



North River Collaborative

Learning Center Programs Student Handbook



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Kate Stevens, Program Coordinator**

Welcome

Welcome to the North River Collaborative Learning Center programs. This handbook has been prepared for the convenience and use of Learning Center students and their parents. The information contained in this handbook will help you gain a deeper understanding of policies related to state and federal guidelines as well as those that are specific to the Learning Center programs. In the Learning Centers, a highly trained and skilled staff of teachers, therapists, paraprofessionals and support personnel offer programming designed to meet the individual needs of each student. Our programs emphasize sensory stimulation, gross and fine motor development, acquisition of self help skills, communication training, socialization, academic skills based on Massachusetts State Standards, and vocational skill development. Throughout this educational and therapeutic process, we recognize that parent involvement is critical to maximize student learning, and we are committed to creating a partnership with families that is supportive, cooperative, and nurturing.

If you need this booklet translated, please contact the main office of your child's school.

Portuguese / Portugues

Se voce necessitar este livreto traduzido, ontate por favor o escritorio principal da escola da sua crianca.

Spanish / Espanol

Si usted necesita esta librete traducido, intre in contacto con por favor la officinal principal de la escuela de su nino.

French / Francais

Si vous avez bsdoin de ce livret traduit, entrez en contact avec svp le bureau principal de votre enfant.

German / Deutsch

Wenn Sie diese ubersetzie Broschure benotigen, treten Sie Bitte mit dem Haupiburo der Schule Ihres Kindes in Verbindung.

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NORTH RIVER COLLABORATIVE
Mission/Vision/Guiding Beliefs

Mission Statement	North River Collaborative cooperatively develops and delivers quality and cost effective programs and services for students, school districts, partner organizations, and communities.
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Guiding Beliefs

We believe that---

1. programs, services and facilities should be of the highest quality and responsive to the changing needs of member districts.
2. all students should be provided with the opportunity and support to reach their potential for academic achievement and independent living.
3. all students should be challenged to learn in a caring, inclusive and flexible environment that appreciates diversity, values life-long learning and prepares students to be successful citizens.
4. high quality professional development combined with educator evaluation is essential for improving educational practice and maximizing student achievement.
5. supporting the social and emotional well-being of our students is essential.
6. through collegiality and shared commitment, we accomplish more collectively than separately.
7. to facilitate the educational process, we need to support families.
8. a variety of opinions will stimulate innovative and creative ideas leading to effective solutions.
9. student assessment and program evaluation are essential for continuous improvement.

Vision Statement	North River Collaborative (NRC) provides innovative, flexible and diverse educational programs and services that engage students in participatory learning. Using state of the art technology, NRC provides educators and districts with the resources to increase student achievement and with the opportunities to collaborate.
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STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

This student handbook has been prepared to acquaint you with the Learning Center programs within the North River Educational Collaborative.

The North River Collaborative enjoys a unique position in the community. A Collaborative is an extension of the participating school committees and formed to complement, strengthen and increase educational opportunities for children. It is devoted to providing services to children with special needs, but also offers other types of educational services such as vocational and occupational education.

At the North River Collaborative, the administration and staff place a strong emphasis upon the individual student and endeavor to provide a learning environment which will stimulate the student's own determination to fulfill his or her capabilities. We believe that each student should be recognized as a person with individual needs, interests, and abilities and that each student should be provided with a stimulating environment and learning experiences.

In addition, we believe that every student must be provided equal opportunity, without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, or disability to obtain an education within his or her personal needs, interests and abilities, to learn citizenship and democracy, and to develop intellectually, socially and physically.

DISCLAIMER

The laws, policies, and school rules in this handbook are intended to ensure the safe, orderly, and educationally sound operation of the Learning Center programs. In addition to these written provisions, there may be times when, to further ensure the safe, orderly, and educationally sound operation of the school, the North River Collaborative may enforce a standard of conduct upon students that furthers this end. Furthermore, the school administration has the right to enforce any law, ordinance or Board policy not written in this handbook. The passage of any new laws supersedes current rules.

ATTENDANCE

Students should maintain regular and consistent school attendance. If your child is absent from school:

- Please contact the program your child attends and the transportation provider
- If your child is transported by North River Collaborative Transportation, please contact Ann Terrill at 781-878-6056 ext. 160
- Please note that you may receive follow-up telephone calls from program staff to inquire about your child's health status
- If your child is absent for more than 5 consecutive school days, a doctor's note will be required prior to your child returning to school
- If your child has been hospitalized, a doctor's note will be required prior to your child returning to school

Student attendance records are shared with the student's sending district each month.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Please refer to the Arrival/Dismissal Addendum for specific program times. A fifteen minute window is allowed in order for students to safely arrive and dismiss from school without interference to instructional learning time. For parents who transport their child, program staff and parent/guardian will establish a location at the school for arrival/dismissal pick-up and drop-off.

If a student requires early dismissal, please notify the teacher through the home/school notebook, via telephone or other pre-arranged method of communication (eg. email). Students may be dismissed due to illness that is diagnosed by the program nurse, in accordance with Department of Public Health regulations. Should a student require early dismissal due to illness, it is the parent's responsibility to pick up the student within a reasonable timeframe, and also inform the transportation company. Should a student be experiencing behavioral difficulties near dismissal time, NRC staff will determine if the student can ride safely with their regular transportation provider. A family member (or other emergency contact) may be called to pick up the student if it is determined that the student poses a safety risk to themselves or others.

NON-DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT POLICY AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The North River Collaborative has a commitment to maintaining a workplace and educational environment where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination such as harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, military service, gender identity or expression, pregnancy and pregnancy-related medical conditions are not tolerated. Discrimination, including harassment, is contrary to the mission of the North River Collaborative and its commitment to equal opportunity in education.

The North River Collaborative does not discriminate against students, parents, employees, or the general public. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to the North River Collaborative, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of the North River Collaborative on account of race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, religion, national origin, pregnancy or pregnancy-related medical condition, disability, or sexual orientation (M.G.L. c. 76 §5). Additionally, the North River Collaborative does not tolerate harassment based upon race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, religion, national origin, pregnancy or pregnancy-related medical condition, disability, or sexual orientation (603 CMR 26.08).

For purposes of this policy and procedure, "school" includes school-sponsored events, trips, sports events, similar events connected with school or employment. Any retaliation against an individual who has complained about discrimination, including harassment, or any retaliation against any individual who has cooperated with an investigation of a discrimination, harassment, or retaliation complaint, is also unlawful and will not be tolerated.

The North River Collaborative takes allegations of discrimination, including harassment, seriously and will respond promptly to complaints. Where it is determined that conduct that violates the law and this policy has occurred, the North River Collaborative will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose corrective action as necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

“Discrimination” includes conduct that excludes a person from participation in, denies an individual the benefits of, or otherwise subjects an individual to different treatment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, military service, gender identity or expression, pregnancy and pregnancy-related medical conditions, or any other classification protected by law. Harassing conduct involving these bases can be a form of discrimination.

"Harassment" is defined as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on: race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, military service, gender identity or expression, pregnancy and pregnancy-related medical conditions. Harassment is prohibited by the North River Collaborative and violates the law.

Examples of harassment include:

- Display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading to a person or group based upon the criteria listed above.
- Verbal abuse or insults about, directed at, or made in the presence of an individual or group described above because of one of the criteria listed above.
- Any action or speech that contributes to, promotes, or results in a hostile or discriminatory environment to an individual or group described above.
- Any action or speech that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent that it either (i) interferes with or limits the ability of an individual or group (as described above) to participate in or benefit from a school program or activity of the North River Collaborative; or (ii) creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

Many forms of harassment have been recognized as violations of the civil rights laws (including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the ADA, Title VI, Title IX and state statutes like M.G.L. 151C) by federal courts, state courts, the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination.

"Sexual harassment" is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to or rejection of such advances, requests, or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of employment, academic standing, school-related opportunities, or as a basis for employment decisions.
- Such advances, requests, or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive work or educational environment.

