

SWANSEA PUBLIC SCHOOLS PARENT/GUARDIAN - STUDENT Pre-K-2nd GRADE HANDBOOK 2016-2017

Gardner Elementary
10 Church Street
Phone: 508-675-7899
Fax: 508-646-4410
Principal- Joanne Furze
Counselor- Kacie Martel

Hoyle Elementary
70 Community Lane
Tele: 508-679-4049
Fax: 508-646-4407
Principal- William Courville
Counselor- Rebecca Platt

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide opportunities and pathways in a safe, supportive technology-rich environment that engage, challenge and inspire students to achieve college and career readiness and to contribute to our 21st century community.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Swansea Public Schools are committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. The Swansea Public Schools are committed to ensuring that all of its programs and facilities are accessible to all members of the public. Swansea Public Schools prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, age, national origin, religion, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, or veteran status.

The content of all Swansea School publications is available upon request in other languages other than English.

The Swansea Public School District provides students with disabilities the same opportunity to succeed in school as they provide to students without disabilities. All school programs are accessible to people with disabilities. Reasonable adaptations and modifications are made for instructional purposes and school facilities are accessible (as in making meetings and classes accessible for wheelchair use).

CHAPTER 766, SECTION 5 PLACE OF ATTENDANCE, DISCRIMINATION

Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where he actually resides, subject to the following section. 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 sex, race, color, age, national origin, religion, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, or veteran status.

The following is a list of Swansea School Department Civil Rights and No Child Left Behind contact personnel:

Superintendent of Schools, John Robidoux
Title IX Coordinator
One Gardners Neck Road
Swansea, MA 02777 (508) 675-1195

Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Elizabeth White
504 Coordinator, Civil Rights Coordinator,
One Gardners Neck Road
Swansea, Swansea, MA 02777 (508) 675-1196

Director of Student Services, Julie Garell
A.D.A. Coordinator, Homeless Coordinator
One Gardners Neck Road
Swansea, MA 02777 (508) 675-7836

Assistant Director Student Services, Lisa LeVie
Early Childhood Coordinator

Title I Director, Michelle Gifford
Gardner School
10 Church Street
Swansea, MA 02777 (508) 675-7899

ELL Coordinator, Joanne Furze
Gardner School
10 Church Street
Swansea, MA 02777 (508) 675-7899

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GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

Students should not be dropped off in the morning until school staff comes outside (8:30am). If the weather is good, students will go to the playground. In inclement weather they will be directed into the school.

ARTICLES PROHIBITED IN SCHOOL

Parents/Guardians are asked to ensure that toys, games, electronic devices and cell phones are not brought to school unless permission has been given by school personnel. Please also ensure that large amounts of money, expensive jewelry, or dangerous items, such as pocket knives, are not brought to school. The school cannot be responsible for the loss of or damage to personal property of students improperly brought to school. Inappropriate items may be taken and kept in the office for return to parents/guardians. Students are not to buy, sell or trade items in school.

ATTENDANCE

All pupils are expected to attend school on a regular basis. When absence is necessary, the following points should be kept in mind:

1. When possible, the school should be notified before the absence.
2. A phone call, e-mail or note is requested in the event of a student absence. A parent/guardian note is required to confirm student's absence but does not excuse the absence.
3. The student is expected to make up any necessary assignments missed while he or she is out of school.
4. Requests for homework will be granted for two or more consecutive days of absence. Parents/Guardians should contact the school by 9:00 AM to request same day pick-up after 2:00 PM.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

According to M.G.L. Chapter 76, Section 1, students are required to attend school. Students may be excused for medical, legal, or religious reasons. No more than seven full days, or fourteen half days, in any six month period may be unexcused. According to M.G.L. Chapter 76, section 2, if a parent/guardian fails to cause a child to attend school; the name of that child will be turned over to a truant / attendance officer.

The following steps will be taken in order to comply with the attendance policy adopted by the Swansea School Committee:

1. Student attendance records will be checked regularly by the Principal.
2. The names of any student who has had more than seven full days or fourteen half days, in a six month period delineated by School Committee Policy may be submitted to the truant/attendance officer.
3. Truancy problems will be dealt with by the school, attendance officer and the juvenile court system.

ATTIRE

School attire should be neat, clean and appropriate. Head apparel is not to be worn inside the school building, with exceptions for religious or medical reasons. Flip-flops, footwear without backs, platforms, and higher heeled footwear are examples of inappropriate footwear for school. In general, any open toed shoe should not be worn to school. Sneakers type shoes are recommended. Clothing or accessories may not display suggestive, profane, violent or vulgar language or images. Jewelry or chains which present a safety risk are not appropriate. Principals will determine appropriateness of school attire in the event solutions to situations not covered in these guidelines are necessary. The principal will call parents/guardians in order to correct these situations.

BUS REGULATIONS/RULES

All students are assigned to school buses. Students will not be allowed off the bus unless an adult is present at the stop. Students are expected to follow bus safety rules and listen to the driver. Students should not be standing, changing seats, making loud noises, bothering other students or distracting the driver. Toys, games, and electronic devices should not be brought on the bus without permission from the driver and the school principal.

