

DANVERS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



Version 3.1
Effective October 9, 2026

Dear DPS Employee,

This handbook is designed to offer general guidance for all employees across the district. It outlines key expectations and procedures related to curriculum, district and school office operations, student services, and other relevant areas. Additional manuals and resources will be provided as necessary.

Where there is a discrepancy between this handbook and the collective bargaining agreement, the terms of the collective bargaining agreement shall prevail. Sections of this guide that align with the mandatory provisions of the collective bargaining agreement are noted as such. Please be assured that none of your rights under M.G.L. Chapter 150E are waived, even if certain matters are not expressly covered in the agreement.

If you are ever uncertain about how to respond in a given situation, please reach out to your building principal or immediate supervisor. If something unusual occurs, notify them as soon as possible. Prevention, clear communication, and timely action are essential to ensuring the safety of all and maintaining legal compliance—allowing us to stay focused on our mission and our students.

Please note that this handbook is not exhaustive. Employees are also expected to be aware of and adhere to applicable federal and state laws, district policies, the collective bargaining agreement, school-level procedures, and additional guidance from organizations such as the MIAA.

I encourage you to take the time to read through this handbook carefully. The guidelines within are designed to ensure consistency, promote best practices, and support legal and professional responsibilities throughout our district.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DB' followed by a horizontal line.

Daniel Bauer
Superintendent

DANVERS PUBLIC SCHOOLS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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I. INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to have you as a member of the staff of the Danvers Public School District ("District"). Whether you work full-time or part-time, in an administrative, teaching, professional, or support category, the skills and commitment you bring to your job make an important contribution to our goal of academic excellence and opportunity for all students. We are happy to have you as a member of our team.

This Danvers Public Schools Employee Handbook ("handbook") provides information and general guidance to District employees. The District reserves the right to change, add to, or delete any handbook provision at any time. Also, the handbook is not a complete or exhaustive compilation of all District policies, procedures, or requirements. It is intended to provide a summary of relevant information impacting and of interest to District employees. Employees will need to work closely with their building principals and supervisors so that school-based expectations are clear. Please note that this handbook is not a contract or employment agreement. Those employees whose employment terms are governed by a collective bargaining agreement should refer to the relevant collective bargaining agreement and consult with building-based union representatives for any more detailed and/or specific information about terms of employment, compensation/benefits, and working conditions. Further, the District is governed by state and Federal laws and regulations, as well as adhering to the policies of the Danvers School Committee. Should any handbook provision conflict with applicable law/regulation or policy, the relevant law/regulation or policy shall control.

Employees who are new to the District are likely to have many questions relating to their specific job duties and responsibilities. Please direct any inquiries you might have to your immediate supervisor, your building principal, or contact the Human Resources Manager at 978-774-4800, x2432 for assistance.

II. DISTRICT PHILOSOPHY

Mission of the Danvers Public Schools - *Creating a supportive environment where all learners thrive*

Vision of the Danvers Public Schools and Portrait of a Graduate - The Danvers Public Schools envisions graduates who are adaptable, resilient learners, empowered to thrive in a complex and ever-changing world.

We believe all learners are capable and deserve a supportive, safe, flexible, and equitable learning environment—one that nurtures curiosity, creativity, and perseverance while honoring students' diverse backgrounds, cultures, and identities.

To view the District's full Portrait of a Learner plan, please visit:

<https://danverspublicschools.org/school-district/about-dps/danvers-public-school-strategic-plan/>

III. GENERAL EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

EMPLOYMENT EXPECTATIONS

All employees are expected to demonstrate a professional, cooperative, knowledgeable and courteous demeanor in all interactions with students, parents, colleagues and members of the community. The use of profane or otherwise inappropriate language or gestures is prohibited and may be cause for disciplinary action.

It is expected that all employees will follow general and specific work and employment guidelines, carry out instructions and directions appropriately issued by supervisors or administrators, and perform job responsibilities in a satisfactory manner consistent with job descriptions. Employees are expected to have regular attendance, arrive to work on time and adhere to designated starting and ending times for work, breaks, lunch, etc. Employees should be conscious that District telephones, supplies, equipment and services (including Internet access and fax machines) are generally for professional use only. Excessive personal calls, or use of supplies, services or equipment for personal reasons, are not allowed. Inappropriate use of equipment, supplies or services, including electronic access, may result in discipline.

up to and including dismissal. Please refer to the Acceptable Use Policy contained in this handbook. Additionally, staff must be diligent in submitting required reports promptly, exercising care relative to school property, and demonstrating concern for and attention to the school system's legal obligations, prioritizing the safety and welfare of students, including but not limited to appropriate supervision of students.