While it is not possible to list all circumstances that may be considered sexual harassment, the following are examples of conduct that violate the law and policy and which, if severe and pervasive, constitute sexual harassment. In each case, such a determination will depend upon the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, whether they involve physical touching or not.
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments.
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or verbal references to sexual conduct, comments about an individual's body, comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess.
- Discussions of one's own sexual activities or inquiries into others' sexual experiences.
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or cartoons.

The definitions of discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment are broad. In addition to the above examples, other unwelcome conduct, whether intended or not, that has the effect of creating a school environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating may constitute discrimination, harassment, and/or sexual harassment.

Below, you will find various Civil Rights laws that govern the prohibition of discrimination and harassment. The complaint procedure for reporting complaints of discrimination and harassment based on these laws can be found below:

Various Civil Rights Laws:

Title II: *Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990*

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of educational programming and activities.

Title VI: *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial or benefits based on race, color, and national origin.

Title IX: *Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972*

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits in educational programs based on sex. In accordance with the requirements of Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the North River Collaborative hereby makes notice that it does not discriminate in any educational programs or activities or in employment therein.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on disability. Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provides that no otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States of America shall solely, by reason of his or her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. All staff members are required to ensure that we are in compliance with this law and are also required to report any violation or non-compliance issues.

MGL, Ch. 76, Section 5: *Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 5 (Commonly known as Chapter 622)*

Prohibits discrimination in all public schools on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion and sexual orientation. The law reads as follows: "No person shall be excluded from, or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, gender, religion, disability, national origin or sexual orientation." This law makes it clear that all aspects of public school education must be fully open and available to members of both sexes and of minority groups. No school may exclude a child from that public school on account of race, color, sex, religion or national origin of such child. On June 24, 1975, the Massachusetts Board of Education approved regulations for Chapter 622. These regulations address five areas of school policy: school admissions, admission to courses of study, guidance, course content, and extra-curricular and athletic activities.

Complaint Procedure: Reporting Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment

If any North River Collaborative student, parent, or employee believes, in good faith, that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment or any other form of harassment or discrimination described above, the individual has a right to file a complaint with the North River Collaborative. This may be done informally or formally, as described below.

Teachers or staff members who observe or receive reports of incidents of harassment or discrimination involving students shall report such incidents immediately to the student's Principal/Program Coordinator. Teachers or staff members aware of harassment or discrimination involving any employee shall report such incidents to the Principal/Program Coordinator or the Collaborative's Civil Rights Coordinator listed below.

Please note that while these procedures relate to the North River Collaborative's policy of promoting an educational and workplace setting free from discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, as detailed further in this policy, these procedures are not designed nor intended to limit the North River Collaborative's authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which the North River Collaborative deems unacceptable.

Complaint Procedures

i. Contacts

Clarice Doliber- North River Collaborative Civil Rights Coordinator for Title VI (race, color, national origin); Title IX (sex); Section 504 (disability); Title II of the ADA (disability); Religion, Sexual Orientation and Age is the Assistant Executive Director- 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370 (781) 878-6056. Ext. 154

Principal or Program Coordinators:

North River School Principal/Program Coordinator- 525 Beech Street, Rockland, MA 02301 (781) 871-8320

Independence Academy Principal/Program Coordinator- 460R Belmont Street, Brockton, MA 02301 (508) 510-4091

Learning Centers Program Coordinator- 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370 (781) 878-6056

Transportation Director- 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370 (781) 878-6056

Students, parents, or employees who wish to initiate the formal complaint process may put their complaint in writing to the building Principal or Program Coordinator or the North River Collaborative Civil Rights Coordinator. Any Principal or Program Coordinator receiving such a complaint shall immediately forward the complaint to the Civil Rights Coordinator listed above, who will then begin the formal procedure described below.

Any teacher or other employee who receives a formal complaint of discrimination or harassment shall immediately forward the complaint to the building Principal or Program Coordinator or Civil Rights Coordinator. Any Principal or Program Coordinator receiving such a complaint shall immediately forward the complaint to the Civil Rights Coordinator listed above, who will begin the formal procedure described below.

The Civil Rights Coordinator shall handle the investigation of a formal complaint or oversee the investigation of a formal complaint unless the Executive Director chooses to investigate the complaint or designates another person to investigate it on his/her behalf. Any complaint about an employee who holds a supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that supervisor's authority. Any complaint about the Executive Director should be submitted to the chairperson of the Board, who should consult with legal counsel concerning the handling and investigation of the complaint.

ii. Disciplinary Action

If it is determined that harassment or discrimination has occurred by a student or employee, then disciplinary action may be taken appropriate to the circumstances regardless if it is handled through the informal or formal resolution process. Such action may include consequences up to and including termination of employment for staff and up to and including suspension or expulsion for students.

iii. Internal Complaint Procedure

1. Informal Resolution of Discrimination and Harassment Complaints

Before initiating the formal procedure, the student/parent/employee may wish, if possible, to resolve the complaint on an informal basis through discussion.

A student or parent can discuss the issue with the building Principal or Program Coordinator. An employee can discuss the issue with his/her Principal or Program Coordinator.

The person receiving the complaint shall attempt, within his/her authority, to work with the individual to resolve the issue fairly and expeditiously within ten (10) working days of receiving the complaint. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution from the informal process, or if he/she does not choose informal resolution, then he/she can begin the formal complaint procedure described below.¹

Any resolution or disciplinary action taken by a Principal or Program Coordinator as a result of an investigation or discussion during the informal resolution process should be put to writing and forwarded to the Civil Rights Coordinator.

2. Formal Resolution of Discrimination and Harassment Concerns:

A student, parent, or employee who is not satisfied with the informal resolution process or who chooses not to participate in the informal resolution process may initiate the formal complaint procedure at any time by putting the complaint to the Principal/Program Coordinator or Civil Rights Coordinator. An employee, at the request of the student, may put the complaint in writing for the student. Principals or

¹ Informal resolution may not be appropriate in all cases, including but not limited to more severe or egregious allegations of discrimination or harassment.

Program Coordinators who receive written formal complaints should immediately forward the complaint to the District Civil Rights Coordinator.

a. What the complaint should include

The student/parent/employee's complaint should include: the name of the individual making the complaint, the name of the individual aggrieved, the name of the individual(s) accused of committing the harassing or discriminatory practice, the location of the school/department where the alleged discriminatory practice occurred, the basis for the complaint, witnesses (if any) and the corrective action the student/parent/employee is seeking.

If the complaint does not contain this information, the Principal/Program Coordinator or District Civil Rights Coordinator will ask the complainant for this information.

b. When to file a complaint

Efforts should be made to file such complaint within twenty (20) calendar days after the alleged discriminatory practice occurred in order for an expeditious investigation to be conducted, unless extenuating circumstances exist. However, the North River Collaborative will investigate any complaint no matter when it is filed.

c. What will happen after the complaint is filed

Promptly after receiving the complaint, the Civil Rights Coordinator or designee, as permitted pursuant to Section III(B)(i) of this section) will conduct the necessary investigation, including making good faith efforts to gather all relevant evidence for consideration. In the course of his/her investigation, the Civil Rights Coordinator or designee shall contact those individuals that have been referred to as having pertinent information related to the complaint. This process will generally include, at a minimum, contacting the complainant; and the person against whom the complaint was filed and/or the appropriate authority involved; interviewing witnesses; and considering relevant documentation. During this process, complainants will have the opportunity to present witnesses and other relevant evidence to the Civil Rights Coordinator or designee conducting the investigation.

The Civil Rights Coordinator or designee should use appropriate interim measures during the investigation of a complaint to ensure that a complainant is free from discrimination and/or harassment during the pending investigation.

Barring extenuating circumstances, the Civil Rights Coordinator or designee, will complete the investigation as soon as practicable and normally not later than thirty (30) working days. When more than thirty (30) working days is required for the investigation, the Civil Rights Coordinator or designee shall inform the complainant that the investigation is still ongoing.