Any student who fails to follow bus regulations or who endangers

the safety of other pupils is subject to suspension of bus riding privileges.

Bus conduct slips will be issued by the driver to students who are not following the rules or listening to the driver. Loss of riding privileges will be cumulative starting with the third conduct slip.

1. Enter and leave the bus in a single line and in a courteous and orderly manner
2. Be seated promptly without disturbing others and remain seated at all times.
3. Keep head, arms, and hands inside the bus.
4. Talk only in conversational tones. Shouting, making loud noises, or using vulgar language are not allowed.
5. Aisles are to be kept clear of lunch boxes, books, and musical instruments.
6. Fooling and/or horseplay are not allowed. Poor conduct distracts the driver and endangers the safety of all.
7. Objects of any kind are not to be thrown from or on the bus.
8. When it is necessary to cross the road, cross in front of the bus and use extreme caution to be sure no traffic is approaching in either direction.
9. Take only the bus designated for you by the school department. In other words, if you are scheduled for Bus 1 that is the only bus you are eligible to ride.
10. The bus driver is in charge of the bus and he/she is responsible for the safety of all bus riders. Follow his/her instruction promptly and without question.
11. Students are expected to help maintain the cleanliness of the bus. No paper or other articles should be thrown on the floor. Food of any kind may not be eaten on the school bus.
12. Should any student damage the bus, he/she is responsible for payment of damages.
13. Cooperation on the part of all will make our school buses clean and safe for all riders.
14. Do not open/close bus windows without permission of the driver.
15. Report any accidents or unsatisfactory conditions to the bus driver and/or bus supervisor.
16. Any student who fails to follow bus regulations or who endangers the safety of other pupils renders himself/herself liable for suspension of bus riding privileges.

Student Returned to School

Parents/guardians of students in grades K-5 must be present at the end of the school day to receive student(s) from their designated bus stop. In the event that a parent/guardian is not present, the student(s) will be returned to their school at the end of the route. If circumstances do not allow for the student(s) to be returned to their school (i.e. principal unavailable), they will be returned to the Transportation Office at the School Administration Building.

In the event that a parent/guardian is not present at the student's bus stop at the end of the school day and the student is returned to school, the following procedures and consequences will be instituted for incidents occurring during the same school year:

First Incident: Parent is notified by the building administrator via phone call* and documented via e-mail or letter.

Second Incident: Parent is notified by the building administrator via phone call* and documented via e-mail or letter noting the second incident. Notification will inform the parent/guardian that another occurrence will result in the loss of transportation in accordance with this policy.

Third Incident: Parent is notified by the building administrator via phone call*. Loss of transportation for three (3) school days will be documented via e-mail or letter.

Fourth Incident: Parent is notified by building administrator via phone call*. Loss of transportation for five (5) school days will be documented via e-mail or letter.

** If a student is returned to the Transportation Office, the phone notification will be made by the Transportation Coordinator.*

Further incidence will result in a progressive manner of consequences. (please refer to Swansea School Committee policy FILE: EE)

BUS VIDEO

Buses will be equipped with video equipment, which will be used by the Administration to address safety and behavioral issues that may occur.

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT REPORTING LAWS

Massachusetts General Law, M.G.L. Chapter 119, Sec. 51A, identifies all school officials/employees as mandated reporters who are legally obligated to contact the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF) if they suspect the neglect or abuse of a child under the age of eighteen.

CLASSROOM PARTIES

Parents/Guardians should not send in any food or drink without permission from the classroom teacher. Classroom parties are limited to one a month. The Swansea School District Wellness policy encourages healthy and nutritious snacks in our schools and discourages students from having cookies, cupcakes, candy, etc. If you are asked or allowed to send in a class snack, please insure it meets these guidelines.

DISMISSAL - PARENT/GUARDIAN PICKUP

Parents/Guardians picking up their child at the end of the day should sign them out and wait for the office to call students down. Please leave promptly as buses will begin to be called. If you will be late to pick up your child please call the school or they will be put on the bus.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Any student being dismissed from school for any reason should have a note signed by a parent/legal guardian. This note should be brought to the office and officially cleared during the morning homeroom period. If a student is to be released from school, it will be necessary for the parent, guardian or other authorized person to report to the main office and provide identification. Students should continue to bring notes whenever a dismissal becomes necessary. If a student becomes ill, the person receiving the child should report to the nurse's office and provide identification in order to obtain the release of the student.

FIELD TRIPS

Each class will have field trips during the year. Your signed permission will be needed for your child to attend. Chaperones will be arranged by the school and will be limited in number by the facility to be attended and/or the principal.

All school field trips are "Nut-Free". Students purchasing a school lunch will be offered a "Nut-Free" lunch such as a turkey sandwich. If you are packing a lunch for your child it cannot contain any peanut or nut products. This will ensure the safety of our students as well as the students from other schools who will be at the same facility.

FIRE DRILLS/LOCK DOWN DRILLS

Throughout the year fire/lockdown/evacuation drills will be practiced to ensure the safety of all staff and students.