All staff members have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with and abide by the state and Federal laws and regulations relevant to their work, as well as School Committee policies and District procedures.

In the area of personal conduct, the District expects that all teachers and all other employees will conduct themselves in a manner that not only reflects credit to the school system, but also sets forth a model worthy of emulation by students.

All staff members will be expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern.

Essential to the success of ongoing school operations and the instructional program are the following specific responsibilities, which will be required of all personnel:

1. Faithfulness and promptness in attendance at work;
2. Support and enforcement of policies of the School Committee and District procedures, practices, and school rules, regarding students and other matters;
3. Diligence in submitting required reports promptly at the times specified;
4. Care of school property;
5. Concern for and attention to their own and the school system's legal obligations, prioritizing the safety and welfare of students, including but not limited to appropriate supervision of students.

DRESS CODE

Employees are responsible for dressing in a manner that does not disrupt or impede the education process, nor pose any safety risk. All employees are expected to observe standards of modesty, cleanliness, and good grooming. Employees of the Danvers Public Schools serve as role models for the students with whom they work and as leaders in the community. All employees are expected to conform to and model the student dress code, which may vary slightly from location to location.

Professional attire is encouraged and respectfully requested. Employees should be guided by their supervisor or the building principal with regard to any special clothing or equipment needed for the job. The following items of apparel are not appropriate: clothing lacking appropriate coverage for a professional/school setting, clothing or accessories with statements or graphics that constitute hate speech or are otherwise objectively offensive, or that disrupt or impede the education process, or that reference alcohol/drugs, weapons, or violence.

CELL PHONES AND TEXTING

The use of cell phones, in any capacity, while you are teaching or working with students is prohibited absent an emergency. Please limit texts/calls and cell phone use to before and after school, lunch and non-teaching times.

CONFIDENTIALITY

As an employee of the District, you may have access to confidential, protected or privileged information. It is expected that employees will maintain others' rights to privacy by not disclosing confidential or privileged information to unauthorized individuals or groups. Failure to maintain confidentiality may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Employees should consult their supervisors with any questions regarding confidentiality. All employees are reminded that schools and all school staff are obligated to maintain the confidentiality of student record information under both state and Federal law and regulations, with very few and narrow exceptions. See 603 CMR 23.00.

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

As an employee of the Danvers Public Schools, you are expected to maintain professional boundaries with students, families, colleagues, administrators, school officials, and other school community members, both inside and outside of school, inclusive of electronic, online, and social media conduct.

Also, your personal opinions about students, families, colleagues, administrators, school officials, and other school community members, as well as situations and issues involving individuals or groups, should not be shared inappropriately. Failure to exercise good judgment, demonstrate respect, appropriately maintain confidentiality, or engage in inappropriate conduct, may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

EMAIL

All staff are expected to use their danvers.org email for educational/work purposes for all DPS business. Conversely, DPS business should be conducted through a danvers.org account. If you need to communicate via a staff distribution email list, please ask your Principal/Assistant Principal prior to sending such email.

When possible, refrain from noting student names, initials, or other personally identifiable information as defined under 34 C.F.R. § 99.3 in the subject line of an email. Use discretion when including student information in electronic communications and ensure that communications comply with applicable confidentiality requirements.

Soliciting money or other donations for charitable causes via email must receive prior Central Office administrator approval.

SMOKING/VAPING/TOBACCO

Smoking, vaping, e-cigarettes, and the use of any tobacco and/or nicotine products within school buildings, in school facilities, on school grounds, or on school transportation vehicles by any individual, including school personnel, is prohibited by law and is strictly enforced.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

The District acknowledges the strong commitment of the Danvers Public Schools to its employees to provide a safe workplace and to establish programs promoting high standards of employee health. The goal of this policy is to establish and maintain a work environment that is free from the effects of alcohol and drug use. The District further acknowledges that employees impaired by drugs and alcohol pose a danger to their fellow employees and to students, and impair their own health and safety. The District also recognizes that teachers and other staff are role models for students, and must behave accordingly.

Employees are prohibited from engaging in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, use, purchase, sale, or other transfer of any controlled substance, or the possession, use, purchase, sale or other transfer of alcohol while on school premises or while performing any job-related activity, whether on or off school premises. Employees are also prohibited from reporting for work or performing any job-related activities, on or off school premises, while under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance. An employee who violates any of these provisions is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

The District has the right to search for alcohol or drugs on District-owned or controlled premises; including desks, closets, file cabinets, toolboxes, lockers, and in District-owned vehicles.