After completing the formal investigation of the complaint, the Civil Rights Coordinator or designee shall make a decision on the complaint and shall inform the complainant and the person(s) against whom the complaint was made of the results of the investigation in writing. In the case of a student who is found to have violated this policy, the Civil Rights Coordinator or designee will take appropriate action. In the case of an employee who is found to have violated this policy, the Civil Rights Coordinator or designee may refer the matter to the Principal/Program Coordinator or Executive Director for appropriate action. In all cases, if the Principal/Program Coordinator is the designee, then he/she can make a decision on the complaint, inform the complainant and the person(s) against whom the complaint was made of the results in writing, and take appropriate action if necessary provided they first notify the Civil Rights Coordinator once the complaint is made.

d. What you can do if you are not satisfied with the outcome of the formal complaint procedure

If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, he/she can appeal this finding to the Executive Director within five working days.

The Executive Director will review the information considered by the Civil Rights Coordinator or designee, collect any additional information he/she believes is necessary to make an informed decision and shall issue a written decision to the complainant and the person against whom the complaint was made. Again, strict timelines cannot be set for conducting the investigation because each set of circumstances is different. However, the Executive Director will make sure that the complaint is handled as quickly as feasible and will strive to complete the investigation within ten (10) working days.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Executive Director's decision, or if he/she does not choose either of the internal resolution processes, he/she may follow the external complaint procedure described below.

Contact information for the Executive Director is: 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370 (781) 878-6056.

North River Collaborative conducts its programs and operations in conformity with Title VI, Title IX, G.L. c. 76, sect. 5, 603 CMR 26.08, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is the policy of the Collaborative not to discriminate in any way on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability in its educational activities. This policy also ensures that students should be free from retaliation and/or harassment based upon any of the foregoing attributes. Anyone having a complaint alleging a violation of any anti-discrimination laws or regulations referenced above, including the proscription against sexual harassment, should immediately bring the complaint to the attention of the administration of the Collaborative, or some other trusted staff member. Any school personnel who receive a complaint of harassment or discrimination must immediately relay that complaint to the Assistant Executive Director, at 781-878-6056, who is the person designated by the North River Collaborative to coordinate the Collaborative's efforts to comply with this anti-discrimination policy. The Assistant Executive Director will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation into the charges. In the event that the charges are substantiated, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action. Please refer to addendum for Non-Discrimination Policy and Grievance Procedure.

BEHAVIORAL PROTOCOLS

In accordance with state and federal special education and civil rights laws, provisions are required for students who have been found by an evaluation TEAM to be eligible for special education and whose program is described in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). When a student's behavior significantly interferes

with access to the curriculum, a Functional Behavior Assessment will be proposed. A Behavior Support Plan will be included in the IEP of Learning Center students identified with behavioral need, and will be reviewed annually with parent/guardian and district liaison. Staff in Learning Center programs receive annual training to work with children, adolescents, or adults who may exhibit challenging or dangerous behavior. This training includes prevention and behavior support, time-out, de-escalation techniques, alternatives to physical restraint, and types of permitted physical restraints. A Board Certified Behavior Analyst works in conjunction with the classroom teacher to monitor individual student Behavior Support Plans and the application of protocols in Learning Center programs. Should it be determined that a student's behavior compromises the safety of self and others, North River Collaborative adheres to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, sections 37 H, 37 H ½ and 37 H ¾ as well as 603 CMR 53.00 et seq. Please refer to addendum for Due Process, Manifestation Determination, Suspension, and Termination Policies and Procedures.

BULLYING

NRC BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING POLICY

Bullying and Cyberbullying are Strictly Prohibited

It is the policy of North River Collaborative to provide a learning environment for students free from bullying and cyber-bullying. It is a violation of this policy for any student or member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional to engage in bullying or cyber-bullying. It is a violation of this policy for any student to engage in bullying or cyber-bullying or for any employee of NRC to condone or fail to report acts of bullying or cyber-bullying that they witness or become aware of (i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at school sponsored or school-related activities, functions or programs, whether on or off school grounds, at school bus stops, on school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district/NRC and (ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district/NRC, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require the NRC to staff and/or monitor any non-school related activities, functions or programs.

Retaliation is Strictly Prohibited

The North River Collaborative will not tolerate retaliation against a person who reports bullying or cyber-bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or cyber-bullying, or witness or has reliable information about bullying or cyber-bullying.

Definitions

Bullying. Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students or members of the staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture of any combination thereof, directed at a victim that (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

Cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying refers to the bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to any, transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or on part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of web-page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Procedure for Reporting Bullying, Cyberbullying or Retaliation

It is the responsibility of every employee, student and parent/guardian to recognize acts of bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation and take every action necessary to ensure that the applicable policies and procedures of NRC are implemented.

Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to bullying and/or cyber-bullying has the right to: (i) file a complaint with his/her teacher or principal and to (ii) receive prompt and appropriate handling of the complaint.

Further, all reasonable efforts shall be made to maintain the confidentiality and protect the privacy of all parties, but proper enforcement of this policy may require disclosure of any and all information received.

Students and parents who witness or become aware of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation should immediately report it to the principal and/or program coordinator.

NRC employees (including but not limited to educators, administrators, school nurses, paraprofessionals, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, van monitors) who witness or become aware of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation must immediately report it to the principal and/or program coordinator.

Reports of bullying may be made anonymously, although students should be aware that the administration cannot take disciplinary action against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the Collaborative may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-388-3700. Hard copies of this information are also available at the Program Director's office.

Procedure for Investigating Reports

Once a report is made, the Principal or his designee will initiate an investigation in accordance with the North River Collaborative's Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan.

Reports of bullying and/or cyber-bullying, occurring in or out of school will be reviewed and, when a link to work or school exists, will result in an investigation.

Parents of students alleged to have engaged in bullying and/or cyber-bullying will be invited to attend a meeting at which the activity, words, or images subjected to the complaint will be reviewed. A student disciplined for bullying and/or cyber-bullying may not be readmitted to their school program until his/her parent(s)/guardian attend such a meeting.

Discipline for Bullying, Cyber-bullying or Retaliation

If the Program Coordinator or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the Program Coordinator/designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the student's individual behavior plan and/or IEP.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

Procedures for Protecting the Target

Safety: As soon as an allegation of bullying is received, while the investigation is underway, the Program Coordinator/Director or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target; and altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target.

Procedures for Preventing Retaliation

The Program Coordinator or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary. Additionally, the Program Coordinator or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

Procedures for Notifying the Parents or Guardians of a Target and Aggressor/ Perpetrator

The Program Coordinator or designee will notify the parent/guardian of the alleged target and the alleged aggressor once the investigation has determined that either bullying or retaliation has occurred. If the alleged target and alleged aggressor attend different schools, the Program Coordinator receiving the report shall inform the Principal and/or Director of Special Education/designee of the other student's school and notify the student's parents of the report and procedures. However, all notification to parents about reports of bullying or retaliation must comply with the confidentiality requirements in the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations and the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Procedures for Notifying Another School District

If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school and the North River Collaborative is the first to be informed of the bullying or retaliation, then the appropriate Program Director or designee must, consistent with state and federal law, promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school district or school so that both may take appropriate action. The Principal/Director of Special Education will then follow their district process in notifying the Superintendent.

Procedures for Notifying Local Law Enforcement

At any point after receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, or during or after an investigation, if a NRC Program Coordinator/designee has a reasonable basis to believe that the incident may involve criminal conduct; NRC Program Coordinator/designee will notify the local law enforcement agency. In addition, if an incident of bullying or retaliation occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in a local school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school, the Executive Director of NRC or designee will notify local law enforcement if s/he believes that criminal charges may be pursued.

False Accusations

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

Assistance to Targets and Aggressors

Upon the Program Coordinator or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, §37O (d)(v). Skill-building approaches that the Program Coordinator or designee may consider include:

- Offering individualized skill-building sessions based on North River Collaborative's anti-bullying curricula;
- Providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- Implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavior supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- Meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- Adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- Making a referral for evaluation

Miscellaneous Student-Related sections:

Nothing in this section prevents the North River Collaborative or a host school from imposing disciplinary sanctions on a student whose behavior does not meet the definition of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation but which nonetheless violates other Collaborative and/or host school policy/ies.