GRADE PLACEMENT - PROMOTION & RETENTION

The grade placement of students is based upon the mastery of the academic skills at each grade level in each subject area. The final class assignment is the decision of the Principal. Parents/Guardians are asked to not request a specific teacher or placement. The final decision for promotion or retention of a student is the responsibility of the principal after consultation with appropriate members of the staff. The building administrator will consider teacher reports, reports of support personnel, student records, medical/psychological data, state and national testing, attendance and their own observations as appropriate.

HOME PARTIES

Students who are celebrating birthdays at home or having parties are allowed to distribute invitations in school if they have an invitation for each child in the class or each child of their gender in the class. They may not pass out invitations in school to a portion of the class.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework may be used for practice, reinforcement and preparation/review for tests. The purpose of homework may also include:

- Make-up assignments due to illness/vacations.
- Completion of work not finished in school.
- Corrections in each subject area.
- Remedial work as needed.

SCHOOL CANCELLATION, DELAYED OPENING, EARLY DISMISSAL OF SCHOOL DUE TO WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather parents/guardians should check Channel 10 or go to www.swanseaschools.org for information regarding a delayed school opening, early release or cancellation. A recorded *One Call Now* message will also be sent out to families.

In the event of delayed opening schools will dismiss at their normal times. A delayed opening announcement will cancel the morning surround care session and an early dismissal will cancel afternoon surround care.

If an early release is required a *One Call Now* message will go out. Please plan ahead and have someone available to pick up your child or meet him or her at the bus. Please call the school to inform us if someone other than a parent/guardian will be picking up your child.

LIBRARY BOOKS

We have a large selection of books for our students to take out for reports and entertainment. Students are given between one and two weeks before the books are due. Students losing or damaging library books assume full responsibility for replacement of said book.

LUNCH PROGRAM

The School Lunch Program serves breakfast and lunch each full school day. A copy of the lunch menu is distributed to all students monthly and is posted on the school website swanseaschools.org.

School Lunch menus and payment information will be sent home with each child and also are available online. School lunch balances should be settled in a timely manner.

Free and reduced price meal applications are distributed at the beginning of each school year. They may be returned directly to the school lunch office. Free and reduced price meal applications must be approved by October 1st for benefits to continue. Applications are accepted anytime throughout the school year should household financial situations change. They are available at each school. All information on the application is kept confidential and used only to determine eligibility for school meals, unless the waiver form to share information is signed and submitted.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the School Lunch Program, please call Gail Oliveira, School Lunch Director, at 508-646-4401.

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to become active participants in their children's education through membership in the parent-teacher organization and through communication and cooperation with the staff. All volunteers MUST have a current CORI on file at the Administration Building. CORI forms are good for three years. In addition, at the discretion of the building principal, you may need to be fingerprinted if you volunteer in order to comply with state law.

PLAYGROUND REGULATIONS

Basic rules of safety, courtesy, and fairness apply to playground behavior as well as throughout the rest of the school program. Students are expected to exhibit appropriate playground behavior and follow playground rules at all times. Students are expected to treat others with respect. Games involving rough play, tackling, tripping, pushing, etc., are not allowed. Students are expected to keep their hands and feet to themselves when playing.

SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Elementary school counselors are available to help families and children address issues associated with family functioning, social and emotional growth, and development of children. You can reach a

school counselor by calling the school office. Leave your phone number and your call will be returned.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

School insurance is available yearly through the school department. Parents/guardians should read the information carefully to see if they would like to purchase it.

If this insurance is not purchased and your child is injured, parents/guardians should request from the school a copy of the insurance form. The school section will be filled out and signed by the principal. Parents/Guardians are responsible for seeing that the rest of the form is completed by your doctor or by the hospital and sent to the insurance company.

School insurance will pay only for costs which your family's regular insurance may not cover. Since families have different kinds of insurance plans of their own, the school policy should be clearly understood before your parents/guardians decide to purchase it or not.

SCHOOL SECURITY & PUPIL SAFETY- PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CUSTODY CONCERNS - STUDENT DISMISSAL PRECAUTIONS

There are specific rules relative to pupil security that may vary from building to building. However, general guidelines are in place at all schools to protect your children.

Parents/Guardians and pupils should be aware that:

1. All visitors to the school must report to the office upon arrival as a visitor management system is used at each school. A state issued photo ID is required for our database for admission beyond the main office. You will be issued a temporary badge/ pass which you must wear and return at the end of your visit. Please be aware an electronic background check will be performed. This includes a registered sex offender search, custody issue alerts, restraining order warnings, and protection from abuse orders. If you are here to pick up a student, you may be asked to verify your identity. Please be prepared to present your ID to school officials.
2. No parents/guardian or adult should attempt to remove a child from the school, classroom, or playground without getting specific authorization from the principal or his or her designee in the office. No teacher has the authority to release a pupil without the above approval.
3. No unauthorized personnel will be allowed to remove a child from the school.
4. Requests for a permanent change in a bus stop should be made to the transportation director. Request to authorize someone other than the parent or guardian to pick up a child should be made in writing to the school.
5. Copies of any legal restrictions or custody that authorize or prohibit parental interaction or removal from school must be on file at the school to provide guidance when decisions must be made.
6. Parents/guardians should advise the school administration promptly, preferably in person and in writing, of any changes affecting release of pupils.
7. School doors are locked at all times. No unauthorized person should use any but the designated doors.
8. No parents/guardians are allowed to go to any classroom without first checking in at the main office and without prior authorization.

