

Monson Public Schools 2025-2026

Handbook for Students and Families



Mission

The mission of the Monson Public Schools is to maximize learning by adhering to high standards of academic achievement, preparing all students to become responsible, productive global citizens.

Vision

The vision of the Monson Public Schools is to be a high-performing, nurturing and dynamic learning environment, in which the community supports the stated mission, and where staff and students are passionate, lifelong learners.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
DISTRICT CALENDAR	9
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS	10
NON-DISCRIMINATION	12
TRANSLATION SERVICES	13
DISTRICT COORDINATORS	14
DIRECTORY OF ADMINISTRATION	15

1 GENERAL INFORMATION GRADES PREK-12

1.1 FAMILY AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

- 1.1.1 School Council
- 1.1.2 Monson Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)
- 1.1.3 PTSA and other Parent Groups
- 1.1.4 School Messenger Telephone System
- 1.1.5 Visitor Access
- 1.1.6 Informal Classroom and School Visitations
- 1.1.7 Formal Parent Observations in Classrooms
- 1.1.8 Complaints
- 1.1.9 Home Schooling
- 1.1.10 Curricula and Materials

1.2 ATTENDANCE, PROMOTION, AND ASSESSMENT

- 1.2.1 Requirements for School Entrance
- 1.2.2 Residency Requirement for Students
- 1.2.3 Absences Due to Religious Holidays
- 1.2.4 Transferring Students
- 1.2.5 Assessment Plan
- 1.2.6 Grading Periods-Report Cards

1.3 DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

- 1.3.1 Health Care
- 1.3.2 English Language Learning and Support
- 1.3.3 Special Education
- 1.3.4 District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP)
- 1.3.5 Student Teacher Assistance Team (STAT)
- 1.3.6 Risk/Threat Assessment
- 1.3.7 Home and Hospital Instruction

1.4 HEALTH POLICIES

- 1.4.1 Immunization
- 1.4.2 Concussion
- 1.4.3 Medication Policy
- 1.4.4 Nurse's Office
- 1.4.5 Communicable Diseases
- 1.4.6 Physical Examinations
- 1.4.7 Physical Limitations/Pregnancy
- 1.4.8 Exposure Control Plan

1.5 ADDITIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

- 1.5.1 Cafeteria Services
- 1.5.3 Cafeteria Meal Charging Policy
- 1.5.4 Cafeteria Reimbursement Procedure
- 1.5.5 Cafeteria Collection Procedure
- 1.5.6 Cafeteria Bounced Check/Insufficient Funds
- 1.5.7 Transportation and Bus Policy
- 1.5.8 Grade Specific Transportation Policies
- 1.5.9 Rules for Riding the Bus
- 1.5.10 Bus Route/Stop Changes
- 1.5.11 Weapons
- 1.5.12 Lost or Damaged Textbooks/School Property
- 1.5.13 Gambling
- 1.5.14 Responsibility / Liability
- 1.5.15 Canine Searches

1.6 NETWORK, INTERNET, E-MAIL, AND ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

1.7 SAFETY AND EMERGENCIES

- 1.7.1 School Cancellation
- 1.7.2 Delayed Opening of School
- 1.7.3 Early Dismissal Due to Inclement Weather
- 1.7.4 Health, Safety, and Emergency Communications
- 1.7.5 Evacuation
- 1.7.6 Student and Staff Safety
- 1.7.7 Off-Site Evacuation and Dismissal Policy

1.8 CIVIL RIGHTS AND LEGAL REFERENCES

- 1.8.1 Mandated Reporting
- 1.8.2 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act
- 1.8.3 Liaisons
- 1.8.4 School Placement, Transportation, and Enrollment
- 1.8.5 Transportation
- 1.8.6 Enrollment
- 1.8.7 DESE McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Process
- 1.8.8 Dispute Resolution Process

1.9 EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

- 1.9.1 Glossary of Relevant Definitions Related to Bullying and Discriminatory Harassment
- 1.9.2 Types of Discriminatory Harassment
- 1.9.3 Hazing
- 1.9.4 Bullying, Hazing, and Intimidation Policy
- 1.9.5 Physical Contact, Threats, Harassment, and Bullying
- 1.9.6 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan
- 1.9.7 Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Bullying, Hazing, and Intimidation Claims
- 1.9.8 Education and Skill Building
- 1.9.9 Gender Identity
- 1.9.10 Child Nutrition Programs
- 1.9.11 USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

1.10 ANTI-DISCRIMINATION/ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

- 1.10.1 What Is Discrimination, including Harassment?
- 1.10.2 Responsibilities of all Persons Associated with Educational Community
- 1.10.3 Designated Officials for Addressing Discrimination and Harassment Complaints
- 1.10.4 Procedure for Reporting Discrimination and Harassment
- 1.10.5 Investigation of Complaints
- 1.10.6 Consequences of Violating Policy - Discipline & Discharge
- 1.10.7 Confidentiality
- 1.10.8 State and Federal Authorities
- 1.10.9 Sex-Based Harassment/Discrimination
- 1.10.10 Procedure for Reporting and Investigating Harassment on the Basis of Sex

1.12 HOLIDAY OBSERVANCES

1.13 STUDENT RECORDS LAW

- 1.13.1 General Provisions
- 1.13.2 Directory Information Notice
- 1.13.3 Rights of Certain Divorced or Separated Parents
- 1.13.4 Amending Your Child's Record
- 1.13.5 Notice on Transfer to Other Schools
- 1.13.6 Destruction of Records
- 1.13.7 Display and Publication of Student Work
- 1.13.8 Complaint Procedure

1.14 PHYSICAL RESTRAINT REGULATIONS SCHOOL DISTRICT GENERAL POLICY

- 1.14.1 Use of Physical Restraint
- 1.14.2 Prohibited Use of Physical Restraint
- 1.14.3 Prohibited Methods of Physical Restraint and Separation Techniques
- 1.14.4 Notification Requirements
- 1.14.5 Additional Administrative Requirements

1.15 DUE PROCESS FOR SUSPENSIONS

- 1.15.1 Notice of Proposed Suspension
- 1.15.2 Short-Term Suspensions: Hearing and Principal Determination
- 1.15.3 Long-Term Suspensions: Hearing and Principal Determination

1.16 ACADEMIC PROGRESS

- 1.16.1 Students suspended, or expelled for more than ten (10) consecutive school days
- 1.16.2 Appeal of Long-Term Suspension
- 1.16.3 Emergency Removal
- 1.16.4 In-School Suspension Under 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10
- 1.16.5 Suspension or Expulsion for Disciplinary Offenses Under M.G.L. 71 §§37H and 37H1/2

1.17 DISCIPLINE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- 1.17.1 Students Identified as Having Special Needs
- 1.17.2 Students Identified as Having a Disability and on a Section 504 Plan

1.17.3 Procedural Requirements for Students Not Yet Determined to be Eligible for Special Education

1.18 USE OF PESTICIDES ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

1.19 COLLABORATION WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

2 EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER AT QUARRY HILL COMMUNITY SCHOOL

2.1 ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES FOR SCHOOL

- 2.1.1 Arrival
- 2.1.2 Dismissal
- 2.1.3 Early Dismissals
- 2.1.4 Absences
- 2.1.5 Tardiness
- 2.1.6 Vacation Policy
- 2.1.7 Absences Due to Religious Holidays

2.2 REPORT CARDS

2.3 PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

2.4 PRESCHOOL/KINDERGARTEN HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

2.5 CODE OF CONDUCT AND STUDENT DISCIPLINE

2.6 DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES AND CONSEQUENCES

- 2.6.1 Student Code of Conduct: Rules and Regulations
- 2.6.2 Consequences
- 2.6.3 Discipline Categories

2.7 CELL PHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

2.8 TOYS

2.9 CELEBRATIONS

2.10 PARTY INVITATIONS

2.11 LOST AND FOUND

2.12 CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

2.13 COMMUNICATION OF CONCERNS

2.14 CLASS PLACEMENT POLICY

2.15 SCHOOL ATTIRE

2.16 FIELD TRIPS

3 GRANITE VALLEY SCHOOL

3.1 ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES FOR SCHOOL

- 3.1.1 Arrival
- 3.1.2 Dismissal
- 3.1.3 Tardy Policy
- 3.1.4 Early Dismissals
- 3.1.5 School Attendance
- 3.1.6 Absences

3.2 GENERAL SCHOOL VISITATION

3.3 PARENT VOLUNTEERS

3.4 PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

3.5 POWERSCHOOL

3.6 HOMEWORK POLICY

3.7 ORGANIZATIONAL/STUDY SKILLS

3.10 POLICIES RELATING TO STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

- 3.10.1 Student Code of Conduct: Rules and Regulations
- 3.10.2 Consequences
- 3.10.3 Categories of Behavior

3.11 STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

- 3.11.1 Bicycles, skateboards, rollerblades, scooters, and wheelies
- 3.11.3 Money and Valuables
- 3.11.4 Cell Phones and Electronic Devices
- 3.11.5 Physical Education
- 3.11.6 Gum
- 3.11.7 Respect and Care of School Property
- 3.11.8 School Attire

3.12 STUDENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- 3.12.1 Extra Help
- 3.12.2 Cafeteria Service
- 3.12.3 Sexual Education
- 3.12.4 Excursion Policies
- 3.12.5 Field Trips and Co-Curricular Activities
- 3.12.6 Lost and Found

4 MONSON HIGH SCHOOL

4.1 ATTENDANCE

- 4.1.1 Arrival
- 4.1.2 Tardy Policy
- 4.1.3 Illness
- 4.1.4 Dismissal
- 4.1.5 Attendance Policy
- 4.1.6 Truancy
- 4.1.7 Absences Due to Religious Holidays
- 4.1.8 School Sponsored Activities
- 4.1.9 Guidelines for Make-Up Work
- 4.1.10 Guidelines for Missing Final Exams

4.2 ACADEMICS

- 4.2.1 Homework Policy
- 4.2.2 Extra Help
- 4.2.3 Academic Eligibility for Student Athletes
- 4.2.4 Requirements for Graduation
- 4.2.5 Promotion/Retention
- 4.2.6 Honors/Advanced Placement
- 4.2.7 Weighted Grades, GPA, and Class Rank
- 4.2.8 Student Progress Reports for grades 7-12
- 4.2.9 Honor Roll for Grades 7-12
- 4.2.10 Dual Enrollment Coursework
- 4.2.11 Summer School Regulations
- 4.2.12 Credits/Grades
- 4.2.13 Selection Procedure for National Honor Society

- 4.2.14 NHS Dismissal
- 4.2.15 Independent Study Program
- 4.2.16 Sexual Education
- 4.2.17 Physical Education

4.3 COUNSELING

- 4.3.1 School Counseling
- 4.3.2 Schedule Changes
- 4.3.3 Transfer
- 4.3.4 Withdrawal
- 4.3.5 Student Records
- 4.3.6 Career Information
- 4.3.7 College Admissions
- 4.3.8 College Board Entrance Examination
- 4.3.9 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Program

4.4 DISCIPLINE

- 4.4.1 Policies Relating to Student Conduct and Discipline
- 4.4.2 Student Code of Conduct: Rules and Regulations
- 4.4.3 Cafeteria Behavior
- 4.4.4 Academic Honesty
- 4.4.5 Academic Ethics and Integrity

4.5 SAFETY

- 4.5.1 School Safety
- 4.5.2 Courtesy
- 4.5.3 Restrooms
- 4.5.4 Unattended Belongings and Personal Items
- 4.5.5 Outdoor Areas
- 4.5.6 Parent Volunteers
- 4.5.7 Visitors to School
- 4.5.8 Emergency and Non-Prescription Medication Form
- 4.5.9 Safety Drills
- 4.5.10 Federal Gun-Free Schools Act
- 4.5.11 Bicycles, skateboards, rollerblades, scooters, and wheelies
- 4.5.12 Parking, Use of Automobiles and Motorcycles
- 4.5.13 Breathalyzer Protocol
- 4.5.14 Eighteen Year Old Policy

4.6 GENERAL INFORMATION

- 4.6.1 Cafeteria Service
- 4.6.2 Contacting Students and Staff in School
- 4.6.3 Lockers
- 4.6.4 Money and Valuables
- 4.6.5 Respect and Care of School Property
- 4.6.6 School Attire
- 4.6.7 Morning Announcements and PA System
- 4.6.8 Student Accountability and Debts

- 4.6.9 Lost and Found
- 4.6.10 Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 4.6.11 Working Papers
- 4.6.12 Excursion Policies
- 4.6.13 Field Trips and Co-Curricular Activities
- 4.6.14 Library
- 4.6.15 Special Committees

MONSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS | 2025-2026 DISTRICT CALENDAR

<p>21 & 22 - New Teacher Orientation</p> <p>25 & 26 - Teacher Work Day / Teacher In-Service Day</p> <p>27 - First Day, grades 1-12</p>	AUGUST '25	JANUARY '26	<p>1 - New Year's Day</p> <p>2 - No School</p> <p>5 - School Reopen</p> <p>19 - Martin Luther King Jr Day</p> <p>23 - Early Release (Teacher Work Day)</p> <p>16 - Presidents Day</p> <p>17-20 - Winter Recess</p>																				
<p>1 - Labor Day</p> <p>2 - First Day of Prek and K</p>	SEPTEMBER '25	FEBRUARY '26	<p>19 - Early Release (Parent-Teacher Conferences and Teacher In-Service)</p> <p>13 - Indigenous Peoples' Day / Columbus Day</p>																				
<p>8 - Early Release (Parent-Teacher Conferences and Teacher In-Service)</p> <p>13 - Indigenous Peoples' Day / Columbus Day</p>	OCTOBER '25	MARCH '26	<p>20 - Patriots' Day</p> <p>21-24 - Spring Recess</p>																				
<p>10 - No School / Teacher In-Service</p> <p>11 - Veterans Day Observed</p> <p>26 - Early Release</p> <p>27-28 - Thanksgiving Recess</p> <p>24-31 - Holiday Recess</p>	NOVEMBER '25	APRIL '26	<p>13 - Early Release (Teacher In-Service)</p> <p>25 - Memorial Day</p>																				
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="font-size: 0.8em;">Early Release Time</th> <th style="font-size: 0.8em;">School</th> <th style="font-size: 0.8em;">Regular School Hours</th> <th style="font-size: 0.8em;">2 Hour Delay Hours</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>11:30</td> <td>Quarry Hill</td> <td>8:55 – 3:10</td> <td>10:55 – 3:10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11:30</td> <td>Granite Valley</td> <td>8:55 – 3:10</td> <td>10:55 – 3:10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10:35</td> <td>Monson High</td> <td>7:35 – 2:05</td> <td>9:35 – 2:05</td> </tr> <tr style="background-color: #f2f2f2;"> <td colspan="2">No School Days = X</td> <td colspan="2">Half School Days = /</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Early Release Time	School	Regular School Hours	2 Hour Delay Hours	11:30	Quarry Hill	8:55 – 3:10	10:55 – 3:10	11:30	Granite Valley	8:55 – 3:10	10:55 – 3:10	10:35	Monson High	7:35 – 2:05	9:35 – 2:05	No School Days = X		Half School Days = /		DECEMBER '25	MAY '26	<p>11 - Early Release 180th Day</p> <p>18 - Early Release 185th Day (with five snow days)</p> <p>19 - Juneteenth</p>
Early Release Time	School	Regular School Hours	2 Hour Delay Hours																				
11:30	Quarry Hill	8:55 – 3:10	10:55 – 3:10																				
11:30	Granite Valley	8:55 – 3:10	10:55 – 3:10																				
10:35	Monson High	7:35 – 2:05	9:35 – 2:05																				
No School Days = X		Half School Days = /																					
	JUNE '26																						

This publication summarizes many laws, policies, regulations, and practices that are important to the Monson Public Schools' (MPS) students and their parents and guardians. It is not intended to be a complete directory of all laws and policies, relating to students and parents.

Federal and state laws, MPS policies, regulations, and practices at the system-wide and school building levels, are subject to change.

PAUL N. FOSTER
Superintendent of Schools

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2025-2026

Alison Morgan
Chair

morgana@monsonschools.com

Karen Nothe-Valley
Vice Chair

nothevalleyk@monsonschools.com

Peter Wiggins
Secretary

wigginsp@monsonschools.com

Jamie Murphy
Member

murphyj@monsonschools.com

Colleen Flynn
Member

flynnc@monsonschools.com

The entire School Committee can be emailed at SchoolCommittee@monsonschools.com

The School Committee typically holds regular business meetings once a month at Quarry Hill Community School. Meetings are broadcast live, and repeated the following day over the local public access station (M-PACT) which is broadcast on channel 17 (Comcast). Meetings are open to the public and community members are encouraged to attend either in-person or via Google Meet.

Dear Students and Families,

It is with great pride and genuine excitement that I welcome you to a new school year in the Monson Public Schools. As your new Superintendent, I am honored to join this vibrant and caring community, where students are at the heart of everything we do.

This Handbook for Students and Families is designed to be a helpful guide throughout the year. Inside, you'll find important information about district policies, procedures, and expectations—including topics such as safety, student rights and responsibilities, bullying prevention, and more. We encourage you to read through it carefully and keep it accessible for reference (it's always available as a link on the homepage of our website at <https://www.monsonschools.com/>). If you ever have questions or need clarification, your building principal is always available to help.

Monson is a district defined by its commitment to academic excellence, success for all students, and strong community partnerships. Our dedicated educators and staff work tirelessly to create learning environments that are safe, supportive, and engaging for every student. We offer a rich curriculum and a wide range of extracurricular opportunities that nurture the whole child.

As we begin this new chapter together, I look forward to building strong relationships with students, families, staff, and our broader community. Let's make this year one of growth, connection, and shared success.

Warmest wishes for a joyful and fulfilling school year ahead.

Sincerely,

Paul N. Foster
Superintendent
Monson Public Schools

NON-DISCRIMINATION

Students will be treated without discrimination based on sex, age, marital status, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or handicap, national origin or pregnancy in compliance with State and Federal laws. Equal educational opportunity is available to all students with respect to enrollment, programs, and participation in school, athletic, and extracurricular activities, including those students who are pregnant or parenting. In addition, the District believes that students should learn in an atmosphere free of harassment or bullying, and will take affirmative steps to eliminate any inappropriate conduct brought to its attention.

The Monson Public Schools District, pursuant to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Acts (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, M.G.L. c. 76, sect.5, M.G.L. c. 151B, M.G.L. c. 151C, Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1972, and Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, does not discriminate against:

1. Any adult on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, marital status, or veteran status in any employment status or access to programs available to such adults; and
2. Any student on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability, be denied equal access or admission to school programs, courses, and/or extra-curricular activities.

Any student, parent, or guardian who believes they have been discriminated against, denied a benefit, or excluded from participation in any district program or activity on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability in violation of this policy may file a written grievance with the Superintendent of Schools or designee.

Non-Discrimination against Students with Disabilities

The Monson Public Schools District does not discriminate on the basis of disability. Program applicants, participants, members of the general public, employees, job applicants, and others are entitled to participate in and benefit from all agency programs, activities, and services without regard to disability. Copies of this notice are available, upon request, in alternate print formats (large print, audiotape, Braille, computer disk, etc.). Our grievance procedure, self- evaluation, as well as ADA policies, practices and procedures are available upon request.

Inquiries, requests, and complaints should be directed to the Superintendent of Schools or designee. Copies of the laws and regulations may be obtained from the Office of Civil Rights, Region I, 33 Arch Street, Boston, MA (617) 289-0111.

TRANSLATION SERVICES

At the request of a parent/guardian or adult student whose primary language is not English, school generated documents like the student handbook, code of discipline, procedural notices, correspondence and the like will be translated into that primary language. Requests for translation should be made to the Superintendent of Schools at 413-267-4150.

Na prośbę rodziny, których pierwszym językiem nie jest angielski, ten dokument zostanie przetłumaczony na język polski. Proszę dzwonić 413-267-4150 ext. 4916.

的要求,一个家庭的第一语言不是英语,这一文件将被翻译成中文。呼叫。413-267-4150 ext. 4916.

Si usted necesita ayuda para leer este documento u otras publicaciones de la escuela, por favor llame al 413-267-4150 ext. 4916.

DISTRICT COORDINATORS

Harassment and Title IX

Colette Bidus
43 Margaret Street
Monson, MA 01057
413-267-4150

Christopher Fontaine
43 Margaret Street
Monson, MA 010597
413-267-4150

Homeless Liaison

Colette Bidus
43 Margaret Street
Monson, MA 01057
413-267-4150

ADA Coordinator and Section 504 Coordinator

Colette Bidus/
Melissa Mannello
43 Margaret Street
Monson, MA 01057
413-267-4150

Title I and ELL Program Coordinator

Paul Foster
Superintendent of Schools
43 Margaret Street
Monson, MA 01057
413-267-4150

Monson Public Schools District

DIRECTORY OF ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent of Schools
Paul N. Foster
43 Margaret Street, Monson, MA 01057
413-267-4150 ext 4901

Director of Business & Operations
Leah Zippin
43 Margaret Street, Monson, MA 01057
413-267-4150

Director of Special Education
Colette Bidus
43 Margaret Street, Monson, MA 01057
413-267-4150

Director of Facilities
Paul DeMaio
43 Margaret Street, Monson, MA 01057
413-267-4150

Director of Food Services
Tracy Blanchard
43 Margaret Street, Monson, MA 01057
413-267-4150

DIRECTORY OF SCHOOLS

Early Childhood Center at Quarry Hill Community School (PreK-K)
Penny Ann Manteria, Principal
43 Margaret Street, Monson, MA 01057 Phone (413) 267-4160
Fax (413) 267-4154
Hours: 8:55 a.m.-3:10 p.m.

Granite Valley School (Grades 1-6)
Jordan Wissinger, Principal
21 Thompson Street, Monson, MA 01057 Phone (413) 267-4155
Fax (413) 267-4624
Hours: 8:55 a.m.-3:10 p.m.

Monson High School (Grades 7-12)
Christopher Fontaine, Principal
55 Margaret Street, Monson, MA 01057 Phone (413) 267-4589
Fax (413) 267-4157
Hours: 7:35 a.m.-2:05 p.m.

SECTION 1

**GENERAL INFORMATION GRADES
PREK-12**

1.1 FAMILY AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

The School Connection

The family and school partnership is an essential component of the successful educational experience. A strong partnership provides opportunities to organize and sustain excellent programs and strengthen the type of communication that will increase student success in school.

1.1.1 School Council

Each school council consists of the school principal, who shall co-chair the council; parents of students attending the school who are selected by the parents of students attending such school, teachers, and community members. The school council meets regularly with the principal of the school and assists in the identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school, in the review of the annual school budget, and in the formulation of a school improvement plan, which is submitted to the school committee for review and approval every year (Chapter 71, Section 59C).

1.1.2 Monson Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC)

The SEPAC is an organization that provides support and networking for parents with children who have disabilities . This parent group meets regularly and offers workshops and special events throughout the school year. The Special Education Parent Advisory Council acts as Special Needs Liaisons to the district to facilitate the exchange of ideas and information and act as a resource for parents with questions. Meetings are open to residents of Monson, parents of MPS students, or persons affiliated with the Monson Public School District (MPS). Meetings are held during the school year on an agreed upon time and scheduled by the SEPAC President, and may be held in person, virtually, or using a hybrid model. Interested parents should contact the Director of Special Education at (413) 267-4150 for the current contacts.

1.1.3 PTSA and other Parent Groups

The District encourages parental involvement in the educational process. Support groups such as PTSA, and booster clubs, working together with the administration, can enrich the offerings available to students and create a cooperative relationship between the home and school.

Activities of these groups are coordinated through the school administration.

1.1.4 School Messenger Telephone System

School Messenger is an automated phone and email notification system that supports school to family communication efforts. Through this system, families receive important messages about emergencies, events, or other school matters. To maintain optimal effectiveness, please notify the school office if there are changes in emergency contact information. Families will be updated daily for students who are absent from school via an automated system.

1.1.5 Visitor Access

A safe school environment is essential for learning and it is the highest priority for the Monson Public Schools. For the security of our students and staff, and the safety of our guests, all school buildings are locked during school hours, and activity is video monitored.

All guests should expect the following procedures when entering the building.

1. Upon arrival, press the call button on your left by the main door (right side of the door at the high school).
2. When requested, state your name and the purpose of your visit and wait until you are instructed to come in.
3. Please do not hold the door for the person behind you.
4. Proceed to the office and you will be issued a visitor badge and directed to a sign-in log. You must wear and display your visitor badge at all times during your stay, as this will indicate that your presence in the building is authorized. When you are leaving, return your badge and use the log to record the time of your departure.

Occasionally, there may be circumstances that will require you to show an ID, such as a driver's license, in order to enter the building or pick up your child. While some of these measures may

create anxiety, inconvenience or delays, they are necessary steps to provide the safest and most secure learning environment possible.

1.1.6 Informal Classroom and School Visitations

The District supports and encourages the active involvement of parents in their children's learning. Informal visitations, distinguished from formal observations (see below), are opportunities for parents to support their children's participation in a school/ classroom activity or event. Informal visitations are not to be used in determining the appropriateness of a program and/or to become more familiar with the program and staff or to evaluate academic programs or staff. The following procedures must be followed during informal classroom and school visitations:

All parents must follow District protocol for safety when visiting our schools.

- Parents must make prior arrangements with the school principal and teacher.
- All visits shall be of such reasonable length and at such a time as to be non-disruptive to the instruction of students, as determined by the teacher and school principal.
- All visitors are to report first to the school principal's office. No unauthorized person will be permitted access to any classroom.
- The schools reserve the right to limit the number of visits to classrooms to protect the learning process and the confidentiality rights of students.

1.1.7 Formal Parent Observations in Classrooms

The Monson Public Schools District believes parents are important partners in educating students and welcomes parental participation in determining a child's appropriate educational program. To that end, we open our classrooms to parents or a parent representative who want to observe a child in the school setting when practical. For the purposes herein, parent representative means an independent evaluator, educational consultant, or an individual who preferably holds certification or licensure from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in a field directly related to the child's educational program. The following procedures shall be followed when an observation is requested:

1. A request to observe a child in the child's current or potential educational placement must be scheduled at least five (5) days in advance through the building principal;
2. The building principal shall contact the parent(s) to schedule a meeting or phone conference within five (5) days of receipt of the parents' request to discuss the purpose(s) of the observation;
3. The observation will be scheduled at a mutually- agreed upon time and date after consultation with the classroom teacher(s);
4. The principal will consult with the classroom teacher and the observer to set up the parameters of the observation (including, but not limited to, conferences with school staff, review of work products, and placement of the observer in the classroom);
5. The number, frequency, and duration of observation periods will be determined on an individual basis. The start and end time and day(s) of observation periods will be determined in advance. In order to minimize classroom disruption, the length and number of individual observation periods may be limited. The complexity of the child's needs, as well as the program(s) to be observed, should determine what the observation will entail and what amount of time is needed to complete it.
6. The parent must sign a release for a parent representative to observe a child;
7. The parent or parent representative must be silent at all times and not interrupt the educational process in the classroom. If the observer's presence disrupts the learning environment, they will be asked to leave. This notice is particularly important since the presence of parents can influence the performance of the child being observed as well as other children;
8. The parent or parent representative may not record at any time during their observation, by any recording device. This prohibition against recording includes, but is not limited to, the use of cell phones, tablets, or pocket recorders. Parent and parent representatives are hereby advised that under Massachusetts law, any such recording is illegal.
9. The parent or parent representative is not observing for the purpose of evaluating a teacher's ability to perform his or her contractual duties. The parent or parent representative

must report to the school office (as do all visitors) as part of the School District's Safety Protocol. A school administrator or designee will accompany the observer and may remain and take notes as to what is observed, paying particular attention to anything that is atypical during the observation period;

10. Observations during state testing or during the first or last weeks of school are highly discouraged and will generally not be scheduled;
11. The parent or parent representative must sign the "Observation Agreement" so that both the School District and classroom parents have assurance that information concerning other students' education remains in the classroom and is not discussed in public.

1.1.8 Complaints

Complaints about the performance of staff members are most appropriately lodged first with the individual directly involved, then with the principal and appealed to the Superintendent if necessary. When a complaint about an administrator or central office staff member is necessary, such a complaint should be brought to the attention of the Superintendent who will investigate and take appropriate action. Concerns about athletic staff members or special education personnel should first be brought to the attention of the individual directly involved, then the administrator responsible for the staff person and finally the Superintendent.

Complaints regarding curricula, materials or building operations should be first directed to the school principal. Complaints about district-wide policies should be brought to the attention of the School Committee. While some complaints may be made verbally, complaints of a serious nature should be made in writing, be specific in nature and detail desired actions. Complaints should never be made anonymously.

1.1.9 Home Schooling

In May 1987, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court decided the case entitled *Care and Protection of Charles*. The decision addresses legal standards for approval of home education programs of children of compulsory school age in Massachusetts. Prior to removing the child from the public school, the parent/guardian must submit written notification of establishment of the home-based program to the Superintendent at least 14 days before the program is established, and resubmit notification on an annual basis as long as the child or children are being educated in a home-based environment. The parent/guardian must certify in writing, on a form provided by the district, the name, age, place of residence, and number of hours of attendance of each child in the program. MPS policy requires that in writing parents explain their request and specifically address the following questions:

1. What is the proposed curriculum and projected number of hours of instruction in each of the proposed subjects for the entire year?
2. What is the competency of the individuals who will be instructing your child?
3. What textbooks, workbooks, and instructional materials will be used, along with lesson plans and teaching manuals?
4. What procedures will be used to assess and ensure student progress and the attainment of minimum grade level standards?

Parents must obtain approval prior to beginning the home education program. Correspondence and questions related to homeschooling should be addressed to the Superintendent at (413) 267-4150.

1.1.10 Curricula and Materials

Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, 603 CMR 26.05(1), the Monson Public Schools, through its curricula and materials, encourages respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. In accordance with district guidelines, families may request information from the building principal on available accommodations related to curriculum content.

1.2 ATTENDANCE, PROMOTION, AND ASSESSMENT

1.2.1 Requirements for School Entrance

A child must be 5 years of age before August 31st of the year they enter Kindergarten. Parents are requested to attend Kindergarten registration to enroll their child. Each year, these registrations are held during late winter/early spring. Specific information will be published prior to registration dates. If you are unable to attend, you must register your child in the principal's office at the school they will attend. If parents are not sure which school to register their child, they should contact the Superintendent's office at (413) 267-4150. State law requires that all children are successfully immunized prior to entering school. Parents/Guardians must provide an original birth certificate, a physical exam dated within the last 12 months and a complete immunization record.

All students must have reached six years of age prior to enrollment in grade one. Exceptions may be made by the Superintendent for new students who have successfully completed Kindergarten in another public school. New students to the system should contact the registrar located at the Central Business Office at Quarry Hill Community School.

1.2.2 Residency Requirement for Students

Before any student is assigned or invited to attend school in the Monson Public Schools, the student's custodial parent or legal guardian must prove legal residence in the Town of Monson. Families whose primary residence is outside of Monson are not eligible to attend the Monson Public Schools District unless they are exempt from meeting such residency requirements pursuant to the Monson Public Schools District School Committee Policy or law. Any person who violates or assists in the violation of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly attended public schools. 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, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity. All applicants to Monson Public Schools District must submit a valid Massachusetts photo identification card and at least one document from the following list:

- Copy of Deed and/or record of most recent mortgage statement. We recommend omitting financial information.
- Legal Affidavit from landlord/owner affirming tenancy and copy of lease and record of most recent rent receipt
- Utility bill
- Section 8 Agreement
- If a new house is under construction the town-building inspector will provide an estimated date of completion. The Superintendent will then consider the enrollment request.

The information listed above will also be required of residents moving within the district. Documents must be pre-printed with the name and address of the student's custodial parent or legal guardian and must be presented at the central business office at the time of registration. These documents will also be required for any change of address. Divorced parents must present a copy of an Order of Probate Court designating current physical custody of the student. Legal guardianship requires a copy of an Order of Probate Court.

1.2.3 Absences Due to Religious Holidays

Consistent with state and federal laws, the Monson Public Schools District makes every effort to accommodate students who will miss school due to the observance of religious holidays or activities. Given the diverse and varied nature of our religious communities and their beliefs, we must ask that it be the student's and/or parents' responsibility to notify the office staff regarding religious absences. Religious absences will not be counted against students when calculating the school attendance requirement.

1.2.4 Transferring Students

The school office should be notified at least one week in advance, if possible, when a student will be transferring to another school. Parents must sign a release form to allow the school to forward

student records. The following information will be needed to complete the transfer: date of departure; name/address of new school; new residence, town/city, street and number; updated immunization record.

1.2.5 Assessment Plan

Assessing students' performance involves collecting data to help us make sound judgments for evaluation and for instructional decisions. Assessment information may be requested of new students for placement purposes. The assessment process is comprehensive; a combination of student performances, products, tests, projects, and work samples. Parents are encouraged to address specific questions about student performance and assessment results to the child's teacher, counselor, or building administrator.

1.2.6 Grading Periods-Report Cards

Early Childhood Center at Quarry Hill Community School - Report cards will be issued three times per year for Preschool and Kindergarten.

Granite Valley School - Report cards will be issued three times a year. Grades will be updated regularly and posted on the parent portal for grades 3-6. All teachers in all grades and subjects communicate home regularly about student progress. Parents and guardians can expect communication to occur in the following ways: phone, email, and online/mobile applications such as ClassDojo.

Monson High School - Report cards will be issued quarterly at the end of each term. Grades will be updated regularly and posted on the parent portal. Parents will be notified at the midpoint of each quarter if their child is in danger of failing one or more classes for the term.