NOTICE OF MASSACHUSETTS PREGNANT WORKERS FAIRNESS ACT

Employees and applicants with needs related to pregnancy, childbirth or related conditions (inclusive of lactation), may request reasonable accommodation to enable job performance. Reasonable accommodation may include, but is not limited to: more frequent or longer breaks; acquisition or modification of equipment or seating; assistance with manual labor; job restructuring; light duty; private non-bathroom space for use as a lactation room; modified work schedule; temporary transfer to a less

strenuous or less hazardous position; or time off to attend to a pregnancy complication or recover from childbirth. The District will grant a reasonable accommodation for needs relating pregnancy, childbirth, a related medical condition, or lactation, provided that the requested accommodation does not impose an undue hardship on the District.

The District will not discriminate in hiring or employment opportunities, and will not or take any adverse employment action against otherwise qualified employees or applicants due to pregnancy or related conditions or who request or use related reasonable accommodations (inclusive of any related leave taken for which the employee is eligible).

The District may require that an employee provide medical provider documentation supporting a need for reasonable accommodation. The District will not require such documentation when the requested accommodation is more frequent restroom, food and water breaks; seating; private non-bathroom space for use as a lactation room, or limits on lifting over 20 pounds.

To request a reasonable accommodation, or for related inquiries, please contact the Human Resources Manager at 978-774-4800 x2432.

Upon an employee's request for accommodation, the District will engage in a timely, good faith and interactive process with the employee, aimed at determining an effective reasonable accommodation.

STAFF ETHICS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST/OTHER PURSUITS

The District expects members of its professional staff to be familiar with the code of ethics that applies to their profession and to adhere to it in their relationships with students, families, colleagues, administrators, and officials of the school system. No employee of the District shall engage in or have a financial interest in, directly or indirectly, any activity in which the District has an interest or that presents a conflict of interest or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his/her duties and responsibilities in the District. Staff may not engage in any type of private business during school time or on school property.

Staff shall not engage in work of any type where information concerning customer, client, student or employer originates from any information available to them through school sources. Moreover, as there should be no conflict of interest in the supervision and evaluation of employees, at no time may an administrator be responsible for the supervision and/or evaluation of an employee directly related to him/her, including individuals who reside in the same household.

Staff shall make any required or appropriate disclosures relative to other positions or interests in accordance with state ethics and conflict of interests laws. See M.G.L. c. 268A.

Employees should note that the District may have ownership of and/or certain rights to intellectual property created by an employee during the employee's employment with the District that meets certain criteria, such as, for example, relative to employee authored educational materials created by the employee in the course and scope of employment with the District. Any such analysis is fact dependent and governed by applicable law, including but not limited to copyright law.

STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The School Committee recognizes that employees of the school system have the same fundamental civic responsibilities and privileges as other citizens, among which are campaigning for an elective public office and holding an elective or appointive office.

In connection with campaigning, staff will not use school system facilities, equipment or supplies; discuss their campaign with school personnel or students during the working day; or use any time during the work day for campaigning purposes. Under no circumstances will any student, family, or colleague be solicited for campaigning or pressured into campaigning for any staff member.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

Information about staff members is required for the daily administration of the school system, for implementing salary and other personnel policies, for budget and financial planning, for responding to appropriate inquiries about employees and for meeting the School Committee's education reporting

requirements. To meet these needs, the Superintendent will implement a comprehensive and efficient system of personnel records maintained and controlled under the following guidelines:

1. A personnel file for each employee will be accurately maintained in the District's central office. In addition to the application for employment and references, the folders will contain records and information relative to compensation, payroll deductions, evaluations and any other pertinent information.
2. The Superintendent will be the official custodian of personnel files and will have overall responsibility for maintaining and preserving the confidentiality of the files in accordance with applicable law.
4. Each employee will have the right, upon written request, to review the contents of the employee's own personnel file.
5. An employee may make written objections to any information contained in the personnel file. Any written objection must be signed by the staff member and will become part of the employee's personnel file. Further, no negative comment will be placed in a staff member's file unless it is signed by the person making the comment, and the staff member is informed of the comment and afforded the opportunity to include his written response in the file.
6. A District employee's confidential information, inclusive of home addresses, will be released only with employee consent or in accordance with applicable law.