STUDENT SERVICES

Special Education Federal and State law provides certain rights to parents/guardians for the education of children who have a disability and qualify for special education. The purpose of this law is to identify and evaluate any child who may have a special educational need in order that an appropriate educational program may be designed and implemented. A parent/guardian, a teacher, a school official, or a family physician may refer a child. An evaluation team conducts assessments of each child referred. Once the evaluation has been completed, the team members meet to discuss their findings and to determine whether there is a need for special education services. More information on these laws is available through the Student Services Office at 508-675-7836.

TARDINESS

Pupils should arrive at school on time regularly. Any student who is tardy should be accompanied by a parent/guardian who will explain

the tardiness to the office. Repeated or excessive tardiness is not acceptable. Parents/Guardians will be advised of the concerns of the school if necessary. A pupil who is tardy not only misses valuable instruction, but also interrupts the class when he or she comes in late.

VACATION

It is expected that family vacations will be taken only during school vacation time. Taking your vacation during school time is not an excused absence. **SCHOOL WORK WILL NOT BE GIVEN PRIOR TO THE VACATION.** Work will be made up in a timely manner upon return to school.

WEAPONS

Any student bringing a weapon or any object that could be considered to be a weapon to school may be suspended from school for the maximum amount of days allowed by law.

SCHOOL HEALTH & NURSING

SCHOOL NURSE

The school nurses send information to parents/guardians throughout the year notifying them of information needed or upcoming changes. Please be sure to return any information requested by the nurses in order to update our records as needed. Please be sure if there are changes or updates to your child's medical history that you bring this to the nurse's attention as soon as possible.

HEARING / VISION TESTS

In an effort to discover and correct any vision and/or hearing difficulties vision and hearing tests are given to all students in the Swansea Public Schools. Parents/Guardians will be notified concerning the results of these examinations.

District -Wide Swansea School Health Services

MEDICATION:

1. No "over the counter" medications will be given at school unless a doctor's order is obtained.
2. All medication must be kept in the Nurse's Office.
3. Only medication ordered by your doctor will be given.
4. Long Term Prescription Drugs will be dispensed only by a school nurse. Return the parent's consent form and the doctor's written order form in order for the medication to be given.
5. Short Term Prescription Drugs (for example antibiotics) need only parent's written permission and medication in the Original Prescription container.
6. **All Medication must be in the original prescription container or it will not be given.**
7. Some pharmacies will provide an extra container for school use upon request.
8. Parents/Guardians must bring the medication to the nurse – medication is not to be brought in by the students.

REPORTING ILLNESS:

If your child is ill with a contagious disease, notify your nurse. **Strep Infections, Conjunctivitis and a Diagnosis of Chickenpox:** require a doctor's note to return to school. If your child has a problem with head lice at home please be sure to notify the school nurse. This information is kept confidential.

FEVER:

If your child has a fever of 100 degrees or higher, he/she MUST remain at home until the child is **fever-free for a period of 24 hours without the use of Tylenol or Motrin.**

IMMUNIZATIONS:

If your child receives any type of immunization booster, make certain the nurse is notified in writing with a note specifying date and type of immunization signed by the doctor.

HEALTH PROGRAMS:

1. Vision and Hearing Testing will be done in all grades. If your child fails either of these tests, you will receive a notice and a doctor's form. Please return the doctor's form when your child has been examined.

2. Height and Weight: your child's height and weight will be measured each year.
3. Physical Exams must be completed within one year prior to entrance into school or within 30 days after school entry. Thereafter, students must have a physical exam in grades Pre K, K, 3, 6 and 9.
 - a. Transfer students must have had a physical within the year of transfer.
 - b. School physicals will be scheduled two times a year, fall and spring.
4. In the spring, a notice will be sent home asking if you prefer a school physical or a physical done by your own doctor. Please sign and return form to school.
5. Immunization Clinics will be scheduled as needed during the school year.
6. Dental information: At the beginning of the school year dental forms are sent home. We ask that once your child has seen their dentist please return the dental form to the school nurse.
7. March: Scoliosis Screening – Grades 5-9. The nurse and/or physical education teacher will view your child's back for any curvature of the spine. Parents will be notified if their child should see a physician. Parents can choose to have the school doctor see the child or their own doctor. If you choose to have your own physician see the child, please return the completed doctor's form to the nurse.
8. Body Mass Index Screening (BMI): Is mandated by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). It requires that all schools collect height and weight measurements of students in Grades 1, 4, 7, and 10. The results of the BMI Screening will be kept confidential in each student's school health record. This information will not be sent home unless it is requested by the parents.

*** **School Health Policy for Exclusion from School due to incomplete immunization for Medical and Religious Reasons:** If a student who is not fully immunized is exposed to a diagnosed case of a Vaccine Preventable Disease, he/she will be excluded from school according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Regulations. The most common diseases include, but are not limited to the following: Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Chickenpox and Pertussis. As soon as a physician confirms the diagnosis, the parent will be notified. Specifics regarding the time of exclusion vary with each illness and will be explained when pertinent.