1.3 DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Monson Public School District provides special education services for students with disabilities who require specialized instruction to make effective progress in general education. In accordance with Federal and Massachusetts Law, services are available for eligible children ages 3-22. Students may be eligible for special education services because of an identified disability such as autism, intellectual, sensory, neurological, emotional, communication, physical, specific learning, or health impairment. Referrals for evaluation can be made by a parent or through the Student Teacher Assistance Team (STAT). Prior to referring a student for evaluation, every effort will be made to meet the student's needs within the general education program. Further information may be obtained by contacting Colette Bidus, Director of Special Education, at (413) 267-4150.

The district provides a continuum of services that compliment and support general education programming. These services range from health care, ELL, special education evaluation and programming.

1.3.1 Health Care

The school nurse should be made aware of any issues of a medical nature that may impact your child's educational program. At the beginning of the school year, Health Office Information Forms will be sent to the parent/guardian of every student. Please be sure to fill these forms out completely and return them as soon as possible to the school nurse.

1.3.2 English Language Learning and Support

In accordance with Department of Elementary and Secondary Education guidelines, students who may be English learners are identified and assessed with regard to their level of English proficiency upon their enrollment in the school district. Parents should be sure to indicate the possible need for ELL services upon registration. The school district provides a variety of services, both direct and/or consultative, to students who are English language learners. Translation of important documents or interpretation during important meetings is available when parents or guardians of students have limited English language skills.

1.3.3 Special Education

The Monson Public School District views special education services as one part of a continuum of interventions that seeks to ensure that all students within the district are able to make effective educational progress. The continuum begins with the general education class. Students who are having difficulty progressing with the class should be referred to the school's Student Teacher Assistance Team (STAT). This team is composed of various professionals who meet on a regular basis to discuss ways to make learning more successful for students who may be struggling. If such an intervention is not effective, a referral may then be made for an evaluation to determine if a student is eligible for special education services.

If your child has a disability or is suspected of having a disability, they will be referred for special education services. Before receiving services, a determination of eligibility will be made by the initial evaluation team. The criteria for special education require that the child have a disability, as defined by law; that they are not making effective progress in school as a result of the disability; and that they require specially designed instruction or related services in order to access the general curriculum. Assessments will be conducted by a team of trained and knowledgeable professionals. They may include a psychologist, social worker, speech and language pathologist, and an occupational or physical therapist as well as medical evaluations. Once all evaluations are available, the team, including the parents, will examine the relationship between your child's disability and its impact on making educational progress in the general education program. If your child is eligible for special education, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be developed.

For additional information, please contact the Special Education Office at 267-4150 ext. 4903.

1.3.4 District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP)

Prior to referring any student for a special education evaluation and eligibility determination, educators must systemically search for accommodations that will enable the child to make progress. This commitment requires effective teaching strategies that reach diverse learners and pre-referral practices that support diverse learners.

The purpose of the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) is to ensure that all efforts have been made to meet students' needs in general education. The plan is a systemic plan that is intended to increase the general education capacity to meet the individual needs of diverse student learners. The DCAP is considered an educational activity for the general education program, not solely or specifically special education.

1.3.5 Student Teacher Assistance Team (STAT)

At times, input may be required in order to develop effective strategies when a student is having persistent difficulties at school. An important component in the continuum of district curriculum accommodation resources is the building-based Student Teacher Assistance Teams, or STAT. Each school has a designated Student/Teacher Assistance Team, typically composed of the principal or assistant principal, counselors, general and special education teachers, and specialized members such as the school nurse or related arts personnel.

While the composition and schedule of each building team may vary, the function of the STAT is to develop school-based strategies to assist students who are struggling with academic, emotional or behavioral concerns. The Teams are trained to examine these concerns from a variety of different vantage points, using a strength-based approach that builds on the students' own assets as well as other individualized resources. During a STAT discussion, an action plan is formulated and a liaison is designated for follow up.

A specific action plan may include introducing a different instructional approach; enlisting the assistance of other building support personnel; or, if appropriate, suggesting other community resources. If additional evaluation is necessary, the STAT will initiate an IDEA evaluation referral.

Classroom teachers typically make referrals to the STAT, although a parent or other staff member may request STAT input. The teacher, counselor or principal can provide specific information about the STAT process at your child's school.

1.3.6 Risk/Threat Assessment

When school personnel believe that a child or family member poses a risk of harm to self or others, professionals are required by law to make efforts to protect the safety of the child and those around them by reporting the potential risk to the appropriate authorities. When these concerns are identified, the school will engage in a process of risk/threat assessment that will include the collection and review of all relevant information, and the notification of proper authorities (911 and/or Psychiatric Crisis Services if there is an imminent risk, and/or notification of law enforcement in the case of a reportable offense).

Depending on the nature of the circumstances, and the information that is gathered in the preliminary assessment, a formal risk assessment may be recommended, conducted by specially trained school mental health staff or community agency providers. This may be required prior to a student's re- entry to school so that an appropriate safety plan can be developed and implemented.

1.3.7 Home and Hospital Instruction

Upon receipt of a physician's written order verifying that any student enrolled in a public school or placed by the public school in a private setting must remain at home or in a hospital on a day or overnight basis, or any combination of both, for medical reasons and for a period of not less than fourteen school days in any school year, the Principal shall arrange for provision of educational services in the hospital or an appropriate agreed upon location. Such services shall be provided with sufficient frequency to allow the student to continue his or her educational program, as long as such services do not interfere with the medical needs of the student. The Principal shall coordinate such services with the Director of Special Education.

1.4 HEALTH POLICIES

1.4.1 Immunization

As required by the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 15, every school child must be “successfully immunized”. The Department of Public Health has established the following schedules as legal requirements for children to attend school. Please be aware that these requirements may change annually.

Preschool:

1. IPV (polio), 3 or more doses
2. MMR (measles, mumps, rubella), 1 or more doses
3. DTaP/DTP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis), four or more doses
4. Hepatitis B, 3 doses
5. Varicella, 1 or more doses *
6. Hib (haemophilus influenza), 1-4 doses. The number of doses is determined by vaccine product and age the series begins.

Grades K-12:

1. IPV (polio), four or more doses
2. MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) , 2 doses
3. DTaP/DTP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis), five doses
4. Hepatitis B, 3 doses
5. Varicella – two doses
6. Hib (haemophilus influenza), 1-4 doses. The number of doses is determined by vaccine product and age the series begins.
7. Tdap, 1 dose is required for all students entering grade 7- 11
8. Meningococcal, 1 dose on or after the 10th birthday and a 2nd dose on or after the 16th birthday

*Varicella vaccination is required unless the student has a diagnosis of chickenpox disease by the HCP or laboratory proof of immunity.

*Physical exam must show the date of at least 1 lead screen for all children born in Massachusetts.

1.4.2 Concussion

The school district has developed and adopted a concussion policy to outline protocols, procedures, and responsibilities to protect the health and safety of students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities, including but not limited to, interscholastic sports. This policy complies with the MA Department of Public Health regulation 105CMR 201.00, “Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Activities”.

Prior to the beginning of each sports season that the student participates in, they and the parent/guardian must complete an online registration process, which includes providing mandatory information on any prior head injury or current head injury. The parent/guardian is required to accept by electronically signing their name that they have read and understand the concussion policy and related information. If a student athlete sustains a head injury or concussion while not participating in an extracurricular athletic activity, the parent must complete the Report of Head Injury Form and submit it to the school nurse as soon as possible following the injury and/or doctor visit. Regardless of athletic participation, all parent(s)/guardian(s) of students who sustain a concussion must report it to the school nurse so a safety, activity, and academic plan may be developed to protect and assist the child if needed.

After a concussion diagnosis, final return to play must be obtained after successful completion of a gradual return to play. This requires the completion of the Post Sports Related Head Injury/Medical Clearance Authorization Form by the HCP. The details of this process are included in the policy.

1.4.3 Medication Policy

Medications can be given during school hours according to the following medication policy: The Monson Public Schools Medication Policy conforms to the new regulations (105CMR 210,000) as set forth by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. These new policies also apply to self-administered medications such as inhalers and Epi-pens.

Our district requires that the following must be on file in your child's health record before any medications are given at school:

1. A signed PARENTAL CONSENT FORM.
2. A signed PHYSICIAN'S MEDICATION ORDER.

These forms are available in the nurse's office and must be renewed annually.

All medications must be delivered to the school nurse in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container by a parent or a responsible adult whom the parent designates. MEDICATIONS MAY NOT BE DELIVERED TO SCHOOL BY A STUDENT. Please ask your pharmacy to provide separate bottles for school and home. No more than a 30-day supply of the medication should be delivered to school. Any medication brought into school without meeting the above regulations shall be administered only after a parent or guardian has been notified and the requirements of this policy have been met.

The parent of a child must assume responsibility for informing the school of any change in the child's health or change in medication.

For administration of OTC (over-the-counter) medications, such as Ibuprofen/Acetaminophen, parent or guardian permission is required annually.

The Monson Public Schools District retains the discretion to reject requests for administration of medication.

1.4.4 Nurse's Office

Some of the services provided:

1. Screenings: The following mandated screenings are performed per DPH guidelines. Parents should submit a written request to the health office if they do not want their child screened. Parents will be notified of any unusual results.
 - a. Vision
 - b. Hearing
 - c. Scoliosis
 - d. BMI Body Mass Index, height and weight
2. Immunization management: All immunizations are required to be current per MA DPH standards. Records are reviewed upon school entry for compliance. A student may be excluded from school until vaccine status is brought into compliance.
3. Evaluation for illnesses and injuries
4. Management of chronic health conditions
5. Physical education excuses: If a student is unable to participate in physical education classes, a note from a medical provider must be presented to the nurse's office. A new note for chronic health problems is required every school year.
6. Sports Clearances: In order to participate in sports, students must have a copy of a physical exam on file in the nurse's office. Both sides of the MIAA form must be completed and signed. Physicals expire after 13 months. Students will be cleared for sports once all paperwork has been received and the nurse has reviewed it. Students should carry emergency medication such as inhalers and Epi-pens with them during sports. It is the responsibility of the parent to report any new injuries or serious illnesses to the coach, nurse, or athletic trainer. Should an injury or serious illness occur during or between sports seasons, a doctor's note is required to return to sports participation. All medical notes must be submitted to the health office.
7. Emergency Services
8. Communicable Disease Management and Control

9. Health Counseling
10. Health and Safety Education
11. Maintenance of a healthful school environment

1.4.5 Communicable Diseases

Parents must inform the school's nurse if their child has contracted a communicable disease. According to Massachusetts regulations on Isolation and Quarantine, codified at 105 CMR and M.G.L. c. 111, §7, communicable diseases must be reported. Please consult this regulation for a comprehensive list. A partial list of communicable diseases for which children are required to remain out of school follows:

- **Chicken Pox:** May return to school when blisters are crusted over & dry, approximately 5 days from eruption or when lesions fade.
- **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye):** Not an emergency. Parent/Guardian will be notified immediately. May return the next day after treatment for bacterial conjunctivitis, unless indicated in writing by the child's physician. Free of elevated temperature (100.5 Degrees or higher) for at least 24 hours, without use of fever reducing medication. Child may be excluded an extra day if unable to manage symptoms and infection control restrictions.
- **Gastro-Intestinal Illness:** Free of symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever) for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever reducing medication. Stress frequent hand washing.
- **Impetigo:** Not an emergency. Parent/Guardian will be notified immediately. Wash area with soap and water & cover exposed areas with loose dressing. Child may return to school 24 hours after treatment has been started.
- **Pediculosis (head or body lice):** No need to be sent home early. Child may return to school after treatment. Check student when they return to school and recheck student in 10-14 days.
- **Ringworm:** Not an emergency and do not need to send home early. Cover area. Refer to health care provider for diagnosis and treatment and permit to return to school as soon as treatment has been started.
- **Scabies:** Not an emergency and do not need to send home that day. Refer to health care provider for diagnosis & treatment. Child may return to school after treatment.
- **Shingles:** It is advisable that the individual stay home until the rash is crusted over, unless the shingles rash can be completely covered.
- **Streptococcal Infections (Scarlet Fever, Strep throat):** The first day of treatment plus the next day and fever free for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever reducing medication.

On the day following an absence, students are required to bring in a written excuse signed and dated by a parent or guardian.

1.4.6 Physical Examinations

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 57 requires that each child receive a physical examination prior to initial school entrance. Physical examinations dated within the last 12 months are required of all students in Pre-K, Kindergarten and in Grades 4, 7, and 10. Students who transfer into the district must also provide a physical dated within the last 12 months.

1.4.7 Physical Limitations/Pregnancy

Any student entering the Monson Public Schools who may have a temporary or permanent physical limitation that would impact his or her ability to access the various educational programs of the District, should be brought to the immediate attention of the school nurse who will then consult with the building principal.

The district does not require a pregnant student to obtain certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue in school, other than the same health and immunization records that are required of all students. The only limitations or accommodations implemented for a pregnant student will be those deemed necessary by the student's physician, as documented in writing by that physician. The building principal or designee will then consult with the student's parents/guardians to determine the nature of the limitation and the necessary accommodations that will need to be made to ensure accessibility to all District programs.

1.4.8 Exposure Control Plan

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA's) Blood Borne Pathogens Standard requires all school systems to create and make available to every employee an Exposure Control Plan. All employees of the Monson Public Schools are required to comply with this plan.

1.4.9 Wellness Policy

The Monson Public Schools promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. The District supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices.

Schools contribute to the basic health status of children by facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity. Improved health optimizes student attendance and performance.

The School Committee has approved and adopted revisions to the original Wellness Policy. The policy guidelines, which may be viewed on the Monson Public Schools website, strengthen our commitment to wellness. Food sold or provided to students from 12:00am to thirty minutes after the school day ends will meet the criteria according to all State and USDA requirements. Teachers, administrators, and staff will act as facilitators of the guidelines addressed in the policy. We encourage and ask for parent support in following the guidelines.

1.4.10 Smoking and Tobacco Free Policy

The Education Reform Act of 1993 prohibits the use of any tobacco products within school buildings and school facilities, on the school grounds, or on school buses by any individual. Furthermore, student possession, as well as the use of tobacco products (i.e., cigarettes, chewing tobacco, cigars, electronic or vapor cigarettes), is prohibited within the school building, on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities off school grounds, and on school buses at any time.

1.5 ADDITIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

1.5.1 Cafeteria Services

Monson Public Schools will be participating in the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program. As part of this program, all schools will offer healthy meals every school day. The Massachusetts legislature has provided funding to make meals available at no cost to all students during the school year 2025-2026, regardless of household income.

All school cafeterias will serve USDA-approved reimbursable breakfast and lunch. Milk or approved substitution is included with all lunches. Extra milk, bottled water and snacks are available for purchase a la carte at breakfast and lunch. A monthly menu and calendar will be available on the district website and posted/announced in school daily. The USDA nondiscrimination regulation (7 CFR 15b), as well as the regulations governing the Child Nutrition Programs, make it clear that substitutions to the regular meal must be made, at no extra cost, for children who are unable to eat meals served in any Child Nutrition Program because of their disabilities and/or special nutritional needs including food allergies. Contact the school nurse for special accommodations and a meal modification request form.

Families may complete a Voluntary Family Income Survey as this may connect families to additional benefits. Families may contact their building Principal for the form.

1.5.3 Cafeteria Meal Charging Policy

The Monson Public Schools District does not allow charging of any kind for ala carte items. All schools have point of sale registers. Parents may send in money to put on students' accounts to be used for double meals, milk and snacks. Cash is also accepted on a daily basis. We urge parents to keep their child's account balance positive. By setting up an account using the www.myschoolbucks.com payment center, parents have the ability to track spending, monitor account balances, make payments online and receive email alerts when the balance gets low. To set up an account, visit myschoolbucks.com. Parents are responsible for monitoring all account transactions. If a parent does not agree with charges made to the account, he/she must notify the Food Services Director within two weeks.

1.5.4 Cafeteria Reimbursement Procedure

Upon written request or phone call from a parent/guardian of a student, reimbursement of monies equal to or greater than the price of a single lunch, held for future purchases, will be refunded using the following procedure: 1. Monson Public Schools Food Service Department will determine the amount of money to be reimbursed and place the request for payment on a warrant within ten (10) business days of the request. 2. The request for reimbursement will be submitted to the town accountant for approval. 3. The town treasurer will issue a check within ten (10) business days of the approval date. 4. The refund warrant will only require the signatures of the Food Services Director and the Director of Business and Operations.

1.5.5 Cafeteria Collection Procedure

For failure to pay, the Food Services Department will take the following steps: 1. Personal notification in writing and telephone call 2. If no response within five (5) business days, registered letter to parent and copy to town treasurer 3. Town treasurer attempts collection 4. If not resolved, names forwarded to the Monson Police Department for further investigation under M.G.L. Ch. 266, §37. 26

1.5.6 Cafeteria Bounced Check/Insufficient Funds

Upon notification from the town treasurer of insufficient funds 1. A letter will be mailed from Food Services within five (5) business days along with a telephone call. 2. A registered letter, with applicable service fee, as required by Chapter 60, Section 57A of the General Laws of Massachusetts, will be mailed within ten (10) business days. 3. Names and copies of letters will be forwarded to the town treasurer for further investigation with Monson Police Department under

1.5.7 Transportation and Bus Policy

The bus and van drivers are responsible for the safety of the pupils and for their conduct while being transported. Drivers will report all violations of rules. Transportation can be denied temporarily or permanently, if a pupil's behavior warrants it. It is necessary for students to observe the following rules - which also apply to all school-sponsored trips:

- Be at the bus stop at least five minutes (but no more than 10 minutes) before the time at which the bus usually arrives.
- Wait for the bus/van in an orderly manner.
- Do not stand or play in the road.
- Remain at least ten feet from the bus/van when it stops to pick up students, and move toward the bus/van ONLY when the bus/van is stopped and the driver opens the door.
- Board the bus/van in an orderly manner; do not push or crowd other students
- Once on board the bus/van, take your assigned seat as quickly as possible.
- Remain seated and face front while in motion. Do not change seats.
- Do not bring items on the buses/vans that are not allowed in school. (Such as, but not limited to animals, firearms, fireworks, explosives, tobacco, and valuable items.)
- Keep the aisle clear of lunch boxes, backpacks, musical instruments etc.
- Remain absolutely quiet when the driver notifies you that the bus/van is approaching a railroad crossing.
- Students having to cross the road when loading or discharging are to cross ten feet in front of the bus/van (not the rear) upon the driver's signal. All students are advised to use extreme caution by looking at traffic both ways before crossing the street.
- Students loading the bus/van on a street where the bus/van travels in both directions are to wait until the bus/van passes on their side so that they will not have to cross the street. Crossing permission may be granted in some areas after approval by McCarthy & Sons Transportation.

1.5.8 Grade Specific Transportation Policies

- For students in Grades K-4, a parent/guardian is required to meet students at their bus/van stop. If a bus/van arrives at the stop and no parent is present, a phone call will be made to the parent. If we are unable to reach a parent, the student will be returned to their school's office and emergency contacts will be notified.

1.5.9 Rules for Riding the Bus

- Maintain an acceptable manner of conduct at all times.
- Speak quietly and respectfully to the driver and other students.
- There is no eating or drinking while on the bus/van.
- Damage or defacing of the bus/van will be paid for by the offender.
- Do not play any sound equipment without earphones. Use of sound equipment with earphones should be kept at a volume level that allows the student to hear the driver make any announcements necessary.
- Bus/van equipment such as the service door, emergency door should only be operated by the driver. Windows may be opened or closed with permission from the driver.
- Remember to take all books, backpacks, lunches or other articles off the bus/van. Drivers are not responsible for items left on the bus/van.

1.5.10 Bus Route/Stop Changes

- For bus and/or van changes, please contact Deb Pafumi at deborah@mccarthybus.com.

1.5.11 Weapons

Students are not allowed to have in their possession knives or any other article, which could be considered a weapon. Violations of this rule will result in confiscation of the weapon, parent notification and possible suspension or expulsion. Possession of a firearm requires a minimum of

one-year expulsion under Federal law.

1.5.12 Lost or Damaged Textbooks/School Property

Students are responsible for the appropriate use and care of school Chromebooks, textbooks, trade books, and library books. Should books or other material be lost, parents will be billed replacement costs. Parents may also be billed for the cost of repair for intentional damage or destruction of school property such as Chromebooks, desks, lockers and teacher materials. Please see the MPS Chromebook Information Guide for additional information regarding Chromebooks.

1.5.13 Gambling

Gambling is not allowed on school property at any time.

1.5.14 Responsibility / Liability

Schools will assume no responsibility or liability for the loss or damage to a device or for the unauthorized use of any such device.

The use of photography, video equipment or other recording devices during the school day is not permitted unless authorized by administration.

Videos or photographs of students may not be used for non-educational purposes without authorization from the student's parent/guardian.

1.5.15 Canine Searches

Monson Public Schools has formed a partnership with the Monson Police Department and the Massachusetts State Police Canine Unit to periodically use trained police dogs to search the lockers, classrooms and school grounds. These unannounced searches may occur at any time.

1.6 NETWORK, INTERNET, E-MAIL, AND ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

The Monson Public Schools District Technology Network, which includes access to the internet and electronic mail capability, exists solely for educational purposes, which are defined as classroom activities, career and professional development and high-quality self-discovery activities of an educational nature. The Monson Public Schools District intends to utilize this computer network, along with all of its other educational resources, to fulfill its ultimate goal of preparing students for success in life and work.

To this end, the computer network will be used to facilitate communication between and among students, staff and parents, enhance productivity, assist staff members in upgrading and acquiring skills through a broader exchange of information, and to provide information to the community including parents, government agencies and businesses. The computer network 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.

The following rules apply to the use of the Monson Public Schools District computer network:

1. Network access is a privilege, not a right. The use of the network must be consistent with, and directly related to, the educational objectives of the Monson Public Schools District. A violation of the terms of this Acceptable Use Policy may result in suspension or termination of network access privileges and may also result in other disciplinary action consistent with the disciplinary policies of the Monson Public Schools District and the applicable provisions of any governing collective bargaining agreement. Users should also be aware that violation for these rules that constitutes a crime might also result in criminal prosecution.
2. Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy include, but are not limited to, the following conduct:
 - a. Placing unlawful and/or inappropriate information on a system.
 - b. Using profane, vulgar, threatening, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, harassing, bullying or otherwise objectionable or criminal language in a public or private message.
 - c. Sending messages or posting information that would likely result in the loss of a recipient's work or system.
 - d. Sending "chain letters" or "broadcast" messages to lists or individuals, subscribing to "list-serves" or "newsgroups" without prior permission, or using the Internet for access for any other personal use, without prior permission.
 - e. Participating in other types of use, which would cause congestion of the network to interfere with the work of others.
 - f. Using the network in a manner that would violate any U.S. or state law. This includes, but it is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening material and spreading of computer viruses.
 - g. Accessing or transmitting materials that are obscene, sexually explicit, or pornographic and accessing any prohibited sites on the Internet.
 - h. Revealing one's own personal address or telephone number.
 - i. Revealing one's password to anyone else, using anyone else's password, or pretending to be someone else when sending information over the computer network.
 - j. Attempting to gain unauthorized access to system programs or computer equipment, including attempts to override, or to encourage others to override, any firewalls established on the network.
 - k. Attempting to harm, modify or destroy data of another user.
 - l. Exhibiting any other action whatsoever, which would in any way subject the user of the Monson Public Schools District to any civil or criminal action.
 - m. Discussing highly sensitive or confidential school department information in e-mail communications. Using the Monson Public Schools District technology network to buy, sell or advertise anything. Accessing discussion groups or "chat rooms", or engaging in any other form of online conversation or communication whose purpose is not primarily educational.

- n. Using the Monson Public Schools District technology network for gambling.
 - o. Using the Monson Public Schools District technology network for political campaigning purposes, including attempts to influence ballot questions or to promote or oppose a candidate for public office.
 - p. Failing to log off the computer network at the conclusion of a work session or at the request of system administrators.
 - q. Using the computer network for recreational purposes or activities relating to personal hobbies.
 - r. Installing software or data on the computer network without first having the information scanned by the computer technology coordinator for viruses or other incompatibility.
3. Except as otherwise provided in the applicable collective bargaining agreement, the Monson Public Schools District assumes no responsibility for:
- a. Any unauthorized charges or fees, including telephone charges, long distance charges, per minute surcharges and/or equipment or line costs.
 - b. Any financial obligations arising out of unauthorized use of the system for the purchase of products or services.
 - c. Any cost, liability or damages caused by a user's violation of these guidelines.
 - d. Any information or materials that are transferred through the network.
 - e. Any other inappropriate use of electronic resources of Monson Public Schools District.
4. The Monson Public Schools District makes no guarantee, implied or otherwise, regarding the reliability of the data connection. The Monson Public Schools District shall not be liable for any loss or corruption of data resulting while using the network.
5. All messages and information created, sent or retrieved on the network are the property of Monson Public Schools District. Electronic mail messages and other use of electronic resources by students and staff, including accessing web pages, should not be considered confidential. Copies of all information created, sent or retrieved are stored on the computer network's back-up files. While the Monson Public Schools District does not plan to review cache files or back- up files on a regular basis, it reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files on the computer system, including web pages accessed, as it deems necessary and appropriate in the ordinary course of its business for purposes including, but not limited to, ensuring proper use of resources and conducting routine network maintenance. By participating in the school district's computer network, users are indicating their consent to such monitoring and access. Where appropriate, communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement in response to proper requests, or to other third parties in the context of proper requests in the course of litigation without prior consent of the sender or receiver.
6. The Monson Public Schools District strongly condemns the illegal distribution (otherwise known as pirating) of software. Any users caught transferring such files through the network, and any whose accounts are found to contain such illegal files, shall immediately have their accounts permanently revoked. In addition, all users should be aware that software piracy is a federal offense and is punishable by a fine or imprisonment.
7. The Monson Public Schools District reserves its right to seek restitution from any user for costs incurred by the district, including legal fees, due to such user's inappropriate use of electronic resources.
8. All system users are responsible to notify their teacher, or a system or building administrator, upon discovery of a security breach, information or messages that are dangerous, inappropriate or make them feel uncomfortable.

1.7 SAFETY AND EMERGENCIES

1.7.1 School Cancellation

The following procedures apply for the opening and closing of schools during winter storms or emergency situations:

- When weather or other conditions warrant, school may be cancelled. “No School” announcements will be made via School Messenger: the automated call and e-mail notification system; the district website; on social media; and on local television stations. When school is cancelled, school activities, school-related meetings and athletic events are also cancelled.
- When morning weather conditions are improving, the schools may open on a “delayed opening” basis. On these days, schools will start between 1 to 2 hours later. Consequently, all activities, commencing with the start of the bus runs, will follow a 1 to 2 hour later pattern.
- When school is delayed, dismissal will be at the regular time.

1.7.2 Delayed Opening of School

Delayed opening announcements will be made via the School Messenger notification system, on social media, on the district website, and will be broadcast over local radio and television stations. Announcements should be monitored carefully. Parents are reminded that while schools may operate on the basis of improving conditions, they should exercise their own good judgment as to the attendance of their children.

1.7.3 Early Dismissal Due to Inclement Weather

In severe weather or similar emergencies when road conditions are expected to deteriorate, it is sometimes best to dismiss students early. Parents will be informed of dismissal times through the automated emergency advisory system. For kindergarten through grade 4, our policy is to return bus riders to their school if no one is at the usual drop-off point and no alternate adult (neighbor, relative) has been authorized to receive them (via the Emergency/Non-Prescription Medication Form). For older children, families should have a procedure that could be followed in case of an unanticipated early dismissal and should communicate that procedure to their children in advance.

1.7.4 Health, Safety, and Emergency Communications

In the event of an emergency, the District will make every effort to communicate critical news and updates to parents/guardians. It is extremely important that all emergency contact information including home, work, cell phone and email addresses are kept up to date so that proper notification can occur. Information may be disseminated in a variety of ways, including:

- Broadcast on local television stations - TV-22, TV-40, Western Mass. News
- Automated telephone messaging and/or email notification via School Messenger Notification System
- Social media
- District website www.monsonschools.com

1.7.5 Evacuation

The need to evacuate the students from a building before the regularly scheduled closing time could arise from a relatively minor incident, such as a power failure or from a major event, such as fire or bomb threat.

During evacuation, students are guided to the nearest exit and assemble at an established location. During evacuation, release times, communication into the school and/or transportation may be temporarily disrupted, and families will receive information and instructions from the listed communication resources.

1.7.6 Student and Staff Safety

District student and staff practice and are able to implement, if necessary, a variety of responses to emergency situations. In the event of an intruder, we utilize the ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter & Evacuate) procedure and participate in drills regularly. Please contact your building Principal should you wish for further information regarding any of our safety protocols.

1.7.7 Off-Site Evacuation and Dismissal Policy

In an extreme emergency when a school has been evacuated and it is not possible to return, an off-site meeting place may be needed. Parents will be directed (through the above advisories) to go to the closest available school building or designated information center in the community. The Superintendent, with public safety personnel, will determine the location that best meets the needs of the specific emergency, and staff will be on site to assist with dismissal procedures using the following guidelines:

1. No student will be dismissed from a primary or secondary evacuation site unless a parent (or individual designated by a parent on the student's Emergency/Non-Prescription Medication Form) comes for them and is able to present a photo ID to identify themselves upon request.
2. All parents or designated persons who come for students will be required to sign out at the front office or from a designated alternate release location.
3. In addition to the above notification resources, signs will be posted if an alternate location is needed.

Throughout the school year your child will be trained in emergency procedures. They will learn how to react, where to assemble, and what to expect in an emergency situation. While it can be unsettling to think about situations that require emergency procedures, by continually reviewing potential scenarios and plans, we can prevent or mitigate threats to student safety and be prepared to implement the best possible response.

Help us in the following ways:

1. Be sure that in the event of an emergency, the medical information on file for each student is accessible. It is very important that you keep this information up-to-date, and notify the school nurse of any changes.
2. Similarly, please be sure to keep all emergency contact information current, and inform the school Administrative Assistant if there are changes in your cell, office or home phone numbers.
3. During an emergency, please do not call the school. Telephone lines need to be kept open for emergency calls.
4. Turn to the listed television stations for information, and make sure that changes in your telephone numbers are provided to the school so that the School Messenger automated notification system can be accurately updated.
5. Do not immediately drive to the school. The school access route and street entrance areas may not be open.

Have your family review and practice responses to emergency situations at home, including instructions that your child should follow in the event of an early dismissal if you are not at home.

1.8 CIVIL RIGHTS AND LEGAL REFERENCES

1.8.1 Mandated Reporting

School personnel are mandated reporters. If school personnel have reasonable cause to suspect physical or emotional abuse, or substantial risk of harm or neglect, they are obligated by M.G.L., ch. 119, Section 51A, to report these conditions to the Department of Children and Families (DCF).

If the reportable incident involves criminal conduct, including physical abuse, violation of a restraining order, assault and battery, indecent assault and battery or rape, school officials shall also report the incident to the police department, and further action may be taken by the county District Attorney's office. Additional information can be found on the following website:

[A Mandated Reporter's Guide to Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting](http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dcf/can-mandated-reporters-guide.pdf)
<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dcf/can-mandated-reporters-guide.pdf>

1.8.2 McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act) ensures homeless children and youth have equal access to the same free and appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths. It has most recently been reauthorized under the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA).

Definition

Homeless children and youths are individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. It includes:

1. Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals.
2. Children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
3. Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
4. Migratory children (as defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended) who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above.

1.8.3 Liaisons

The Homeless Education liaison's role is to assist homeless students enroll in school to ensure that they receive the educational services for which they are eligible. Further information may be obtained by contacting Colette Bidus, Director of Special Education at (413) 267-4150.

1.8.4 School Placement, Transportation, and Enrollment

Homeless students have the right to remain enrolled in their school of origin and receive transportation or immediately enroll in the school district where they are temporarily residing.

School placement determinations must be based on the best interest of the homeless student. In making decisions regarding best interests, school districts must:

- Presume keeping the student in the school of origin until the end of the year in which the student obtains permanent housing is in the student's best interest except when doing so is contrary to the request of the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth
- Consider student-centered factors related to the student's best interest including factors related to the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety of homeless

students, school placement of siblings, giving priority to the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth

For homeless students who meet the relevant eligibility criteria, districts must remove barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, including magnet schools, summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, on-line learning, and charter school programs.

1.8.5 Transportation

School districts must adopt policies and practices to ensure that transportation is provided, at the request of the parent or guardian (or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison), to and from the school of origin. Furthermore:

- If the homeless student continues to live in the area served by the district in which the school of origin is located, that district must provide or arrange transportation if needed;
- If the homeless student moves to an area served by another district, though continuing his or her education at the school of origin, the district of origin and the district in which the student resides must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin; and
- If the districts cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs must be shared equally.

In addition, districts must provide transportation services to homeless students that meet Massachusetts state law and are comparable to those received by other students. Each school district's homeless education liaison must ensure that the parent or guardian of a homeless student, and any unaccompanied homeless youth, is fully informed, in the language of the home, of all transportation services, including transportation to the school of origin, and is assisted in accessing transportation to the school selected.

1.8.6 Enrollment

School districts must immediately enroll homeless students in school to provide educational stability and avoid separation from school for days or weeks while documents are located.

Therefore, homeless education liaisons must ensure that:

- Students who chose to enroll in school where they are temporarily residing must be enrolled immediately, even if they do not bring the records usually required for enrollment with them;
- If a homeless student arrives without records, the previously attended school district is contacted and the required records requested;
- That homeless students are attending school while the records are being requested;
- Districts remove barriers to homeless students receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school; and
- Information about a homeless student's living situation shall be treated as a student education record and not be deemed to be directory information and therefore cannot be shared with the public including landlords.