IV. STARTING EMPLOYMENT WITH THE DANVERS PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

EMPLOYMENT PAPERWORK

Upon acceptance of a job offer and prior to beginning work, all new employees must arrange to visit the central office to ensure that the documentation necessary for employment has been submitted. At that time, employees can review their eligibility to receive benefits. Employees must provide proof of eligibility to work in the U.S. by completing the Federal Employment Eligibility and Verification Form. Depending on the nature of your position within the District, official education transcripts may be required.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Probationary Employees: New, rehired or promoted employees will serve a prescribed period of close supervision and evaluation in order to assess their ability and adaptation. Probationary employment may be terminated at will. Termination is at the discretion of the Superintendent without advance notice, or by the employee. Please refer to any relevant contract language regarding termination.

Regular Full-Time Employees: Employees who regularly work a minimum of forty (40) hours per week on a continuous basis following satisfactory completion of a probationary period; Full-time teachers are regular full-time employees.

Regular Part-Time Employees: Employees who complete a satisfactory probationary period and regularly work less than forty (40) hours per week on a continuous basis. Employees must work a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week on a continuous basis in order to receive benefits.

Temporary Employees: Employees holding jobs of limited or specified duration arising out of special projects or seasonal work, position vacancy pending appointment, the absence of a position incumbent, abnormal workloads, emergencies, or other reasons determined by the Superintendent. Temporary employees may work either full-time or part-time schedules, but will not be eligible to receive District-sponsored benefits, accrue any form of service credit, or file formal grievances except in matters pertaining to alleged discrimination.

Exempt Employees: Employees classified as exempt are ineligible for overtime pay and other employment conditions as provided in the Fair Labor Standards Act and applicable state laws. Generally, such employees are those occupying executive, administrative or professional positions.

BACKGROUND AND REFERENCE CHECKS

A person applying for a position as an employee or volunteer in the Danvers Public School District will, upon request, supply references who will attest to the sound character of the applicant.

The District will review the qualifications and employment history of each applicant recommended for employment. An employment history covering a five-year period will be requested of each applicant, allowing for telephone contact with former employers.

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS (C.O.R.I.) / FINGERPRINTING

District policies require that Criminal Offender Record Information (C.O.R.I.) checks are conducted on employees and volunteers in accordance with applicable law. All offers of employment are contingent upon satisfactory results as determined by the District. All criminal record checks will be done on a voluntary basis with prior written approval of the applicant. Failure to comply with the request for a criminal record check will disqualify an applicant from further consideration for employment. CORI documentation will be maintained by the Central Office in confidence.

In addition, each employee must, as a condition of employment, also provide an authorization properly completed, signed and dated, that permits the district to obtain C.O.R.I. information every three years thereafter. An unsatisfactory C.O.R.I. report may result in termination of employment.

Employees will be fingerprinted in accordance with applicable law.

SEX OFFENDER REGISTRY INFORMATION (S.O.R.I.)

The Sex Offender Registry Law, M.G.L. Ch. 6, 178C-178O, requires that all convicted sex offenders in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts register with the police departments in the cities and towns where they live and work.

S.O.R.I. information is available to school departments when a formal request is made to the local police department. Consistent with statute, the District will request available S.O.R.I. information from the Danvers Police Department. In making this request, the District will seek information on registrants who live within one mile of the school facility and/or within one mile of any school bus stop. Further, the District will request that all updates and/or changes to registrant information be sent to the District's Human Resource Director directly.

S.O.R.I. information received from the Danvers Police Department will be compiled and kept in the principal's office in each school. Each building principal will take responsibility for ensuring that each professional staff member reviews the S.O.R.I. file and that dissemination of any such information is limited to the professional staff. S.O.R.I. information provided to the school cannot be reproduced, nor can S.O.R.I. information be used to commit a crime, or to engage in illegal discrimination or harassment of a sex offender. Further, S.O.R.I. information received by the school shall be considered to be confidential, will be maintained in a secure manner, and will not be available to any individual other than a school employee. Requests for S.O.R.I. information by individuals who are not professional staff members should be directed to the Danvers Police Department.

The District will arrange for the training of professional staff members in the proper use of S.O.R.I. information through the Danvers Police Department. Said training shall include information related to compliance with the dissemination provisions of the law so that the Town would not be subject to any form of legal action for improper release of such information.

LINES OF AUTHORITY AND STAFF RELATIONS

All requests and communications from school personnel to the Danvers School Committee and from the Committee to its employees shall be handled through the office of the Superintendent.