School Health Records

Please be advised as of the 2007 school year all student health records will be distributed to all seniors at the end of the school year.

Please be advised there will no longer be copies available at the school after graduation.

Revised: November 2003, January 2008, February 2009, Jan 2015 Evaluated: January 2004, May 2004, January 2008, February 2009, May 2010, Dec 2012, June 2013, November 2013 & Jan 2016

Standing Order Medications:

In the event of a specific medical emergency, the school physician has written standing medication orders for the following medications:

- Benadryl may be given for a mild allergic reaction.
- Epipen may be given for an allergic reaction. (This order is not meant to replace the physician's order that is required for those students with a known allergy to insects or foods.)
- Naloxone (Narcan) can be administered for an individual experiencing a life threatening opiate overdose in a school setting.

BULLYING / HARASSMENT / DISCRIMINATION

The Administration and the Faculty of all our Swansea Elementary Schools shall strive to prevent harassment or discrimination within the school and its extended environment. The rights of individuals to receive a free public education devoid of discrimination and harassment are a priority of the Administration of Swansea Public Schools. The Administration and Faculty shall respond promptly and consistently to such discrimination or harassment when they have knowledge of its occurrence. The students of the Swansea Public Schools shall be provided with a safe, nurturing educational

environment and they will not be denied the "advantages and privileges" of a safe school. The Administration will do everything within its power to insure that this environment exists. Perpetrators of harassment and/or discrimination will be disciplined consistently and effectively in compliance with the progressive disciplinary procedures employed by the Swansea Public Schools.

Definition – Bullying:

Bullying is defined as the repeated use of a written, verbal, or electronic communication, or physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, by one or more students or employees directed at another student or employee that has an effect of:

- Causing physical or emotional harm or damage to his or her property;
- Placing the victim in reasonable fear of harm to him or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- Creating a hostile environment at school or the workplace for the victim;
- Infringing on the rights of the victim at school or work; or
- Materially and substantially disrupting the educational process or the orderly operation of the school or the workplace

Bullying is prohibited at non-school-related locations and through non-school technology or electronic devices when a nexus to school or work exists and it effects the school or work environment. Bullying causes physical and/or emotional harm to the target, it is never justified or excusable as "kids being kids," "just teasing," or any other rationalization. The victim is never responsible for being the target of bullying.

Harassment/Sexual Harassment:

These terms refer to unwelcome behavior of a physical, written, verbal, cyber, or electronic nature, including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or physical conduct or gestures of a sexual nature which are either repeated or severe, and which create a hostile, humiliating, intimidating and offensive educational environment or workplace. Harassment is a form of discrimination.

School Responsibility (M.G.L. Chap. 76.: Section 5):

This section provides the guarantee of non-discrimination "in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study in a public school on account of sex, race, color, age, national origin, religion, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, pregnancy, or veteran status." Severe or pervasive harassment unlawfully denies a student the "advantages and privileges" of school, creating a hostile and offensive educational environment.

Harassment/Discrimination Protocol:

It is the responsibility of all students and staff to recognize acts of harassment and take every action necessary to ensure that the applicable policies and procedures of this school district are implemented. Students and staff are expected to report incidents of harassment to Teachers, Guidance Counselors or Principals. [The School Resource Officer by the Administration in cases of potential criminal charges]. All reports of bullying/harassment, oral or written, may be made to any professional staff member or adult in a supervisory role. The recipient of any complaint is responsible for reporting said complaint to the Building Administrator. Anonymous complaints will be reviewed but are inherently difficult to investigate and substantiate and may not be procedurally fair; as a result, no disciplinary action will be taken on anonymous complaints unless verified by clear and convincing evidence. All other complaints will be reviewed based on a preponderance of evidence. A student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

- Prompt, impartial, and thorough investigations of all reported harassment will be completed by the Principal, and/or School Resource Officer.
- When alleged harassment/discrimination has occurred directly relating to a student's disability, the building Principal will notify the Student Services Director who will address the issue with the parties involved and notify the parent/guardian of the findings.

ref: Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990.

Investigations Will Include:

- 1) Identification of problem, students and sites.
- 2) Questioning and documentation of all parties involved (witnesses, target, and perpetrator statements).
- 3) Preservation of physical evidence.
- 4) Clear explanation of consequences for engaging in harassment to all parties.
- 5) Notification of parents/guardians of the targets & the perpetrators.

Administrative Action:

- 1) Prompt, effective, and consistent response to all incidents of harassment.
- 2) Prompt remedial action to prevent reoccurrence (referral for: Peer Mediation, Resolution Meeting including both parties). Failure to comply after a resolution meeting will result in appropriate disciplinary action.
- 3) Apply age-appropriate disciplinary measures that escalate with severity and reoccurrence of conduct (progressive disciplinary procedure).
- 4) Parent/guardian contact made to the parents/guardians of the targets and the perpetrators.
- 5) Appropriate support and counseling from the School Staff and the School Resource Officer for the target & perpetrator as needed. A clear explanation of consequences and direction toward reconciliation will be provided.
- 6) Restore non-discriminatory environment for the target.
- 7) Make appropriate law enforcement referrals/reports (assist target in reporting to law enforcement). Criminal charges may be filed at the discretion of the School Resource Officer.