1.8.7 DESE McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Process

The McKinney-Vento Act calls for "procedures for the prompt resolution of disputes regarding the educational placement of homeless children and youth."

Reasons for Dispute

If a dispute arises between the district and parent, guardian or unaccompanied homeless youth, the homeless education liaison must ensure that:

- the student be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought pending a final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals
- the parent, guardian or unaccompanied homeless youth is provided with a written explanation of any enrollment decisions made by the district and be informed of the right of the parent, guardian or unaccompanied homeless youth to appeal the decision to DESE.

Considerations

Determinations regarding enrollment and the subsequent provision of transportation if necessary, must:

- Presume that keeping the student in the school of origin is in the student's best interest, except when doing so is contrary to the request of the student's parent or guardian or in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the youth; and
- Consider student-centered factors related to the student's best interest including factors related to the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety of homeless students, giving priority to the request of the student's parent or guardian or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the youth.

1.8.8 Dispute Resolution Process

In order to ensure the prompt resolution of disputes DESE has established the following McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Process:

- The dispute resolution process begins at the time a district denies the continued enrollment or right to enroll a homeless student in the school selected by the parent, guardian or unaccompanied homeless youth.
- A student must be allowed to attend the school in which enrollment is sought and transportation provided (if needed) pending the resolution of the dispute.
- The homeless education liaison must:
 - provide notice of the denial to the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth on the day of the denial using the form prescribed by DESE
 - provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with written notice in clear, easy-to-understand language detailing the dispute resolution process, informing the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied homeless youth of the right to appeal and the option to obtain independent information and counsel;
 - provide the prescribed form to be completed by the parent/guardian, or unaccompanied homeless youth should they decide to appeal the school district's enrollment decision.
 - assist the parent/guardian or unaccompanied homeless youth in promptly submitting an appeal to DESE in three school days with an extension of up to ten additional school days (please contact the state coordinator regarding an extension); and
 - if the district has not notified the parent of its enrollment decision or the parent's right to appeal that decision, the parent/guardian or unaccompanied homeless youth may initiate a dispute by contacting DESE.
- Following receipt of the district's denial form the appeal by the parent/guardian or unaccompanied homeless youth and any additional requested information, the

Commissioner or the Commissioner's Designee shall promptly issue a decision usually in five to ten school days. The decision of the Commissioner or the Commissioner's Designee shall be final.

1.9 Equal Educational Opportunity

Equal educational opportunity and non-discrimination laws protect the rights of students to participate in all activities pertaining to their education. The law in Massachusetts states: No person shall be excluded from, denied the benefits of, 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, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Students will be treated without discrimination based on sex (including pregnancy), age, marital status, race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability in compliance with State and Federal laws. Equal educational opportunity is available to all students with respect to enrollment, programs, and participation in school, athletic, and extracurricular activities, including those students who are pregnant or parenting. In addition, the District believes that students should learn in an atmosphere free of discriminatory harassment or bullying, and will take affirmative steps to eliminate any inappropriate conduct brought to its attention.

The Monson Public School District, pursuant to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Acts (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, M.G.L. c. 76, sect.5, M.G.L. c. 151B, M.G.L.c.151C, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, does not discriminate against:

1. Any adult on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, marital status or veteran status in any employment status or access to programs available to such adults; and
2. Any student on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability, in equal access or admission to school programs, courses, and/or extra-curricular activities.

Any student, parent, or guardian who believes they have been discriminated against, denied a benefit, or excluded from participation in any district program or activity on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity in violation of this policy may file a grievance with the Superintendent of Schools or designee. For complaints of disability discrimination, contact the Title IX Coordinator, Colette Bidus, at (413) 267-4150.

1.9.1 Glossary of Relevant Definitions Related to Bullying and Discriminatory Harassment

1. Bullying for the purposes of requirements related to M.G.L. c. 71 § 37O is defined as the following: The repeated use by one or more students or by a 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 of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or 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.
2. Perpetrator – a student or a 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 who engages in bullying or retaliation.
3. Discriminatory harassment is unwelcome verbal, physical or other conduct that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent to create a hostile environment resulting in a denial or limitation in a student's ability to participate or benefit from the school's program. To determine whether the conduct denies or limits benefits or services consideration must be given to subjective and objective perspectives. Under the subjective standard, the conduct must actually be perceived by the student/victim as offensive in order to interfere with their participation in the program.

Under the objective standard, consider whether a reasonable person in the student's position (including the student's age, sex, and any other relevant factors) would find the conduct offensive. Also, consideration must be given to whether conduct is sufficiently severe or serious. The more

severe the conduct, the less need to show repeated incidents, and the effect of the conduct on the student's education. Other relevant considerations might include the type, frequency, location, and duration of conduct; number of students involved; and the relationship/roles of the parties.

1.9.2 Types of Discriminatory Harassment

1. **Disability Harassment:** Intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on disability that creates a hostile environment by interfering with or denying a student's participation in or receipt of benefits, services, or opportunities in the institution's program. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as nonverbal behavior, such as graphic and written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating. When harassing conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates a hostile environment, it can violate a student's rights under the Section 504 and Title II regulations. A hostile environment may exist even if there are no tangible effects on the student victim where the harassment is serious enough to adversely affect the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program.
2. **Racial Harassment:** Harassing conduct (i.e., physical, verbal, graphic, or written) based on race, color and/or national origin that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by the District.
3. **Sexual Harassment:** Conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:
 - A school employee conditioning education benefits on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e. quid pro quo); or
 - Unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would determine is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity; or
 - Sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act as: any sexual act directed against another person, without consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking (as defined in the Violence Against Women Act as: engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to: (1) Fear for the person's individual safety or the safety of others; or (2) Suffer substantial emotional distress).
4. **Gender Identity:** The law and its accompanying regulations have a broad definition of "gender identity". It is "a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth."

The new guidance clarifies that this definition is intended to encompass two groups: gender non-conforming and transgender students.

- Transgender students are youth whose assigned sex at birth differs from their clearly and persistently identified sex.
- Gender non-conforming youth do not meet the stereotypically expected norms associated with their assigned sex at birth.

1.9.3 Hazing

Hazing is any conduct or method of initiation, even if consented to, 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, but is not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other 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 person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Types of Hazing

1. **Subtle Hazing:** Behaviors that emphasize a power imbalance between new members/newcomers and other members of the group or team. Termed "subtle hazing" because these types of hazing are often taken-for-granted or accepted as "harmless" or meaningless. Subtle hazing

typically involves activities or attitudes that breach reasonable standards of mutual respect and place new members/rookies on the receiving end of ridicule, embarrassment, and/or humiliation tactics. New members/rookies often feel the need to endure subtle hazing to feel like part of the group or team. (Some types of subtle hazing may also be considered harassment hazing).

2. Harassment Hazing: Behaviors that cause emotional anguish or physical discomfort in order to feel like part of the group. Harassment hazing confuses, frustrates, and causes undue stress for new members/rookies. (Some types of harassment hazing can also be considered violent hazing).

Violent Hazing: Behaviors that have the potential to cause physical and/or emotional, or psychological harm.

Retaliation refers to retribution or other coercive, threatening or intimidating actions taken against any individual or associates of that individual because that individual or associates of that individual made a charge, testified, assisted, participated in any manner in an investigation, or advocated for rights protected under Monson Public Schools District's applicable policy and applicable Federal laws.

1.9.4 Bullying, Hazing, and Intimidation Policy

It is the policy of the Monson Public Schools District to provide a learning and working atmosphere for students, employees, and visitors free from bullying, hazing, and intimidation. Such action may constitute discriminatory harassment when it occurs on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability, as defined above. Refer to "Title IX Grievance Procedures" within this handbook, for complaints of discrimination on the basis of sex, including harassment based on sex. For complaints of disability-based discrimination, contact the District Title IX Coordinator.

Bullying, cyber-bullying, hazing, intimidation, and retaliation are prohibited:

1. At school and at all school facilities.
2. At school-sponsored or school-related functions, whether on or off school grounds.
3. At school bus stops and on school buses or any other vehicle owned or used by the school district.
4. Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, licensed or used by a school. At non-school-related locations and through non-school technology or electronic devices, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school; infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

1.9.5 Physical Contact, Threats, Harassment, and Bullying

Students have the right to attend school without the fear of physical harm, threats or harassment. Fighting, pushing, tripping or hitting another student or staff member is not allowed and may result in a suspension or expulsion. Under Massachusetts Law, bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students or by a 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 of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that:

1. Causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property.
2. Places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property.
3. Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim.
4. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school.
5. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

This law also applies to cyber-bullying, defined as 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 in 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:

1. The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person
2. 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 1 to 5, inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to anyone 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 referred to in the definition of bullying.

Threats, harassment, and/or bullying of students or staff members are not allowed and may result in suspension and referral for risk-threat assessment as a condition for re-entry.

1.9.6 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

The Monson Public Schools District has developed a bullying prevention and intervention plan in accordance with the guidance issued by the Mass. DESE on September 2013.1.

Priority Statement: Monson Public Schools District will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore a sense of safety.

The Principal is responsible for implementing the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, which includes the following provisions:

1. Strategies for protecting those who report bullying.
2. Notice to the parents or guardians of students involved in bullying, including perpetrators and victims.
3. Appropriate services for students who have been bullied or who are bullies.
4. Age-appropriate review of the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention Plan in the Student Handbook.
5. Annual review of available data on bullying and behavioral incidents and assessment of available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services.
6. Any retaliatory action of any kind taken by an employee or student of the Monson Public School District against anyone as a result of that person's advocacy for rights protected under Monson Public School District's applicable policy and applicable Federal laws, seeking help, cooperating in an investigation, or otherwise participating in any proceeding is prohibited.
7. It is a violation of the Bullying Policy for any administrator, teacher or other employee, or any student to engage in or condone bullying in school or to fail to report or otherwise take reasonable corrective measures when they become aware of an incident of bullying.
8. This policy is not designed or intended to limit the school's authority to take disciplinary action or take remedial action when such bullying occurs out of school but has a connection to school, or is disruptive to an employee's or student's work or participation in school related activities.
9. It is the responsibility of every employee, student and parent to recognize and report acts of bullying and take every action necessary to ensure that the applicable policies and procedures of this school district are implemented.
10. Any employee or student who believes that they have been subjected to bullying has the right to file a complaint and to 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 or all information received.
11. The building Principal or designee shall be responsible for assisting employees and students seeking counseling or support in addressing matters relating to any form of bullying.

12. Retaliation in any form against any person who has made or filed a complaint relating to bullying is forbidden. If it occurs, it could be considered grounds for dismissal of staff personnel and/or removal from the educational setting for a student. A referral to law enforcement may be made.
13. Reports of bullying should be confidential, consistent with necessary investigation procedures, with the goal of protecting the victim and stopping the behavior.
14. Preventing bullying to create a more positive school climate and to prevent as much bullying as possible, age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention, for students in each grade must be incorporated in a school's curriculum. Professional development is required for teachers and other staff to help them prevent and stop bullying. In addition, schools must offer education to parents about bullying prevention.
15. The ability for students with disabilities to navigate and respond to bullying will be reviewed yearly by the IEP team to ensure these areas are addressed as needed.
16. Reporting and Stopping Bullying - To stop bullying as soon as it occurs, all school staff are required to promptly report bullying when they witness or become aware of it. A school principal or his designee must immediately investigate and take appropriate disciplinary action.

1.9.7 Procedures for Reporting and Investigating Bullying, Hazing, and Intimidation Claims

In school systems, bullying may take many forms and cross many lines. The situation may be an instance of staff member to staff member, staff member to student, student to staff member, or student to student. Guidelines for dealing with any charge of bullying are as follows:

1. (Student and Adults) By law, bullying is defined by the victim's perception in combination with objective standards or expectations. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may be viewed as bullying by another person. Therefore, in order to protect the rights of both parties, it is important that the victim make it clear to the bully that the behavior is objectionable.
2. (Students and Adults) In all charges of bullying, the victim should report the specifics of the complaint to ensure that the subsequent investigation is focused on the relevant facts. Oral and anonymous complaints will be reviewed but are inherently difficult to investigate and may not be procedurally fair; as a result, no disciplinary action shall be taken on anonymous complaints unless verified by clear and convincing evidence. All other complaints will be reviewed based on a preponderance of evidence standard.
3. (Students and Adults) Any school employee that has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of bullying, hazing, or intimidation shall immediately report it to the administration; each school shall document any prohibited incident that is reported and confirmed, and report all incidents of hazing, intimidation, bullying or cyber-bullying and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals, in accordance with state laws and regulations.
4. (Students) A good faith report from a staff member renders the staff member immune from discipline for making a report and is considered to have been made in the course of the staff member's employment for purposes of M.G.L. c. 258. School staff will be indemnified from any cause of action arising out of a good faith report of bullying or the district's subsequent actions or inaction in connection thereto.
5. (Students) If an instance of student to student bullying is reported to a staff member other than an administrator, the staff member must inform the dean of students or the building principal.
6. (Adults) If the alleged bully is responsible for conducting an investigation, the Superintendent or Committee shall designate an alternative Coordinator, who is immediate Supervisor of the alleged bully.
7. (Adults) If a situation involving a charge of staff member to student bullying is brought to the attention of any staff member, the staff member should notify the building principal or their designee immediately.
8. (Students) In a situation involving a charge of student to staff member bullying the staff member should notify the building principal or their designee immediately.
9. (Adults) In a situation involving a charge of staff member to staff member bullying the staff

- member should notify the building principal or their designee immediately.
10. (Students and Adults) Once a charge of bullying has been made, including charges of mental, emotional or physical bullying as well as threats to a person's safety or position in the school or work environment, the following course of action should be taken:
 - a. The building principal should investigate the charge through discussions with the individuals involved.
 - b. In situations involving allegations against a staff member, they should be informed of their rights to have a third-party present at the time of the discussion.
 - c. In situations involving students the principal should engage the appropriate classroom or special subject area teacher. Parents will be informed of the situation in incidences involving students.
 - d. It is important that the situation be resolved as confidentially and as quickly as the circumstances permit.
 11. After an investigation with the involved parties, if the building principal determines that disciplinary action must be taken, the following could occur:
 - a. (Students and Adults) In instances involving student to student or student to staff member bullying, the student may be subject to discipline including but not limited to counseling, suspension, and in appropriate cases expulsion.
 - b. (Adults) In instances involving staff member to student and staff member to staff member bullying, findings will be reported to the Superintendent of Schools for further action. Personnel action may also be initiated at this point, consistent with the applicable law and collective bargaining agreement.
 - c. (Students and Adults) In all cases, a referral to law enforcement will be considered by the Principal or Superintendent based on the circumstances. School officials will coordinate with the Police Department to identify a police liaison for bullying cases.

1.9.8 Education and Skill Building

In determining the appropriate response to an incident of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation, the principal shall consider a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c.71, 8370(d) (v)2 Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include, but are not limited to:

- Offering individualized skill-building sessions-based school's/district's anti-bullying curricula;
- Providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- Implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- Meeting with parents/guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home.

We recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic, status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or sensory, disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. The school or district will identify specific steps it will take to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

The Monson Public School District Bullying Prevention Plan, as well as notification of updates, can be found in its entirety on the district website at www.monsonschoools.com and is subject to modifications by state legislation.

1.9.9 Gender Identity

“Education Alert – February 2013”:

Massachusetts Department of Education Issues Guidance on Gender Identity Law

On November 23, 2011, Governor Deval Patrick signed into law “An Act Relative to Gender Identity” (Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011). It went into effect on July 1, 2012, amending M.G.L. ch. 76, § 5 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of gender identity of students who enroll in or attend public schools. On February 15, 2013, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education issued guidance, clarifying how the new law and its accompanying regulations apply to school districts. For a discussion of these and other issues, please visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/ssce/genderidentity.pdf>.

1.9.10 Child Nutrition Programs

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) nondiscrimination regulation (7 CFR 15b), as well as the regulations governing the Child Nutrition Programs, make it clear that substitutions to the regular meal must be made, at no extra cost, for children who are unable to eat meals served in any Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) because of their disabilities.

In a disability situation, meal modifications outside the reimbursable meal pattern must be made, provided the request is supported by a medical statement signed by a State licensed healthcare professional.

- The medical statement must include:
 - Information about the child's physical or mental impairment that is sufficient to allow the Program Operator/SFA to understand how it restricts the child's diet,
 - An explanation of what must be done to accommodate the child's disability, and
 - The food or foods to be omitted and recommended alternatives, in the case of a modified meal.

1.9.11 USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: [USDA Discrimination Complaint Form](#), from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax:

- (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email:
program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

1.10 ANTI-DISCRIMINATION/ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The Monson School District is committed to maintaining and promoting an educational environment free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment. The civil rights of all school community members are guaranteed by law, and the protection of those rights is of utmost importance and priority to the District. Discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, genetic information or testing, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, pregnancy, pregnancy related condition, or disability (hereinafter “membership in a protected class”) will not be tolerated. Retaliation against any student or other individual who has complained of discrimination, including harassment, or individuals who have cooperated with an investigation of such a complaint, is also unlawful and will not be tolerated. The District will promptly investigate, remedy any harm, seek to prevent recurrence of such conduct, and will also develop procedures to accomplish this end. This policy applies to conduct directed toward persons associated with the educational community by all other persons associated with the educational community including, but not limited to, students, District employees, the School Committee, school volunteers, and independent contractors.

1.10.1 What Is Discrimination, including Harassment?

A. Discrimination: Treating persons differently, or interfering with or preventing them from enjoying the advantages or privileges afforded to others because of their membership in a protected class.

B. Harassment: Oral, written, graphic, electronic, or physical conduct relating to a person’s actual or perceived membership in a protected class that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit that person’s ability to participate in the District’s programs or activities by creating a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive educational environment.

Harassing conduct based on a person’s protected status may include, but is not limited to:

- Degrading, demeaning, insulting, or abusive verbal or written statements;
- Taking personal belongings, taunting, teasing, name-calling, or spreading rumors;
- Drawing or writing graffiti, slogans, visual displays, or symbols on school or another’s property;
- Telling degrading or offensive jokes;
- Unwanted physical contact of any kind;
- Physical violence, threats of bodily harm, physical intimidation, or stalking;
- Threatening letters, emails, instant messages, or websites that come within the scope of the District’s disciplinary authority;
- Defacing, damaging, or destroying school or another’s property.

C. Sexual Harassment: Conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- i. A school employee conditioning education benefits on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e. quid pro quo); or
- ii. Unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would determine is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school’s education program or activity; or
- iii. Sexual assault (as defined in the Clery Act as: any sexual act directed against another person, without consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent), dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking (as defined in the Violence Against Women Act as: engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to: (1) Fear for the person’s individual safety or the safety of others; or (2) Suffer substantial emotional distress.).

1.10.2 Responsibilities of all Persons Associated with Educational Community

Each member of the educational community is personally responsible for ensuring that their conduct does not in any way harass or discriminate against any other person that they have contact with in the performance of their duties or studies or while acting as a member of the school community. In addition, each member of the educational community is required to fully cooperate in any investigation of alleged discrimination, including harassment. Further, District employees are obligated to intervene and stop any discrimination, including harassment they witness and to immediately report to the appropriate party instances of discrimination, including harassment that are reported to them or of which they otherwise learn.

1.10.3 Designated Officials for Addressing Discrimination and Harassment Complaints

The Civil Rights Coordinator(s) and Title IX Coordinators are responsible for receiving reports and complaints of violations of this Policy. Individuals may file a report or complaint of discrimination, including harassment, with the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) and/or Title IX Coordinators. If the complaint involves allegations of discrimination based on disability, the person filing the complaint also has the option to file their complaint with the building level 504 coordinator. A report or complaint of a violation involving the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) and/or Title IX Coordinators should be filed with the Superintendent. A report or complaint of violation involving the Superintendent should be filed with the Committee.

The Civil Rights and Title VI Coordinator:

Colette Bidus, Director of Special Education, 267-4150

Title IX Coordinators:

Colette Bidus, Director of Special Education, 267-4150

Christopher Fontaine, Principal, Monson High School, 267-4150

The contact information for the Title IX Coordinators will always be prominently displayed on the school's website.

Section 504/Title II Coordinator:

Melissa Mannello, Quarry Hill Community School, 267-4160

1.10.4 Procedure for Reporting Discrimination and Harassment

The following complaint procedure has been established to ensure prompt and effective investigation into allegations of discrimination, including harassment.

A person who believes that they have been discriminated against, including being harassed may, to the extent that they feel comfortable, immediately:

1. confront the harasser(s) or person believed to be discriminating against them;
2. state the conduct that they object to;
3. indicate that they find such conduct offensive, intimidating and/or embarrassing;
4. insist that the person(s) engaging in the conduct stop the conduct immediately; and/or
5. report the conduct immediately to the Civil Rights Coordinator(s);

If the individual with the concern is not comfortable with such a confrontation, or feels that such a confrontation is unsafe and/or otherwise inappropriate, they should instead report the situation to the Civil Rights Coordinator(s). Reports/complaints are to be filed within ninety (90) days after the conduct complained of occurred or within the time the individual reasonably becomes aware of the conduct. (Note: this filing period may be extended for good cause.) Reports/complaints filed after ninety (90)

days will still be accepted, however, it is important to know that the investigation may be impeded due to the passage of time after the conduct or occurrence. The report can be written or oral and should consist of the following:

1. the specific conduct objected to,
2. the date(s) and time(s) such conduct took place,
3. the name(s) of the alleged harasser(s) or person believed to be discriminating against them,
4. the location(s) where the conduct occurred,
5. the name(s) of any witness(es),
6. action sought to remedy the situation, and
7. any other details or information requested by the designated official.

The individual can contact the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) to file a report/complaint as well as to seek assistance in the filing of a report/complaint. If a report/complaint is filed, the person should provide the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) with any documentation (emails, notes, pictures, etc.) or other information in support of the allegation of discrimination, including harassment.

1.10.5 Investigation of Complaints

Upon receipt of a report or complaint, the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) should conduct a prompt investigation. The investigation must allow for the complainant, the subject of the complaint, the alleged harasser, and any other appropriate party to provide information, including witnesses or other evidence, relevant to the consideration and resolution of the complaint. The Civil Rights Coordinator(s) will also endeavor to promptly interview and obtain detailed written statements from potential witnesses. If further documentation or information is necessary, the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) will notify the appropriate party, asking that the information be provided within ten (10) school/working days.

The District will take interim steps, as necessary, to ensure the safety and well-being of the complainant and the alleged harasser while the investigation is being conducted. Interim measures are available even if the complainant does not file or continue to pursue a complaint. The Civil Rights Coordinator(s) shall notify the complainant and the alleged harasser of specific types of interim measures available, which may include measures to avoid contact with the other party, allowing employees to change work situations as appropriate, or prohibiting contact between the parties pending the results of the District's investigation. At any time, a complainant or the alleged harasser may request either orally or in writing to the Civil Rights Coordinator that specific interim measures be taken pending the outcome of the investigation.

A written determination regarding the complaint and any resolution will be provided by the Civil Rights Coordinator to the complainant and the alleged harasser within thirty (30) school/working days of the complaint. The determination of whether the District's antidiscrimination policy has been violated will be based upon a preponderance of the evidence standard.

The complainant or the alleged harasser may request reconsideration of the determination and/or resolution of a complaint by notifying the Superintendent in writing or verbally within seven (7) school/working days of receipt of the written determination of the Civil Rights Coordinator. The Superintendent or their designee will respond to such a request with notice to both parties within (30) thirty school/working days of receipt of the request for reconsideration; their decision is final.

If a violation is found to have occurred, the District will take steps to prevent recurrence of the

violation and correct its discriminatory effect on the person(s) affected. Such steps may include appropriate disciplinary action, counseling, development of a safety plan and other remedies, as appropriate.

1.10.6 Consequences of Violating Policy - Discipline & Discharge

Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the contractual provisions governing their employment. In appropriate circumstances, the District may also refer the matter to law enforcement officials for possible prosecution.

Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may range from detention, suspension from schools, or expulsion from school. (Note: students with disabilities will be subject to the applicable disciplinary procedures set forth in the Students' Rights and Responsibilities District handbook, which adhere to Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973.) In appropriate circumstances, the District may also refer the matter to law enforcement officials for possible prosecution.

1.10.7 Confidentiality

Investigations of discrimination, including harassment complaints shall be conducted in such a manner as to disclose information only to those with a need to know or those who may have information pertinent to the investigation. Please note, some level of disclosure may be necessary in the course of conducting interviews in connection with investigation of any complaint under this policy. The District shall endeavor to keep such information as confidential as it can without compromising the thoroughness of the investigation.

1.10.8 State and Federal Authorities

In addition to the process described above, the complainant may, at any time, file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, or other appropriate federal or state agency charged with enforcement of state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination, including harassment based on membership in a protected class.

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
5 Post Office Square
8th Floor, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: (617) 289-0111 <http://www.ed.gov>

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
436 Dwight St., 2nd Floor, Rm. 220
Springfield, MA 01103
Telephone: (413) 739-2145

Massachusetts Department of
Elementary and Secondary Education
135 Santilli Highway
Everett, MA 02149
Telephone: (781) 338-3000

1.10.9 SEX-BASED HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION

Monson Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination and sex-based harassment in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX. The Monson Public Schools are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members that is free from all forms of harassment, including sex-based harassment and sex-based discrimination.

Sex-based discrimination is discrimination based on sex, sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Sex-based harassment is harassment on the basis of sex, sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Sex-based harassment includes:

- *Quid pro quo harassment.* An employee, agent, or other person authorized by the School to provide an aid, benefit, or service under the School's education program or activity explicitly or impliedly conditioning the provision of such an aid, benefit, or service on a person's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
- *Hostile environment harassment.* Unwelcome sex-based conduct that, based on the totality of the circumstances, is subjectively and objectively offensive and is so severe or pervasive that it limits or denies a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the recipient's education program or activity (*i.e.*, creates a hostile environment).
- *Specific offenses.* An offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation such as sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, etc.

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sex-based harassment, the following are some examples of conduct, which if unwelcome, may constitute sex-based harassment, depending on the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct or its pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances-whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity and/or sexual orientation and/or gender identity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and,
- Discussion of one's sexual activities.

The definition of sex-based harassment is broad and in addition to the above examples, other conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating an environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, to male, female, or gender non-conforming students or employees may also constitute sexual harassment.

Because the District takes allegations of harassment, including sex-based harassment, seriously, the District will respond promptly to complaints of harassment including sex-based harassment, and following an investigation where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will

act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Monson Public Schools is committed to ensuring that sex-based discrimination and sex-based harassment does not continue or recur within our education program or activities. To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or sex-based harassment or to make a complaint regarding such under Title IX, please contact the Title IX Coordinator.

The Title IX Coordinators for the district are:

Colette Bidus
Director of Special Education
43 Margaret Street
Monson, MA 01057
413 267 4150
bidusc@monsonschools.com

Christopher Fontaine
Principal, Monson High School
43 Margaret Street
Monson, MA 01057
413 267 4150
fontainec@monsonschools.com

Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to Monson's Title IX Coordinator(s), the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both.

Monson Public School's nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures can be located within this handbook and at our website www.monsonschools.com.

Retaliation against a complainant, witness, or any other participant in an investigation because they have filed a harassment or sex-based harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment or sexual harassment investigation or proceeding, is strictly prohibited. Anyone found to have retaliated against another in violation of Monson Public School's policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

Retaliation is any intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against any person for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege, or because the person has reported information, made a complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, including in an informal resolution process.

Any person who experiences retaliation for exercising their rights under Title IX can file a retaliation complaint with the Title IX Coordinator.

1.10.10 Procedure for Reporting and Investigating Harassment on the Basis of Sex

Reporting: Any person may file a report of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), at any time either in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, using the contact information listed for the Title IX Coordinator, or by any other means

that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's verbal or written report. However, if a person files a false complaint in bad faith, knowingly and intentionally, they will be subject to discipline.

Investigations: The school is considered to have actual knowledge of a sexual harassment complaint if notice of sexual harassment or an allegation of sexual harassment is provided to a Title IX Coordinator, any school official, or any school employee. The School will investigate every formal complaint (which may be filed by a complainant or by a school's Title IX Coordinator). If the alleged conduct does not fall under Title IX, then a school may address the allegations under the school's code of conduct and can still provide supportive measures. The school is required to investigate the allegations in a complaint, send written notice of the allegations to both parties upon receipt of a formal complaint, and investigate under specified procedures.

The School will investigate and adjudicate formal complaints of sexual harassment using a grievance process that incorporates due process principles, treats all parties fairly, and reaches reliable responsibility determinations. The school's grievance process will:

- Give both parties written notice of the allegations, an equal opportunity to select an advisor of the party's choice (who may be, but does not need to be, an attorney), and an equal opportunity to submit and review evidence throughout the investigation;
- Use trained Title IX personnel to objectively evaluate all relevant evidence without prejudgment of the facts at issue and free from conflicts of interest or bias for or against either party;
- Protect parties' privacy by requiring a party's written consent before using the party's medical, psychological, or similar treatment records during a grievance process;
- Obtain the parties' voluntary, written consent before using any kind of "informal resolution" process, such as mediation or restorative justice, and not use an informal process where an employee allegedly sexually harassed a student;
- Apply a presumption that the respondent is not responsible during the grievance process (often called a "presumption of innocence"), so that the school bears the burden of proof and the standard of evidence is applied correctly;
- Use the preponderance of the evidence standard for all complaints of harassment on the basis of sex, regardless of whether the complaint is against students or district employees;
- Ensure the decision-maker is not the same person as the investigator or the Title IX Coordinator (i.e., no "single investigator models");
- Parties may submit written questions for the other parties and witnesses to answer;
- Protect all complainants from inappropriately being asked about prior sexual history ("rape shield")
- Send both parties a written determination regarding responsibility explaining how and why the decision-maker reached conclusions;
- Effectively implement remedies for a complainant if a respondent is found responsible for sexual harassment;
- Offer both parties an equal opportunity to appeal;
- Protect any individual, including complainants, respondents, and witnesses, from retaliation for reporting sexual harassment or participating (or refusing to participate) in any Title IX grievance process;
- Make all materials used to train Title IX personnel publicly available on the school's website or, if the school does not maintain a website, make these materials available upon request for inspection by members of the public; and

Document and keep records of all sexual harassment reports and investigations for at least seven years.

Record Keeping for Sexual Harassment Complaints

Records relating to complaints of sexual harassment must be kept for not less than seven years. Such records include: records of a school's investigation (including notices, the determination, investigative report, disciplinary measures or remedies, etc.); records of any appeals and materials associated with the appeal; records of any supportive measures taken in response to a complaint of sexual harassment (even if the complainant does not file a formal complaint); records of any informal resolution process; all materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, Investigators, decision makers, and those facilitating an informal resolution. The training materials must be kept on the School's website.

Retaliation is prohibited.

Any person who experiences retaliation for exercising their rights under Title IX can file a retaliation complaint with the Title IX Coordinator. The school will keep the names/identity of parties and witnesses confidential unless such disclosure is required under another law, or is necessary to conduct a thorough grievance procedure.

Supportive Measures

When alleged sexual harassment is reported, the Title IX Coordinator must inform the victim to their right of supportive measures even if not formal complaint is filed. The school must consider the alleged victim's wishes with respect to supportive measures. Supportive measures for those involved in the sexual harassment complaint process may include: counseling, extending deadlines, modifications of work and/or class schedules, school escort services, increased school security and/or monitoring, mutual restrictions on contact between the individuals involved through a safety plan.

Supportive measures will be kept confidential whether they are provided to the alleged victim or accused person to the extent the confidentiality will not interfere with the supportive measure offered.

Legal References:

Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended 45
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq. (Title IX), as amended
Board of Education 603 CMR 26:00
Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, as amended
Title II, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992, as amended

Alternative Procedures:

Individuals are not limited to a formal complaint procedure through Monson Public Schools but may seek resolution through other agencies.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Congress Street, Boston, MA 02114 (617) 565-3200

Massachusetts Commission against Discrimination
1 Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108 (617) 727-3990

U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights
5 Post Office Square, 8 Floor, Boston, MA 02109 (617) 289-0111

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against persons because of disability in any program receiving Federal financial assistance. The Act defines a person with a disability as:

1. Someone with a mental or physical impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities.
2. Someone with a record of such impairment; is regarded as having such impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligations under Section 504, the School District recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person falling under the provisions of Section 504 will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices in the school system. Any student, parent, or guardian who believes that they have been discriminated against on the basis of disability, should contact the District 504 Coordinator, at (413) 267-4150.

No student, parent, or guardian will be subject to coercion, intimidation, interference, or retaliation for registering a complaint or for assisting in an investigation of any alleged violation of laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, or for advocating for rights protected under these laws.

The School District has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and, if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to provide regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet that student's educational needs in compliance with Section 504. For concerns related to identification, evaluation, and placement regarding the Monson Public School District's system of procedural safeguards under Section 504, please contact the District 504 Coordinator.

1.12 Holiday Observances

The Monson Public Schools District recognizes and respects the cultural diversity that exists in the celebration of holidays. Based on these cultural and historical traditions, classroom activities may be scheduled. If any parent wishes to exclude their child from any such events, please notify the building Principal in writing. An alternative activity will be provided.