Acting with the approval of the Superintendent, the building principal is the chief administrator of the school. Professional personnel in a school building report directly to the building principal.

Teachers and other building based staff shall recognize the building principal as their supervisor; complaints and general matters should be discussed with the building principal first. If an issue remains unresolved, it may be discussed with the Superintendent.

Supervisors and principals shall be subject to the general policies applying to teachers except as otherwise specified, such as by contract or applicable law/regulation. Under these general directions, the building principal will be responsible for the conditions and progress of the school.

It is expected that the established lines of authority will generally serve most purposes, though differences of opinion, unique circumstances, and emergencies may arise. Personnel may appeal a decision made by an administrator to the next higher authority in accordance with established policies and procedures.

Lines of responsibility and authority should not restrict cooperative, sensible collaboration.

STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

The School Committee will encourage the administration to develop effective means of resolving differences that may arise among employees and between employees and administrators, reduce potential areas of grievance; and establish and maintain recognized channels of communication between the staff, administration and School Committee.

It is the Committee's desire that grievance procedures provide for prompt and equitable adjustment of differences at the lowest possible administrative level, and that each employee be assured an opportunity for an orderly presentation and review of complaints and concerns.

Please consult governing employment agreements regarding applicable grievance procedures.

The process established for the resolution of grievances in contracts negotiated with recognized employee bargaining units will apply only to "grievances" as defined in a particular contract.

ORIENTATION

Staff members new to the District may be required to attend one (1) day of orientation prior to the first scheduled workday. Conducting the orientation is the responsibility of the Assistant Superintendent or designee.

Orientation of personnel new to the school system may extend over a period of time and will provide a broadly based effort to supply information and background details which will improve a new staff person's understanding of the District's framework, including state and Federal laws and regulations relating to public schools, School Committee policies, District procedures and practices, and the instructional program. Each new teacher will be assigned a mentor and participate in a new teacher mentoring program.

The Assistant Superintendent, or designee, shall orient all teachers to the evaluation procedures and standards during the first two weeks of their assignment to their respective program.

V. EMPLOYMENT GUIDELINES

COMPENSATION AND PAY SCHEDULE

Salary is generally based on the salary range and schedule established for each position. Previous experience and level of education may also be factors in determining salary. Salary schedules for collective bargaining unit positions are provided within collective bargaining agreements.

Completed employment paperwork must be provided to the Central Office two weeks prior to a scheduled pay date in order to receive a paycheck.

Salary increases, including step increases, are governed by collective bargaining agreements for union employees. Non-union employees are granted increases upon recommendation of the Superintendent or as may be provided for by contract.

LICENSURE

Professional staff members are responsible for maintaining their appropriate and up-to-date licensure. Please send all licensure materials to the Central office.

WORK SCHEDULES

Employees in the Danvers Public School District work a wide variety of schedules and hours. The work year may be based on a 10-month or a 12-month schedule, and regular work hours may range from less

than ten (10) to forty (40) hours or more per week, depending upon the nature of the position, school and District needs, and collective bargaining agreements. One's supervisor or department administrator will explain the work hours associated with a position in accordance with school policies and practices, and answer any pertinent questions.

STAFF ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCES

All employees are expected to be regular in attendance. If illness, injury or other situation prevents an employee from reporting to work, the employee must notify the appropriate supervisor of the absence as far in advance as possible so that appropriate coverage may be arranged. If an employee is absent for five (5) or more consecutive days, the employee may be required to provide written medical provider documentation to the supervisor or department administrator to justify the absence, and/or to be cleared to return to duty. Reference collective bargaining agreements for any unit specific requirements.

ABSENCE & SUBSTITUTE COVERAGE FOR TEACHERS & INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS

Teachers, nurses, and instructional assistants are required to use the Absence & Substitute system by Tyler Technologies (Munis) to report an absence and request a substitute. Whenever possible, this must be submitted by 6:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. It is expected that lesson plans and other pertinent materials relating to curriculum and schedules are easily accessible for the substitute teacher and department coordinator. Please contact your school administrator or supervisor if you have any questions about how to report an absence. The system is accessible by visiting <https://app.readysub.com/> and logging in with your danvers.org Google Account.

REQUESTING LEAVE FOR ALL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

If an employee will be using a specified available leave benefit for time off or an absence, for example, personal day, bereavement leave, sick time, etc., (refer to governing contract for specifics), the employee shall specify the leave type to be taken at the time of the request or notice of absence, as applicable.