The North River Collaborative will provide students with age-appropriate instruction on bullying/ cyber-bullying prevention. The NRC will provide professional development to build the skills of staff members, as required by law. The NRC has developed a Bullying/Cyber-Bullying Prevention and Intervention plan that includes but is not limited to: procedures for reporting, responding to and investigating reports of bullying/ cyber-bullying or retaliation of a person who reports bullying/ cyber-bullying or provides information during an investigation; any notification requirements consistent with state and federal law; a strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for perpetrators, victims, and family members; and provisions for educating and informing parents about bullying/ cyber-bullying and the Collaborative's bullying/ cyber-bullying prevention curriculum. This plan can be obtained by contacting the Program Coordinator.

This portion of the student handbook serves as annual notice to students and parents/guardians of the relevant student-related sections of the plan.

NRC employees are trained annually on the plan.

The Program Coordinator shall be responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan at his/her program. The Program Coordinator works cooperatively with the Director of Special Education from the sending districts as well as the principal assigned to the building in which the program is located to assist NRC students, parents, and employees who seek guidance or support in addressing matters related to any form of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation (MGL c. 71 §37O).

COMMUNICATION – HOME/SCHOOL

Regular home/school communication is vital to inform students' instructional programming. To that end, Learning Center teachers maintain ongoing communication with parents in the form of a home/school notebook. Other forms of communication may also be used, including telephone calls and email. Please be aware that when communicating by telephone, you may need to set up a time before or after program hours in

order not to keep teacher away from instructional time with students.

Learning Center staff also work with other agencies that may be involved with a student's care. Given parental authorization for release of information, staff may provide pertinent information for physician or therapy appointments (i.e. classroom data).

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

- A student or staff member who has a reported communicable disease must be authorized by a physician to continue to be present within the school. This authorization must be in written form from the attending physician.
- The school may notify all parents and staff of the reported communicable disease, adhering to our policy of student confidentiality. The program nurse shall make available printed information regarding the nature of the disease to all parents and staff.

CURRICULUM

Learning Centers for Students with Multiple Disabilities:

Classrooms follow a functional, experiential curriculum based upon The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (2011). An MCAS Assessment is completed by the classroom teacher in accordance with the student's IEP, typically in the form of an MCAS-Alternate portfolio documenting the student's progress over the year. The continuum of Learning Centers for Students with Multiple Disabilities are located in member district public schools allowing for placement of students in buildings with similarly aged peers and for access to age appropriate thematic materials.

An Integrated Related Services Approach is utilized; therapists provide individual and small group services as written in Individual Education Programs and classroom staff apply the recommended therapeutic strategies throughout the week in order to enhance learning.

Learning Centers for Students with Autism:

These programs are structured to meet the needs of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Enrollment is open, however, to all students who would benefit from an integrated, eclectic approach that includes Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) techniques, such as Discrete Trial Teaching and Behavior Support Plans, Picture Exchange Communication Systems, and a total communication approach. The goal of these programs is to enhance academics, social skills, behavioral regulation, self-care, and play/leisure skills.

Instruction, aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (2011), is provided to students at their instructional level. An MCAS assessment is completed by the classroom teacher; typically in the form of an MCAS-Alternate portfolio documenting the student's progress over the school year.

An ABA Specialist is an ongoing member of the classroom team. Home/school behavior support and consultation is available and provided through a team approach that utilizes the skills of the specialist most familiar with the area of need; for example, the occupation therapist may work with the behavioral specialist and teacher to develop routines for dressing and bathing. Parent training in ABA for the home is also available through the North River Collaborative BCES Program when recommended by the Team.

All Learning Center classrooms utilize the Unique Learning System. The Unique Learning System is a standards-based curriculum specifically designed for special learners. Each month, teachers download thematic units of study. Each instructional unit contains 30 lesson plans and downloadable materials that teachers can readily integrate into classroom learning activities. Each unit lesson plan defines three levels of differentiated tasks, allowing the teacher to accommodate a wide diversity of learners with significant disabilities.

DRESS AND HYGIENE

Students are expected to have appropriate hygiene and wear age appropriate clothing with proper fit when attending school. Special consideration should be given to health and safety. Any type of attire or hygiene that interferes with the educational process will be considered inappropriate. Parents/guardians may be notified to bring in appropriate clothing and/or may be requested to accompany their child home to attend to hygiene related issues.

EARLY RELEASE DAYS

Early release days are scheduled periodically through the school year to allow opportunities for Learning Center staff to participate in professional development, provide home visits, and to provide parent/teacher conferences.

Please refer to Addendum for school calendar and specific program early release times. Students will not be provided lunch on early release days, but will be offered their usual mid-morning snack. Please ensure someone is home to meet your child on early release days.

END OF SCHOOL YEAR

Learning Center students attend school 180 days per year. The last day of school may be adjusted due to snow days or other unforeseen events, and is an early release day. Please refer to Extended School Year information and Program Calendar addendum.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Communications with parents are in clear and commonly understood words and are in both English and the primary language of the home if such primary language is other than English. Important information and documents being distributed to parents are translated in to the major languages spoken by parents or guardians with limited English skills. The Program Coordinator works in conjunction with the district to ensure interpreter is provided for IEP meeting. The IEP document is provided in both English and the primary language of the home.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

In the event of an emergency evacuation, the Learning Center programs follow the Emergency Procedures and Evacuation plans adopted by the host school. In addition to this, each Learning Center program follows a classroom specific Evacuation Plan for each student. These plans include the following:

- Specific evacuation needs (i.e. materials, supplies, medication, etc.)
- Assignment of staff to individual students
- Assignment of staff to serve as back-up
- Individual student schedules and the student's exact location
- Assignment of staff for students who are out of the classroom

Evacuation Plans are posted in an easily visible area of the classroom and are reviewed by staff periodically. The Program Coordinator disseminates a copy of Learning Center Evacuation Plans to the host school for inclusion in their Emergency Management Plan.

EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR

The North River Collaborative Learning Center programs offer a 7 week extended school year, or summer program. The purpose of the schedule modification to a longer school year, as documented in the student's IEP, is to prevent substantial loss of previously learned skills. The program is 4 days per week with no school on Fridays. Program hours are typically the same as regular school year hours. Therapy services are provided but may be adjusted to accommodate the reduced program schedule, or modified to include small group instruction (if appropriate).

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are provided for Learning Center students to complement the classroom curriculum, facilitate generalization of specific skills, and/or to address target IEP goals. Classroom teachers plan and organize field trips based on the needs of their individual students. Parent/guardian permission slips must be submitted for all field trips. Should you desire that your child not participate in a field trip, please notify classroom teacher or Program Coordinator in advance in order for alternative educational programming be arranged for your child.

HAZING

The North River Collaborative forbids hazing of any form. Any student who has engaged in hazing shall be subject to disciplinary actions. Any employee who has engaged in hazing will be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action. In accordance with GL. c.269, should an instance of hazing occur, Sections 17-19 shall be adhered to.

Chapter 269, Section 17, the Crime of Hazing

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

The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections 18 and 19 shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug of substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

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

Chapter 269, Section 18 – Duty to Report Hazing

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section 17 and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Chapter 269, Section 19 – Statement of Compliance and Discipline Policy Requirement

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

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

HEALTH

North River Collaborative believes there is an important relationship between health and education. A healthy child is an effective learner. North River Collaborative believes that all students are entitled to full and comprehensive health maintenance promotion and prevention while in the education setting. Through interdisciplinary collaboration, the student shall receive optimal health care services.

The North River Collaborative complies with all Mandated School Health Services as specified by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Parents are encouraged to keep ill students home (refer to Health and Safety). It is often difficult for a child to learn when they are not feeling well. It is the policy of the North River Collaborative to send a student home if they are not feeling well. Parents are responsible for transportation of their ill child.