1.13 Student Records Law

1.13.1 General Provisions: The student record contains all information concerning a student that is kept by the school district and which personally identifies the student; it consists of the temporary record and the transcript. For purposes of these procedures, custodial parent refers to a divorced or separated parent who has physical custody of the child, and the non-custodial parent is the parent who does not have physical custody of the child. Non-custodial parents may not be eligible to access their child's student record, or may have to follow certain procedures in order to access the student record. See Section C below.

The rights outlined below may be exercised by the custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) for a student under the age of 14 years, or jointly by the student and custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child over the age of 14 years. A student over the age of 14 is called "an eligible student." A student 18 years or older may, in writing, deny his custodial parent(s)/non-custodial parent(s) access to their student record, with the exception of transcripts, report cards and/or progress reports.

Each eligible student and custodial parent/guardian, except as limited herein for certain parents, has the right to see the student record for that student within ten (10) days of submitting a written request to see the records. Copies of any records may be obtained upon request and shall be provided within ten (10) days of the request. The District may charge for the cost of reproducing copies.

The student's record is available to authorized school personnel who work directly with the student, or administrative/clerical personnel who need to have access to records in order to carry out their responsibilities. The term "authorized school personnel" includes, but is not limited to, administrators, teachers, counselors, therapists, paraprofessionals, administrative office, staff and clerical personnel. Authorized school personnel included those employed by the District or under contract with the District as an independent contractor. Authorized school personnel do not need permission to see student records.

No information in the student's record is available to anyone outside the school system without written permission from the eligible student and/or parent and/or guardian, unless the requesting party is listed an exception as provided by the Student Records regulations.

Exceptions to the requirement of written permission include, but are not limited to, a probation officer, court order, subpoena, where health or safety requires the disclosure of student information/records or upon transfer to another school district. However, eligible students and/or their parents/guardians will generally be notified before these records are released. A written release must be signed to have any part of the school record sent outside the school. This includes, but is not limited to prospective employers, other technical schools, and colleges.

An eligible student and parent/guardian have the right to request to add relevant information to the student's record as well as the right to request removal of information believed to be untrue or incorrect.

1.13.2 Directory Information Notice: The Monson Public School District has designated certain information contained in the education records of its students as directory information for purposes of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Student Record Regulations at 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

The following information regarding students is considered directory information: (1) name, (2) address, (3) phone number, (4) date and place of birth, (5) major field of study, (6) participation in officially recognized activities and sports, (7) weight and height of members of athletic teams, (8) dates of attendance, (9) degrees, honors and awards received, (10) post high school plans of the student.

Directory information may be disclosed for any purpose at the discretion of the school system, without the consent of a parent of a student 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; such refusal must be in writing and made annually. In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent or student, or as otherwise allowed by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00 et seq. You are hereby notified that pursuant to this notification, the school system will provide requested directory information to military recruiters unless the parent or eligible student specifically directs otherwise, as required by the No Child Left Behind Act.

Any parent or student refusing to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed must file written notification to this effect with the principal on or before the 15th day of each September. In the event that a refusal is not filed, it is assumed that neither a parent of a student or eligible student objects to the release of the directory information designated.

1.13.3 Rights of Certain Divorced or Separated Parents: It is necessary for divorced parents to submit a copy of the custody agreement or order, and any subsequent changes made thereto, to the District so that District personnel may identify which of the parents has physical custody of the child. The non-custodial parent may access their child's record unless:

1. The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered for 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.
2. The parent has been denied visitation.
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.
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 school principal. Upon receipt of the request, the principal and/or their 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 principal 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.

1.13.4 Amending Your Child's Record: A parent has the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant written material to the student's record. The parent should submit the additional information in writing to the principal with a written request that the information be added to the student record. A parent has the right to request in writing deletion or correction of any information contained in the student's record, except for information, which was inserted into that record by the team. Such information inserted by the team shall not be subject to such a request until after the acceptance of the Individual Educational Plan (IEP), or, if the IEP is rejected, after the completion of the special education appeal process. Any deletion or amendment shall be made in accordance with the procedure described below:

1.If a parent is of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in the student's record, the parent shall present the objection in writing and/or have the right to have a conference with the principal or their designee to make the objections known.

2.The principal or their designee shall within one week after the conference or receipt of the objection, if no conference was requested, render to such parent a decision in writing, stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the parent, the principal or designee shall promptly take such steps as may be necessary to put the decision into effect.

3.If the principal's decision is not satisfactory to the parent, the parent may file an appeal to the Superintendent. Such appeal shall be in writing and submitted to the Superintendent within five (5) business days of receipt of the principal's decision. The Superintendent shall render a written decision on the appeal within two (2) weeks of receipt of the written appeal.

4.If the Superintendent's decision is not satisfactory to the parent, the parent may appeal to the School Committee by filing a written appeal within five (5) business days of receipt of the Superintendent's decision. The School Committee shall conduct a hearing as required on the appeal as required by 603 CMR §23.09(4).

1.13.5 Notice on Transfer to Other Schools: Pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(g), notice is hereby given to parents and eligible students that the District forwards the complete school record of a transferring student to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Such transfer of records takes place without consent of the parent or eligible student.

1.13.6 Destruction of Records: Notice is hereby given that the temporary record of a student will be destroyed no later than seven (7) years after that student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the school system. Temporary records are defined as all information in a student record, which is not contained in the transcript. Such information may include standardized test results, extracurricular activities and evaluations by teachers, counselors, and other school staff. When the student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from school, and if the eligible student or the parent/guardian want the temporary record, they must request, in writing, prior to the last day of school, that the documents be provided to them. No additional notice, other than this Notice in the handbook, will be provided to the student or his parent/guardian of such destruction.

In addition, each year, the principal and/or teachers and/or other service providers may destroy the following documents that are considered part of the student's temporary record: disciplinary records (other than documentation of suspensions or expulsions or exclusions), any notes from the parent/guardian or other documents concerning absences, early dismissals, late arrivals, as well as examples of student work. If the eligible student or the parent/guardian wants those records, they must request, in writing, prior to the last day of school that the documents be provided to them, rather than be destroyed. No additional notice, other than this Notice in the handbook, will be provided to the student or his parent/guardian of such destruction.

1.13.7 Display and Publication of Student Work: Notice is hereby given that there will be occasions when student work is seen and is on display within the school; for example, at open houses, exhibits, fairs, on bulletin boards, etc. Unless a parent/ guardian informs the District in writing no later than September 15 of each school year; the District will assume that this display and publication of the student work is acceptable to the parent/guardian.

1.13.8 Complaint Procedure: In addition to the appeal procedure, above, a parent/guardian/eligible student may file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO) of the federal Department of Education. The FPCO has the authority to interpret and decide issues involving student records under FERPA.

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave., Washington D.C., 20202-5920

1.14 Physical Restraint Regulations School District General Policy

It is the policy of the District to use physical restraint only in emergency situations of last resort, after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution.

In accordance with this policy, physical restraint shall only be used by employees who have received the necessary training under 603 CMR 46.04(2) or 603 CMR 46.04(3). Employees shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:

1. To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm; and
2. To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

Program staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student.

1.14.1 Use of Physical Restraint

Physical restraint is direct physical contact, which prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

Physical Escort Not a Restraint- A physical escort, defined as a temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student that is agitated to walk to a safe location, is not considered to be a physical restraint.

Permitted physical escorts include guiding a student to time-out (if the student is not fighting the redirection against their will), redirecting students by a busy road, or grabbing a student who is about to fall, or breaking up a fight between students.

Only staff members, who have received training in the use of physical restraint as a member of the program staff, or in-depth training as a school-wide resource, can administer physical restraint.

Physical restraint is used only in emergency situations of last resort, after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. Whenever possible, the restraint must be witnessed by at least one person who is not participating in the restraint.

Emergency Situations- The student represents an imminent danger to self or others.

Last Resort- Other methods of de-escalation or behavior support have been unsuccessful, or would be inappropriate.

When the use of physical force is appropriate, a properly trained employee shall only use the amount of force reasonably necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

The use of physical restraint shall be done in the safest method available and appropriate to the situation in a manner to prevent or minimize physical harm. Physical restraint shall not be

administered in a manner in which the student is prevented from breathing or speaking.

During the restraint a staff member must continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin temperature and color, and respiration. If, at any time during a physical restraint, the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress including, but not limited to, difficulty breathing, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.

Any use of physical restraint shall end as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to themselves and/or others.

Principal Approval Required for Restraints In Excess of Twenty (20) Minutes- If a student is restrained for a period longer than twenty (20) minutes, program staff shall obtain the approval of the principal. The approval shall be based upon the student's continued agitation during the restraint justifying the need for continued restraint.

1.14.2 Prohibited Use of Physical Restraint

The use of physical restraint as a form of punishment, on students with medical conditions which pose safety concerns, in response to student misbehavior not resulting in legitimate threat to safety, or as a standard response (such as in a behavioral intervention plan or individualized education plan) is prohibited.

Punishment- Physical restraint as a means of punishment is strictly prohibited.

Student Medical Safety Concerns- Physical restraint shall not be used where it cannot be safely implemented because of medical conditions (such as asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting).

Student Misbehavior Not Resulting in Assault or Imminent, Serious, Physical Harm- Physical restraint may not be used in response to a destruction of property, disruption of school order, refusal to comply with a public education program rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious physical harm.

Physical Restraint as a Standard Response Prohibited- Physical restraint may not be used as a standard response. Employees are required to engage in positive behavioral interventions. No written behavioral or individualized educational program (IEP) may include the use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior.

1.14.3 Prohibited Methods of Physical Restraint and Separation Techniques

The use of mechanical restraint, medication restraint, and seclusion are prohibited in all instances. The use of prone restraint is generally prohibited.

Mechanical restraint- Mechanical restraint is defined as the use of any device or equipment to restrict a student's movement.

Medication restraint- Medication restraint is defined as the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior. Medication prescribed by a licensed physician and authorized by the parent for administration in the school setting is not medication restraint.

Seclusion- Seclusion is defined as the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a

room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving.

Prone Restraint- As indicated above, the use of prone restraint is generally prohibited. Prone restraint is a physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the face down position.

Prone restraint is prohibited, except when all of the following criteria are met:

- the student has a documented history of repeatedly causing serious injury to self or others;
- all other forms of restraint have been unsuccessful in ensuring safety;
- there are no medical contraindications as documented by a licensed physician;
- there is psychological or behavioral justification with no psychological or behavioral contraindications as documented by a licensed mental health professional;
- the program has obtained consent from the parent to use prone restraint in an emergency, and the consent has been approved in writing by the principal;
- the program has documented all of the above in advance of the use of prone restraint.

Time-outs

Seclusion occurs when a student is left alone with no staff present or immediately available in an area where the student is prevented from leaving. Seclusion is not permitted under any circumstance.

Time-outs are a permitted behavioral support strategy. Time-outs involve a temporary separation of a student from learning activities or the classroom, either by choice or by direction of staff for the purpose of calming. Time-outs must end as soon as the student has calmed. During a time-out the student must continually be observed by staff member(s). Staff member(s) must be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times.

The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming.

1.14.4 Notification Requirements

Employee Notification to Principal- The employee(s) who administered restraint are required to verbally inform the principal as soon as possible, and submit a written report no later than the next school day.

Parent Notification- The Principal or Director of Special Education, or their designee, will make reasonable efforts to verbally notify the student's parents of the physical restraint within twenty-four (24) hours of the event. A written report will be sent to the parents/guardians within three (3) school days by an email provided to the school by the parent/guardian or postmarked within three (3) school days by regular mail. If the parent/guardian receives school-related information in a language other than English, the written report shall be provided in such non-English language. The student and parents/guardians shall have the right to respond to the use of physical restraint as well as the content of the report verbally or in writing.

Written report must include:

The written report to parents within three (3) school days must include the following:

1. The name of the student; the names and job titles of the staff who administered the restraint, and observers, if any; the date of the restraint; the time the restraint began and ended; and the name of the principal or designee who was verbally informed following the restraint; and, as applicable, the name of the principal or designee who approved continuation of the restraint beyond 20 minutes pursuant

- to 603 CMR 46.05(5)(c).
2. A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff in the same room or vicinity were engaged immediately preceding the use of physical restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to prevent escalation of behavior, including the specific de-escalation strategies used; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint.
 3. A description of the administration of the restraint including the holds used and reasons such holds were necessary; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how the restraint ended; and documentation of injury to the student and/or staff, if any, during the restraint and any medical care provided.
 4. Information regarding any further action(s) that the school has taken or may take, including any consequences that may be imposed on the student.
 5. Information regarding opportunities for the student's parents to discuss with school officials the administration of the restraint, any consequences that may be imposed on the student, and any other related matter.

1.14.5 Additional Administrative Requirements

The District is required to take certain follow up procedures in addition to the report. The follow up procedures required are dependent upon whether the student was restrained once over the course of a week, or was restrained multiple times over the course of the week.

Single Restraint of Student in the Course of a Week- After the release of a student from a restraint, the District shall review the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint, review the incident with the staff person(s) who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed, and consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.

Multiple Restraints of Student in the Week- The Principal is required to conduct weekly reviews of restraint data. If the Principal identifies a student or student(s) who have been identified as being restrained multiple times during the course of the week, the Principal shall convene a team to assess the restrained student's progress and needs. This assessment shall include as least the following:

- a. review and discussion of the written reports and any comments provided by the student and parent about such reports and the use of the restraints;
- b. analysis of the circumstances leading up to each restraint, including factors such as time of day, day of the week, antecedent events, and individuals involved;
- c. consideration of factors that may have contributed to escalation of behaviors, consideration of alternatives to restraint, including de-escalation techniques and possible interventions, and such other strategies and decisions as appropriate, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of restraint in the future
- d. agree on a written plan of action by the program

*Note- if the principal directly participated in the restraint, a duly qualified individual designated by the superintendent or board of trustees shall lead the review team's discussion. The principal shall ensure that a record of each individual student review is maintained and made available for review by the Department or the parent, upon request.

Principal Monthly Review- As mentioned above, the Principal is required to conduct weekly reviews to determine if any students have been physically restrained multiple times.

Additionally, the principal shall conduct a monthly review of school-wide restraint data. This review shall consider patterns of use of restraints by similarities in the time of day, day of the week, or individuals involved; the number and duration of physical restraints school-wide and for individual

students; the duration of restraints; and the number and type of injuries, if any, resulting from the use of restraint. The principal shall determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify the school's restraint prevention and management policy, conduct additional staff training on restraint reduction/prevention strategies, such as training on positive behavioral interventions and supports, or take such other action as necessary or appropriate to reduce or eliminate restraints.

Data Reporting

Injury reports and annual data on the use of physical restraints must be reported to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department).

Injury reports- all restraint-related injuries will be reported by the District to the Department. When a physical restraint has resulted in an injury to a student or program staff member, the program shall send a copy of the written report detailed above postmarked no later than three (3) school days of the administration of the restraint. The District shall also send the Department a copy of the record of physical restraints written reports for the thirty (30) day period prior to the date of the reported restraint. Within thirty (30) calendar days the Department will determine if any action is warranted.

Annual report- The District will collect data concerning every use of physical restraint and report such data to the Department on an annual basis. Such data shall be reported in a manner and form directed by the Department.

Staff Training Requirements

Annually the District will conduct general staff training covering information on the role of the student, family, and staff in preventing restraint. The training will cover the district's restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures, including the use of time-out as distinct from seclusion.

Staff will be instructed in interventions that could be used to preclude the need for restraint, as well as de-escalation techniques and other alternatives. Staff will also receive information on the types of permitted physical restraints and related safety considerations, including medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history. Staff who have received or will receive in-depth training and who can serve as resources to others should be identified to the school staff as a whole.

For those staff members who will receive in-depth training, the Department recommends that the training in the use of physical restraint be at least 16 hours and include an annual refresher training. Such training must include at least the following:

- Appropriate procedures for preventing the use of physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building and the use of alternatives to restraint;
- A description and identification of specific dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may lead to the use of physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted;
- The simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
- Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints;
- Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint; and,
- Instruction regarding the impact of physical restraint on the student and family, recognizing the act of restraint has impact, including but not limited to psychological, physiological, and social- emotional effects.

The Superintendent will develop procedures identifying:

- Appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention;
- Methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide including crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors among groups of students or individuals;
- Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints;
- Methods for engaging parents/guardians in discussions about restraint prevention and use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure

This policy and its accompanying procedures shall be reviewed and disseminated to staff annually and made available to parents/guardians of enrolled students. The Superintendent shall provide a copy of the Physical Restraint regulations to each Principal, who shall sign a form acknowledging receipt thereof.

(1) Procedures. Public education programs shall develop and implement written restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures consistent with 603 CMR 46.00 regarding appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention. Such policy and procedures shall be annually reviewed and provided to program staff and made available to parents of enrolled students. Such policy and procedures shall include, but not be limited to:

(a) Methods for preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide, including individual crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student;

- The District has implemented PBIS across the district to support students in a positive and proactive manner. Classroom and building expectations have been created as part of PBIS. In addition, student behavior is tracked through an online computer program, School Wide Information System (SWIS), which is a web-based data and reporting system for screening and monitoring student behavior. The system allows schools to easily collect and analyze behavior data around school climate. The system is aligned with the school-wide PBIS.
- District staff have been offered Professional Development in verbal de-escalation strategies each year. At the start of each school year, selected staff have been identified to participate in Safety Care training, which focuses on verbal de-escalation strategies first, and then moves to physical intervention if necessary. All building principals have identified staff who will respond to student behavior.
- The District may access Mobile Crisis support when a student's behavior escalates.
- The District accesses the School Adjustment Counselor if a Risk Assessment is necessary from a student report of potential self-harm/injury.
- For identified students, a crisis plan is developed to ensure safety throughout the day.

(b) Methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and the use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;

- On an annual basis parents are also notified of our behavior protocols and are provided an opportunity to engage in discussion to clarify any questions they may have regarding physical restraint and prevention strategies.

(c) A description and explanation of the program's alternatives to physical restraint and method of physical restraint in emergency situations;

- During Safety Care training, particular emphasis is also given to training staff on interventions that may preclude the need for restraint, including de-escalation of problematic behaviors and other alternatives to restraint in emergency circumstances such as but not limited to the following:
 - Physical escort: shall mean a temporary touching or holding without the use of force, of the hand, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location.
 - Structuring the environment: including thinking about where we choose to discuss situations, whether we sit or stand, the tone a staff member uses, etc.
 - Proximity control or taking space: having someone close to or further away from the person might be calming depending on their personality. This may also take the form of asking a student to move to a quiet, neutral, and safe area that minimizes visual and auditory stimulation and assist individuals in regaining control.
 - Prompting/verbal cues: gentle verbal reminders to use appropriate behavior or learned coping skills or a verbal reminder to stop an undesirable behavior or inappropriate action. We would use one or two reminders before switching to a different technique.
 - Non-verbal cues: using nods, signs, checklists, hand-gestures, or eye contact to remind the individual of behavioral expectations.
 - Prompting: reminding the student of coping skills or the first few steps in conflict resolution.
 - Choice making: providing at least two choices in daily activities, tasks, and routines.
 - Planned ignoring with positive feedback: when students are engaging in attention seeking behavior and know alternative positive strategies to seek attention, but opt not to use them, the staff will use planned ignoring until the student participates in more appropriate behavior, at which time they will be praised for the appropriate behavior.
 - Redirection: turning attention from an undesirable activity to one that is neutral or socially appropriate.
 - Directive statements: informing the student of what they need to do when the student's ability to make decisions for themselves declines. Statements may range from requests to listening to rules to demands.

- Verbal de-escalation strategies are always recommended first. Staff may utilize time out with adult supervision to allow time for the student to calm prior to returning to class.

1.15 DUE PROCESS FOR SUSPENSIONS

1.15.1 Notice of Proposed Suspension

Except in the case of an emergency removal or disciplinary offense defined under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H1/2 or an in-school suspension as defined by 603 CMR 53.02(6), the school shall provide the student and parent/guardian with written and oral notice of the proposed out-of-school suspension, an opportunity to be heard at hearing, and the opportunity to participate at the hearing. Notice shall set forth in plain language:

1. the disciplinary offense;
2. the basis for the charge;
3. the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
4. the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent/guardian to attend the hearing;
5. the date, time, and location of the hearing;
6. the right of the student and student's parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

The principal/assistant principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian verbally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. In order to conduct a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. Reasonable effort is presumed if the principal sent written notice and documented at least two attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent/guardian for emergency situations.

All written communications regarding notice of proposed suspension shall be either by hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the student and parent/guardian at the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

1.15.2 Short-Term Suspensions: Hearing and Principal Determination

A short-term suspension is the removal of the student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive days or less. Out-of-school short-term suspensions which do not cumulatively over the course of the school year exceed ten (10) days of suspension shall be conducted in accordance with this section.

Principal Hearing. The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts. A parent/guardian present at the hearing shall have the opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal will make a determination whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequence. The principal will provide notification in writing of their determination in the form of an update to the student and parent/guardian, and provide reasons for the determination. If the student is suspended, the principal shall inform the parent/guardian of the type and duration of the suspension, and shall provide an opportunity for the student to make up assignments and other

school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

If the student is in grades pre-k through 3, the principal shall send their determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

There is no appeal process for short-term suspensions.

1.15.3 Long-Term Suspensions: Hearing and Principal Determination

A long-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal will consider in determining whether alternatives to suspension such as loss of privileges, detention, an apology, a student contract, restitution, and/or probation are appropriate.

Additionally, the student shall have the following additional rights:

In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;

- i. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's and or parent's/guardian's expense;
- ii. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and
- iii. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- iv. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal. All participants shall be informed that the hearing is being recorded by audio. A copy of the audio recording will be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request.

Based on the evidence submitted at the hearing the principal shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension (the use of evidence-based strategies and programs, such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports) what remedy or consequence will be imposed. If the principal decides to impose a long-term suspension, the written determination shall:

- i. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
- ii. Set out key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
- iii. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
- iv. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive a specific list of education services to make academic progress during removal, and the contact information of a school member who can provide more detailed information.
- v. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or their designee (only if a long-term suspension has been imposed) within five (5) calendar days, which may be extended by parent/guardian request in writing an additional seven (7) calendar days.

The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

If the student is in grades pre-k through grade 3, the principal shall send their determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the student and parent/guardian at the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or by other means of communication where appropriate.

The principal shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

1.16 ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Any student who is suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days whether in school or out of school or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The Principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

1.16.1 Students suspended, or expelled for more than ten (10) consecutive school days

All students suspended or expelled in excess of ten (10) consecutive school days will be notified of the availability of alternative educational services and the contact information for selecting and accessing said services at the time the suspension or expulsion is imposed. The alternative education services available through the Monson Public Schools are provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under M.G.L. c.69, §§ 1D and 1F.

The following services are available to any student suspended or expelled for more than ten (10) consecutive school days to facilitate the student's continued academic progress and the acquisition of credits toward graduation during any suspension or expulsion in excess of ten (10) consecutive school days:

1. Individual/Small Group Tutorial Services:

The suspended/expelled student will be assigned to an individual or small group tutorial session to be conducted on Monson Public Schools' property or at a neutral location to be determined by the school administration.

2. Online/Distance Learning

The suspended/expelled student will be provided with access, at no cost to grade appropriate curriculum through an online learning platform, i.e. Google Classroom.

Students participating in alternative educational services while suspended or expelled in excess of ten (10) consecutive school days will receive full credit toward state and local requirements for graduation/promotion. M.G.L. c.76, §21.

To obtain more information regarding the alternative educational services available to your child, and to verify you and your child's selection of and enrollment in either of the alternative educational services available through the Monson Public School District, please contact the school principal.

1.16.2 Appeal of Long-Term Suspension

1. A student who is placed on a long-term suspension shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent if properly and timely filed. If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in their discretion for good cause.
2. A good faith effort shall be made to include the parent/guardian at the hearing. The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if they have made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate.
3. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

4. The student and parent/guardian shall have the same rights afforded at the long-term suspension principal hearing.
5. Within five (5) calendar days of the hearing the superintendent shall issue their written decision which meets the criteria required of the principal's determination.
6. If the superintendent determines the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than that of the principal.
7. The superintendent's decision shall be final.

1.16.3 Emergency Removal

A student may be temporarily removed prior to notice and hearing when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and 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. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal.

During the emergency removal, the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to verbally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The principal shall also provide the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions and provide for a hearing, for which the parent/guardian has the opportunity to attend within the two (2) school days, time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian. The student may not be removed from school until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

A decision shall be rendered verbally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day. The decision shall meet all of the due process requirements of a principal's determination for suspensions.

1.16.4 In-School Suspension Under 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10

In-school suspension is defined as the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not the school premises, for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions over the course of the school year.

The principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses. A principal may impose an in-school suspension as defined above according to the following procedures:

The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal 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. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two (2)

attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth above, if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. The principals use of in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension.

1.16.5 Suspension or Expulsion for Disciplinary Offenses Under M.G.L. 71 §§37H and 37H1/2

1. The due process procedures above do not apply to a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) an assault on a member of the educational staff; or
d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c.71, §§37H or 37H1/2.
2. The principal will inform the student of the specific charges in writing, informing the student of the right to be represented by counsel (at the student's expense) and the right to provide evidence and question witnesses, on the proposed hearing date.
3. The student may appeal the principal's expulsion determination to the superintendent of schools within ten (10) days of notification of the expulsion.
4. The superintendent may uphold, reduce, or reverse the disciplinary action after the appeal hearing. Note that a failure to make an appeal to the superintendent within the ten (10) day period will exhaust any further right of appeal.
5. All students who have been suspended or expelled who remain residents of the District shall have an opportunity to make academic progress during their period of suspension, expulsion, or removal from regular classroom activities.
6. If the superintendent upholds the expulsion decision, 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.

1.17 Discipline for Students with Disabilities

1.17.1 Students Identified as Having a Disability

1. All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this Handbook. Chapter 71B of the Mass. General Laws, formerly known as Chapter 766, requires that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation team to have special needs and whose individualized program is described in an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).
 - a. Students with Disabilities may be suspended for up to ten (10) consecutive days, and may also be suspended in excess of ten (10) cumulative days, as fully outlined under M.G.L.c. 71B, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Such suspensions may be carried out without any further or additional process.
 - b. Suspensions or exclusions in excess of ten (10) consecutive days or ten (10) cumulative days may also occur, provided that the conduct for which the student is being disciplined is not a manifestation of their disability, and the District provides educational services which will allow the student to access the general curriculum and to make progress toward their goals.
2. The IDEA and M.G.L. c. 71B allow school personnel to move a student with disabilities to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days, if that student is in possession of a dangerous weapon at school or a school function or on school property, is in possession or uses a controlled substance or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function or on school property, or inflicts serious bodily injury on a person, including themselves. The appropriate interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the IEP team.
3. The IDEA and M.G.L. c. 71B also allow school personnel the option of asking a hearing officer or a court to move children with disabilities to an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days, if they are substantially likely to injure themselves or others in their current placement.
4. When a Student with Disabilities has been suspended for more than ten (10) consecutive or cumulative days in a school year, such that a substantial change in placement is occurring or will occur, the IEP team will meet to conduct a manifestation determination.
5. When a suspension constitutes a change in placement of a student with disabilities, District personnel, the parent/guardian, and other relevant members of the Team, as determined by the parent and the District, convene to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information from the parents/guardians, to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the District's failure to implement the IEP—"a manifestation determination."
6. At the manifestation determination, a copy of the Procedural Safeguards will be given to the parent/guardian.
7. Relevant members of the team meet for the manifestation determination. A summary of the manifestation determination review will be written and a copy provided to the Parent/guardian(s) as soon as possible after the review, but no later than five (5) school days after the review.

If the team finds that the misconduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, then the student may be disciplined according to the discipline policy in this handbook. The student will receive educational services during this period of suspension or exclusion. If the team finds that the misconduct was a manifestation of the student's disability, then the school may still be able to implement an IAES (see #2 and #3 above). If the IAES is not possible, then the student will remain in their current placement, and the team will arrange for a functional behavioral assessment (if one has not been conducted on the student) and the development or modification of a behavior intervention plan. The principal or designee will notify the Special Education Office of the suspension offense of a Student with Disabilities and a record will be kept of such notices.

1.17.2 Students Identified as Having a Disability and on a Section 504 Plan

Students are expected to meet the expectations for behavior identified in this handbook. A student on a Section 504 plan may be disciplined like any other non-disabled student. However, if the student is going to be suspended for ten (10) or more cumulative days, expelled or suspended for more than fifteen (15) cumulative days (and there is a change in placement as a result), then a manifestation determination review shall be conducted.

A summary of the manifestation determination review will be written and a copy provided to the parent(s)/guardian(s) as soon as possible after the review, but no later than five (5) school days after the review.

1.17.3 Procedural Requirements for Students Not Yet Determined to be Eligible for Special Education

A child who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services and who has engaged in behavior that violates the Student Code of Conduct, may assert any of the protections provided for special education students if the school had knowledge (as determined by the IDEA) that the child was a child with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. The school district may be considered to have prior knowledge if, before the behavior that resulted in the disciplinary action occurred:

1. The parent of the student expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the student's school or to a teacher of the student that the student is in need of special education and related services; or
2. The parent requested an evaluation of the student; or
3. District staff expressed, directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel, specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

The district may not be deemed to have had knowledge if the parent has not consented to an evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student was completed and resulted in a determination of ineligibility. If the district had no knowledge that the student is a student with a disability prior to taking disciplinary action, the student may be subjected to disciplinary measures applied to students without disabilities. However, if an evaluation is requested during the time period in which the student is subjected to these disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner.

1.18 Use of Pesticides on School Property

Pesticides shall not be sprayed, released, deposited, or applied indoors while children are on the property of a school, day care center or school age child care program, except for those pesticides listed in section 6F.

Pesticides shall not be sprayed, released, deposited, or applied on the outdoor property of a school, day care center or school age child care program while children are located in, on, or adjacent to the area of the pesticide application.

1. Whenever pesticides are to be sprayed, released, deposited, or applied outdoors at a school, day care center or school age child care program, the school administration, day care center operator, or school age child care program operator shall ensure that employees, pupils, or supervised children and their parents or guardians receive standard written notification, as defined in section 2, at least two working days before pesticides are sprayed, released, deposited or applied, provided that such spraying, release, deposit or application of pesticides shall not commence prior to approximate dates set forth on the standard written notification, and shall not conclude more than 72 hours after such approximate dates.
2. Such notification policy shall apply at all times except during periods when classes are not scheduled for at least five consecutive days after spraying, release, deposit, or application or when day care or school age child care facilities are not scheduled to be open for at least five consecutive days after the spraying, release, deposit, or application.
3. Information to be included in the standard written notification shall be provided to the school administration, day care center operator, or school age child care program operator by the certified commercial applicator, certified private applicator, or licensed applicator, or the contractor, employers or employees responsible for carrying out the pesticide spraying, release, deposit, or application. Larval mosquito control applications using pesticides classified as category four pesticides by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, as applied by mosquito control projects under chapter 252, are exempt from the notification requirements of this section. This section shall not apply to any use of an anti-microbial as defined in section 2.

Legal Reference: Massachusetts Pesticide Control Act (M. G. L. c 132B §6C).

1.19 Collaboration with Law Enforcement

The Monson Public School District, the Monson Police Department, and the Hampden County District Attorney's Office agree to develop and coordinate their response to violent, delinquent, or criminal acts by students, including possession or use of weapons and alcohol and other drug use, that occur on school premises, school buses, or at school-related events.

SECTION 2

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER AT QUARRY HILL COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Preschool and Kindergarten

Dear Early Childhood Center Students and Families,

Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year at the Early Childhood Center located at Quarry Hill Community School! We are looking forward to welcoming our new and returning youngest learners. We have a love of learning through play, and are prepared to provide all learners with the highest quality instruction and social emotional learning support.

Here at the ECC, we strive to be Super STARs. This is our positive behavioral expectations acronym that helps students focus on expected behaviors in all different parts of our school. Each letter identifies qualities or actions that students will develop over their time here. We look forward to partnering with you to support that development. The traits are:

S - Stay Focused
T - Try Your Best
A - Act Safely
R - Respect Others

Please review appropriate portions of this handbook and discuss the learning and behavioral expectations with your student(s). The time spent reviewing the handbook with your child is greatly appreciated, and supports your child's continuous progress at school. We will also be having conversations as a school community about certain topics, so students will have many opportunities to ask questions and review expectations with staff and peers.

With your support, we can create and sustain a dynamic learning environment that fosters the academic and social well-being of all students every day.

Sincerely,

Penny Manteria
Principal

2.1 Arrival and Dismissal Times for School

2.1.1 Arrival

Students should arrive at school no earlier than 8:40 a.m. (There is no adult supervision provided prior to 8:40 am.) Students being dropped off should enter through the public entrance way by the office. Students arriving after 8:55 a.m. are considered tardy, and will need to be escorted to the main office by a parent/guardian.

Vans drop students off on the side of the building where the early childhood playground is located.. It is important to remember not to park and leave your vehicle in the circle. This is a handicap accessible location and fire lane.

2.1.2 Dismissal

Students will be dismissed at 3:10 p.m. If your child is a parent pick-up at the end of the school day, please use the following procedure: (If dismissal has ended and your child has not been picked up, the student will be brought to the main office and the parent/guardian will be contacted.)

- Please line-up, single file in the public entrance way by the office.
- Staff will direct cars in order to keep emergency access lanes open.
- Please wait in your vehicle and do not park and leave your vehicle while in the parent pick-up line.
- Students will be directed to you and your vehicle by staff.
- Please exit slowly, in the same lane
- Please do not pass other parent pick-up vehicles.
- Dismissal Changes
 - If your child's dismissal plan needs to change, please contact the main office at 413-267-4160 and send in a note. The office will then contact the classroom. Please do not directly contact the teacher, as they are not always available electronically during the school day.