Definition Hazing

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 any behavior or forced physical activity which is likely to affect the physical health or safety of any such student or person, or which subjects such student or person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. *ref: Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 269, Section 17*

Duty To Report Hazing

Any person who knew that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in M.G.L. Ch. 269, Sec. 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 or School Administrator as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime is subject to criminal action by the appropriate Law Enforcement Agency. *ref: Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 269, Section 18*

SEXUAL HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION POLICY:

(M.G.L. Chap. 76: Section 5)

Definition – Harassment is defined as conduct that:

1. Unreasonably interferes with an individual's work or educational performance
2. Creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or educational environment

This policy on harassment goes beyond the issues of gender and sexual harassment to include race, religion, national origin, ethnic background, sexual preference, color, age and disability.

Such behaviors may include verbal comments; subtle pressure for sexual activity, pinching, petting and other forms of unwanted touching as well as more severe manifestations such as sexual assault, rape, or attempted rape.

Students are protected from sexual harassment by title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. All complaints of sexual harassment involving either staff to student or involving adults are to be brought to the attention of the school principal or appropriate administrative supervisor immediately.

Procedures:

Procedures for dealing with sexual harassment (student to student, adult to student, student to adult)

All complaint regarding sexual harassment should be referred to the principal. The person making such a complaint has the option of including any other personnel in addition to the administration at his/her discretion.

On the first complaint the administrator will assist the victim in communicating to the harasser, in writing or verbally, a description of the harassing behavior, how the behavior made the victim feel, noting any consequences to school performance, and a request to stop harassment.

The administrator will be present when such communication is made and should record the date, time and substance of said communication for later reference. Peer mediation may be used as a means of solving the harassment is agreed by both parties.

If the victim so chooses, the communication to the harasser may be made by the administration alone. Care will be taken not to place the total onus for this communication on the victim. In either instance the administrator will inform the alleged harasser of the disciplinary consequences. Punishment may be suspension of up to ten (10) days for severe harassment cases.

Note: When sexual harassment is more than verbal, involving serious sexual behavior or when the victim brings a second complaint, a more formal investigation will be carried out. This investigation will be made by the principal or her/her designee (assistant principal) to determine if disciplinary action is warranted. This investigation, in which witnesses and additional evidence is gathered, will be conducted while maintaining confidentially and without violating the due process rights of the accused.

If the principal or designee finds sufficient cause the harasser may be:

1. Suspended from school for up to ten (10) days
2. May be excluded from school for a period of time longer than ten (10) days
3. Police may be informed of the harassment as outlined in the school discipline code for major infractions.

The Title IX/Chapter 622 Coordinator for our school district is Mr. John Robidoux.

PLEASE NOTE: Any district-wide harassment policy may supersede the aforementioned policy and proceedings upon approval of the Swansea School Committee. A copy of any updated policy will be provided to all faculty and students in a timely manner.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Appropriate behavior is an important part of every class and activity throughout the school day. It is expected that all pupils will:

1. Show respect for the rights and property of others.
2. Take care of all materials and equipment for which they are responsible.
3. Move safely and quietly in the building.
4. Avoid unnecessary interruptions or disturbances in class and throughout the school.
5. Follow the instructions of staff and others to whom they are responsible.

When a student is not cooperative, teachers and other adults on the staff will remind students what is expected of them. If the problem continues, the following steps may be necessary.

1. A private meeting with the teacher.
2. A note home from the teacher explaining the problem.
3. A meeting with the principal.
4. The principal may request a meeting with parents/guardians to discuss behavior.

In most cases, the steps above should be useful in ending the discipline problem. Repeated or serious poor behavior however, can lead to suspension from school.

School staff members may use reasonable force if necessary to protect students, other persons, or themselves from an assault by a student.

STUDENT DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE
MAJOR INFRACTIONS

The school administration will contact the parent/guardian and the

School Resource Officer may be involved when deemed necessary. The school will provide a due process hearing in order to suspend a student involved in, but not limited to, the following major infractions:

1. Leaving school grounds without proper authorization.
2. Disrespect, insubordination, or profanity
3. Possession or use of any illegal substances or material (see Drug/Alcohol Policy)
4. Fighting or assault on school grounds - progressive disciplinary action:
 - 1st offense - 1 day O.S.S., parent/guardian contact, re-entry meeting with students and parents/guardians.
 - 2nd offense - 3 days O.S.S., parental contact, re-entry meeting with student and parents/guardians, meeting with School Adjustment Counselor.
 - 3rd offense - 5-day out-of-school suspension, parent/guardian contact, written report by School Resource Officer, re-entry meeting with student and parents/guardians, meeting with School Adjustment Counselor.
 - 4th offense - 10 day out-of-school suspension, parent/guardian contact, written report by School Resource Officer, possible charges filed, re-entry meeting with student and parents/guardians.
5. Possession or use of any object considered to be a weapon or dangerous (safety issues); Chapter 71, Section 37H, 37H 1/2, 37H 3/4, MGL.
6. Destruction, vandalism, or defacement of school property
7. Threatening to bring a weapon to school or threatening to harm other students
8. Inappropriate dress at the discretion of school administration
9. Taking another student's or teacher's property
10. Students will be suspended for any involvement in teacher assault
11. Truancy/skipping school/excessive tardiness
12. Bullying or harassment
13. Excessive mischief resulting in damage to school property, injury to others, disruption to safety, order or discipline of the school