The nurse will make every effort to reach the parent/guardian or emergency contact person named on the student's emergency card to notify them of any significant injuries or signs of illness that may require further observation, intervention, or follow-up with the student's health care provider. In the event of a medical emergency, local EMS services/ambulance may be activated. If a student is taken to the hospital, a school employee will stay with the student until the parent/guardian arrives.

It is the policy of the North River Collaborative that the parents must have a physician's written statement that a child is ready to return to school following an absence of five consecutive school days and/or a hospitalization.

HEALTH RECORDS

North River Collaborative Learning Center program nurses maintain individual student health records. The record includes medical information submitted to the nurse, including physicals, immunization records, mandated screenings, and nursing assessment form completed by the parent/guardian when the student entered the program.

Before contacting a student's physician or other health care provider it is necessary to have written consent from the parent/guardian unless it is to clarify an existing order. This form gives permission to North River Collaborative nurses, therapists, or teachers to contact the student's physician. This information is intended to enhance the care given to a student and shall remain confidential.

In the event clarification is needed on a signed physicians order, the nurse may contact said physician for the necessary information.

Parents/guardians are asked to communicate student health concerns and medical reports to the program nurse. Access to the student health record is restricted to program nursing staff and other program staff on a need-to-know basis only, as determined by the school nurse. The health record is transferred with the academic record of when the student moves to another school or district.

HEALTH SCREENINGS

In accordance with Massachusetts Department of Public Health General Laws, the North River Collaborative program nurses conduct yearly screenings and works in conjunction with the nursing staff at the public school in which the student's program is located.

Vision & Hearing

Grades: K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and once in Middle School and once in H. S.

BMI

Grades: 1, 4, 7, & 10

Postural

Grades: 5, 6, 7, 8, & 9

For children who have special medical and developmental needs and are unable to be properly screened with the equipment available within the public school setting, parents are asked to have their child evaluated by their physician or specialist. In order to secure the best education results for the student, medical reports should be forwarded to program nurse so they can best address child's medical needs to provide optimal access to their curriculum.

Health and Safety

One of the best ways to prevent the spread of disease at your child's school is to be aware of warning signs. North River Collaborative adheres to Massachusetts Department of Public Health protocols as well as NRC nursing guidelines to advise parents when to keep their child home from school.

<u>When these signs, symptoms, or diseases appear</u>	<u>You should keep your child out of school until</u>
Fever 100 with behavior changes or other symptoms of illness	Doctor indicates that it is OK to return to school or fever-free for 24 hours without taking Tylenol or Motrin
Unusual lethargy, uncontrollable coughing, irritability, constant crying, difficulty breathing or other unusual symptoms	Doctor indicates that it is OK to return to school; if your child has discomfort from cold symptoms please consider keeping them home
Uncontrollable diarrhea-increased number of loose bowels	Symptom-free for 24 hours and able to ingest fluids and food comfortably
Vomiting – 2 or more times in 24 hours	Symptom-free for 24 hours and able to ingest fluids and food comfortably
Mouth sores with drooling	Doctor indicates it is non-infectious
Rash with fever or behavior changes	Doctor indicates it is non-infectious
Pink or red conjunctivitis with yellow or white discharge	24 hours after treatment is initiated
Severe respiratory symptoms which limit the child's comfortable participation in activities or significantly increase the level of care necessary	Symptoms are resolved to the point where standard routines or activities will no longer be affected
Antibiotic for Infection	Until 24 hours after the first dose before returning to school

HOME VISITS

Prior to a student entering a Learning Center program, the classroom teacher typically provides a home visit. The purpose of the visit is to bridge communication between home and school, and allow the student an opportunity to become familiar with the teacher prior to starting the program. Additionally, home visits may be provided at any time during the student's time in a Learning Center program. Parents interested in a home visit should contact the teacher directly.

HOMEWORK

Homework is assigned in some classrooms within the Learning Center programs, and varies in accordance with an individual student's needs and abilities. The purpose of homework is to practice learned skills and expand upon themes or activities learned in the school setting.

INOCULATION OF STUDENTS

Immunization requirements are revised periodically to reflect the most recent requirements of the law. All children in school setting must be immunized in accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) requirements in order to attend school. All students should have on record a certificate of immunization documenting that the student has been successfully immunized in accordance with current DPH recommended schedules against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, rubella, Haemophilus influenza type b (Hib), hepatitis B, varicella and other communicable diseases as specified from time to time by the department. Any exceptions must be medical or religious exemptions meeting the standards in MGL c. 76 §15.

The program nurse shall be up to date in his or her knowledge of the DPH recommended schedules and shall monitor each student's schedule of immunization as is currently recommended. The program nurse shall review yearly all students' records to assure that the students are up-to-date. The immunization record shall be kept current in the student health record.

It is important that the program nurse notify parents if immunizations are past due. Many times the school will find that the student has had the immunization. If not, this is the opportunity to notify the parent that the immunization is due.

The program nurse shall assure that any student entering the school system is appropriately immunized. Some students entering school have not been immunized on schedule or lack immunization documentation. Regional MIP (Massachusetts Immunization Program) epidemiologists can provide recommendations for children who are behind schedule.

INTERNET USE

All aspects of the North River Collaborative's Technology network, which includes computer, technology and communications systems, hardware, software and all message contents, internet access and electronic mail capability and voice mail, are the property of North River Collaborative. The network exists solely for educational purposes. The network, including social media, is not to be considered a resource intended for use as a public forum or for any purpose that is not directly related to the delivery of educational services. Please refer to addendum for Internet/Network Acceptable Use Policy.

MANDATORY REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

North River Collaborative complies with the Massachusetts Mandatory Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Statute, Chapter 119, Section 51A, which mandates that certain persons in their professional capacity report child abuse and neglect when there is reasonable cause or suspicion to believe that a child under the age of eighteen has been abused or neglected. Should a staff member have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years is suffering from effects of any form of child abuse and neglect, the staff member will report his/her concerns to the Program Coordinator, and appropriate action will be taken.

North River Collaborative Learning Center staff receives annual training on their role as mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect, including definitions and policies. It is not the responsibility of the individual filing the 51A report to determine if the child has been abused and/or neglected or to determine whether the child is in need of protection.

MEDICATION PROCEDURES

NORTH RIVER COLLABORATIVE Learning Centers MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY

PURPOSE:

The purpose of the medication policy is to provide a standard consistent with state regulations. This is done to assure the safe administration of medication in the school setting. This will include both prescription and non-prescription drugs.

GOAL:

To ensure that students requiring prescription and non-prescription medications during the school day will be able to attend, and to ensure that medications are safely administered and stored in the school setting.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION PLANS:

The Collaborative nurse, in collaboration with the parents or guardian whenever possible, shall establish a medication administration plan for each student receiving a prescription medication. In accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, it is also the policy of NRC that parent/guardian hand delivers their student's medication to the classroom nurse.

1. Name of student
2. Correct dosage
3. Signed authorization by physician
4. Known allergies to food or medications
5. Quantity of medication received in school
6. Required storage conditions
7. Duration of prescription

Medications, Formula, Supplements:

1. All medications require an order to be given at school; this includes over the counter medication
2. Medications should be hand delivered to program nurse (not sent in child's backpack)
3. Please make us aware of any supplement you put in your child's drinks/food (eg. Miralax, protein, Polyose); some of these might require a doctor's order
4. Please provide sunscreen, insect repellent, and products specific to your child (eg. skin lotions and creams)

PARENT COMPLAINT AND GRIEVANCES

The Learning Center staff strives to maintain ongoing communication and collaboration with parents in order to maximize student success. In the event that a parent has a complaint or a grievance, the parent is encouraged to contact the staff member involved to set up a meeting or telephone conference.

If the complaint or grievance remains unresolved, the issue should be addressed by contacting Kate Stevens, Program Coordinator, (781) 878-6056 ext. 103.

A complaint or grievance involving North River Collaborative Transportation should be addressed by contacting Ann Terrill, (781) 878-6056 ext. 160. Should your student be transported by a vendor other than NRC, please contact transportation company directly.