2.1.3 Early Dismissals

Students who are dismissed before 3:10 are required to bring in a written request or phone call to the main office by parents/guardians specifying the time, date, reason, and who will be picking up your child. The parent or guardian must come into the office to sign the child out. If a person other than the parent or guardian is picking up a student, the parent or guardian must provide their name. For the safety and security of your child, identification will be requested at the time of dismissal of the person picking up the child. We do not release children to minors under the age of 18 without parental notification either by phone or a note

When there are half-days of school, we dismiss students at 11:30 a.m. Half-days due to inclement weather typically dismiss at 11:30 a.m. as well. There will be an announcement made via the information given on your emergency contact form.

Please note: If a person other than the parent or guardian is picking up a student, it **MUST** be noted in the notice from the parent or guardian. For the safety and security of your child, identification will be requested at the time of dismissal of the person picking up the child. If the child is to be picked up by a neighbor or friend, please specify the name of that person. We do not release children to minors under the age of 18 without parental notification either by phone or a note. If a child is to be picked up by a neighbor or friend, please specify the name of that person.

2.1.4 Absences

Regular school attendance is critical to creating a strong educational foundation for your child. Please communicate with the main office if your child is going to be absent from school. The ECC office and administration will be in regular contact with families whose child is absent. This collaborative approach will help create long lasting positive habits for your child. Families can expect the following steps to be taken to support student attendance:

4. The parent/guardian will receive a text message at roughly 10:30 a.m. on each day their child is marked absent. This message is automated and will be sent regardless of if the parent/guardian has already contacted the school to report the absence.
5. When a child reaches 5 or 9 total absences for the school year (regardless of if the absence is excused or unexcused) the parent/guardian will receive notification.
6. When a child reaches 12 total absences (regardless of if the absence is excused or unexcused) an administrator will schedule an attendance support meeting. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall be developed jointly by the principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies. A warning notice will be sent documenting that any more absences may result in non- promotion to the next grade level. A court referral is probable at this point in time indicating failure to comply with the state mandated policy.

2.1.5 Tardiness

1. Students who arrive at school after 8:55 a.m. are considered tardy.
2. Students should be escorted by their parent/guardian into the office to obtain a pass before going to their class.
3. Accumulation of three tardies will result in a warning letter; more than three in one quarter will result in follow-up communication with the parent/guardian to identify needed supports or actions.
4. Please note that if a student is out of school for more than one-half of the school day, it will count as an absence.

2.1.6 Vacation Policy

The administration strongly recommends that students do not take vacations while school is in session. Families going away on vacation may request work from the teacher. Teachers will be unable to recreate or replicate class lessons for vacationing students.

2.1.7 Absences Due to Religious Holidays

Consistent with state and federal laws, the ECC will make every effort to accommodate students who will miss school due to the observance of religious holidays or activities. Given the diverse and varied nature of our religious communities and their beliefs, we must ask that it be the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify Administration regarding religious absences. Religious absences will not be counted against students when calculating the attendance requirement.

Informal Classroom and School Visitations

Please refer to the policy in Part 1, on page 8 of this handbook for more information.

We welcome parents/guardians to visit our school and ask that they observe the following guidelines when visiting:

1. Please call the school to make arrangements ahead of time.
2. All visitors must use the main entrance.
3. Proceed to the office and you will be issued a visitor badge and directed to a sign-in log. You must wear and display your visitor badge at all times during your stay, as this will indicate that your presence in the building is authorized. When you are leaving, return your badge and use the log to record the time of your departure.
4. Young siblings should not accompany their parents/guardians to the classrooms.
5. Visitors are expected to comply with the confidentiality policy as stated on the Visitor's Log in the school's main office.

2.2 Report Cards

Early Childhood Center report cards will be issued three times a year for both Preschool and Kindergarten.

2.3 Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences are an integral part of the communication carried on between home and school. Through these conferences, a better assessment of each student's progress can be achieved between teacher and parent. Parents may request a conference with their child's team any time during the school year by calling or emailing the teacher to arrange a convenient time. In October and March, a parent-teacher conference half-day is scheduled for students. Teachers will reach out to you to schedule.

2.4 Homework Guidelines:

GRADE	HOMEWORK GUIDELINES
K	Reading (to or with your child) for 20 minutes and Math practice for 5-10 minutes is encouraged.

2.5 Code of Conduct and Student Discipline

The Early Childhood Center at Quarry Hill Community School Code of Conduct and disciplinary policies focus on creating a safe and hospitable environment for the students. We realize that learning is a lifelong process, and this is especially true for the development of interpersonal skills, such as empathy and self-control. These attributes are being fostered throughout the grades through the instruction of social thinking skills. It is imperative that we, as educators, use positive role modeling to lead by example. We make every effort to work with the students and families to make disciplinary actions positive and focused on learning.

At the Early Childhood Center at Quarry Hill Community School, a *positive discipline* approach is used and it is our belief that all students can learn to make appropriate decisions that support their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

2.6 Discipline Procedures and Consequences

On occasion, students make mistakes and do not adhere to the school guidelines. When appropriate, this is addressed in the classroom by the classroom teacher. Intervention by the teacher may include some of the consequences listed in 2.6.2. If the incident is of a more serious nature, the student may be issued a Classroom Discipline Report (which needs to be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to school) and/or be referred to the office. Once in the office, the Dean of Students and/or the Principal will assist the student in taking responsibility for their actions and gain knowledge to inform them how to improve their choices in the future.

2.6.1 Student Code of Conduct: Rules and Regulations

The types of behavior that will not be tolerated have been categorized into four groups (A through D), based on the degree of seriousness of the action. The listed behaviors are merely examples of prohibited conduct. The Student Code of Conduct policies do not cover every possible infraction and do not preclude the administration from responding to conduct that is deemed inappropriate for the school setting in a manner other than is set forth in this handbook. The Early Childhood Center at Quarry Hill Community School reserves the right to discipline, suspend, expel or otherwise remove a student from the school setting; consistent with state and federal law and to consider the severity of each incident, whether the student was involved in prior disciplinary incidents and other relevant factors.

2.6.2 Consequences

Student discipline is confidential and typically progressive. Although our regulations and rules are

straightforward, each case is dealt with on the basis of the severity of the infraction and individual circumstances. The following list represents typical consequences that may be invoked by school administration:

1. Verbal warning
2. Removal from class
3. Seat change
4. Discussion of problem with teacher or team of teachers
5. Notification of parents
6. Parent conference
7. Behavioral contract
8. Financial restitution
9. Lunch detention
10. Counselor referral
11. Outside counseling referral
12. In-school suspension*
13. Out-of-school suspension*
14. Expulsion from school
15. Suspension or expulsion from bus transportation
16. Police referral

*Any student on external or internal suspension will not be allowed to participate in any school activities during the period of suspension.

2.6.3 Discipline Categories

Group A

1. Behavior that disrupts the educational process (e.g., inappropriate classroom behavior; inappropriate physical contact; making excessive noise; misuse of school equipment; use of non-approved electronic devices during class.
2. Being in an unauthorized area (e.g., any area in the school which is unsupervised or in which the student does not have permission from staff member to be at that time.)
3. Use of profane or obscene language.
4. Verbal non-compliance with a reasonable request from any member of the school staff, including guests and substitute teachers.
5. Instigating conflict.

Consequence: One or more of the following:

1. Conference with an administrator
2. Lunch Detention
3. Suspension at discretion of administrator
4. Revocation of privileges not limited to: field trips or eligibility for co-curricular events.

Discipline may also include consequences noted under Groups B, C and D below as deemed appropriate or resulting from multiple offenses.

Group B

1. Initiating or participating in food/classroom item throwing.
2. Opening secured exterior doors for students and/or visitors during school hours.
3. Harassment or intimidation of any student, staff member or other member of the school community. Forms of harassment whether verbal, physical, technological (email, social network postings, text messaging, prank or repeated harassing calls) will not be tolerated (please see Anti-bullying Policy on page 30).
4. Slurs, symbols, lewd actions, comments or writing based upon religious, ethnic, racial, disability, gender or sexual orientation.

5. Leaving school without permission or being outside of building without authorization.

Consequence: Minimum – one (1) to three (3) day suspension from all classes and school activities.

Discipline may also include consequences noted under Groups A, C and D below as deemed appropriate or resulting from multiple offenses.

Group C

1. Fighting
2. Threat of violence directed toward any other person. In the case of a threat to a teacher, the student may also be removed from the class on a temporary or permanent basis, depending on the circumstances.
3. Actions and/or comments that may threaten or incite others to disrupt the good order of the school and/or endanger a person(s) or property.
4. Willful destruction of, or damage to, school (e.g. furniture, classroom materials, walls) or personal property.
5. Possession of lighters, matches or other flammable materials.
6. Exhibitionism, lewd wanton and lascivious behavior, disorderly conduct and distracting or inappropriate sexual contact between students. Possession, dissemination or use of explicit sexual pictures or drawings.
7. Chronic school offender stemming from multiple violations over a period of time with little to no corrective action on behalf of student.

Consequence: Mandatory short-term suspension not to exceed ten (10) days, restitution for any damage, reporting to the police and/or fire departments as appropriate.

Discipline may also include consequences noted under Groups D below as deemed appropriate or resulting from multiple offenses.

Group D

1. Assault and/or battery of any member of the school community.
2. Possessing, selling, distributing, or use of a weapon (including knife, club, slingshot or other article that can be deemed dangerous) or any other contraband item. Use of a replica or other object in a threatening manner (e.g. fake weapons, bombs).
3. Making threats to any member of the school staff.
4. Obtaining money, material goods, or favors by threat of physical harm.
5. Act of arson, deliberately setting a fire, or use of explosives, this includes fireworks.
6. Making a bomb threat.
7. Participating in a false fire alarm and/or pulling or tampering with any fire alarms or related equipment on school premises.
8. Tampering with security cameras, propping open secured exterior doors and other actions, which directly and purposely affect safety and security issues.

Consequence: Mandatory suspension of up to ten (10) days from all classes and school activities, restitution for any damage, involvement and referral of the police and/or fire department as appropriate.

Additional Action

The discipline procedures are designed to cover the general rules and regulations of the individual schools. However, it is not intended to be all inclusive and individual teachers or principals may have their own rules and regulations pertaining to the management of their classes or schools.

2.7 Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Cell phones, any wireless communication devices, are to be turned off during the school day. No recording device (audio or video) of any type is allowed during school hours or in the building any time without specific permission. If a student has any of the aforementioned items on their person during the school day, the item will be confiscated. The first offense, the student will pick it up at the office at the end of the day.

Subsequent offenses will result in the parent/guardian having to pick up the item in the office after school and may result in further disciplinary action.

2.8 Toys

Bringing items of value to school is prohibited. Items such as stuffed animals, trading cards, matchbox cars, etc. should be left at home. The school cannot accept responsibility for lost, broken, or stolen items. In some cases, it may become necessary to hold some of these items in the office until a parent arranges pick-up. On occasion, some of the above items may be brought to school with teacher and/or administrator permission for special school-wide events or classroom events.

The school provides necessary play equipment, such as basketballs, jump ropes, footballs, etc., for the children. It is not necessary for them to bring this type of equipment to school.

2.9 Celebrations

Due to the increased numbers of Life-Threatening Allergies (LTA), we will not use food to celebrate successes in the school or in classrooms. Please refer to the district Wellness Policy for further information.

For birthday/ individual celebrations, parents may send in goody bags containing non-food items. Such items could include pencils, stickers, erasers, bookmarks, etc. that do not contain latex.

2.10 Party Invitations

In an effort to maintain focus on learning, we request that you send party invitations through the mail. Delivering them at school can create hard feelings and distract students from learning. If you choose to send invitations into school, there needs to be an invitation for each student in the class.

2.11 Lost and Found

Articles which have been found in the school building or on school grounds are placed in the cafeteria where they may be claimed. Please check the lost and found frequently for your items. Parents are requested to label all articles of clothing with the child's first and last name. Articles left on the bus typically get returned to the school's main office.

2.12 Change of Address and Telephone Numbers

Parents are to notify the office immediately of any change of address or telephone number, so we can update the emergency contact information. Emergency contact forms need to be current.

2.13 Communication of Concerns

An important component to the ECC at Quarry Hill Community School's philosophy encompasses teamwork. We will work together to ensure a quality education. It is important that we communicate in a manner that is respectful. If at any time you have concerns regarding your child's education or school procedures, you are invited to voice that concern. We ask that you begin with your child's teacher. If after talking to the teacher you still feel concerned, please contact the main office to set up a time to meet with administration. Your concerns are our concerns; please feel comfortable in sharing them. A resolution will be worked out with a team effort. If a parent/guardian is still not satisfied, they may contact the Superintendent.

2.14 Class Placement Policy

The assignment of students to classes is the responsibility and discretion of the administration in consultation with the appropriate faculty and staff. The criteria employed by the administration, faculty, and staff in determining class placement shall include, but not be limited to, total class size, ability, racial and ethnic diversity, specific academic strengths, and equitable distribution among the sexes.

Professional expertise is utilized to assess the child's learning style, academic ability, preference for teaching style, and performance in varied learning environments. Although parent input is not solicited, parents may submit in writing any information that would assist the Principal in the placement procedure prior to April 15th of the year preceding enrollment. Information provided should address the child's learning style and learning environment, not request a specific teacher or team of teachers. Every effort will be made by the Principal to evaluate all placement information. The ultimate authority lies with the Principal in terms of arriving at a final determination regarding the assignment of all students.

2.15 School Attire

By law, the rights of students as to personal dress and appearance may not be abridged except if school officials determine that such personal dress and appearance violates reasonable standards of health, safety, cleanliness and propriety.

Personal dress and appearance which violates the substance abuse, non-discriminatory and sexual harassment policies of the Monson Public Schools, or which is obscene or interferes with another student's ability to receive an education is prohibited.

Hats may not be worn during the school day - unless it is authorized for special occasions.

In terms of footwear, closed-toed shoes are strongly recommended for play on the wood chip areas. Due to safety reasons, individuals wearing sandals will be asked not to participate in activities on the wood chips.

Parents are requested to be sure their children are dressed warmly in the winter weather as recess is held outdoors unless it is severely cold or wet. Boots should also be worn as the playground often has wet areas. Please provide your child with shoes to be worn within the building, as the combination of boots and heat creates a drain on students and sometimes inhibits efficient work.

During the winter, we determine whether students have outdoor recess or indoor based on the temperatures and wind chill. Please be sure your child is dressed appropriately and prepared for any weather-related conditions.

2.16 Field Trips

Field Trips are a valuable part of the Monson Public Schools' educational program. Students represent their school and community on field trips and exemplary behavior is expected at all times. All school rules are applicable when on the field trip.

Students may be excluded from attending field trips if their school attendance, class work, or behavior is such that remaining at school will be of greater benefit than the field trip. The school administration reserves the right to make those decisions. Parent consent, as indicated by signature on specific forms provided by the school, is also required for participation. Some field trips may require additional rules for participation.

Minimum Standards for behavior and attendance:

1. A serious violation of school rules and/or persistent behavioral issues may also be considered as reason to deny a child's participation under the discretion of the Principal.

The Principal reserves the right to review this policy based upon the best interest of the school and the student(s) involved.

If a student becomes ineligible to participate in a field trip due to the above standards, they will forfeit any payments made towards the trip that are non-refundable at the time of the exclusion.

SECTION 3

Granite Valley School

Grades 1-6

Dear Granite Valley Students and Families,

Welcome to the 2025–2026 school year at Granite Valley! We are so excited to have our students back after a restful summer and can't wait to begin another year of learning, growth, and connection together.

At Granite Valley, we are committed to providing every student with high-quality instruction and the social-emotional support they need to thrive. We believe that when families and schools work together, amazing things happen—and we're grateful to have you as our partners.

This year, we'll continue to build on our school-wide expectations through our Granite Valley theme: **Granite Valley ROCKS!** These core values help guide everything we do as a school community. Each letter represents a trait we work to develop in every student, every day:

- **R** – Respect
- **O** – Ownership
- **C** – Communication
- **K** – Kindness
- **S** – Scholarship

We invite you to review the handbook together as a family. Discussing the learning and behavior expectations with your child helps ensure a smooth start to the school year and sets them up for success. We'll also spend time as a school talking through key topics, so students will have plenty of chances to ask questions and reflect with staff and classmates.

Together, we can make this a joyful, safe, and successful school year for every student. Thank you for being a vital part of our Granite Valley community!

Sincerely,

Jordan Wissinger
Principal

Myriah Hudak
Assistant Principal

3.1 Arrival and Dismissal Times for School

3.1.1 Arrival

Students should arrive at school *no earlier than 8:35 a.m.* There is no adult supervision provided prior to 8:35 a.m.

Bus

Buses drop students off in the front of the building. Students will remain on the bus until 8:35 a.m. to ensure proper supervision. Students will be dismissed by grade levels from the bus. Staff members will be stationed along the walkway and entrances. Students will enter at the main doors.

Parent/Caretaker Drop-off

Parent/caretaker drop offs should follow staff directives in the designated parent/guardian drop off area. Staff members will greet students as they exit the cars and direct them to the sidewalk.

3.1.2 Dismissal

Students will be dismissed at 3:10 p.m. Bus students will leave first and parent pick-ups will occur directly afterwards. If dismissal has ended and your child has not been picked up, the student will be brought to the main office and the parent/guardian will be contacted.

Bus

Students will be dismissed in a staggered format, by bus number. Once outside, students will proceed along the sidewalk to the circle and find their bus, which is in numerical order. Staff will be present to assist students, with staff visible in the hallways. Students will exit the building through multiple doors to minimize the flow of traffic and board buses.

Parent Pick-Up

Parent pick up will begin after the buses have left the bus circle. Please line-up, in the designated pickup lanes, in your vehicle and please do not pull forward until after the buses have left.

Students will be dismissed from their classrooms in a staggered format, based on the order of vehicles in the pickup log. Vehicles will drive slowly into the bus circle to collect their student(s), following the directions of staff. Please pull all the way forward as directed by staff. Please wait in your vehicle and do not park and leave your vehicle while in the parent pick- up line. Please exit slowly once the car in front of you has exited.

Dismissal Changes

- If your child's dismissal plan needs to change, please contact the main office at 413-267-4155 and send in a note. The office will then contact the classroom. Please do not directly contact the teacher, as they are not always available electronically during the school day.

When there are half-days of school, we dismiss students at 11:30 a.m. Half-days due to inclement weather typically dismiss at 11:30 a.m. as well. There would be an announcement made via School Messenger (automated phone call).

3.1.3 Tardy Policy

2. The school doors will open at 8:35 a.m. Students are expected to check in with their homeroom teacher by 8:55 a.m. Any student not present by this time will be marked tardy. Please allow for enough time for your child to get organized to start their day prior to homeroom.
3. Students who are tardy should report to the office to obtain a pass before going to their homeroom or class.

4. Accumulation of excessive tardies will result in a communication with the family to create an intervention plan to support the student.
5. Please note that if a student is out of school for more than one-half of the school day, it will count as an absence.

3.1.4 Early Dismissals

When necessary, early dismissals are granted upon written request by parents/guardians specifying the time, date, reason, and who will be picking up your child. Please try to schedule appointments outside of school hours.

Students are expected to attend a full day of school; from 8:55 a.m. – 3:10 p.m. When students are excused early from the allotted school day, this disrupts learning that is taking place for a student. Dismissal time begins at 3:05 p.m. Students who are dismissed before the dismissal time are required to bring in a note by a parent or guardian and bring it to the front office. The parent or guardian must come into the office to sign their child out.

Please note: If a person other than the parent or guardian is picking up a student, it MUST be noted in the notice from the parent or guardian. For the safety and security of your child, identification will be requested at the time of dismissal of the person picking up the child. If the child is to be picked up by a neighbor or friend, please specify the name of that person. We do not release children to minors under the age of 18 without parental notification either by phone or a note. If a child is to be picked up by a neighbor or friend, please specify the name of that person.

3.1.5 School Attendance

The school administration discourages students missing school for family vacations. Clearly, missed teacher presentations, lectures, classroom discussions, laboratory experiments, and such cannot be made up as homework. However, the reality exists that parents do take their children out of school for such trips and these absences will count against the attendance policy. When this occurs, the following procedures will be used:

- The parent(s)/guardian(s) will contact the administration in advance of the planned vacation.
- The student will be held responsible for making specific arrangements with their teacher(s) for assignments. Work will be offered to students upon their return from an absence from school. Please do not ask teachers to prepare student assignments in advance of your child's trip. All work will be offered to the student for full value credit upon the return of the student to class. The number of days to make up work is equal to the amount of time absent.
- No child under the age of 18 will be dismissed from the school without parental permission. If your child is ill, you will be notified by the nurse or school administrator and you may pick your child up in the Health/Main Office.

3.1.6 Absences

Regular school attendance is critical to creating a strong educational foundation for your child. Please communicate with the main office if your child is going to be absent from school. The Granite Valley office and administration will be in regular contact with families whose child is absent. This collaborative approach will help create long lasting positive habits for your child. Families can expect the following steps to be taken to support student attendance:

1. The parent/guardian will receive a text message at roughly 10:30 a.m. on each day their child is marked absent. This message is automated and will be sent regardless of if the parent/guardian has already contacted the school to report the absence.
2. When a child reaches 5 or 9 total absences for the school year (regardless of if the absence is excused or unexcused) the parent/guardian will receive notification.
3. When a child reaches 12 total absences (regardless of if the absence is excused or unexcused) an administrator will schedule an attendance support meeting. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall be developed jointly by the

principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies. A warning notice will be sent documenting that any more absences may result in non-promotion to the next grade level. A court referral is probable at this point in time indicating failure to comply with the state mandated policy.

4. If students have absences of unusual and/or extenuating circumstances, the principal reserves the right to waive the above actions.

Please provide documentation when seen by an outside health care provider.

3.2 General School Visitation

Parents are welcome to visit our schools at any time when practical. Please observe the following guidelines when visiting:

1. Please call the school to make arrangements ahead of time.
2. All visitors must use the main entrance.
3. All visitors must register and receive a visitor's badge at the front office.
4. Young siblings should not accompany their parents to the classrooms.
5. Visitors are expected to comply with the confidentiality policy as stated on the Visitor's Log in the school's main office.

3.3 Parent Volunteers

We encourage parent volunteers in our schools when practical. However, please be reminded that all parent volunteers who are working in any capacity in the school setting are bound by the laws of confidentiality. Information obtained through observation or participation in classrooms is completely confidential. Additionally, all parent volunteers will need to complete a CORI background check.

3.4 Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences are an integral part of the communication carried on between home and school. Through these conferences, a better assessment of each student's progress can be achieved between teacher and parent. Parents may request a conference with their child's team any time during the school year by calling or emailing the teacher to arrange a convenient time.

In October and March, a parent-teacher conference half-day is scheduled for students in grades PreK-8. These conferences will be held via video conferencing or telephone.

3.5 PowerSchool

Teachers will update students' grades regularly. Please sign up to receive email notifications from PowerSchool when grades are updated. If you need access to the portal, please contact the front office. Please email your student's teacher if you have any questions regarding grades.

3.6 Homework Policy

Parents can help their children by carefully checking their child's folder, three ring binder, agenda and/or assignment sheets daily. Parents can also help their children by arranging a quiet, comfortable place for their child to complete their work.

The purpose of homework is to give students time to practice skills taught in class. This extension of learning time also helps students develop responsibility, time management skills, and self-confidence. It also helps promote parent-child interaction and strengthen home/school communication. Homework has been shown to be an important way to increase student achievement. Students learn and reinforce essential basic skills through consistently completing homework in a responsible and timely manner. In the elementary school, homework fosters positive attitudes, study habits, and character traits.

The following guidelines will assist the student and parent in determining how much time should be spent on homework after school in addition to any daily reading expectations.

GRADE	HOMEWORK GUIDELINES
K-5	Reading (to or with your child) for 20 minutes and Math fluency practice for 10 minutes is encouraged.
6	Up to 60 minutes total (2-3 nights per week and teachers are encouraged to coordinate assignments). In addition, nightly reading is encouraged.

3.7 Organizational/Study Skills

A parent can help their child be aware of skills and techniques, which make learning easier and more enjoyable. There are many ways that parents can help to ensure that their child is prepared for each day. Our school has made a commitment to encourage a home/school connection. Our first way of doing this is helping your child to be organized.

The following are student guidelines for achieving good study habits:

1. Come to class prepared with pencil, charged Chromebook, and other necessary materials.
2. Be an active participant in class. Listen well and take part in class.
3. Ask questions to clarify problems.
4. Plan your day and schedule time for homework.
5. Use what is learned and apply it to new situations.
6. Strive to do the very best work possible.
7. Check the folder/binder with your parent nightly and remove corrected papers and notices.
8. Place the following school materials in folder before going to bed:
 - a. Homework
 - b. Notes to teacher or school
 - c. d. Library books
9. Return all papers promptly that require your signature. Backpacks must fit within the student space permitted. Due to safety concerns and size constraints, we recommend that rolling backpacks not be purchased.
10. Talk about the next day's weather and encourage your child to wear weather- appropriate clothing.

3.10 Policies Relating to Student Conduct and Discipline

The school's primary goal is to educate, not discipline. When the behavior of individual students comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary both for the benefit of that individual as well as the school as a whole. The conduct of students shall be governed by the policies, regulations and rules of Monson Public Schools. These rules are applicable in school, on the school grounds, at a school activity away from school, on the way to and from school, and on a school bus. Students who become involved in behaviors that are beyond the scope of the above area, which adversely affect the continuity and/or quality of school operations, and/or the effectiveness and well-being of school personnel (to include the harassment of school personnel, bomb threats, and vandalism to school property and buses, etc.) will be subject to disciplinary action. Be advised that any Granite Valley School student who attends a Monson High School event is considered to be at a school function and is subject to all rules and regulations as stated in this handbook.

Philosophy

Granite Valley School is committed to providing and maintaining a safe, respectful and orderly learning environment. Reasonable disciplinary measures will be used when a student does not respect the rights of classmates, staff, or persons in the educational system or demonstrates an inability or unwillingness to abide by school regulations and policies.

3.10.1 Student Code of Conduct: Rules and Regulations

The types of behavior that will not be tolerated have been categorized into four groups (A through D), based on the degree of seriousness of the action. The listed behaviors are merely examples of prohibited conduct. The Student Code of Conduct policies do not cover every possible infraction and do not preclude the administration from responding to conduct that is deemed inappropriate for the school setting in a manner other than is set forth in this handbook. Administration at Granite Valley School reserves the right to discipline, suspend, expel or otherwise remove a student from the school setting; consistent with state and federal law and to consider the severity of each incident, whether the student was involved in prior disciplinary incidents and other relevant factors.

3.10.2 Consequences

Student discipline is confidential and typically progressive. Although our regulations and rules are straightforward, each case is dealt with on the basis of the severity of the infraction and individual circumstances. The following list represents typical actions/consequences that may be invoked by school administration:

1. Verbal warning
2. Seat changed
3. Discussion of problem with teacher or team of teachers
4. Notification of parents
5. Parent conference
6. Behavioral contract
7. Financial restitution
8. Lunch/recess detention
9. After-school detention
10. Counselor referral
11. Outside counseling referral
12. Time-out
13. In-school suspension
14. Out-of-school suspension
15. Expulsion from school
16. Suspension or expulsion from bus transportation
17. Police referral
18. Any student on external or internal suspension will not be allowed to participate in any school activities during the period of suspension.

3.10.3 Categories of Behavior

Group A

1. Behavior that disrupts the educational process (e.g., inappropriate classroom behavior; inappropriate physical contact; making excessive noise; misuse of school equipment; throwing snowballs; use of non-approved electronic devices/cell phones during class; use of laser pointers, tazing pens or water guns).
2. Tardiness [See "Attendance Policies"]
3. Truancy [See "Attendance Policies"]
4. Unexcused absence from a class ("Cutting Class") [*** Please Note that this also results in a zero for class work.]
5. Being in an unauthorized area (e.g., any area in the school which is unsupervised or in which the student does not have permission from staff members to be at that time.)
6. Failure to attend teacher detention
7. Plagiarism or any form of cheating. Please note: This will result in a zero for the assignment, teacher will notify parent or guardian, and any recurrences will be documented and remain on file.
8. Deliberately giving false or misleading information. When doubt exists as to the reasonableness of a request from a staff member, the administration will determine reasonableness.

9. Instigating conflict.
10. Use of profane or obscene language.

Consequence: One or more of the following:

1. Conference with an administrator
2. Lunch Detention
3. Teacher Detention
4. After-school Office Detention
5. Suspension at discretion of administrator
6. Revocation of privileges not limited to: field trips or eligibility for co-curricular events.

Discipline may also include consequences noted under Groups B, C and D below as deemed appropriate or resulting from multiple offenses.

Group B

1. Non-compliance with a reasonable request from any member of the school staff, including guests and substitute teachers.
2. Initiating or participating in food throwing.
3. Opening secured exterior doors for students and/or visitors during school hours.
4. Knowingly forging or willfully using a school-related forged document, tampering with a school record, or misrepresentation of parental communication.
5. Harassment or intimidation of any student, staff member or other member of the school community. Forms of harassment whether verbal, physical, technological (email, social network postings, text messaging, crank or repeated harassing calls) will not be tolerated (please see Anti-bullying Policy that begins on page 31).
6. Slurs, symbols, lewd actions, comments or writing based upon religious, ethnic, racial, disability, gender or sexual orientation.
7. Smoking on school property at any time or at co-curricular or athletic activities. Smoking includes the use of tobacco, herbal products in any form (e.g. smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes and vaporizers). Tobacco products and smoking paraphernalia are not allowed on school grounds and will be confiscated.
8. Leaving school without permission or being outside of building without authorization.
9. Any form of gambling.

Consequence: Consequence range– Lunch/after school detentions and/or one (1) to three (3) day suspension from all classes and school activities.

Discipline may also include consequences noted under Groups C and D below as deemed appropriate or resulting from multiple offenses.

Group C

1. Fighting.
2. Threat of violence directed toward any other person. In the case of a threat to a teacher, the student may also be removed from the class on a temporary or permanent basis, depending on the circumstances.
3. Actions and/or comments that may threaten or incite others to disrupt the good order of the school and/or endanger a person(s) or property.
4. Any student photographing or recording and then sharing images of another member(s) of the student body willfully violating school rules for entertainment purpose is subject to the penalties as the student (s) committing the infraction.
5. Smoking, vaping or any use of smokeless tobacco WITHIN THE BUILDING or on a school bus at any time during the school day, or before or after school. Student smoking includes the use of tobacco or herbal products in any form (e.g. smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes and vaporizers).

6. Willful destruction of, or damage to, school or personal property (e.g. graffiti). This includes possession of spray paint or graffiti markers on school property.
7. Possession of lighters, matches or other flammable materials.
8. Exhibitionism, lewd wanton and lascivious behavior, disorderly conduct and distracting or inappropriate sexual contact between students. Possession, dissemination or use of explicit sexual pictures or drawings.
9. Chronic school offender stemming from multiple violations over a period of time with little to no corrective action on behalf of student.

Consequence: Short-term suspension not to exceed ten (10) days, restitution for any damage, reporting to the police and/or fire departments as appropriate.

Discipline may also include consequences noted under Groups D below as deemed appropriate or resulting from multiple offenses.

Group D

1. Assault and/or battery of any member of the school community.
2. Possessing, selling, distributing, or use of a weapon (including knife, club, slingshot or other article that can be deemed dangerous) or any other contraband item. Use of a replica or other object in a threatening manner (e.g. fake weapons, bombs).
3. Possessing, selling, distributing, or being under the effect of an alcoholic beverage or controlled substance, which also includes drug paraphernalia, inhalants, glue or any other similar substance. This also includes any substance purported to be alcohol or drugs.
4. Making threats to any member of the school staff.
5. Obtaining money, material goods, or favors by threat of physical harm.
6. Act of arson, deliberately setting a fire, or use of explosives, this includes fireworks.
7. Making a bomb threat.
8. Participating in a false fire alarm and/or pulling or tampering with any fire alarms or related equipment on school premises.
9. Tampering with security cameras, propping open secured exterior doors and other actions, which directly and purposely affect safety and security issues at GVS.
10. Participation in the act of hazing.
11. Theft of school or personal property or receiving such stolen items (including possession of answer key, teacher manual, tests not yet taken.)

Consequence: Suspension of up to ten (10) days from all classes and school activities, restitution for any damage, involvement and referral of the police and/or fire department as appropriate and social probation.

Additional Action

The discipline procedures are designed to cover the general rules and regulations of the individual schools. However, it is not intended to be all inclusive and individual teachers or principals may have their own rules and regulations pertaining to the management of their classes or schools.

3.11 STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

All students will be following our Granite Valley ROCKS expectations throughout the school year. These traits will be explicitly taught and reinforced in all locations and areas of the school day. With the traits of:

R- Respect

- O- Ownership
- C- Communication
- K- Kindness
- S- Scholarship

We will support students in meeting the expected behaviors in the classroom, as well as the cafeteria, playground and restrooms. Using our PBIS Matrix, students will learn that we are responsible for our own words and actions and how this applies in their daily life.

3.11.1 Bicycles, skateboards, rollerblades, scooters, and wheelies

Students may ride bicycles to and from school, unless otherwise designated by the building principal. It is recommended that students lock their bicycles in the bike rack. The school does not assume responsibility for loss or theft.

