **Investigation**

In dealing with an alleged misconduct, the principal or the principal's designee shall investigate the incident. The student shall be offered the opportunity to raise any defense he/she thinks relevant and shall be permitted, at his/her option, to submit a written statement of the facts relating to the alleged misconduct.

## **DISCIPLINARY DUE PROCESS**

### **Short Term Disciplinary Sanctions:**

Except where circumstances require the student's immediate removal from the school environment, 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 disciplinary violation 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 in writing.

### **Long Term Disciplinary Sanctions:**

Except where circumstances require the student's immediate removal from the school environment, 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 private expense) and may examine and present witnesses and documentary evidence. Following this hearing, the hearing officer (principal/school committee) will issue a written decision.

### **Appeals:**

The parent(s)/guardian(s)/student(s) will have the right to appeal any decision by the Principal to impose a long-term exclusion from school. Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. c.71, §37H, the parent(s)/guardian(s)/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 parent(s)/guardian(s)/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 parent(s)/guardian(s)/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. Within five (5) school days of any disciplinary appeal hearing, the reviewing hearing officer (superintendent/school committee) will render a written decision on the student's appeal.

## **POWER TO SUSPEND**

### **Short Term Suspension:**

The Principal shall have the authority to impose a suspension of ten (10) school days or less for violations of the Student Behavior Code or for repeated misconduct of a less severe nature that has created a substantial disruption of the educational process. The student shall be provided with informal due process prior to the imposition of any such short-term suspension.

### **Long-term Suspension and Expulsion:**

The Principal shall have the authority to suspend students in excess of ten (10) consecutive school days for egregious violations of the Student Behavior Code. In such circumstances, the Principal may, in addition to imposing a long-term suspension, recommend the student for permanent expulsion by the School Committee in accordance with M.G.L. c.76, §16 and §17. The student shall be provided with due process prior to the imposition of any such long-term suspension in accordance with M.G.L. c.71, §37H.

The Principal shall have the authority to permanently expel a student from the North Reading Public Schools for violations involving the use or possession of a dangerous weapon, the possession of a controlled substance on school grounds or at school-sponsored events, or for committing an assault upon a school staff person. The student shall be provided with due process prior to the imposition of an expulsion in accordance with M.G.L. c.71, §37H.

The Principal shall have the authority to long term suspend a student who has been charged with a felony upon a finding that the student's presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The Principal shall further have the authority to permanently expel a student who has been found guilty of, or who has admitted guilt in court, to a felony charge upon a finding that the student's presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall be provided with due process prior to the imposition of an expulsion in accordance with M.G.L. c.71, §37H1/2.

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