In the event that a complaint or grievance continues to be unresolved, parents should address the issue with Nancy Verseckes, Assistant Executive Director, (781) 878-6056 ext. 154, Ed Walsh, Assistant Executive Director, (781) 878-6056 ext. 114, or Joanne Haley Sullivan, Executive Director, (781) 878-6056 ext. 101.

PARENT SUPPORT GROUP

A Parent Support Group is offered once a month for parents of students in Learning Center programs. The group is facilitated by the Social Worker for the Learning Center programs, and meets at the BAMSI Support Center in Hanover MA.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences are held twice a year, in the fall and spring. This is an early release day for students. The conferences are primarily a time for the teacher to share information regarding students' daily activities and/or to provide an opportunity to share an approach that is used in school that would be enhanced by carry over at home.

While we will try to schedule time for all parents/guardians who express an interest in a conference with the teacher, preference will be given to the parents/guardians of students whose IEP meeting falls in the spring for fall conferences. Preference for conferences that occur in the spring will be given to the parents/guardians of students whose IEP occurs in the fall.

PHOTO RELEASE

Students in Learning Center programs may be photographed and/or videotaped for educational (evaluative, teaching, demonstrating), training for staff, public information (brochures, NRC website), and/or communication purposes (with family or staff to staff). Prior to being photographed, students are required to have signed parental permission. Photo release is updated annually.

PHYSICAL EXAMS

A current physical exam must be on file with the Learning Center program nurse. A physical exam is required upon entry for all students, and may be performed within the calendar year. An updated physical exam is required in grades K, 3, 6 and 9.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

North River Collaborative Physical Restraint Policy **Revisions to Physical Restraint, 603 CMR 46.00 and 603 CMR 18.00 will be included when finalized by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.* The authority, scope, purpose and construction of the use of physical restraint are promulgated by 603 CMR 46.00 in effect April 2, 2001.

If a student exhibits escalating behavior, staff will utilize other less intrusive alternatives. If a student exhibits behavior that the staff believes poses an imminent threat of harm to self or others, a physical restraint will be initiated where a non-physical intervention would be ineffective. Physical restraint will not be used as a form of punishment or as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm.

A written incident form is completed for each physical restraint that is implemented. Parents or guardians are notified by telephone and by written report within three school working days of the use of the restraint, and a copy of the incident report is provided. Incident reports are maintained in the student's record. Selected Collaborative staff will be trained in-depth and certified in the use of physical restraint. All Collaborative staff will be trained each year regarding the behavioral management and/or physical restraint protocol. The protocol is available for review in the North River Collaborative Administrative Offices.

None of the foregoing paragraphs or the protocols on file, precludes any teacher, employee or agent of the North River Collaborative from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from an assault by a student.

When to use physical restraint

- When other, non-physical, interventions have been tried and failed or are judged to be inadequate to the circumstances
- **A student's behavior poses a threat of imminent serious, physical harm to self and/or others**

Proper Administration of Physical Restraint by Staff

- Remember training considerations,
- Have an adult witness if possible,
- Use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others,
- Discontinue restraint as soon as student's behavior no longer poses a threat of imminent serious, physical harm to self and/or others.

Safety Requirements

- Make sure student is able to breathe and speak,
- Monitor physical well-being,
- Monitor respiration,
- If student experiences physical distress, release restraint and seek medical assistance immediately,
- Know students' medical and cognitive limitations and behavior intervention plans

School Resource Person

- Be sure to know the identified person in your program who has extensive training in physical restraint,
- Review the district physical restraint policy in which you are working,
- Notify the school administration, NRC administration, and sending LEA when physical restraint is used.

Key Reporting Requirements

- **When to report:** All incidences of restraint must be reported to administration. The Department of Education requires a report only for restraints over 5 minutes or in any case of any injury to student or staff.
- **Notify School Administration:** Notify school administration and North River Collaborative Administration as soon as possible and provide a written report by the next school day.
- **Notify Parents:** The Executive Director, or designee, will notify the parent, verbally as soon as possible, and by written report within 3 school working days.

Content of Written Report

- Who participated in the restraint? Observers? Who was informed and when?
- When did the restraint occur? (date/time)
- What was happening before, during and after the restraint? Describe alternative efforts attempted and the outcomes of those efforts. What behavior prompted the restraint? Describe the restraint.
- Documentation of any injury to students or staff.
- Has the school taken, or will it take, any further actions, including disciplinary consequences?
- For extended restraints, describe the alternatives to extended restraint that were attempted, the outcome of those efforts and the justification for administering the extended restraint.

- Information regarding opportunities for the student's parents or guardians to discuss with school officials the administration of the restraint, any disciplinary sanctions that may be imposed on the student and/or any other related matter.

Special Circumstances

- For students with disabilities (IEP or 504 Plan), physical restraint can be used for different reasons (other than danger) if reasons are detailed and part of the IEP or 504 Plan. Certain limits and requirements will still apply.
- Parents may agree to waiver of reporting requirement in individual circumstances (not for serious injury and not for extended restraint).

School cannot require parental consent to waiver

School must detail alternate reporting mechanism

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports will be sent to parents and school districts on a quarterly basis (November, February, April, and June).

PROTECTING STUDENTS FROM KNOWN LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGENS

All school personnel must be knowledgeable about hypersensitivity reactions and anaphylaxis so they are better able to respond to a student who may have a severe allergic reaction.

The North River Collaborative, in collaboration with the parent, host school, classroom, teacher, program nurse, and student, shall make every attempt to keep the student away from the causative allergen.

Parents of students with allergies must inform the school of their child's allergies. The program nurse will then consult with the parents and the student regarding the allergy/ies and discuss whether a medication administration plan is necessary.

If the administration of epinephrine may be required, the nurse will work with the family to develop a medication administration plan that includes, at least the following:

- (a) a diagnosis by a physician that the child is at risk of a life threatening allergic reaction and a medication order containing proper dosage and indications for administration of epinephrine;
- (b) written authorization by a parent or legal guardian;
- (c) home and emergency number for the parent(s) or legal guardian(s), as well as the names(s) and phone number(s) of any other person(s) to be notified if the parent(s) or guardian(s) are unavailable;
- (d) identification of places where the epinephrine is to be stored, following consideration of the need for storage:
 - a. at one or more places where the student may be most at risk;
 - b. in such a manner as to allow rapid access by authorized persons, including possession by the student when appropriate; and

- c. in a place accessible only to authorized persons. The storage location(s) should be secure, but not locked during those times when epinephrine is most likely to be administered, as determined by the school nurse;
- (e) a list of the school personnel who would administer the epinephrine to the student in a life threatening situation when a school nurse is not immediately available;
- (f) a plan for comprehensive risk reduction for the student, including preventing exposure to specific allergens; and
- (g) an assessment of the student's readiness for self-administration and training, as appropriate, 105 CMR 210.100(A)(5).

The following guidelines shall be used with known allergies:

Parents' Responsibility

1. The parent shall inform the school of their child's allergies.
2. The parent shall provide the school with physician's instructions for administering medication.
3. The parent shall provide the school with an up to date injection kit (Epi-Pen) and keep them current.

Program Nurse Responsibility

1. The program nurse shall consult with, and provide information to, the parents, student, and school personnel regarding children with allergies.
2. The program nurse shall participate in in-service and auto-injector training.
3. The program nurse shall assist in developing emergency response plans.
4. The program nurse shall refer known cases of anaphylaxis to teachers, staff, and school administrators.
5. The program nurse shall assure an up-to-date injection kit is available and kept in a safe, locked, yet accessible place.
6. The program nurse shall develop an emergency protocol for each anaphylactic student, to be posted in the classroom.

Teacher Responsibility

1. The teacher shall encourage students not to share lunches or trade snacks, and choose allergy free foods for classroom events.
2. The classroom teacher shall choose work materials that are allergy-free.

Staff Responsibility

1. All personnel shall assist in creating an allergy-free environment for the student with known allergies.
2. All staff should be able to recognize symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction and react accordingly.