Students are not permitted to ride on the track or in the parking lot at any time. Failure to adhere to these rules will result in disciplinary action that may include loss of privileges.

Helmets must be worn when riding a bicycle to and from school per Mass. Gen. Laws. Ch. 85, §11B(2), requires that “any person under the age of 16 riding a bicycle, as an operator or passenger, must wear a protective bicycle helmet. The failure to wear a required helmet shall not be used as evidence of contributory negligence in any civil action”. This law was current as of August 2012 and may be subject to change.

Students who ride bicycles are not to arrive on school property before the designated time for entry into the building. **Skateboards, rollerblades, scooters and wheelies cannot be used on school grounds.**

3.11.3 Money and Valuables

It is strongly suggested that students should not bring more money to school than needed for that day. The school is not responsible for lost monies and valuables. If students believe they have been the victim of theft, they should come to the office and fill out an incident report that will be forwarded to the Monson Police Department.

3.11.4 Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

Cell phones, any wireless communication devices, portable music and video players are to be turned off and stored away during the school day. Under no circumstances are students to make or receive phone calls or text messages or use social media during school hours. If a student has any of the aforementioned items on their person during the school day, the item will be confiscated. The first offense, the student will pick it up at the office at the end of the day. Subsequent offenses will result in the parent/guardian having to pick up the item in the office after school and may result in further disciplinary action. Students may not play music out loud through a phone, Bluetooth speaker, or any other device at any time during the school day.

If such an item is lost, stolen, or damaged, the school will not be responsible for restitution.

3.11.5 Physical Education

The physical education program provides a variety of activities. To be excused from physical education class, a written note is required from the student's parent/guardian explaining the reason. If there is a need to be excused for more than one week, a signed doctor's note must be sent to the school nurse stating the problem and length of time to be excused.

Sneakers are a requirement for all students for physical education class.

3.11.6 Gum

Students are not permitted to chew gum anywhere in school or on the school bus unless outlined in their IEP/504.

3.11.7 Respect and Care of School Property

Respect for school property is the sign of a good school citizen. Persons who damage school property will be required to make full restitution and will be reported to the proper legal authorities. Vandalism may result in suspension from school for up to 10 days. Textbooks and school supplies are loaned to the student, who is expected to return them in good condition. Lost or damaged books and materials must be paid for in order that immediate replacements may be made.

3.11.8 School Attire

Per School Committee policy, "The responsibility for the dress and appearance of the students will rest with individual students and parents/guardians. They have the right to determine how the student will dress providing that attire is not destructive to school property, complies with requirements for health and safety, and does not cause disorder or disruption. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements." As such, the following guidance is designed to outline what complies with requirements of health and safety, and does not cause disorder or disruption.

The appearance of students reflects the quality of the school. Personal dress and appearance which violates the Sexual Harassment Policy, the Tobacco-Free Policy, the Equality in Education Policy, Hate Crimes & Bias Policy, or the policies relative to substance abuse as described in this handbook, or which is obscene or interferes with another student's ability to receive an education is prohibited.

The commercialization/promotion of alcohol and other drugs, as well as tobacco use is contrary to the wellbeing of the students, staff, and community. Clothing and accessories depicting these substances or their use are not to be worn while a student is attending school. In addition, clothing referencing anything sexually aggressive, physically aggressive or filled with hate speech towards specific groups are not to be worn while a student is attending school.

The school staff reserves the right to determine what is or is not appropriate. If, in their best judgment, the school staff feels that a student's clothing is not appropriate, the student will have the option to put on appropriate clothing or call home and request a change of clothes be brought into school. If a student refuses to change, they may be excluded from classes for the remainder of the day and lose extracurricular activities for the day. If excessive problems persist, students could receive disciplinary consequences.

Hats are not to be worn in school during the school day. They are to be placed in lockers before entering their homeroom and left there until the student leaves school for the day. Garments intended for outside wear, in particular overcoats, must be kept in student lockers and are not to be worn during the school day.

Clothing, attire, and accessories found to be disruptive or distracting to the educational process, or which has affected the safety of students, will be determined a violation of the dress code by the school administration.

3.12 STUDENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

3.12.1 Extra Help

Extra help is available for students after school. Students are encouraged to make arrangements with their teachers in advance. Parents are responsible for transportation arrangements, unless a late bus is available. Students staying after school are required to be supervised by a teacher at all times. Teachers will notify students and families of extra help days.

3.12.2 Cafeteria Service

Lunches are available for order in the school cafeterias. A monthly menu and calendar are posted in the cafeteria, each homeroom, and is also posted on the district website.

3.12.3 Sexual Education

Monson Public Schools provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum beginning in Grade 5 covering various aspects of human growth and development including sexual education. Parents have the right to exempt their child from lessons covering sexual education issues. Parents must submit a request in writing to the building principal if they do not wish to have their child participate in this portion of the curriculum. All materials are available to parents for inspection and review in the building principal's office. Parents will receive a letter prior to the sexual education unit notifying them on how they can exempt their child if they choose to do so.

3.12.4 Excursion Policies

Excursions are supplements to the school program and typically do not require the participation of all students in a group or class. Examples include trips sponsored by student clubs and travel of special interest groups outside of school hours and annual class trips. Students participating in an excursion are representing both our school and community and exemplary behavior is expected at all times. Parent/guardian consent, as indicated by signature on specific forms provided by the school, is also required for participation. Some excursions may require additional rules for participation. The following applies in order for students to participate in an excursion:

- Students may be excluded from attending excursions, if their school attendance, class work, or behavior is such that remaining at school will be of greater benefit than attending the excursion. The school administration reserves the right to make those decisions.

School dress code is to be followed on school excursions.

The school administration reserves the right to review this policy based upon the best interest of the school and the student(s) involved.

3.12.5 Field Trips and Co-Curricular Activities

Field trips/co-curricular activities are a valuable part of MPS District's educational program. Students attending field trips/co-curricular activities are representing both our school and community and exemplary behavior is expected at all times. On field trips and co-curricular activities, students will remain under school supervision during the entire trip.

Parents/Guardians must sign all permission slips required for field trips/co-curricular activity. Please make checks payable to MPS unless otherwise indicated.

Students may be excluded from attending field trips if their school attendance, class work, or behavior is such that remaining at school will be of greater benefit than the field trip. The school administration reserves the right to make those decisions.

Parent consent, as indicated by signature on specific forms provided by the school, is also required for participation. Some field trips may require additional rules for participation.

Minimum Standards for behavior and attendance:

A serious violation of school rules and/or persistent behavioral issues may also be considered as reason to deny a child's participation under the discretion of the Principal.

The principal reserves the right to review this policy based upon the best interest of the school and the student(s) involved.

School dress code is to be followed on all field trips/co-curricular activities.

3.12.6 Lost and Found

Articles that have been found in the school or on school grounds should be turned in to the school office where their owners may claim them. Losses should be reported to the office. Articles of clothing that are left behind at the end of the school year will be sent to charity three times a year, including once before Winter Recess, once before February Recess, and once at the end of the school year. Please label all clothing items and lunch boxes for easy identification and return.

SECTION 4

MONSON HIGH SCHOOL

Grades 7-12

ADMINISTRATION

Christopher Fontaine, Principal
Mary Zurawka, Assistant Principal/Athletic Director

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians,

Monson High School is pleased to present you with the Monson Public Schools Handbook for Students and Families for the 2025-2026 school year. It is designed to be a guide and a resource to our students and parents/guardians. Our hope is that the policies promulgated in this handbook will help us maintain a safe, orderly school environment that is conducive to learning. We review these policies with our students at the beginning of each school year, but we urge students and parents/guardians to review the handbook to become familiar with Monson High School's procedures and expectations. Close attention should be paid to policies relating to school safety, attendance, honor roll, discipline, student assessments, and graduation requirements.

Best wishes for a safe and successful school year.

Christopher Fontaine
Principal

4.1 ATTENDANCE

- 4.1.1 Arrival
- 4.1.2 Tardy Policy
- 4.1.3 Illness
- 4.1.4 Dismissal
- 4.1.5 Attendance Policy
- 4.1.6 Truancy
- 4.1.7 Absences Due to Religious Holidays
- 4.1.8 School Sponsored Activities
- 4.1.9 Guidelines for Make-Up Work
- 4.1.10 Guidelines for Missing Final Exams

4.2 ACADEMICS

- 4.2.1 Homework Policy
- 4.2.2 Extra Help
- 4.2.3 Academic Eligibility for Student Athletes
- 4.2.4 Requirements for Graduation
- 4.2.5 Promotion/Retention
- 4.2.6 Honors/Advanced Placement
- 4.2.7 Weighted Grades, GPA, and Class Rank
- 4.2.8 Student Progress Reports for grades 7-12
- 4.2.9 Honor Roll for Grades 7-12
- 4.2.10 Dual Enrollment Coursework
- 4.2.11 Summer School Regulations
- 4.2.12 Credits/Grades
- 4.2.13 Selection Procedure for National Honor Society
- 4.2.14 NHS Dismissal
- 4.2.15 Independent Study Program
- 4.2.16 Sexual Education
- 4.2.17 Physical Education

4.3 COUNSELING

- 4.3.1 School Counseling
- 4.3.2 Schedule Changes
- 4.3.3 Transfer
- 4.3.4 Withdrawal
- 4.3.5 Student Records
- 4.3.6 Career Information
- 4.3.7 College Admissions
- 4.3.8 College Board Entrance Examination
- 4.3.9 MCAS

4.4 DISCIPLINE

- 4.4.1 Policies Relating to Student Conduct and Discipline

4.4.2 Student Code of Conduct:

- Rules and Regulations
- 4.4.3 Cafeteria Behavior
- 4.4.4 Academic Honesty
- 4.4.5 Academic Ethics and Integrity

4.5 SAFETY

- 4.5.1 School Safety
- 4.5.2 Courtesy
- 4.5.3 Restrooms
- 4.5.4 Unattended Belongings and Personal Items
- 4.5.5 Outdoor Areas
- 4.5.6 Parent Volunteers
- 4.5.7 Visitors to School
- 4.5.8 Emergency and Non-Prescription Medication Form
- 4.5.9 Safety Drills
- 4.5.10 Federal Gun-Free Schools Act
- 4.5.11 Bicycles, skateboards, rollerblades, scooters, and wheelies
- 4.5.12 Parking, Use of Automobiles and Motorcycles
- 4.5.13 Breathalyzer Protocol
- 4.5.14 Eighteen Year Old Policy
- 4.5.15 Guests at SchoolDances/Prom

4.6 GENERAL INFORMATION

- 4.6.1 Cafeteria Service
- 4.6.2 Contacting Students and Staff in School
- 4.6.3 Lockers
- 4.6.4 Money and Valuables
- 4.6.5 Respect and Care of School Property
- 4.6.6 School Attire
- 4.6.7 Morning Announcements and PA System
- 4.6.8 Student Accountability and Debts
- 4.6.9 Lost and Found
- 4.6.10 Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 4.6.11 Working Papers
- 4.6.12 Excursion Policies
- 4.6.13 Field Trips and Co-Curricular Activities
- 4.6.14 Library
- 4.6.15 Special Committee

4.1 ATTENDANCE

[BACK TO TOP](#)

4.1.1 Arrival

- Students should arrive at school no earlier than 7:20 a.m. (There is no adult supervision provided prior to 7:20 am, and the building will not be unlocked.)
- Students cannot enter classrooms until the bell at 7:22. Teachers will stand at the classroom entrances to direct students to their desks.
- Students will be marked tardy after 7:35am.

Buses drop students off in the front of the building. Parent/Guardian drop offs should be made after buses leave. If parents/guardians need to drop something off or speak to a member of the staff, they are expected to pull into one of the visitor parking spots. Parents/guardians are expected to be respectful of the teachers directing traffic.

4.1.2 Tardy Policy

Tardiness to School

- Students are expected to be in their first period class at 7:35 a.m. If they are not in class at this time, they will be marked tardy. Students should allow for enough time to organize the start of their day prior to their first period class.
- Students who are tardy must report to the office to obtain a pass before going to their class.
- Accumulation of three tardies will result in a warning letter. More than three tardies in one quarter will result in an after-school detention for each occurrence.
-
- Students who are absent unexcused for more than half of the school day will be ineligible for athletics or other extracurricular activities scheduled for that day.

Tardiness to Class

- Students who arrive late to class are expected to present a pass admitting them to the class or be considered tardy unexcused.
- In some cases, students may be given twenty-four hours to secure an acceptable pass before the tardy is considered unexcused.
- Students who arrive to class after thirty(30) minutes from the start of the period will be considered absent from that class for credit-granting purposes.
- In addition to possible loss of credit, students will be subject to disciplinary action for unexcused tardies in the form of teacher detentions, office detentions, and possible suspension from school.

4.1.3 Illness

- Students who are ill in class or injured should obtain a pass to the nurse's office.
- If the nurse's office is closed, students should report to the principal's office.
- In case dismissal is necessary, the nurse will telephone the student's home before dismissal.
- If the student requires medication of any type, they must have a written permission slip on file in the nurse's office.

4.1.4 Dismissal

Daily Dismissal

Students will be dismissed at 2:05 p.m. Parent/guardian pick up will follow the outlined procedure:

- Parents/guardians should line up in their vehicles making sure not to pull forward until after the buses have left.
- Parents/guardians should wait in their vehicles making sure not to park and leave the vehicle while in the pick-up line.
- Parents/guardians should exit slowly.
- Students will be dismissed at 10:35 am on half days. The dismissal is noted in the school calendar and in school communication. A message will be sent by telephone in the case of an early dismissal due to an emergency or unforeseen circumstance.

Early Dismissal

- When necessary, early dismissals are granted upon written request by parents/guardians specifying the time, date, reason, and who will be picking up the child. This request must be submitted to the office before the first period.
- Parents/guardians should try to schedule appointments outside of school hours. Learning is disrupted when students are excused early from the allotted school day.

General Dismissal Procedure:

All students must follow this dismissal policy:

- The student will present the dismissal slip to the teacher prior to or at the time of dismissal and bring it with them upon departure. If returning the same day, the student shall bring the slip to office upon return to the school.
- In emergency situations, parents/guardians who need to have their child dismissed but did not send in a note should call the main office to request a dismissal. Upon approval of the request, the student will be called from class to pick up a dismissal slip from the main office prior to leaving the building. If being picked up by a parent/guardian, the parent/guardian must call the main office in order to dismiss the student. Students being dismissed will be released to adults whose name appears in the school database as parents/guardians or emergency contacts. If a child is to be picked up by a neighbor or friend, the parent/guardian should specify the name of that person.
- Students who miss thirty (30) minutes of a class due to a dismissal will accrue an absence for that class.
- Students will not be dismissed from class until their ride has arrived and they have been signed out of school.
- If a student is dismissed by the school nurse due to an illness or medical concern, that student must be picked up by a parent/guardian or a responsible person designated by the parent/guardian. A student may walk/drive home or drive to a doctor at the discretion of the nurse and with the parent's/guardian's permission. Students who need to be dismissed for medical reasons must see our school nurse prior to calling home.

- The administration reserves the right to question the reason for a student being dismissed during the normal school day. Parents/guardians should avoid making appointments for their children between the hours of 7:35 am and 2:05 pm
- Notes for dismissal written by students will not be accepted at any time.

4.1.5 Attendance Policy

Monson High School's vision is to educate students to be productive, successful contributors to the community in which they live. Taking responsibility for commitment is a valuable part of citizenship; prompt, consistent attendance is an attribute higher institutions and the 21st century workforce demand.

Dynamic classroom interaction among teachers, students, and content is crucial to student understanding and cannot be replicated by makeup work or extra-help after school. Each classroom is a learning community, which depends on its members to contribute to the success of all. Being present maintains the consistency of the learning process, whereas absences interrupt that process, leaving student achievement compromised. It is the responsibility of this school, as well as students' parents/guardians, to nurture and encourage strong work habits to prepare students to be responsible adults. It is in this spirit that Monson requires active student participation and consistent attendance. We ask parents/guardians to be a part of this policy, to encourage and support their children to be in school to get the best education possible; therefore, families must make every effort to schedule appointments, vacations, and other activities outside of school hours.

The need for good attendance is a life lesson, which should be learned early. Taking responsibility for a commitment is a valuable part of citizenship, and prompt, consistent attendance is an attribute that employers value. Students must be in school to learn.

Therefore, the following policy will be established:

- Each day, the school will contact the home of students who are absent, dismissed and/or tardy.
- A student will not receive credit when they exceed the following attendance limits:
 - 45-day course: 5 unexcused absences
 - 90-day course: 9 unexcused absences
 - 180-day course: 18 unexcused absences
- In the case of illness, students must provide doctor verification to have the absence excused. A note or call from a parent/guardian to verify an absence is necessary; however, the absence will still be considered unexcused.
- The following reasons for absence will be excusable and not included in the maximum number of absences mentioned above:
 - Hospitalization
 - Religious holiday
 - Death of an immediate family member
 - School sponsored and approved activity

- Mandatory court appearance
- Medical or dental appointments

All of the above require official documentation to be considered an excused absence and MUST be received within FIFTEEN (15) SCHOOL DAYS of the absence.

- Students will not be allowed to attend summer school to make up a course that has lost credit.
- This policy will apply retroactively to students who transfer to Monson High School.

Notification of Loss of Credit Due to Absence

- A warning notice will be sent to parents and handed to the student when the following number of absences occur:
 -
 - For a 90-day course: 5 absences
 - For a 180-day course: 9 absences
- A final notice, indicating the student's loss of credit for the particular course, will be sent to parents and handed to the student when the following number of absences occur:
 -
 - For a 90-day course: 9 absences
 - For a 180-day course: 18 absences

Administration will notify teachers when absences are excused from the policy.

Appeal Process

The Appeal Board will consist of the principal (or designee) and two school faculty members (including teachers, counselors, etc.).

1. To appeal the loss of credit due to attendance, parents/guardians must notify the Appeal Board in writing within five (5) school days of receiving a notice of violation of the Attendance Policy. The Appeal Board will notify the parents/guardians in writing of the date and time for an appeal meeting.
2. Parents/guardians and students involved are invited to the meeting, where they should present their request and supporting documentation.
3. The Appeal Board is empowered by a majority who will hear the appeal and vote on a final decision.
4. The Appeal Board notifies, in writing, parents/guardians and students of the decision within five (5) school days of the appeal meeting.

Notifying the School of Absence

When sickness or family obligations necessitate absence, a timely notification to the office must occur. On the day of an absence, a parent/guardian is required to call the school office (267-4589) before 10am indicating the student's name, reason for absence, and the anticipated return date to school. If a parent/guardian fails to notify the school of their child's absence, the

school will reach out to the parent/guardian for confirmation of the student's absence. A student returning to school after an absence of more than five (5) consecutive days, or any student returning to school after a contagious disease, must present a doctor's certificate upon return. Parents/guardians must notify the school nurse if their child contracts any illness that would require them to be isolated such as Covid, chicken pox, etc. After an appropriate period of isolation, parents may obtain a notification from the school nurse for their child to return to school.

Family trips, vacations, and/or non-medical appointments should be scheduled to coincide with school vacations or non-school days. Family trips, vacations, and/or non-medical appointments are NOT considered excused absences. If circumstances necessitate an extended absence from school, a parent/guardian should notify the school prior to the absence. It is NOT the responsibility of the high school administration and faculty to provide work in advance for a vacation taken during school time.

In the event of an absence from school of three (3) or less school days, it is the responsibility of the student to obtain missed assignments from the teacher during that period of time. In the event that a student is absent for more than three (3) consecutive days, parents/guardians should call the counseling office to request assignments be collected. These assignments will be available to the student upon return to school and students will be given the appropriate amount of time to make up assignments.

The law provides various penalties for persons who obstruct or prevent children from attending school. Parents/guardians must require children and youth of school age to attend school. Parents/guardians are subject to court action and a fine should their child be absent in excess of seven-day sessions or fourteen half-day sessions within a six-month period. (M.G.L. 76:2)

Saturday School may be used to enhance student learning and allow students to make up absences that are counting towards credit loss in addition to a consequence in lieu of suspension. Each day of Saturday School can replace 1 absence from school and each course.

4.1.6 Truancy

Truancy is defined as being out of school without prior parental permission and without a reason acceptable to the administration. Students who purposefully miss class will be considered truant from class and subject to disciplinary actions.

4.1.7 Absences Due to Religious Holidays

Consistent with state and federal laws, Monson High School makes every effort to accommodate students who will miss school due to the observance of religious holidays or activities. Given the diverse and varied nature of our religious communities and their beliefs, we must ask that it be the student's and/or parent's/guardian's responsibility to notify the assistant Principal/Dean regarding religious absences. Religious absences will not be counted against students when calculating the attendance requirement.

4.1.8 School Sponsored Activities

Students who have an unexcused absence from school, may not participate in school sponsored activities on the day of the absence. Students who have an unexcused tardy, may only participate in school sponsored activities if they arrive at school prior to the ½ day time of 10:35. On half days, students must be present for half of the scheduled day. Students who do not meet this requirement, may not participate in extracurricular activities, including athletics. Students who have an excused absence or tardy to school may participate in afterschool activities with approval from the school Principal.

Students who are absent from class while participating in school-sponsored activities will be considered present for the attendance requirement.

4.1.9 Guidelines for Make-Up Work

Students who are tardy to school or are dismissed from school are responsible for missed class work, assignments, tests, and quizzes for the day in question. Students are responsible to turn in any work that is due on the day they are tardy or dismissed to their teachers. If a student is absent from school, that student must make up any missed tests, quizzes or other missed work upon return from their absence. The number of days to make up missed work due to an absence is outlined below:

- One (1) absence = One (1) day make-up period
- Two (2) or three (3) absences = Five (5) day make-up period
- Four (4) or more absences = Timetable to be determined collaboratively between administration, the teacher, and the student

At all times the teacher may modify the above guidelines in order to meet the needs of specific assignments or for unique circumstances. Assignments not submitted on the due date will be issued a zero (0)% in the gradebook until submitted for accurate reporting.

Outside obligations such as work, activities, or athletics are not considered reasons for not being able to complete makeup work within the designated time schedule.

4.1.10 Guidelines for Missing Final Exams

Students who miss the midterm and final exams will receive an incomplete for the exam until the exam is made up. Students who do not make up the exam within the allotted time will receive a zero (0)% for the exam with up to a 20% decrease in their semester grades.

There are two possible exceptions:

- Parents/guardians who predict that their child will be unable to attend an exam due to unusual and/or extenuating circumstances may apply to the Principal in writing to reschedule the exams. Such requests must be processed no later than two weeks prior to final exams. Due to the potential disruption and diminished exam validity caused by students taking early exams, only truly unavoidable rescheduling will be approved.
- Parents/guardians of students who are absent from a scheduled exam(s) due to unpredictable reasons such as medical or family emergencies must contact the Principal that same day to verify the unavoidable nature of the absence and request authorization

to take a makeup exam. A doctor's note may be required to validate absence due to illness or medical emergency.

Some academic departments will be involved in alternative culminating assessments. The times and places of these assessments vary depending upon the particular needs of each class during the non-exam periods. Alternative assessments are not subject to the formal exam schedule, and students who are absent from these alternative assessments are not subject to the district's make-up authorization requirements as outlined above. These students must pursue make-up options directly from their teachers.

4.2 ACADEMICS

[BACK TO TOP](#)

4.2.1 Homework Policy

Homework is a vital part of a child's school experience. Its primary purpose is to give students time to practice skills taught in class. This extension of learning time also helps students develop responsibility, time management skills, and self-confidence. It also helps promote positive interactions at home and strengthen home/school communication. Homework has been shown to be an important way to increase student achievement. Students learn and reinforce essential basic skills through consistently completing homework in a responsible and timely manner. In elementary school, homework fosters positive attitudes, habits, and character traits. For students in 7th and 8th grade and high school homework facilitates knowledge acquisition in specific topics and develops more independent problem-solving skills.

- Homework is a teacher planned learning activity that takes place outside of a student's regular school hours.
- Assignments are specific and related to classroom objectives.
- The needs and abilities of the student are important considerations in planning assignments.
- Students are responsible for the completion of all homework assignments under the supervision of their parents/guardians.
- Teachers are responsible for the coordination of homework assignments.
- Students may receive homework to be completed over the weekend.

The following guidelines will assist students and parents/guardians in determining how much time should be spent on homework after school in addition to any daily reading expectations.

Grade	Homework Guidelines
7-8	Up to 60 minutes total (2-3 nights per week and teachers are encouraged to coordinate assignments). In addition, nightly reading is encouraged.
9-12	The amount of homework will vary by subject.

If a student or parent/guardian finds excessive periods of time are being spent on homework they should contact the teacher to discuss the situation.

4.2.2 Extra Help

- Extra help is available for students after school.
- Students are encouraged to make arrangements with their teachers in advance.
- Parents/guardians are responsible for transportation arrangements unless a late bus is available.
- Students staying after-school are required to be supervised by a teacher at all times.
- Teachers will notify students and families of extra help days.

4.2.3 Academic Eligibility for Student Athletes

In order to participate or try out for interscholastic athletics at Monson High School all students must meet certain academic standards:

- Incoming grade 7 students must have achieved a passing final grade in at least 75% of all core academic classes (English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies) in grade 6 to compete in the fall.
- Starting with the Winter 25-26 season, students in grades 7 through 12 must be passing 3 out of their 4 classes in the quarter prior to and throughout the season to be eligible for interscholastic athletics.
- For the Fall of 2025 season only, students in grades 7 through 12 must be passing five of six of their classes in the quarter prior to the season to be eligible for interscholastic athletics.
- Students who are ineligible may regain eligibility by meeting or exceeding the current academic standards during the close of a term.
- Summer course work may be considered.
- Students may be given an incomplete within a specific course during a term if they have excused absences leading up to the final day of the term. The student (family), counselor and Principal will make the decision together to determine if an Incomplete will be given.
- If a student receives an incomplete in any course, it will be considered a “non passing grade” until the final grade is determined. Students will have ten (10) school days to complete any work that was due during the absence. Teachers will have five (5) school days to change the grade from an incomplete to the final grade. If the final grade is determined to be a passing grade, then the student may regain eligibility prior to the end of the term.
- For students who are taking online courses, the final grade will not be entered until the end of the Semester/course. For terms within the semester, it will be assumed that the student is in good academic standing and passing the course as courses are self paced.

4.2.4 Requirements for Graduation

Grades 7 & 8 - Promotion to Grade 9

Students will take the equivalent of 6 classes a day throughout the school year. In order to be promoted to Grade 9, students must pass each of their core classes in Grades 7 and 8. If a student does not pass the course, they may be eligible for Summer School at the families expense. Students may only take a summer class once per subject during their 7th and 8th grade years. If students do not pass their classes, they will remain in 8th grade, however, may move on with specific classes in 9th grade that have met the criteria for promotion. “Specials” classes may also be required to pass in order to take the next progression in 9th grade.

Credit Requirements for students in grades 9-12

Students must take the equivalent of 6 credits each year. Changes will not be permitted after the beginning of the school year, except for extenuating circumstances such as attendance at summer school. In order to graduate, students must earn the following number of credits:

- English 4
- Social Studies 3.5 (Including World History II, U.S. History I, U.S. History II, and American Government)
- Mathematics 4
- Science 3 (Environmental Science and Biology)
- The Arts & Language 4
 - Applied Arts* (0.5 credits minimum)
 - Personal Finance (0.5 credits)
 - Fine Arts** (1 credits minimum)
 - Foreign Language (2 credits maximum)
- Health 0.5
- Physical Education 2.0
- Total Credits to Graduate: 22

*Applied Arts = Business, Computer Science, Family and Consumer Science, and Technology Education

**Fine Arts = Art, Music, Dramatic Arts and Creative Writing The above chart reflects the minimum graduation requirements.

Students who meet the graduation requirements and have demonstrated proficiency in another language(s), may be eligible for the seal of biliteracy or the seal of biliteracy with distinction on their High School Diploma. For questions regarding requirements, please contact the school counselor or Principal.

4.2.5 Promotion/Retention

The following number of credits indicates the minimum requirements for designated senior high grade levels, effective at the beginning of each school year:

- 6 Credits to become a Sophomore
- 14 Credits to become a Junior
- 22 Credits to become a Senior

End of Course grades will be calculated by having each quarter worth 40% of the overall grade and the Final being worth 20% of the overall grade.

Full year course grades will be calculated by:

- Each Semester is worth 50% of the final grade and both semesters will be averaged together to create the end of year grade.
- Each quarter within a semester is worth 40% of the semester with the midterm/final being worth 20% of the grade within the semester.

Any end of course grade less than a 60 will result in failure and the loss of credit. Students must repeat the required subjects for which credit has not been earned. These subjects may be made up within their high school schedule. The student's counselor may be contacted in order to answer any questions regarding course and credit requirements. In order for students to be eligible for Summer School credits, a student must have at least a 50 within the school year.

4.2.6 Honors/Advanced Placement

- The Advanced Placement® (AP) Program gives high school students the opportunity to pursue college-level studies and possibly receive Advanced Placement® credit upon entering college.
- Students who choose Honors and Advanced Placement® courses should do so with the knowledge that these courses will demand much more than average effort.
- Students that enroll in these courses must understand that they may not be able to drop this course during add/drop week depending on availability of other course offerings. Students and their families should be especially mindful of this if they are not recommended to take the course.

4.2.7 Weighted Grades, GPA, and Class Rank

- Students enrolled in Advanced Placement® (AP) and Honors courses receive a weighted grade in those courses.
- The grades will be weighted by multiplying a GPA (Grade Point Average) factor of 1.1. All other courses will have a GPA factor of 1.0.
- The GPA factor will be used for cumulative grade point average, class rank, and honor roll.
- High school credit courses taken in grade 8 are computed with the 9th grade subjects and courses.
- Class rank is determined by the cumulative GPA arranged from the highest to the lowest.
- Only students enrolled in our school from the beginning of second semester junior year will be considered for class rank in the class in which they are enrolled. The valedictorian, salutatorian, third honor student, and class rank (for the purpose of awards and scholarships) are determined at the end of the third quarter senior year.
- Included on the report card is a class and school attendance report and a total of graduation credits earned in previous high school courses.
- Semester grades and credits are based upon a composite of the two term grades and semester assessments.
- The GPA is listed on student transcripts.

4.2.8 Student Progress Reports for grades 7-12

Grades are updated in a timely manner, whenever possible within two weeks of being turned in, and can be viewed on the Parent Portal. If parents/guardians have questions or concerns, they should contact their student's teacher first. Students may be allowed to retake classes previously passed (with principal approval) for auditing purposes only. Students will not receive additional credits.

4.2.9 Honor Roll for Grades 7-12

Scholarship is recognized and encouraged through an academic honor roll. The honor roll is compiled at the close of each of the marking periods.

- Maximum Honors: A student must have achieved all numerical grades between 90 -100. Exception: Physical Education, 85-100.
- General Honors: A student must have achieved all numerical grades between 80 - 100. (Approved by the Monson School Committee: November 21, 1989)

4.2.10 Dual Enrollment Coursework

Juniors and seniors have an opportunity to take classes at public colleges or universities in Massachusetts for free through the Dual Enrollment Program. Interested students must be a senior in good standing academically and behaviorally and, depending on the college, may also require a minimum GPA (typically 80). Students are given one block per day for the semester per college class. If taking an off-campus class, transportation is the responsibility of the student.

Students interested in pursuing a Dual Enrollment course should see their school counselor to begin the discussion and determine which college and classes would be appropriate. A college/university application is then completed and processed by the school counselor. Once accepted, students attend orientation/on campus programs. Students must provide MHS their final grade at the conclusion of the course and communicate regularly regarding course progress.

Dual Enrollment classes are weighted in the high school as a general high school course unless the college designates them as an honors course for which it will receive a weight of 1.1.

Any student who is electing to take a virtual course must have the course approved by the school counselor. If a student has failed a virtual course in the past or has dropped a virtual course, they are subject to being denied the ability to take a virtual course again at MHS.

4.2.11 Summer School Regulations

Students are eligible to attend local area programs providing they meet the following criteria:

- A course taken in summer school must first have been taken at Monson High School or is appropriately listed on a transfer record
- Courses may be taken in summer school for the reason of making up a failure or raising a grade.
- In order for a course to be approved for summer school registration, all course work at Monson High School must be completed, including final exams.
- A student may not make up a course in summer school for which he/she did not receive credit due to the attendance policy. All courses taken in summer school must be first approved by the Monson High School Principal or by a school counselor.

4.2.12 Credits/Grades

If a course is taken to make up for a failure, credit will be issued if the average between the grade received in that course at Monson High School during the regular session and the grade received in summer school is 60 or higher.

- If a course is taken to raise a grade, the grade will be computed as described above, but no additional credit will be awarded toward graduation.
- In the event that letter grades are issued by the summer school the following conversion table will be used in calculating the averages as described above:

A+=98, A=95, A-=92; B+=88, B=85, B-=82;

C+=78, C=75, C-=72; D+=68, D=65, D-=62; F=55

- Pass/Fail designations will not be accepted.

Students and families interested in attending summer school should see their School Counselor for the appropriate information, paperwork and approval.

Students who transfer from another school will be given credit for completed courses based on the credit system at Monson High School. For courses that run for a full year/term, students will receive 1 credit, while courses that run for a partial year/term will be given 0.5 credit. In some circumstances, students may need to have their credits recalculated to fit the MHS format. Final determination will be made by the school counselor and Principal.

4.2.13 Selection Procedure for National Honor Society

MHS will follow all of the NHS bylaws and the NHS constitution when making decisions and policies regarding admittance and dismissal from the NHS chapter.