At the discretion of the school administration, all penalties for violating the major or minor disciplinary codes may be increased or decreased depending on the severity of the violation. Major infraction violations may result in a loss of school privileges such as; field trips, school activities and assemblies, field day and recess. Any offense to school order not mentioned in the Parent/Guardian-Student Handbook is at the discretion of the school administration. Suspension of a student from one to ten days (maximum) shall occur when there is a serious disruption of the educational process. All the above listed major infractions could lead to school suspension.

DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES: DISCIPLINE

1. Before a student can be suspended for ten (10) days or less, the school authorities have to provide him/her with due process that includes:
 - Oral or written notice of the charges against him/her
 - If the student denies the charges, an explanation of the evidence against him/her; and
 - An opportunity to present his/her side of the story, which if not utilized, does not prevent the imposition of discipline
2. In longer suspensions or expulsions, more formal proceedings may be required including:
 - At the very minimum, the school authorities will hear what the parents/guardians and student have to say in the student's defense
 - Written notice of the charges against him or her sent to the parents/guardians
 - Adequate time to prepare for the hearing
 - The right to present witnesses and testimony on his/her own behalf for expulsions
 - The right to counsel or representative to provide assistance, but not necessarily active participation for expulsions
 - The right to a prompt decision detailing the reasons for the expulsion or exclusion
3. Finally, it should be noted that these procedures should occur prior to the suspension. In emergency situations, however, the student may be suspended first; with the procedures taking place as soon as possible after the suspension has been imposed.

MAJOR OFFENSES SUBJECT TO EXPULSION HEARING:

Violations in the categories below are subject to expulsion from school by the Principal. This is mandated by Chapter 71 of the Act of 1993 signed into law on June 18, 1993 (Section 37H, 37H 1/2, 37H 3/4, MGL). The student shall be provided with an opportunity for a hearing before the expulsion is final.

1. "Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events 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." (Using, in possession of, or distributing the above said materials).
2. "Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at a school-sponsored or school related event, including athletic games..."

Procedures and Penalties:

1. Notification to police.
2. Immediate ten (10) day suspension from school
3. Notification to parents/guardians.
4. Referred to principal for an expulsion hearing.
5. Written notification to the student and parents/guardians concerning the offense and notification of the time and place of the hearing, in accordance with Chapter 761, Section 17 of the General Laws of Massachusetts.

STUDENT DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE MINOR INFRACTIONS

The disciplinary procedure will address the consequences for minor disciplinary infractions of school rules. Minor infractions include but are not limited to:

- Not following classroom and school rules
- Violation of dress code
- Failure to complete class work or assignments
- Failure to comply with teacher requests
- Disrespectful behavior towards others

1. **Documentation:**
Teachers will maintain documentation of student violations of school rules.
2. **Parent/Guardian Contact:**
If the student continues to commit the documented infraction, the teacher will contact the student's parent by phone or letter. The teacher should keep records of parent/guardian conferences.
3. **Teacher/Team - Parent/Guardian Conferences:**
If the behavior persists, make an appointment to meet with the student's parents/guardians. The appointment should be made at the convenience of both the teacher and the parents/guardians; an administrator or school counselor may be asked to be present.

SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENT DISCIPLINE

1. When it is known that the suspension(s) of a special need student will accumulate to ten (10) days in a school year, a review of the I.E.P. as provided in Section 333 of the C. 766 Regulations will be held to determine the appropriateness of the student placement or program. If the TEAM concludes that the student's misconduct is related to the student's disability, is the result of an inappropriate special education placement, or is the result of an I.E.P. not fully implemented, the IEP will be modified to reflect a new program designed to better meet the student's needs. Following parent/guardian approval, the student will be placed immediately in the new program. If the TEAM concludes that the student's misconduct was not related to the student's disability, or the result of an inappropriate special education placement, and that the original I.E.P. was fully implemented:
 - a. An amendment to the I.E.P. will be developed and implemented to provide for the delivery of special education services to the student during the period of exclusion.
 - b. The original I.E.P. will be modified to reflect a long-term plan (including discipline code expectations) designed to assure the student's continued attendance in an educational program.

2. If suspension will result in an exclusion of more than ten (10) days in a school year, immediate written notification of the suspension and request for approval of the alternative plan must be made to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, with copy to the student's parents/guardians. A copy of the alternative plan must be included, and the request for approval must demonstrate that:
- The school has complied with the procedures required by *Goss v. Lopez* and by the school committee's Code of Conduct, a copy of which is on file with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
 - The school has considered less restrictive disciplinary measures, including modifying the student I.E.P. to set out specific methods of discipline
 - The disciplinary action is for a stated and limited number of days
 - The action is necessary in light of the needs of the student and other students in the school
 - The school administrators have conferred with appropriate special education staff as to the disciplinary action and have met the requirements outlined in the above procedure

The Division of Special Education will review all the information presented by the school officials and will approve or reject the alternative plan within five days of its receipt by the regional center.