ALL STUDENTS WHO HAVE AN ANAPHYLACTIC REACTION SHOULD BE TRANSPORTED TO THE HOSPITAL FOR MEDICAL ATTENTION EVEN IF THE EPINEPHRINE HAS BEEN ADMINISTERED AND THE INDIVIDUAL APPEARS TO BE RECOVERING.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION

Weather related or other cancellation of schools is based upon the location of the host school. Please follow the cancellation/delay announcement for the town in which the Learning Center student attends school. If the town where the student attends cancels school, there will be no school for NRC Learning Center students.

If the hometown where the student lives cancels school, but the town in which the student attends school does not cancel, then the student will have school. Please be aware that the home transporters will not transport students to NRC Learning Center programs if school is closed in the hometown. Parents will then have the option of transporting their child to and from school.

SCHOOL VISITATION

School visits by parents are welcome on a periodic basis. In order to minimize interruptions and distractions for all students, visits shall be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance with the classroom teacher. Observation of therapy sessions are also provided and should be scheduled with the therapist in advance of the session.

All other visits to Learning Center programs, including college students, consultants, advocates, other teachers, or any other visitors, must be scheduled in advance with Kate Stevens, Program Coordinator.

SCHOOL/STUDENT RECORDS

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) AND STUDENT RECORDS

RIGHT TO EDUCATIONAL RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations afford parents and students fourteen (14) years of age or older, ("eligible student") certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's educational records as soon as possible, and no later than ten (10) calendar days after the day the school receives a request for access. Parents or eligible students should submit to the Program Director a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Program Director will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place for the records to be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's educational records that the parent or eligible student believed to be inaccurate. Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the Program Director, clearly identify the part of the record they want to be 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.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records.

Authorized school personnel may access the student record without the consent of the parent or eligible student. "Authorized school personnel", as defined by the student record regulations, includes, but is not limited to, an administrator or clerical person who needs to access the record for administrative reasons, employees of the Collaborative who provide services to the student or contractors of the Collaborative who provide services to the student.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to the sending school district and officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

Rights Of Parents With No Physical Custody

It is necessary for divorced parents to submit a copy of the custody agreement or order so that the school may identify which of the parents has physical custody of the child.

The non-custodial parent may access his/her child's record unless

1. the parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student, and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
2. the parent has been denied visitation, or
3. the parent's access to the student or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
4. there is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

The District shall place in the student's record any documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a).

Non-Custodial Parent Access: In the case of a non-custodial parent who is eligible to access the student record, i.e., does not fit any of the four (4) categories under 1-4 above, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the Program Director. Upon receipt of the request, the Program Director and/or his/her designee shall immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the Program Director with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth under 1-4 above.

When the student record is released to the non-custodial parent, the school will delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records will be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.

If a parent does not have physical custody of a child, then the parent will not be allowed to access the records of his/her child unless the parent has submitted the following three documents to the Program Director: a written request submitted annually to the principal to access the records of his/her child, a certified copy of the probate court order or judgment which must indicate that the parent has not sought or been denied shared legal custody and is entitled to unsupervised visitation with the child, or a certified order of

the probate court which specifically orders the parent to receive school records of the child. That order must state that it is being made after a review of any court records, including criminal records of the non-custodial parent, that giving the information will not pose a safety risk to the custodial parent or child and it is in the best interest of the child to provide the information to the non- custodial parent. An affidavit of the non-custodial parent that no temporary or permanent protective order is in effect restricting access to the custodial parent.

After the school receives these documents, the school can allow the non-custodial parent to have access to the child's records only after the school has notified the custodial parent and twenty-one days has elapsed from this notification. During that twenty-one day period, the custodial parent can obtain a court order restricting access to the child's records or he/she can submit a copy of any outstanding protective orders; if such orders are provided to the school, then the school cannot release records.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION NOTICE

North River Collaborative has designated certain information contained in the education records of its students as directory information for the purpose of the FERPA and the Students Record Regulations at 603 CMR 23.00 et seq. The following information regarding the student is considered directory information: (1) name, (2) address, (3) telephone number, (4) date and birth place, (5) major field of study, (6) dates of attendance, (7) degrees, honors and awards received, (8) post high school plans of the student. Directory information may be disclosed for any purpose in its discretion, without the consent of a parent or an eligible student. Parents of students and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information. In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent or student, or as otherwise allowed by the FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

In 2002 Congress passed legislation that requires high schools to provide to military recruiters, upon request, access to secondary school students and directory information on those students. Both the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the National Defense Authorization Act For Fiscal Year 2002 reflect these requirements.

Any parent or eligible student refusing to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed must file written notification to this effect with the Program Coordinator, 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370 by September 15th of the current school year.

In the event the parent does not notify the school of the parent's/student's decision to opt out by the time required, it is assumed that neither a parent of a student or eligible student objects to the release of the directory information designated.

Student Confidentiality/Records

Every student's educational and personal information is protected by laws of confidentiality. For the purpose of releasing information contained in student records, the North River School will follow the guidelines as outlined in the Student's Records Regulations at 603 CMR 23.00 et seq. and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Authorized Collaborative personnel may access records of students to whom they are providing services when such access is required in the performance of their official duties without the consent of the student or parent. Generally, however, release of a student's records requires a signed permission from the parent or guardian, except in those circumstances listed as exceptions in the student records regulations. When a student leaves North River School all student records will be returned to the sending school district.

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

It is the policy of the North River Collaborative not to discriminate against any otherwise qualified individual with a disability, solely by reason of his / her disability, in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in any program or activity.

It is the intent of the Collaborative to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated, and provided with free and appropriate public education. Students may be considered qualified disabled individuals under the policy even though they do not require services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Inquiries regarding compliance with this policy should be directed to the Section 504 Coordinator of the North River Collaborative; Executive Director, 198 Spring Street, Rockland, MA 02370, (781-878-6056).

The Collaborative's grievance procedure for complaints arising under Section 504 can be found in the addendum of this handbook.

TARDINESS

A parent/guardian must inform their student's program staff if their child is going to be tardy. Parents/guardians must transport their child to the school once tardy, unless arrangements were previously made between the transportation provider and the parent/guardian. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the transportation company that the student does not need a morning pick up and to inform them that the student will still need transportation at dismissal time.

ADDENDUMS

DUE PROCESS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS/ MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION

In general, special education students may be excluded from their programs for up to ten school days per school year just as any other student. However, when the Collaborative seeks to exclude a special education student from his/her program for more than ten school days in the school year, the student's special education Team must first determine whether the student's behavior was caused by, or was directly and substantially related to his/her disability or whether the conduct in question was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the student's IEP (a "manifestation determination"). If the Team determines that the behavior was a manifestation of his/her disability or was caused by a failure to implement the IEP, it must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop a behavior plan (or review and modify an existing plan, if necessary), and return the student to his/her current program, unless the student's parents and the district agree to a change in placement.

If the Team determines the behavior was not caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student's disability or failure to implement the IEP, the school may discipline the student according to the school's code of student conduct, except that during the period of suspension or expulsion, the district must continue to provide the student with a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and, if appropriate, conduct a functional behavior assessment and provide intervention services and modifications to prevent the conduct from recurring. If the conduct involves weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury, a special education student may be removed to an interim alternative educational placement for up to 45 school days regardless of the behavior's relationship to his/her disability.

Additional information regarding the procedural protections for students with disabilities can be obtained from the Program Director. The Collaborative does not advocate long-term suspensions of students. However in cases of dangerous disruptions or safety-related behavior by a student, a team meeting will be held, if pertinent to discuss these factors.

CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

North River Collaborative students are expected to abide by the code of conduct for the host school in which their program is located. A copy of the student handbook for the host school will be distributed to each Collaborative student. However, the student handbook for the host school may not include an exhaustive list of actions that are in violation of the code of conduct for the host school or the Collaborative. Therefore, Collaborative students should be aware that they may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, for any violation of school rules defined in the handbook of the host school or for any behavior not specifically mentioned within that handbook that places any member of the school community (student, staff member or visitor) in danger or disrupts the educational process. Additionally, Collaborative students may be subject to suspension or expulsion by the Program Coordinator/Executive Director or the Principal/Superintendent from the host school for any violation of MGL c. 71 §37H or 37H ½, as described further, below.