Provisional membership status:

- In early September, juniors and seniors who meet the academic requirement for membership in the National Honor Society (NHS) will be invited to attend a meeting at which they will receive copies of the Chapter Constitution, By-Laws, Activity Sheet, and a Service Documentation form.
- Students will meet the chapter advisor(s), Faculty Council and current NHS members.
- Criteria for membership will be explained.
- Students who choose to apply for membership status will be required to sign a form.

Membership eligibility: To be eligible for membership in the Henry O. Holley Chapter of the National Honor Society, the student must:

- Have been in attendance at the school for one semester

- Students should have no more than a total of eight (8) absences/tardies during the semester preceding induction.
- Students should have a record free of any Saturday detentions, external suspensions and no more than one (1) office detention during the semester preceding induction.
- Be a member of the junior or senior class.
- Have a minimum cumulative scholastic average of 90%.
- Complete five hours of documented community service during the semester preceding induction.
- Submit an activity sheet, community service verification form, and an essay to the Faculty Council for consideration.

The Faculty Council is limited to five members appointed by the Principal, plus the National Honor Society advisor(s) who serves as an ex-officio member. The Faculty Council:

- Reviews attendance and discipline records.
- Determines the selection procedure for chapter membership
- Selects students for the NHS membership. (While other faculty members may be consulted, only those on the Faculty Council may actually select the members.)
- Hears dismissal cases and appeals. (No member may be dismissed from the NHS without having an opportunity to appear before the Faculty Council.)

Members of the Henry O. Holley Chapter of the National Honor Society who exceed the attendance / discipline criteria may be subject to removal from the NHS.

Membership in the National Honor Society is both an honor and a responsibility. Students selected for membership are expected to demonstrate the qualities of scholarship, leadership, service, and character.

- **Leadership:** The student who exercises leadership:
 - Is resourceful in proposing new problems, applying principles, and making suggestions
 - Exercises influence on peers in upholding school ideals
 - Contributes ideas that improve the civic life of the school
 - Is able to delegate responsibilities
 - Exemplifies positive attitudes
 - Inspires positive behavior in others
 - Demonstrates academic initiative
 - Successfully holds school offices or positions of responsibility, conducts business efficiently and effectively, and is reliable and dependable without prodding.
 - Demonstrates leadership in the classroom, at work, and in school activities
 - Is thoroughly dependable in any responsibility accepted
- **Service:** The student who serves:
 - Participates in some outside activity: Girl Scouts; Boy Scouts; church groups; volunteer services for the aged, poor, or disadvantaged.

- Works well with others and is willing to take on difficult or inconspicuous responsibilities
- Is willing to represent the class or school in inter-class and interscholastic competition
- Participates in committee and staff work without complaint
- Assists visitors, teachers, and students
- **Character:** The student of character:
 - Takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously
 - Constantly exemplifies desirable qualities of personality. Does not receive any disciplinary referrals or action.
 - Upholds principles of morality and ethics
 - Cooperates by complying with school regulations concerning property, programs, office, halls, etc.
 - Shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others
 - Observes rules, punctuality, and faithfulness both inside and outside of the classroom
- **Scholarship:** The student who achieves scholarship:
 - Maintains a GPA of 90% or more
 - Works to achieve the highest possible grade on all assignments
 - Completes all work honestly
 - Stays after school for extra help
 - Shows a sincere and concentrated effort in all classes

Students who fail to maintain any of the four criteria/pillars are subject to dismissal from the National Honor society.

4.2.14 NHS Dismissal

The procedure for dismissal shall be determined by the Faculty Council in compliance with the rules and regulations of the National Honor Society. A written description of the dismissal procedure shall be available to interested parties. Members who fall below the standards which were the basis for their selection shall be promptly warned in writing by the chapter adviser and given a reasonable amount of time to correct the deficiency, except in the case of flagrant violation of school rules or civil laws, a member does not necessarily have to be warned.

- The Faculty Council, in compliance with the rules and regulations of the National Honor Society, shall determine the procedure for dismissal. A written description of the dismissal procedure shall be available to interested parties.
- Members who fall below the standards that were the basis for their selection shall be promptly warned in writing by the

chapter adviser and given a reasonable amount of time to correct the deficiency, except that in the case of flagrant violation of school rules or the law, a member does not have to be warned.

- The Faculty Council shall determine when an individual has exceeded a reasonable number of warnings.
- In all cases of pending dismissal, a member shall have a right to a hearing before the Faculty Council. (Note: This hearing is required and is considered “due process” for all members.)
- For purposes of dismissal, a majority vote of the Faculty Council is required.
- A member who has been dismissed may appeal the decision of the Faculty Council to the principal and thereafter under the same rules for disciplinary appeals in the school district.
- NASSP shall hear no appeals in dismissal cases. (Note: Refer to Article VIII, Section 7 regarding the permanent consequences for members when dismissed.)

4.2.15 Independent Study Program

The Independent Study Program provides an opportunity for 11th and 12th grade students to obtain academic credit for learning acquired through individualized programs of study under periodic guidance by a faculty advisor.

Guidelines for Independent Study Program

Students who wish to participate in an Independent Study Program should initiate a request with the possible faculty advisor. The credit awarded for Independent Study will be determined by the faculty advisor, Counseling Department, and Administration. Final approval for an Independent Study Program must be given by the Principal; however, it is the right of the faculty advisor to determine whether or not they will advise such a program.

The student and faculty advisor will present to the Administration a plan for the program. The plan or contract will include detailed course outcomes, goals of the program, the projected amount of credit expected, necessary due dates, and method of evaluation. At no time will the number of credits to be earned exceed one (1). The student is responsible for successful completion of the Independent Study Program.

All proposals for the Independent Study Program must be submitted on or before May 1 to be considered for the fall semester, and on or before November 1 to be considered for the spring semester. In the event a course is canceled later than the date of submission, the deadlines may be waived for students who had pre-registered.

A student may pursue only one Independent Study Program per year. An Independent Study Program may not be taken in lieu of a required course. A student may request a waiver to replace an existing course with the Independent Study Program under the following criteria:

- The course must be taken when the student is a junior or senior.
- The student must be in good academic standing at the time of the request.
- The student must demonstrate how the Independent Study Program will benefit their future.
- The student must complete and present a final project to the faculty advisor and the Administration.
- The student must be scheduled within a classroom and assigned to the faculty advisor during the period designated for the Independent Study Program.

It is recognized that students may participate in an Independent Study Program to replace a course that they cannot take due to insurmountable scheduling conflicts, or because a course, found in the Monson High School Program of Studies, is not given during that particular year. This is contingent upon all of the above expectations being met.

Evaluation of the student is the responsibility of the faculty advisor. The final evaluation of the student is to be submitted by the faculty advisor no later than a week before the first scheduled final exam unless agreed upon by both parties.

Credit for the student will be granted only after successful completion of the program.

4.2.16 Sexual Education

Monson Public Schools provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum beginning in Grade 5 covering various aspects of human growth and development including sexual education.

- Parents/guardians have the right to exempt their child from lessons covering sexual education issues.
- Parents/guardians must submit a request in writing to the building Principal if they do not wish to have their child participate in this portion of the curriculum.
- All materials are available to parents/guardians for inspection and review in the building Principal's office.
- Parents/guardians will be notified of their right to exempt their child from sexual education in September of each school year.

4.2.17 Physical Education Education

The Physical Education program provides a variety of activities including team and individual sports. Basketball, volleyball, badminton, pickleball, weight room, project adventure, ping pong, disc golf, and fitness testing are routinely covered.

- Students are required to change for class and should a student be unable to physically participate for a class due to an injury a note from a doctor, nurse, or guardian should be provided.
- Lockers are available for each student in the respective locker rooms.
- Physical Education is required for Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12.

4.3 COUNSELING

[BACK TO TOP](#)

4.3.1 School Counseling

Counseling services are available for every student in the school. These services include assistance with educational planning, interpretation of test scores, occupational information, career information, assistance in arranging tutorial help in subjects, assistance with academic, personal, and social concerns, or any situation the student would like to discuss with the counselor. Students may arrange an appointment to see a counselor.

4.3.2 Schedule Changes

After the master schedule has been created, requests for changes can only occur under special circumstances and with the approval of parents/guardians, teachers and administration. All changes are based on space and availability and may be considered for the following situations:

- A student does not meet the course prerequisites
- A course was canceled
- A scheduling conflict exists
- A teacher recommends a change
- A student was improperly placed

4.3.3 Transfer

When transferring from Monson High School to another school, the student is responsible for the following:

- Notifying the Counseling Office of intended transfer as soon as the move is certain. (This allows preparation of the necessary paperwork and any special arrangements for tests, grades, and other work, which must be completed.)
- Obtaining a withdrawal form from the Counseling office on the day prior to departure. The forms must be signed by a parent/guardian.
- Returning books to the teachers on the last day of class and asking each teacher to sign and place the current grade on the withdrawal form. Any library books must be returned and a signature from the Principal/Assistant Principal or their designee must be obtained.
- Returning the completed forms to the Counseling Office and obtaining the necessary papers for enrollment in the new school.

4.3.4 Withdrawal

- Same procedure as a transfer
- A student will receive a copy of their Sign-out Sheet, but will receive no other records or Transfer Card.

If a student who has turned sixteen (16) years of age seeks to voluntarily withdraw from school, an exit interview will be scheduled with the parent/guardian, student, and student's counselor. At that time, the school will provide information regarding available transitional programs, educational services, and student rights. Students must complete a withdrawal form in order to

voluntarily withdraw. If a student who has turned sixteen (16) years of age is absent without medical excuse for fifteen (15) consecutive school days, the parent/guardian and student shall be sent written notice and shall be provided with the opportunity to meet with a designated staff person within ten

(10) school days to discuss the student's status and the educational opportunities that are available within the district. At the request of the parent/guardian, the time for said meeting may be extended for an additional fourteen (14) days. If the parent/guardian and student refuse or fail to participate in such a meeting, the student will be considered to have withdrawn from the Monson Public Schools. M.G.L. Ch.76 §18.

4.3.5 Student Records

Eligible students and parents/guardians have the right to see their/or their child's student record within ten (10) days of submitting a written request. Refer to the "Student Records Law" in Part 1, page 40 of this handbook.

4.3.6 Career Information

Career services are available to students in grades 7-12. Programs of career services include an introduction to career exploration with field trips, job shadows and work-based learning opportunities for juniors and seniors.

4.3.7 College Admissions

Admission to college is a complex process involving scholastic ability and character. The following expectations and/or requirements should be considered:

- Many colleges require applicants to take the SAT Reasoning and subject tests, and/or the ACT.
- Four-year colleges require at least the equivalent of two (2) to three (3) consecutive years of the same foreign language taken at the high school level. 7th and 8th grade language courses do not qualify.
- Massachusetts state universities require four (4) math classes including one during senior year.
- Massachusetts state universities require three (3) lab sciences.
- All MCAS requirements must be met (if requested by a college).
- Highly competitive colleges and universities look for rigorous courses.

Students are encouraged to discuss specific college requirements with their counselors.

Information on the college selection and application processes, test dates, financial aid, and scholarships is available in the Counseling Center.

The NMSQT is the preliminary step in a nationwide scholarship competition which culminates in the selection of merit scholars who receive financial assistance at participating colleges and universities.

The PSAT is given at the high school in October. Students should speak with their counselor for the specific date and registration information.

4.3.8 College Board Entrance Examination

Individual colleges and universities have varying requirements relative to College Board tests; however, it is recommended that most students take the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) Reasoning exam during May or June of the junior year. If retests are needed, they may be taken at any of the regularly scheduled times during the senior year. The SAT Reasoning exam is administered in August, October, November, December, March, May, and June. Please refer to www.collegeboard.com or the Counseling Office for specific test dates and registration information.

Students may also consider taking the ACT, which is accepted as an alternative to the SAT Reasoning exam in most colleges. The ACT consists of four assessments: English, Math, Reading, and Science. Students who are unsure which test to take are encouraged to speak to their counselor. The ACT is given in October, December, February, April, and June. Please consult www.act.org or the Counseling Office for the specific dates and registration information.

4.3.9 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Program

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 requires the development of statewide goals, academic standards, curriculum frameworks and an assessment system based on the standards and frameworks. As a result of this Act, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment Program, mandated by the state Department of Education, establishes academic standards and curriculum frameworks, and the institution of a testing program based on the standards and curriculum frameworks. The areas tested within the MCAS are English/Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science/Technology.

4.4 DISCIPLINE

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Philosophy

Monson High School is committed to providing and maintaining a safe, respectful and orderly learning environment. Reasonable disciplinary measures will be used when a student does not respect the rights of classmates, staff, or persons in the educational system or demonstrates an inability or unwillingness to abide by school regulations and policies.

4.4.1 Policies Relating to Student Conduct and Discipline

When the behavior of individual students comes in conflict with the rights of others, corrective actions may be necessary both for the benefit of that individual as well as the school as a whole. The conduct of students shall be governed by the policies, regulations and rules of Monson Public Schools. These rules are applicable in school, on the school grounds, at a school activity away from school, on the way to and from school, on a school bus, as well as online and through social media. Students who become involved in behaviors that are beyond the scope of the above area, which adversely affect the continuity and/or quality of school operations, and/or the effectiveness and well-being of school personnel (to include the harassment of school personnel, bullying, bomb threats, and vandalism to school property and buses, etc.) will be subject to disciplinary action. Be advised that anyone who attends a Monson High School event is considered to be at a school function and is subject to all rules and regulations as stated in this handbook.

4.4.2 Student Code of Conduct: Rules and Regulations

The types of behavior that will not be tolerated have been categorized into four groups (A through D), based on the degree of seriousness of the action. The listed behaviors are examples of prohibited conduct. The Student Code of Conduct policies do not cover every possible infraction and do not preclude the administration from responding to conduct that is deemed inappropriate for the school setting in a manner other than is set forth in this handbook. Monson High School reserves the right to discipline, suspend, expel or otherwise remove a student from the school setting consistent with state and federal law and to consider the severity of each incident, whether the student was involved in prior disciplinary incidents and other relevant factors. If in the event that a school administrator determines the need for a search of personal belongings including what may be in a students pockets based on a reasonable suspicion, a student will have the right to refuse the search. If the student refuses the search, it will be determined that students are guilty of reasonable suspicion for the search and will be assigned consequences in accordance with the disciplinary categories below.

Discipline Categories

Level 1

- Behavior that disrupts the educational process (e.g., inappropriate classroom behavior; inappropriate physical contact; making excessive noise; misuse of school equipment.)
- Non-compliance with a reasonable request from any member of the school staff, including guests and substitute teachers

- Instigating conflict
- Deliberately giving false or misleading information
- Use of profane and inappropriate language
- Truancy from class
- Cheating/plagiarism
- Unethical/Dishonest use of Artificial Intelligence
- Using technology for non-academic purposes
- Cell phone use in the classroom

Level 1 Violation Consequences:

The following consequences will occur in progressive order. Any/all notification home will be documented by the appropriate staff member involved:

- The teacher will attempt to redirect the student(s) in class
- The teacher will conference with the student(s) privately
- The teacher will issue a lunch detention (only application to students in grades 7 and 8)
- The teacher will assign a detention (applicable to all students in grades 7 through 12)
- An administrator will conference with the student
- An administrator will assign an office detention
- The student may be suspended from school
- Loss of credit for the assignment (Plagiarism/Artificial Intelligence)
- Social Probation and loss of school activities/Privileges

Parents/guardians will be notified should their child be issued a teacher detention, office detention, or suspension.

Cell Phone Policy

Recognizing the widespread use of cell phones and smart devices, such as earpods, within our school community and the opportunities for misuse that these devices present, Monson High School will expect that cell phones are not used during academic times and will uphold the following expectations and procedures:

- During academic times, the expectation is that cell phones are “off and away,” which means that cell phones are turned off (powered off) and not visible and ear pods/Smartwatches are not visible.
- A phone will not be considered “off and away” if it is easily and clearly visible to a teacher, such as being placed on a student’s desk, in a student’s hand or resting on their person, or in a visible, easily accessible location, such as on the floor near the student.

Cell Phone Policy Violation Consequences:

Recognizing the various negative impacts that can arise from the misuse of cell phones and smart devices within a school environment, Monson High School will implement the following disciplinary procedures for students who violate the school wide expectations governing cell phones.

- Students will be reminded at the beginning of the day to make sure that their cell phones, ear buds and smart watches are turned off during academic time.
- First offense: student is sent from class, will receive an after school detention, and the phone is confiscated for the day. The phone will be labeled and held in the main office.
- Second offense: student is sent from class and the phone will be confiscated for the day, and will be returned to a parent or guardian. Additionally, the student will serve an after school detention.
- Third offense: student will be sent from class, phone will be confiscated and only returned to a parent or guardian, and the student will be placed on a phone restriction for a specified amount of time.

Recognizing the importance of maintaining a healthy and safe environment, any student who makes either an audio or visual recording of another student or a staff member will be suspended from school for a period not to exceed three days.

Level 2

- Initiating or participating in food throwing in the cafeteria or halls.
- Opening secured exterior doors for students and/or visitors during school hours.
- Knowingly forging or willfully using a school-related forged document, tampering with a school record, or misrepresentation of parental communication.
- Moderate harassment or intimidation of any student, staff member or other member of the school community. Forms of harassment whether verbal, physical, technological (email, social network postings, text messaging, crank or repeated harassing calls) will not be tolerated (please see Anti-bullying Policy on page 37.)
- Slurs, symbols, lewd actions, comments or writing based upon religious, ethnic, racial, disability, gender or sexual orientation.
- Smoking on school property OUTSIDE THE BUILDING on school property at any time or at co-curricular or athletic activities. Smoking includes the use of tobacco, herbal products in any form (e.g. smokeless tobacco, e cigarettes and vaporizers). Tobacco and marijuana products and smoking paraphernalia are not allowed on school grounds and will be confiscated and destroyed.
- Leaving school without permission or being outside of the building without authorization.
- Any form of gambling.

Level 2 Violation Consequences:

- After school detention
- In-School Suspension
- One (1) to three (3) day suspension from school
- Social Probation and loss of school activities/Privileges

Discipline may also include consequences noted under Groups C and D below as deemed appropriate or resulting from multiple offenses.

Level 3

- Fighting
- Threat of violence directed toward any other person. In the case of a threat to a teacher, the student may also be removed from the class on a temporary or permanent basis, depending on the circumstances.
- Moderate actions and/or comments that may threaten or incite others to disrupt the good order of the school and/or endanger a person(s) or property.
- Any student photographing or recording and then sharing images of another member(s) of the student body willfully violating school rules for entertainment purpose is subject to the penalties as the student (s) committing the infraction.
- Smoking, vaping, or any use of smokeless tobacco WITHIN THE BUILDING or on a school bus at any time during the school day, or before or after school. Student smoking includes the use of tobacco and marijuana or herbal products in any form (e.g. smokeless tobacco, e cigarettes and vaporizers) will be confiscated and destroyed.
- Willful destruction of, or damage to, school or personal property (e.g. graffiti). This includes possession of spray paint or graffiti markers on school property.
- Possession of lighters, matches or other flammable materials.
- Exhibitionism, lewd, wanton and lascivious behavior, disorderly conduct and distracting or inappropriate sexual contact between students. Possession, dissemination or use of explicit sexual pictures or drawings.
- Chronic school offender stemming from multiple violations over a period of time with little to no corrective action on behalf of the student.
- Video recording and posting of infractions to social media may result in the same consequence as the infraction.

Level 3 Violation Consequences:

- Restorative Practices including projects and referral to community organizations
- In-School Suspension
- Short term suspension not to exceed ten (10) days
- Restitution for any damage
- Reporting to the police and/or fire departments as appropriate.
- Social Probation of loss of school activities/Privileges

Discipline may also include consequences noted under Group D below as deemed appropriate or resulting from multiple offenses.

Level 4

- Assault and/or battery of any member of the school community.
- Possessing, selling, distributing, or use of a weapon (including knife, club, slingshot or other article that can be deemed dangerous) or any other contraband item. Use of a replica or other object in a threatening manner (e.g. fake weapons, bombs).

- Possessing, selling, distributing, or being under the effect of an alcoholic beverage or controlled substance, which also includes drug paraphernalia, inhalants, glue or any other similar substance. This also includes any substance purported to be alcohol or drugs. Please Note: The operator of the car is always considered to be in possession of alcohol or a controlled substance if found in a vehicle regardless of whether the driver is in the vehicle. This applies to any vehicle on school grounds or school-sponsored activity.
- Making severe threats to any member of the school staff that could result in severe harm to one's body or property.
- Obtaining money, material goods, or favors by threat of physical harm.
- Act of arson, deliberately setting a fire, or use of explosives, this includes fireworks.
- Making a bomb threat.
- Participating in a false fire alarm and/or pulling or tampering with any fire alarms or related equipment on school premises.
- Tampering with security cameras, propping open secured exterior doors and other actions, which directly and purposely affect safety and security issues at MHS.
- Participation in the act of hazing.
- Theft of school or personal property or receiving such stolen items (including possession of answer key, teacher manual, tests not yet taken.)

Level 4 Violation Consequences:

- Short term suspension from school
- Long term suspension from school
- Expulsion
- Restitution for any damage
- Involvement and referral of the police and/or fire department as appropriate and social probation.
- Social Probation of loss of school activities/Privileges

Additional Action

The discipline procedures are designed to cover the general rules and regulations of the individual schools; however, it is not intended to be all inclusive and individual teachers or principals may have their own rules and regulations pertaining to the management of their classes or schools.

4.4.3 Cafeteria Behavior

Students are expected to follow all school rules while in the cafeteria and at recess. Playing music out loud is not permitted. Students may be removed from the cafeteria and/or lunch because of inappropriate behavior and such behavior may result in further disciplinary action. Food should only be consumed within the cafeteria and students should finish their food prior to going to class (after breakfast) or returning to class (after lunch). Water is permitted in the

classrooms and no other form of drink should be consumed within the classroom. This includes energy drinks and coffee.

4.4.4 Academic Honesty

Honesty is important and is expected at Monson High School. Students have the duty to be responsible and honest. Dishonesty and cheating often deprives people of self-respect.

- Students may not forge (write the signature or initials of another person) any note, pass or official paperwork for themselves or another student.
- Students may not cheat on a quiz, test or other class work. Cheating includes:
 - Copying class work or homework, or providing answers to another student.
 - Plagiarizing (using ideas or writings of another as one's own work, such as copying and pasting from an internet source, including unethical utilization of artificial intelligence)
 - Bringing answers into a testing area.
 - Giving test questions/answers to a member of a later class or receiving test questions/answers from an earlier class.
 - Copying from another student's test or knowingly permitting another to copy during a test.
 - Any other action intended to obtain credit for work that is not one's own.
 - Distributing or possessing a midterm or final exam.

National Honor Society members should be aware that any of the above violations may result in dismissal from the National Honor Society. Please see the section on National Honor Society in this handbook.

The Principal or designee will determine which level the incident falls under and the severity of the consequence.

4.4.5 Academic Ethics and Integrity

Everyone involved in the students' education at Monson must be committed to upholding the standards of academic ethics and integrity.

Academic Integrity is the demonstration of commonly accepted standards of honesty and ethics in a school community. Academic integrity requires that all academic work is the original product of an individual student or a group of students. This means that proper documentation must be used when borrowing material from other sources. Academic integrity also means that students may not copy work from others and submit it as their own.

At Monson High School academic integrity is expected of all students; therefore, students must assume responsibility for maintaining honesty in all their work submitted in a course. Students should be expected to report incidents of academic dishonesty to the appropriate faculty member. Ways for students to demonstrate proper Academic Integrity:

- Taking tests and/or completing assignments on the day tests are given or papers due.
- Maintaining a good attendance record, especially on days when assignments are due.

- Doing your fair share when engaged in group work.
- Not completing work for one class while sitting in another.
- Making academics a priority over job responsibilities and/or sports team requirements.
- Attending school even when tempted to go to breakfast.
- Asking permission from the teacher before missing class to do work for other classes or activities.
- Attending all outside obligations to the class (i.e. concerts and rehearsals).
- Not discussing the questions and/or answers with a student who is taking the exam in another block.
- Not plagiarizing homework and/or written work.
- Not allowing students to copy your homework and not copying homework of other students.
- Reading books assigned and not substituting published notes for actual texts.
- Avoiding the use of online translators for papers in foreign languages.

Artificial Intelligence in the Classroom

Monson High School embraces the ethical and responsible integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a powerful tool to enhance learning, foster creativity, and prepare students for the future—and to protect students from damaging effects of irresponsible uses of Artificial Intelligence in the classroom. This policy outlines our expectations for students, staff, and parents regarding AI use in the classroom.

I. Guiding Principles:

- **Learning Enhancement:** AI should be used to support and enrich the learning process, not to replace original thought or effort.
- **Academic Integrity:** All work submitted must be the student's own. AI tools should be used to aid understanding, research, or brainstorming, not to generate final submissions without proper citation or original input.
- **Transparency:** When AI is used, its role should be openly acknowledged and understood by all parties.
- **Critical Thinking:** Students are expected to critically evaluate AI-generated content for accuracy, bias, and relevance.
- **Privacy and Safety:** Students and staff must adhere to all school policies regarding data privacy and responsible online conduct when using AI tools.

II. Acceptable Use of AI:

- **Brainstorming and Idea Generation:** Using AI to explore topics, generate initial ideas, or outline projects.
- **Research Assistance:** Leveraging AI to summarize information, identify key concepts, or find relevant sources (always cross-referencing with reliable information).
- **Learning Support:** Utilizing AI for personalized explanations, practice problems, or feedback on concepts.

- **Accessibility:** Employing AI tools to support diverse learning needs and accessibility.

III. Unacceptable and Unethical Use of AI:

- **Plagiarism:** Submitting AI-generated content as one's own original work without proper attribution or significant original contribution. This includes, but is not limited to, essays, reports, code, or creative works.
- **Cheating:** Using AI to complete assignments, tests, or assessments where individual work is required, or to gain an unfair advantage.
- **Misrepresentation:** Falsely claiming AI-generated content as entirely human-created.
- **Creating Harmful Content:** Using AI to generate discriminatory, hateful, violent, or inappropriate material.
- **Breaching Privacy:** Inputting sensitive personal information into AI tools or using AI to violate the privacy of others.
- **Circumventing Security:** Using AI to bypass school network security or content filters.

IV. Consequences for Unethical or Dishonest AI Use:

Monson High School views unethical and dishonest use of AI as a serious breach of academic integrity, subject to the same disciplinary actions as other forms of cheating or plagiarism. Consequences will be determined on a case-by-case basis, considering the severity and frequency of the offense, and may include:

- **First Offense:**
 - Verbal warning and clear explanation of the policy violation.
 - Mandatory re-do of the assignment with potential for no credit until policy is followed, or a failing grade for the assignment/assessment.
 - Communication with parents/guardians.
- **Second Offense:**
 - Office detention.
 - Failing grade for the assignment/assessment.
 - Parent/guardian conference with administration.
 - Referral to School Administration.
- **Third and Subsequent Offenses:**
 - In-school suspension.
 - Potential loss of privileges (e.g., participation in extracurricular activities, honor societies).
 - Further disciplinary action up to and including expulsion, depending on the severity and nature of the misuse.

4.5 SAFETY

[BACK TO TOP](#)

4.5.1 School Safety

- All Monson High School visitors are required to sign-in in the principal's Office and obtain a visitor's pass.
- At 7:35 a.m. each morning all exterior doors will be locked.
- Students, faculty, staff, and visitors will be able to exit the building from any door but entrance will be limited.

Students should be aware that faculty, staff, and administration will take all verbal and/or written threats seriously. Administration will investigate any threat or implied threat and take appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion and involvement of the police for criminal investigation thereof.

4.5.2 Courtesy

As a school citizen, each person should strive to be considerate of others. The expectation is that all members of the school community will be respectful and treat people as they would want to be treated in person and online.

4.5.3 Restrooms

Students must receive permission from their teacher to leave the classroom at any time. All students must sign out on the sign-out sheet before they leave the classroom. General restrooms on the first floor will be accessed by students in grades 7 and 8 only. A gender neutral restroom will be available to students on the first floor (accessible by key which should be obtained in the main office).

4.5.4 Unattended Belongings and Personal Items

There shall be no expectation of privacy for bags or backpacks left unattended. School personnel will search unattended items to determine ownership and to assess danger/threat. All student backpacks and bags should be kept in their assigned locker. Students who are not keeping their bags in their assigned locker are subject to leaving their bags in the main office.

4.5.5 Outdoor Areas

All areas on the exterior of the building are considered out of bounds at the beginning of the school day. Access to outdoor spaces may be granted in certain situations with administrative/faculty approval.

4.5.6 Parent Volunteers

We encourage parent/guardian volunteers in our schools; however, all parent/guardian volunteers who are working in the school setting are bound by the laws of confidentiality. Information obtained through observation or participation in classrooms is completely confidential.

4.5.7 Visitors to School

Student visitors to school are not encouraged. Any person wishing to visit the school during the school day must obtain approval and a visitor's pass from a member of the administration two days prior to the visit requested. The Principal will have the discretion to deny student visitors from school.

4.5.8 Emergency and Non-Prescription Medication Form

At the beginning of the school year, parents/guardians will receive an email from the school which contains a Biographical Sheet and an Emergency/Non-Prescription Medication Form. Parents/guardians are asked to complete both of these forms and return them to the Principal's Office by the start of the school year.

4.5.9 Safety Drills

Safety drills such as fire drills and ALICE drills will occur during the school year. In order to ensure the highest possible level of safety and security, students must follow all procedures and directives given by the faculty, staff, and administration during these drills.

4.5.10 Federal Gun-Free Schools Act

This Act relates to possession of a firearm, as defined in the 20 U.S. Code, Section 8921, on school premises or at a school-related event. The Gun-Free Schools Act requires that a mandatory expulsion of a minimum of one (1) year be imposed by the building Principal of a student who is found to violate this section. Expulsion can only be modified by the Superintendent on a case by case basis.

4.5.11 Bicycles, skateboards, rollerblades, scooters, and wheelies

- Students may ride bicycles to and from school, and it is recommended that students lock their bicycles in the bike rack.
- The school does not assume responsibility for loss or theft.
- Students are not permitted to ride in the parking lot at any time.
- Failure to adhere to these rules will result in disciplinary action that may include loss of privileges.
- Helmets must be worn when riding a bicycle to and from school per Mass. Gen. Laws. Ch. 85, §11B(2) requires that "any person under the age of 16 riding a bicycle, as an operator or passenger, must wear a protective bicycle helmet. The failure to wear a required helmet shall not be used as evidence of contributory negligence in any civil action". This law was current as of August 2012 and may be subject to change.
- Students who ride bicycles are not to arrive on school property before the designated time for entry into the building. Skateboards, rollerblades, scooters, and wheelies cannot be used on school grounds.

4.5.12 Parking, Use of Automobiles and Motorcycles

- Student parking is restricted to sophomores, juniors and seniors in designated areas only.

- Eligible students wishing to park on school property must register each year with the main office and purchase a parking permit.
- Checks should be payable to Monson High School.
- Student cars that are not registered with the main office or are parked illegally will be towed.
- The cost incurred by towing is the responsibility of the student driver.
- The parking fee structure is a prorated scale that decreases in certain increments throughout the school year. All permits are valid from the date of purchase through the last day of the school year
 - August – November: \$25.00
 - December – March: \$15.00
 - April – June: \$10
- A student may purchase one additional permit for \$5.00 to cover administrative costs.
- A new permit is required each school year and a new spot will be assigned.
- Parking fees will be applied to the respective class account.
- Student drivers are required to complete a vehicle registration form in the main office.
- Students are required to attach a school sticker to their car in the designated area.
- Students are required to park in areas designated on the registration form.
- All student drivers must have a permit by the second Friday of the school year.

Student parking is as follows:

- Inducted National Honor Society Members – Lot 1 (visitor parking level)
- Seniors - Lot 2 (student parking level)
- Juniors - Lot 3 (student parking level)
- Overflow -Baseball Lot
- Should a student change the vehicle they drive to school, the new vehicle information must be added to the student's registration form the first time the vehicle is driven onto school property. A new sticker should be attached immediately.
- Unsafe driving on school or district property, repeated tardiness or failure to abide by other rules may result in the loss of driving privileges.
- In accordance with MGL 90/13A (Mass General Law), no student shall operate a private passenger motor vehicle or ride in a private passenger motor vehicle unless such student is wearing a safety belt that is properly adjusted and fastened.
- Periodically, safety checkpoints may be conducted to monitor compliance. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action as deemed appropriate by administration.

4.5.13 Breathalyzer Protocol

Part I: School Sponsored Events

The administration will determine at which school-sponsored events the Breathalyzer test procedures will be used. These events will include, but are not limited to, proms, dances, concerts, overnight activities, optional field trips, athletic events, etc.

- The administration will determine the manner by which the students will be tested: entire group, predetermined random selection, or based on individualized reasonable suspicion. The trained administrator or trained staff member present at such events has

the authority to test and retest any individual suspected of being under the influence of alcohol even if the student has a negative test upon entering the event.

- Any student who tests positive will be given a second test after a waiting period of twenty (20) minutes; If the second test is also positive, the student will be denied entrance to the event and detained by school officials until parents/guardians arrive and an investigation is conducted. After testing positive, the student will be sent home and subject to disciplinary procedures (which will result in suspension)
- Any student who is subject to be tested and refuses the test, they will be denied entrance into the event and parents/guardians will be notified to have them picked up.
- If a student, already in attendance, is suspected of using alcohol as described herein and refuses the test, that student will be detained and sent home with a parent/guardian and will be subject to disciplinary procedures (which will result in suspension).