In the case of a long-term suspension or the exclusion of a student with special needs, division staff generally will approve an alternative program for the provisions of special education services as an interim placement only, based on limited duration and consistent with the goals and objectives of the student's I.E.P. Home tutoring is viewed as a last resort of very limited duration to be used while an appropriate program is being determined.

The Department of Education will monitor records of suspension of special needs students.

Disciplining Students not yet eligible for Special Education Services (34CFR 300.530) - Special Education disciplinary rules also apply to some students who have not yet been found eligible for special education services. If prior to the conduct in question the parent/guardian has put his/her concern that the student has a possible disability in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel, or the student's teacher or guidance counselor, if the teacher or other supervisory personnel, or if the student has been referred for an evaluation that has not yet been completed, these special rules apply. The special education disciplinary rules do not apply if the parent/guardian has refused to consent to an evaluation or if the student has previously been found to be not eligible for special education.

Disciplining of Students with 504's - The code of conduct applies to students with and without disabilities; however, students on 504 plans must have an equal opportunity to be successful with classroom rules and behavioral regulations. Section 504 prohibits districts from disciplining students more severely than non-disabled students on the basis of disability. The free and appropriate education (FAPE) requirement of Section 504 provides that appropriate procedures for discipline are designed to meet individual educational needs of students with disabilities. Students with 504 plans may be excluded from their programs, as can students without disabilities. If students are suspended or expelled, they are entitled to oral or written notice of charges and an appeal for the opportunity to tell their side. Expulsion or suspensions of 10 or more days are considered a change of placement and must follow the procedures designated by the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). When students with 504 plans are excluded from their program for more than 10 school days in the school year, it must be determined if the behavior was a result of the students' disability (manifestation determination). If it is determined that the behavior was related to the disability, students may not be excluded from the current educational placement until a new plan is written. The behavioral intervention services and modifications in the plan should address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. If the student's misconduct is determined not related to his disability then the district may discipline in the same way as other students would be disciplined. 504 students do not have to be provided with a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) during expulsion or suspension

for behavior not related to the disability. Students currently engaged in drug or alcohol abuse are not protected under Section 504. When the placement of students with disabilities is changed for disciplinary reasons, the students and parents/guardians are entitled to the procedural protections required by Section 504 and the ADA. (A school district may employ due process procedures that meet the requirements of IDEA to comply with the Section 504 and ADA requirements for procedural safeguards.) These protections include appropriate notice to parents/guardians, an opportunity for their examination of records, an impartial hearing with the participation of parents/guardian and an opportunity for their representation by counsel and a review procedure. Thus, if, after a re-evaluation of an initial placement decision, the parents/guardians disagree with the determination regarding the relationship of the behavior to the disability or with the subsequent placement proposal in those cases where the behavior is determined to be caused by the disability, they may request an impartial hearing. A school district is not prohibited from employing its normal, reasonable procedures short of a significant change in placement for dealing with 504 students who are endangering themselves or others. When students present an immediate threat to the safety of others, school officials may promptly adjust the placement or suspend the students for up to 10 school days, in accordance with rules that are applied evenhandedly to all children.

RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

The Swansea Public Schools has a hands-off policy with students. No student will be physically restrained in any way unless the student's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to self and/or others.

Policy: Every school has staff members that are trained in restraint procedures. The Swansea School Committee has adopted a student restraint policy that ensures that students are free from the unreasonable use of restraint. Physical restraint will only be used in emergency situations, after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. This full restraint policy is available in the Superintendent's office.

Reporting: The staff member who administers the restraint will inform the principal verbally as soon as possible, and in writing no later than the next school working day. The student's parent/guardian will be informed verbally as soon as possible and by written report postmarked no later than three working days following the restraint.

SUSPENSION

Length of suspension will be determined by school authorities and will reflect the offense committed. Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing of the action taken and will have complete custody and jurisdiction of their child during the suspension. A suspended student may not loiter or appear on school property or at any school-sponsored activity at or away from the school. He or she will be permitted to make up all work and tests missed with credit.

A student will be readmitted to school after parents/guardians and administration agree upon a satisfactory solution to his conduct. A student may be suspended for up to ten days for each offense. It is the school's administrative policy that suspension be used only as a last resort or due to violation of the school's disciplinary code.

Students may be suspended for offenses which include but are not limited to the following:

- Leaving school grounds without proper authorization.
- Disrespect, insubordination, or profanity directed towards any school personnel.
- Possession or use of any illegal substance or material (Refer to Drug/Alcohol Policy.)
- Fighting or assault on school grounds.
- Possession or use of anything that is or could be considered to be a weapon.
- Destruction, vandalism, or defacing school property.
- Students **can be** suspended for any involvement in teacher assault.
- Bullying/ Harassment.
- Threatening of any type.