Discretion of Program Coordinator and/or Designee

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, the Program Coordinator or his/her designee (which may include staff from the host school) shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense. The Program Coordinator or his/her designee shall consider ways to reengage the student in learning and shall attempt to avoid long term suspension as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. These alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

SUSPENSION, TERMINATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The North River Collaborative adheres to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, sections 37H, 37H 1/2 and 37H 3/4 as well as 603 CMR 53.00 et seq.

Definitions:

1. **In-School Suspension** is the removal of a student from regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive or cumulative school days or less in one school year. Please note that removal from participation in extracurricular activities does not count as a removal from school in calculating the duration of a suspension.
2. **Out of School Suspension** is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive or cumulative school days or less in one school year. Please note that removal from participation in extracurricular activities does not count as a removal from school in calculating the duration of a suspension.
3. **Long Term Suspension** is defined as the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in one school year, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. A long term suspension may be served in school. Except for M.G.L. c. 71, sects. 37H and 37H1/2 offenses, a long term suspension may not be imposed for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year and does not extend from school year to school year.
4. **Emergency Removal** is a brief removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for no more than two (2) school days following the date of the emergency removal when the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.
5. **School Wide Education Service Plan** is a document created available for students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days.. by the Program Coordinator that "includes a list of educational services available for students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days.."

6. **Program Coordinator** refers to the Program Coordinator or his/her designee, which could include staff from the host school. Executive Director refers to the Collaborative's Executive Director or his/her designee which could include staff from the host school district.

PROCEDURES FOR AN IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

An in-school suspension may be used as an alternative to out-of-school suspension. An in-school suspension means the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in one school year.

If the Program Coordinator chooses this alternative, the Program Coordinator shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for that charge; the Program Coordinator shall provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charge and explain the circumstances surrounding the charge. If an in-school suspension is issued, the Program Coordinator shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the offense, and the length of the in-school suspension.

The Program Coordinator shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. This meeting shall be schedule on the day of the suspension, if possible, or as soon as possible thereafter. The Program Coordinator shall also send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent the above described meeting, if such meeting has not already occurred.

PROCEDURES FOR SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION

(exclusion of a student from school premises and regular classroom activities for a specified period of not more than ten school days.)

The Program Coordinator, or his/her designee, may suspend students on a short-term basis. Unless a student poses a danger to persons or property, or the suspension/expulsion is pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, sect. 37H or 37H 1/2, the student will receive the following prior to a short-term suspension:

1. Oral and written notice of the charges in English and the primary language of the home if other than English. This notice shall include:
 - i. The disciplinary offense;
 - ii. The basis for the charge;
 - iii. The potential consequences, including the potential length of the suspension;
 - iv. The opportunity to have a hearing with the Program Coordinator and the parent concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident;
 - v. The date, time, and location of the hearing;
 - vi. The right of the parent and student to interpreter services at the hearing; and
 - vii. If the student may be placed on a long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal:
 1. The rights set forth under the "Procedures for Long-Term Suspension"; and
 2. The right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.
2. At the hearing, if the student and/or parent elects to attend, the student shall have the opportunity to present his/her version of the relevant facts and any mitigating circumstances. The Program Coordinator shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct the hearing without the parent, the Program Coordinator must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The Program Coordinator is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the Program Coordinator sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.
3. Based on the available information, the Program Coordinator shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offences and what remedy shall be imposed. The Program Coordinator shall notice the student and parent in writing of his/her decision, the reasons for it, and, if applicable, the type and duration of the suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and other academic work.
4. If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Program Coordinator shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the suspension takes effect.

PROCEDURES FOR EMERGENCY REMOVAL

If the student's continued presence poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption, the Program Coordinator shall temporarily remove the student from the school. This temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) days following the day of the emergency removal and the superintendent shall be immediately notified of the removal. Additionally, the Program Coordinator shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the emergency removal, and the other information required in a short-term suspension notification. The short-term suspension notice shall be provided in writing to the student and parent. The opportunity for a hearing with the Program Coordinator shall occur within two (2) school days, unless otherwise extended by the school and parent. A decision regarding the student's continued suspension or other removal shall be rendered the same day as the hearing and written notice shall be provided the following school day. This written notice shall include all the information required based on the type of discipline imposed (short-term suspension, in-school suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion).

The Program Coordinator may also remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on a student's misconduct. This type of removal is not subject to the procedures for suspension and expulsion outlined in this policy.

PROCEDURES FOR LONG-TERM SUSPENSION

(exclusion of a student from school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten school days.)

The Program Coordinator, or his/her designee, may issue long-term offenses set forth in M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and §37H1/2, as described in

suspensions at the building level. Expulsions may also be issued for the the next section, below.

1. In the event of a long term suspension or expulsion, the student will be provided oral and written notice of the charges in English and the primary language of the home if other than English. This notice shall include:
 - i. The disciplinary offense;
 - ii. The basis for the charge;
 - iii. The potential consequences, including the potential length of the suspension;
 - iv. The opportunity to have a hearing with the Program Coordinator and the parent concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident;
 - v. The date, time, and location of the hearing; and
 - vi. The right of the parent and student to interpreter services at the hearing.
2. The Program Coordinator shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct the hearing without the parent, the Program Coordinator must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The Program Coordinator is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the Program Coordinator sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.
3. In advance of the hearing, the student shall have the right to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Program Coordinator may rely in making a determination to suspend the student.
The student shall also have the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person at the choice and expense of the student/parent.
4. At the hearing, if the student and/or parent elects to attend, the student shall have the opportunity to present his/her version of the relevant facts and any mitigating circumstances. The student shall also have the right to produce witnesses and the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school. The student may request that the hearing be audio recorded by the Program Coordinator and may request a copy of the recording. All parties must be made aware that the hearing is recorded in advance of the hearing.
5. The parent, if present, shall have the opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and other information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Program Coordinator should consider in determining consequences for the student.
6. The Program Coordinator shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offenses and what consequences shall be imposed. The Program Coordinator shall notice the student and parent in writing of his/her decision, including the following information:
 - i. The disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants in the hearing;
 - ii. The key facts and conclusions reached by the Program Coordinator;
 - iii. The length and effective date of the suspension and the date of return to school;
 - iv. The notice the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the suspension;
 - v. The student's right to appeal the Program Coordinator's decision to the Executive Director or his/her designee if a long-term suspension has been imposed. This notice of appeal shall include the process for appealing the decision, which requires the parent or student to file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension.
 - a. The Executive Director shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless an extension is mutually agreed to.
 - b. The Executive Director shall make a good-faith effort to include the parent in the hearing.
 - c. The hearing shall be conducted to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and, if so, what the consequence shall be. The hearing shall be audio recorded and a copy of the recording shall be provided to the student or parent upon request.
 - d. All the same rights as are afforded in the above long-term suspension principal's hearing shall apply to the student in an Executive Director's hearing.
 - e. The Executive Director shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. If the Executive Director determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Executive Director may impose the same or lesser consequence than the Program Coordinator.
 - f. The decision of the Executive Director shall be the final decision of the Collaborative.
 - vi. If the student is in grades K-3, the Program Coordinator shall send a copy of the written determination to the Executive Director and explain the reasons for the suspension before the suspension takes effect.

EXPULSION

Expulsion is the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) days, indefinitely, or permanently. Conduct that may lead to expulsion includes but is not limited to possession of a dangerous weapon, assault on school personnel or upon other students, possession of a controlled substance, and certain criminal convictions and charges.

M.G.L. c. 71 §37H

(a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

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

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

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

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

M.G.L. c. 71 §37H ½

Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter seventy-six:

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

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

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

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