The Breathalyzer Protocol shall apply to all students and guests regardless of age and whether they are listed on the “Eighteen-Year-Old Policy” as described below.

4.5.14 Eighteen Year Old Policy

When a student has reached the age of majority (18 years old); the student can elect to receive all school communications concerning their progress, standing, and attendance in school.

Pursuant to 603 CMR 23.01, If a student is 18 years of age or older, he/she alone shall exercise these rights, subject to the following. The parent may continue to exercise the rights until expressly limited by such student. Such student may limit the rights and provisions of 603 CMR 23.00 which extend to his/her parent, except the right to inspect the student record, by making such request in writing to the school principal or superintendent of schools who shall honor such request and retain a copy of it in the student record. Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, section 34E, the parent of a student may inspect the student record regardless of the student's age.

4.5.15 Guests at School Sponsored Dances/Prom

School sponsored dances, including Prom are an extension of the school day and considered a school sponsored activity. Any dance at the 7th/8th grade level is strictly for students who are current students of Monson High School. Students may not bring a guest unless they are currently enrolled at MHS.

The Prom is a school sponsored event and thus all rules and regulations within the student handbook apply. Students planning to invite a guest who is NOT a MHS student must complete the MHS Prom Guest Application and return it to the school Principal at least 1 week prior to the date of Prom. All guests must also show the same Picture ID at the door upon entrance to the Prom. All MHS students are accountable for their guests' behavior at the Prom.

4.6 GENERAL INFORMATION

[BACK TO TOP](#)

4.6.1 Cafeteria Service

Lunch is available for order in the school cafeterias. A monthly menu and calendar are posted in the cafeteria and on the district website.

4.6.2 Contacting Students and Staff in School

- Students will not be allowed to receive telephone calls to the office or a classroom except in the case of an emergency.
- It is the responsibility of every student to arrive at school with all necessary materials relating to their assignments.
- Assistance at home can minimize unnecessary phone calls. Whenever possible, parents/guardians should plan ahead and use a note so that phone calls can be kept to a minimum.
- Parents/guardians should make every effort to give the school office sufficient time to deliver a message.

4.6.3 Lockers

- Student lockers are assigned to students at the beginning of the school year for students to use. All bags must be placed in a student's locker and should not be brought to class.
- They are jointly accessible to the student and school officials and may be subject to inspection and search at any time at the discretion of school officials.
- No degree of privacy or security should be expected in lockers by students.
- If a lock is lost or damaged, a charge of \$7.00 will be made.
- No personal locks are allowed on school lockers.
- Students are not to give other students their locker combinations; only one student is to be using a locker at any given time.
- Students should report any locker problems to the main reception office.

4.6.4 Money and Valuables

It is strongly suggested that students do not bring more money to school than needed for that day. The school is not responsible for lost monies and valuables. If students believe they have been the victim of theft, they should come to the office and fill out an incident report that will be forwarded to the Monson Police Department.

4.6.5 Respect and Care of School Property

- Persons who damage school property will be required to make full restitution and will be reported to the proper legal authorities.
- Vandalism may result in suspension from school for up to 10 days.
- Textbooks and school supplies are loaned to the student, who is expected to return them in good condition.
- Lost or damaged books and materials must be paid for in order that immediate replacements may be made.

4.6.6 School Attire

Per School Committee policy, "The responsibility for the dress and appearance of the students will rest with individual students and parents/guardians. They have the right to determine how the student will dress providing that attire is not destructive to school property, complies with requirements for health and safety, and does not cause disorder or disruption. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements." As such, the following guidance is designed to outline what complies with requirements of health and safety, and does not cause disorder or disruption.

Personal dress and appearance which violates the Sexual Harassment Policy, the Tobacco-Free Policy, the Equality in Education Policy, Hate Crimes & Bias Policy, or the policies relative to substance abuse as described in this handbook, or which is obscene or interferes with another student's ability to receive an education is prohibited. The commercialization/promotion of alcohol and other drugs, as well as tobacco use is contrary to the wellbeing of the students, staff, and community. Clothing and accessories depicting these substances or their use are not to be worn while a student is attending school.

While in school, students must wear clothing that meets the following standards:

- No bare feet or unsafe footwear (appropriate footwear must be worn in PE class, food & nutrition classes as well as Laboratory science classes).
- No clothing referencing anything sexually aggressive, physically aggressive or filled with hate speech towards specific groups.
- No hats during the school day.

The school staff reserves the right to determine what is or is not appropriate. If, in their best judgment, the school staff feels that a student's clothing is not appropriate, the student will have the option to put on appropriate clothing or call home and request a change of clothes be brought into school. If a student refuses to change, they may be excluded from classes for the remainder of the day and lose extracurricular activities for the day. If excessive problems persist, students could receive disciplinary consequences.

In addition, a student's dress and appearance must comply with all OSHA and safety regulations while attending a lab or shop. Clothing and accessories that jeopardize the safety of staff and students or disrupt the educational process are not allowed.

4.6.7 Morning Announcements and PA System

Each day announcements are made to the entire school population by way of the public address system located in the main office. It is the responsibility of all members of the staff and student body to listen to these announcements so that they are aware of events that are occurring in the school community that directly affects them.

- All announcements must be submitted by 7:20 a.m. with a proper signature to receive administrative approval.
- Only approved announcements will be read and posted.

- The public address system may also be used to call down students to the counseling office, Assistant Principal's office, or Principal's office. No one will be called from class without sufficient and just reason.
- Announcements are also available on the school's website.

4.6.8 Student Accountability and Debts

Over the course of the school year and a student's high school career, students may accumulate debts for a variety of reasons. On a regular basis, students are notified of the outstanding debts. Failure to pay these debts may result in a loss of privileges. Furthermore, seniors with outstanding debts may not be eligible for senior activities including graduation participation.

4.6.9 Lost and Found

A lost-and-found area is located in the Main Office. Lost books are also brought to and held in the Main Office until the end of each semester when they are returned to the core areas. Unclaimed lost and found items will be donated at the end of the year.

4.6.10 Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences are an integral part of the communication carried on between home and school. Through these conferences, a better assessment of each student's progress can be achieved between teacher and parent/guardian. Parents/guardians may request a conference with their child's team any time during the school year by calling or emailing the teacher to arrange a convenient time.

4.6.11 Working Papers

Working papers may be obtained in the Superintendent's office. The permits are made out to a specific job and employer; therefore, students need to be hired before papers can be issued.

4.6.12 Excursion Policies

- Excursions are supplements to the school program and typically do not require the participation of all students in a group or class. Examples include trips sponsored by student clubs, travel of special interest groups outside of school hours, and annual class trips.
- Students participating in an excursion are representing both our school and community and exemplary behavior is expected at all times.
- Parent/guardian consent, as indicated by signature on specific forms provided by the school, is also required for participation.
- Some excursions may require additional rules for participation.
- We value the attendance policy and student behavioral and academic code of conduct.
- Students in violation of these policies will be required to meet with administration to discuss eligibility.
- If a student becomes ineligible to participate in an excursion due to the above standards, they will forfeit any payments made towards the trip at that point, and parents/guardians

will be contacted in accordance with our current disciplinary parent communication protocol.

- School dress code is to be followed on school excursions.
- The school administration reserves the right to review this policy based upon the best interest of the school and the student(s) involved.

4.6.13 Field Trips and Co-Curricular Activities

- Field trips/co-curricular activities are a valuable part of The Monson Public Schools District's educational program. Students attending field trips/co-curricular activities are representing both our school and community and exemplary behavior is expected at all times. On field trips and co-curricular activities, students will remain under school supervision during the entire trip.
- Parents/Guardians must sign all permission slips required for field trips/co-curricular activity.
- Parents/guardians should make checks payable to MPS unless otherwise indicated.
- Students are expected to follow all school rules and meet behavior expectations while here in school. The risk is far too great to allow students to participate in field trips/co-curricular activity if they have an established pattern of making poor choices while at school.
- Students may be excluded from attending field trips/co-curricular activity, if their school attendance, grades, or behavior is such that remaining at school will be of greater benefit than attending. The school administration reserves the right to make those decisions.
- If a student becomes ineligible to participate in a field trip/co-curricular activity due to the above standards, they will forfeit any payments made towards the trip at that point.
- School dress code is to be followed on all field trips/co-curricular activities.
- The school administration reserves the right to review this policy based upon the best interest of the school and the student(s) involved.
- Any chaperone that is not an employee of the school and is attending a trip/activity must have a preapproved CORI check and fingerprinting done with the Monson Public Schools.
- Any chaperone that is not an employee of the school will report to the staff member that is the leader of the field trip/activity
- The Principal will have final approval of which parent chaperone attends and the amount of parent chaperones needed in compliance with the school committee policy.

4.6.14 Library

In order to find, use, and enjoy sources of information and reading material, the library collections are open for use during school the day.

Library Conduct: An atmosphere of mutual respect for people and property is expected at all times. Students may remain in the library as long as they are productively using it and not disturbing others. Anyone who is consistently disrespectful, as determined by the library staff, will be required to return to their classroom or sent to the Principal/Assistant Principal.

Borrowing and Using Library Resources: No library materials may be removed from the library without being properly checked out. Books used for in-library research should be left on the library tables or brought to the library circulation desk. Students should not reshelv books.

Library materials are lent out for up to two weeks. Students may borrow up to four books at a time. Students with overdue materials limit the access of others; they are therefore denied from borrowing any library materials until all overdue materials are returned. Each borrower must pay for any lost library material. Seniors who have not returned or paid for lost materials will not be issued a cap & gown for graduation.

Use of the Library Area: Teachers who pre-schedule time in the Library have priority as to availability of the area and its resources.

Students who are scheduled for Independent Study, Dual Enrollment, Online Learning, Work Based Learning, or any other non-classroom program should notify the Principal/Assistant Principal in advance of their expected library use so that appropriate accommodations can be determined. Students going to the library, either individually or in small groups, from a classroom whose teacher has not scheduled library time, must have a pass. These students should anticipate a request to return to their classroom should no space be available.

No student may go to the library during lunch.

All passes must have the student's full name(s), the date & time of expected use, the topic to be worked on, and the assigning teacher's signature. **Library Computers:** Students are responsible for library computer use as described in the school's Technology/Internet Acceptable Use Agreement. (Refer to the appropriate location in the school Handbook.) Students will be assigned to use a specific desktop or laptop computer by either their classroom teacher or a member of the library staff. The students are personally responsible for the condition of the computer(s), the computer area, and all attached peripheral devices upon completion of their usage. Students must NOT attempt to download or change any software, nor disconnect or reconnect any attached devices (mice, monitors, keyboard, etc.) on any school computer. Any problems, damage, or errant conditions of the computers or the computer areas should be immediately reported to a member of the library staff.

Books taken from shelves and periodicals from the back room should be returned to the circulation desk. The IRC staff reserves the right to inspect bags, backpacks, etc., before a student leaves as a theft deterrent.

Circulation and Overdue Materials: The student is responsible for the return of materials on time.

4.6.15 Special Committees

Student Members, School Committee, and Student Advisory Committee to School Committee.

The School Committee has two students as non-voting members. The objective of student participation is to foster a partnership between the two generations for the purpose of building a better educational community. The two, non-voting members attend School Committee meetings and serve as liaison between the Student Council and the committee. Election of two members of the student body to serve on the committee occurs in the spring. Three additional members are elected and the group of five comprises a Student Advisory Committee to the School Committee. The Student Advisory Committee to the School Committee meets and represents the students' concerns to the Committee. Questions concerning these positions should be directed to the Principal.

4.7 Athletic Handbook

[BACK TO TOP](#)

Forward

The purpose of this guide is to coordinate the efforts of the total athletic program offered by the Monson Public Schools. In order to ensure consistency in athletic activities, the administration and athletic director have set forth certain guidelines and regulations to be followed by those persons directly involved with the supervision. It is expected that all persons will have a complete understanding of the proper interpretation of the regulations and apply them in a way that will be most satisfactory.

The policies for interscholastic athletics are aligned with the rules & regulations of the MIAA and PVIAC. If you have any questions regarding policy, ask your Coach, Athletic Director, visit the MIAA website at www.MIAA.net or visit the Monson Public Schools website at www.monsonschoools.com.

The Monson School Committee believes that students will benefit from the experiences in self-discipline and team effort made possible through participation in inter-school sports.

Participation in interscholastic athletics will be subject to approval by the School Committee and will be in accordance with regulations and recommendations of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA).

At the high school level, interscholastic athletic competition will include a variety of sports. Students will be allowed to participate in individual sports on the basis of their abilities and desire.

The School Committee is aware that team participation in athletic contests by members of the student body requires that “away games” be scheduled. It also recognizes that there is a need to regulate certain aspects of student participation in such contests. Therefore, the Superintendent will establish regulations to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff members who participate in these activities.

Our school is a member of the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Conference (PVIAC) and the Massachusetts Secondary Schools Athletic Directors Association (MSSADA). We participate in the following activities:

Season	Sport	Teams
Fall	Cross Country Soccer Golf Unified Basketball Cheerleading	Boys and Girls Varsity Boys and Girls Varsity (JV if enough players) Varsity (open to both boys and girls) Open to both boys and girls Varsity (open to both boys and girls)
Winter	Basketball Cheerleading Swimming	Boys and Girls Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman Varsity (open to both boys and girls) Boys and Girls Varsity
Spring	Baseball Softball Track and Field Lacrosse	Varsity and Junior Varsity Varsity and Junior Varsity Boys and Girls Varsity Boys and Girls Varsity

Mission

The athletic program can only be as strong as its leadership. Administratively, we are pledged to a program that places endeavors on and off the athletic field as visible examples of the principles of the social interaction we desire to be learned by our students. To this end, we have selected leaders in whom we empower the responsibility to supervise such a program. The coaches are expected to secure student leadership of such quality and understanding that they are able to instill in all members of athletic squads the objectives desired by the department and the school.

Within high school sports programs, young people learn the values associated with discipline, performing under stress, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership, and organizational skills, participating within rules, physical well-being, healthy lifestyles and striving toward excellence. If interscholastic athletics are to be justified as school activities, then values such as these must be the properties of our programs.

While winning contests rather than losing them is a commendable goal, emphasis is placed on preparing students to succeed, as well as, other lessons of a lasting and positive nature.

Students should be encouraged to participate in a varied set of activities that may include a wide range of sports or activities outside of the athletic realm. Young people need time to learn, to think and simply grow up. Our program should allow this to happen as comfortably as possible.

It is to this end that we strive to coordinate the entire athletic program and in turn achieve these goals.

Conduct and Sportsmanship

Players will always conduct themselves in a gentlemanly and ladylike manner. Remember, you represent Monson High School. You will treat all persons with courteous behavior and respect at all times.

Coaches expect student athletes to be with them at all times. Athletes are expected to be on the bench as a unit, not wandering around. In all sports, no student is permitted on the team bench unless he/she is a member of the team or is the team manager.

Derogatory remarks will not be made toward officials or opponents at any time. Upon completing games, all players on a team will cross the field or the court and shake hands with all the opponents. There is no better way to impress opposing schools and spectators with the type of school we have.

We want to win, and we strive to be winners at Monson High School; but we admire the athlete who can be respected by everyone for his/her conduct as well as his/her outstanding ability.

SPORTSMANSHIP CODE

- We consider all athletic opponents as guests and treat them with all the courtesy due friends and guests.
- We accept all decisions of officials without question.
- We never hiss or boo a player or official.
- We never utter abusive or irritating remarks from the sidelines.
- We applaud opponents who make good plays or show good sportsmanship.
- We never attempt to rattle an opposing player, such as a player attempting a free throw.
- We seek to win by fair and lawful means, according to the rules.
- We do unto others as we would have them do unto us.

- We try to win without boasting and we lose without excuses.
- We ask that every player and fan in attendance do his level best throughout the contest to cooperate with us in living up to this code.
- And may the better team win!

Principles and Policies of the Department of Athletics

General

Proper behavior and sportsmanship for our athletes and students is expected. By doing so, we can give the Monson High athletes and student body the best competition any high school could possibly have. There are many fine schools that we would like to have on our schedule. In order to schedule these teams, we must establish good public relations with all schools. Each player, each spectator, and each coach must realize that he/she represents Monson High, whether it is on or off the field, in practice, or in a game.

The Coach is responsible for each student athlete on his/her team. He/she will stress the need for academic success and provide guidance whenever possible with the goal being to have the average grades of our athletes above the class average. Coaches also encourage athletes to be top students and top citizens by checking on their academic work and their overall citizenship as often as possible. It is essential for athletes to try to develop a sense of responsibility, respect and pride in all of these areas.

Relationship between the Instructional Program and the Athletic Program

Athletic personnel must keep in mind that they are teachers first and coaches second.

Athletics are responsible jointly with academic subjects for establishing those standards of good behavior that represent the best in good citizenship. Athletics must contribute to those virtues which are socially sound for a democracy such as truthfulness, fair play, honesty, modesty, give and take, courtesy, pride, poise, self-discipline, courage, generosity, self-restraint, and loyalty to team, school, and the community.

The athletic program shall be closely coordinated with the general instructional program and properly articulated with the other extra-curricular activities of the school.

Coaches in each individual sport make every effort to cooperate with coaches in other sports. Doing so helps:

- strengthen the continuity between the school and the athletic program; and
- meet the objectives of the school to help further the growth of the individuals taking part in athletics.

Cooperation in establishing and enforcing uniform training rules or regulations for all sports is desired from all coaches involved in the athletic program of the school.

Parent Involvement – Athletic Booster Club

The Monson Public Schools Administration believes strongly in parental involvement at all levels and invites everyone to belong to the Athletic Booster Club. In an effort to aid in communication between coaches, parents, the Athletic Director, and Athletic Booster Club, we recommend parents attend the Athletic Booster Club meeting each month (usually the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm). These meetings are held to share ideas and important information regarding the sports and awards programs at Monson High School.

Athletic Schedules

All schedules for athletic contests are arranged by the Athletic Director. An attempt will be made to schedule schools of approximately the same size, the same team ability, or with comparable athletic programs. Sports schedules and scores are posted and updated by the Monson Athletic Director on the ArbiterGame website.

The following is a list of the maximum number of games or meets, exclusive of tournament competition, to be scheduled in any one year for each sport:

Sport	Maximum Games/Meets per Week	Maximum Games/Meets per Year
Baseball	3	20
Basketball	3	20
Cheerleading	3	20
Cross Country	3	16
Golf	4	20
Lacrosse	3	18
Soccer	3	18
Softball	3	20
Swimming	2	18
Track	3	16

Pre-Sport Orientation

Coaches will hold a pre-sport orientation for students interested and/or involved in the sport. This meeting may be held before the first formal practice session. A complete run-down of all team rules and regulations, practice sessions, schedules, objectives, training, and safety advice, etc., should be undertaken at this time.

Assistant Coaches

Coaches may seek the assistance of unpaid assistant coaches for any athletic season. Any individual working in the capacity of coach must be school appointed.

The procedure to apply to be an Assistant Coach follows:

1. Perspective unpaid assistants are to write a letter of application to the Coach.
2. The Coach will write and sign a letter recommending the applicant and forward the letter to the Athletic Director.
3. The Director will meet with the candidate and, if viewed favorably, the candidate's letter will be forwarded to the High School Principal. The Principal will then meet with the candidate, and then appoint or not appoint the candidate based on the recommendation of the Athletic Director.

Student Managers

Each head coach will determine the number of student managers he/she needs and, in turn, select the people he/she feels possess the character, physical ability, and desire to do an outstanding job.

Student managers must conform to the academic eligibility requirements of the athletic teams. A set of duties and responsibilities will be distributed to student managers by the coach in order to avoid any last minute confusion before an interscholastic contest.

Physical Examinations

An athlete's physical examination is only good for 13 months from the date the physical examination was given. An athlete may be eligible at the start of the season, but could possibly become ineligible at some point during the season. Please double check the date of the physical examination so that the athlete does not become ineligible at any point. We will also be tracking physical dates at school. A copy of the physical examination needs to be on file with the school nurse in order for the athlete to be eligible for the first day of practice/tryouts. The nurse will be providing a list of physicals to the Athletic Director on the first day of tryouts. An athlete will not be able to participate if they are not on that list with a valid physical. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the nurse: MHS: (413) 267-4589 ext. 6009

Monson High School Athletics Required Online Course

All parents of student athletes must complete the National Federation of State High School Associations **Concussion in Sports** online training. You can find this course at: <https://nfhslearn.com/courses> then click on **Concussion in Sports**.

Physical Examinations/Disqualifications

Before participating in any sport, all students must pass a physical examination within 13 months of their first practice session. Physical examinations must be performed by the appropriate medical authority as defined by the MIAA Sports Medicine Committee. Currently the definition is a duly registered physician. In addition, Physician's Assistants and Nurse Practitioners may administer school physicals under the provisions of existing State law.

Insurance

All athletes must have some form of insurance coverage.

Completed forms must be returned to the Athletic Director before the first practice of the team.

Travel Policy for Out-of-Town Athletic Contests

- All student athletes will travel to and from all out-of-town contests as a group in school-sponsored conveyances.
- Student athletes are not permitted to drive themselves or any other athletes to any away athletic contests.
- It may be possible for a student athlete to leave their team at the game site and return home with parents but only with approved written consent of the parents, coach and school administration.

Violation of Travel Policy

Penalties for violating any of the previously stated policies will be at the discretion of the Principal and Athletic Director and may include forfeiture of playing time and/or letter eligibility by the athlete.

Athletic Fee Policy

The Monson School Committee has authorized an athletic fee for all interscholastic participants at Monson High School and Granite Valley Middle School. Without this fee it would be impossible for the school committee to authorize any involvement in competitive athletics. The table below outlines the fees for each sport:

Cheerleading (fall)	\$150
Girls Soccer	\$175
Boys Soccer	\$175
Golf	\$300
Girls Cross Country	\$150
Boys Cross Country	\$150
Unified basketball	\$0
Cheerleading (winter)	\$175
Girls Swimming	\$150
Boys Swimming	\$150
Boys Basketball	\$300
Girls Basketball	\$300
Softball	\$250
Baseball	\$275
Girls Lacrosse	\$150
Boys Lacrosse	\$150
Boys Track & Field	\$150
Girls Track & Field	\$150

There is a maximum \$600.00 yearly cap for each family.

The athletic user fee is reduced to \$50 per season for any student on the direct certification list. If an athlete is not listed on the direct certification list, parents/guardians may complete the Voluntary Family Income Survey to apply for the reduced athletic user fee. Voluntary Family Income Surveys are available by contacting the Athletic Director.

No refunds will be given after the first athletic contest. Checks are to be made out to: Town of Monson. All fees must be paid prior to an athlete receiving a uniform or other arrangements made through the Athletic Director. .

Practice Sessions

At least one coach must be in attendance at each practice session.

Coaches must be notified, by the student athlete or parent of the athlete, at the beginning of tryouts of any scheduled trips in which the athlete may be involved which may come in conflict with practice sessions, games, or meets scheduled for the sport in which he/she would like to participate.

Attendance at Practice Sessions

Attendance at practice sessions are mandatory for anyone on a varsity or junior varsity team unless excused for medical or religious reasons.

A maximum of 6 practices per week may be held (Monday – Sunday). Athletes must be given 1 day free of athletic participation in a Monday – Sunday week. This one day off may not be viewed as optional.

Practices may be held on Sundays after 12:00 pm.

Team Managers and Assistant Team Managers must attend practice just as the players do, as defined by the coach.

Athletes must inform coaches at least 24 hours prior to missing any scheduled practice. This is the duty of the athlete or the athlete's parents, not another team member.

An athlete will be excused without penalty with respect to his/her status on the team when a good reason is provided for his/her delay for (conference with a teacher) or absence at (sickness, doctor or dentist appointment) a practice session when the coach has been notified prior to that practice session.

Violation / Practice Session or Game/Meet Attendance

Penalties for violating any of the previously stated policies/procedures may include forfeiture of playing time and/or letter eligibility by the athlete.

School Attendance

No student athlete is permitted to participate in a particular interscholastic contest on a day that the student is not in school by 10:35 AM or in school at least $\frac{1}{2}$ of the school day (3 hrs 15 min).

School Tardiness

Constant tardiness will not be permitted. The athlete as any other student must follow school rules and regulations.

Bona Fide Team Rule

A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is regularly present for, and actively participates in, all team practices and competitions. Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to practice or compete with an out-of-school team. The first offense of the bona fide team rule will result in a suspension of 25% of the season. The second offense will result in suspension for an additional 25% of the season, and ineligibility for tournament participation.

Violation / Bona Fide Team Member

The first offense of the bona fide team rule will result in a suspension of 25% of the season. The second offense will result in a suspension for 25% of the season and ineligibility for tournament participation.

Violation / Leaving the Team

Any player, once a member of a team, who voluntarily leaves that team, may be suspended from further participation in all interscholastic athletics for a period of up to one year.

This process will be initiated by the Coach of the violating player in writing to the Athletic Director. A hearing will then be convened by the Director; the hearing will include the Coach, Director, athlete, and the parents of the athlete. This meeting will be held to determine what, if any, action will be taken.

Should the student wish to join the same team the following season, it will be up to the Coach's discretion as to whether or not the student may do so.

Violation / Conduct and Sportsmanship Expectations

- First two offenses – player receives a warning unless violation is of a flagrant nature, then a 2-week suspension;
- Offenses after 2 warnings – player receives a 2-week suspension;
- If poor behavior continues - player receives a one-year suspension from season play.

All Disciplinary Actions – Length of Time

While it is our fervent hope and expectation that all athletes at Monson High School exhibit good decision-making throughout the entire year, our training policy penalties, according to MIAA Policy, may only be invoked while the athlete is in-season, (e.g., the first day of official practice through the final season contest including any competition or tournament play).

Procedure for Student/Athlete or Parental Complaints

If student athletes or parents/guardians have a complaint about any aspect of the athletic program, the proper procedure is to bring it to your child's Coach so that he or she may respond to your concern.

- Student to Coach
- Parent to Coach
- Student to AD
- Parent to AD
- Student to Principal
- Parent to Principal
- Student to Superintendent
- Parent to Superintendent
- School Committee

No Game Day Discussion with Coaches Rule – Regarding Players or Team

Contact with the coach about the players or team should not be made on the day of a game.

Please see the section titled "Procedure for Student Athletes or Parental Complaints" above in regards to the appropriate measures to take for a complaint.

Athletic Eligibility Requirements

General Requirements

- A student must not have reached his/her 19th birthday as of September 1 of the school year.
- All students participating in interscholastic athletics must carry accident insurance.

Academic Requirements

- A student must be fully enrolled in school to be eligible for participation in the athletic programs.
- In the 4-block schedule, starting with the 2025-2026 school year, students must pass, and be passing, three (3) out of the four (4) courses to be eligible for participation.
- Students participating in the fall season of 2025 must have passed five (5) of the six (6) courses in the 4th quarter of the spring of the previous school year.
- Incoming grade 7 students must have a 75% in all core classes
- The academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determined only on the date when the report cards for that ranking period have been issued to the parents of all students.
- Incomplete grades may not be counted toward eligibility.
- A student who repeats work upon which he/she has once received Credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility.

- A student cannot count for eligibility for any subject taken during the summer unless that subject has been previously pursued and failed.

Chemical Health

From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is latest), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco products; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer”. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her doctor.

Violation / Chemical Health - Minimum Penalties

First Violation:

When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic events totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, penalties will be determined by the current or next season of participation. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. Any fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

The student may attend interscholastic activities during suspension from the team but may not dress in the team uniform.

Second and Subsequent Violations:

When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a second or subsequent violation has occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, penalties will be determined by the current or next season of participation. Any fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season.

The student may attend interscholastic activities during suspension from the team but may not dress in the team uniform.

Locker Room Procedure

All coaches shall emphasize to their squads the importance of proper conduct in the locker room.

- Only managers and coaches are permitted in the athletic storage at any time.
- Athletes should not take a locker for the present season until he/she is assigned one by the coach.
- After each practice session a coach will make sure the locker room is reasonably clean.
- No one is to be left inside the building once the coach leaves.

Checklist for Players:

- must report to the gym or field at the time designated;
- must have all belongings that they intend to take home that evening as they will not be allowed to return to their lockers in the classroom wings;
- leave no towels, clothing or papers on benches or on the floor;
- responsible for keeping the locker room neat and clean;
- lock all money, wallets and valuables in the gym lockers;

- must leave the building before the coach. No students are allowed to be in the building unsupervised. Students are dismissed through the front lobby.
- return all uniforms and equipment to the Coach at the end of the season.

Injuries

If an athlete is seriously injured, the coach shall immediately notify the athlete's parents and the Athletic Director or Principal.

Athletes may go to the doctor of their choice at any time, but in cases where medical advice has been given, it is the duty of the athlete to make as much of the knowledge known to the coach as is necessary for him/her to make an intelligent decision. Written consent from the doctor must be obtained before the athlete is permitted to return to action.

Accident and insurance forms must be filled out and submitted to the Athletic Director as soon as possible by the coach of the sport on all injured athletes who may require medical attention.

Away Contests

All athletes will travel to and from all out-of-town contests by school designated transportation. It may be possible for a team member to leave the squad at the game site and return home with parents (only with approved written consent of the parents). **Athletes are not permitted to drive themselves to any away athletic contests.** Consequences for this action will be at the discretion of the Principal and Athletic Director.

The manner of dress of athletes will be expected to conform to the coach's regulations for the particular sports activity. Coaches will be responsible for the conduct of their team at all away contests.

Practice Games and Scrimmages

Coaches may, with the approval of the Athletic Director, arrange practice games or scrimmages with other schools prior to the regular season.

Game Cancellation Procedure

In general, the home school determines whether or not there will be a game cancellation. However, in the best interest of all concerned, the Athletic Directors from both our district and the opposing team will make contact in regard to the final decision.

The Athletic Director will:

- Notify the coach when a game is cancelled;
- Consult with the coach on a reschedule date.
- Notify the students of the date change.

Sports schedules and scores are posted and updated by the Monson Athletic Director.

Hazing

Below acknowledges your understanding that the MHS Parent- Student Handbook includes the Act Prohibiting the Practice of Hazing, M.G.L. c269 sections 17-19 and that your son/daughter understands and agrees to comply with the law.

Awards

Coaches Award

At the conclusion of each session, the varsity coach for that season will select a recipient for “The Coach’s Award.” This award will be presented to its recipient at the annual sports awards program and may be given for any of the following reasons:

- Most valuable
- Most improved
- Most desire
- Most dedicated to the sport
- Best offensive player
- Best defensive player
- Sportsmanship

Special Awards

Robert E. Moriarty Award

Awarded for excellence in the sport of boys’ soccer. This award is voted on by the squad members to select the most valuable player of the soccer season.

Bimm Wytas Award

Awarded to the senior male athlete who demonstrates the highest athletic ability coupled with the highest adherence to the principles set forth in this guide. Voted on by all coaches.

Diana Roberts Award

Awarded to the senior female athlete who demonstrates the highest athletic ability coupled with the highest adherence to the principles set forth in this policy guide. Voted on by all coaches.

Keith Gamage Award

Awarded to a male or female runner who exemplifies the courage, dedication, and perseverance shown by Keith Gamage during his lifetime. Recipient is selected by the Cross-Country coaching staff.

Sportsmanship Award

Awarded to the athletes who exhibit the highest qualities of sportsmanship. Recipients will be selected by the coach of each sport (Varsity and JV).

Most Promising Player Awards

Awarded to the most promising Junior Varsity player. Recipients selected by all JV coaches and awards are presented at the Varsity Awards program.

Athletic Letter Requirements

Sport	Requirements
Baseball	50% of total number of innings in the season. EXCEPTION: Pitchers
Basketball	75% of total number of halves in the season.
Cheerleading (Winter)	Must cheer in 100% of the games

Cross Country	The ten runners whose names were submitted to compete in the WMASS Championships.
Golf	Must earn points in 50% of the matches.
Soccer	75% of total number of halves in the season.
Softball	50% of total number of innings in the season. EXCEPTION: Pitchers
Swimming	Any swimmer who competes in WMASS Championships or earns points in 75% of the meets, or earns a total of 30 points.
Track & Field	Earn 10 points. Points are earned during regular season meets according to the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1st place = 5 points ● 2nd place = 3 points ● 3rd place = 1 point
Team Managers	Students who participate in the day-to-day activities of the team.

Monetary Donations / Fundraising / Grants

Donations under \$1000 for Athletic Programs

A donation under \$1000 will be accepted by the Principal with the approval of the Superintendent of the district. Due to the nature of distributing monies equally among all programs, outside donations may not be made to specific teams or coaches. However, a letter/note from the donor stating his/her/their wish for a specific use of the funds may be included with the donation check. Checks for donations may be made out to Monson High School.

Any funds received will be placed in the Monson High School Athletic Improvement Fund.

Through input from the coaching staff and based on the current needs of the athletic programs, Administration will use these funds to aid the high school athletic programs. These funds will only be used for the athletic department.

Donations for \$1000 and over for Athletic Programs

Any gifts over \$1,000.00 will be subject to School Committee approval. For more information on this policy, please visit the Monson Public Schools website at www.monsonschoools.com; go to the School Committee section, then review the Policy Manual on-line (policy files JJFA-R and KCD).

Once accepted by the School Committee, the procedure stated above for "Donations under \$1000" will be followed.

Fundraisers by Teams

The Athletic Director and Principal must approve all fundraisers. Fundraising requests will be evaluated on the following:

- type of fundraiser
- why money is being raised
- needs of the program
- other scheduled school fundraisers
- Athletes' participation

Grants/Advertisements

Research is continually being done to investigate various areas of grant funding for our programs.