Once a time off request under a particular leave benefit (for example, personal day) is submitted through the designated system (Absence & Substitute by Tyler Technologies), it cannot be modified or cancelled by the employee without administrator approval. Any modification or cancellation to the original request, inclusive of dates duration, or type of leave, will require a new time off request to be submitted. The original request will remain in the system for record-keeping purposes but will not be processed upon administrator approval of modification or cancellation. Employees are encouraged to carefully review time off requests for accuracy before submission. If, after submission of a request, an error or change in circumstances results in an employee's desire to modify or cancel a submitted request, the employee should contact their supervisor directly to discuss potential options and to seek supervisor/Superintendent approval. Any such approval is at the discretion of the Superintendent or designee.

TIMESHEETS AND PAY

If you are an employee who submits individual timesheets, they must be certified by your supervisor. Delays in submitting timesheets can result in delays in your pay.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS

Weather or other emergency conditions may necessitate that schools be closed. Such closings are announced on local radio and television stations. The District also maintains an automated notification system (ReachMyTeach).

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

Periodically, a supervisor will formally evaluate an employee's job performance and assess how satisfactorily the employee is performing the responsibilities of the position. If an employee does not

agree with a performance evaluation, the employee may submit a written response addressing any relevant issues to the supervisor, department coordinator, or principal. The performance evaluation and any written response an employee elects to submit will be included in the employee's permanent personnel record. Collective bargaining agreements may have specific requirements regarding evaluation.

RESIGNATION OR RETIREMENT

In the event that an employee resigns employment, the employee is expected to provide a minimum of two (2) weeks written notice to the supervisor and to the principal or Superintendent whenever possible. Certain administrative employees have a greater notice requirement under individual contracts. Employees are encouraged to arrange an exit interview with the Superintendent or designee.

If an employee plans to retire, the employee should send written advance notification to the Superintendent and also directly contact the Retirement Board in which the employee is enrolled well in advance of the anticipated date of retirement to best assure that any pension payments and insurance benefits due will be coordinated and continuous. In addition, collective bargaining agreements may have specific language concerning notification dates that must be adhered to in order to receive certain benefits. Once notice of retirement is accepted by the Superintendent, it may not be rescinded.

The Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement Board (MTRB) administers the retirement system for teachers and educational administrators. Danvers Contributory Retirement Board administers the retirement benefit for non-teaching and some administrative staff. Mission Square administers retirement plans for employees who are not eligible to join the Massachusetts Teachers' or Town of Danvers Contributory Retirement systems.

VI. PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

PAY SCHEDULE / DIRECT DEPOSIT / DEDUCTIONS

Full-year employees are paid twenty-six (26) times per year. School-year employees have the option of being paid twenty-two (22) or twenty-six (26) times per year. Employees who work for the Food Services department are paid through Town Hall and follow a weekly pay schedule. Employees are encouraged to have their salary directly deposited to their bank account by obtaining a direct deposit authorization form from the Central Office.

All payroll deductions are itemized on paycheck stubs or direct deposit forms. To ensure that an employee is paid accurately, the employee should contact the Payroll Department staff in Central Office to initiate any change in name, address, marital status or number of exemptions.

PENSION CONTRIBUTIONS

Employees who qualify for membership in either the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System (MTRS) or in the Town of Danvers Contributory Retirement System are required to contribute a percentage of their salary to the plan. The required amount will be deducted each pay period.

VII. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

ELIGIBILITY

Regular full-time and part-time employees who work a schedule of twenty (20) hours or more per week are eligible to participate in medical, dental, and life insurance plans.

HEALTH PLAN ENROLLMENT

New employees who work twenty (20) or more hours per week are eligible for health insurance benefits and must enroll within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of hire. Those who do not enroll within this timeframe will not be eligible to enroll for health insurance coverage until the next annual open enrollment

period, with the exception of certain “qualifying” events. Enrollment forms are available directly from the Town Benefits Coordinator at 978-777-0001, x3032 or at <https://danversma.gov/319/Employee-Benefit-Information>

Once an employee has elected a health insurance option, the employee must remain enrolled in that option until the next open enrollment period, except in the case of a qualifying event. During the open enrollment period, employees may elect to change plans or coverage, or enroll in a plan if eligible.

Eligible employees may elect either individual or family coverage. Family coverage provides for spouses and dependents up to age twenty-six (26) or for two (2) years after they lose their dependent status.

An employee may change from individual to family coverage, or add additional members to the plan, within thirty (30) days of a birth or adoption of a child, or marriage. The Health Benefits Office must be notified within thirty (30) days of such an event to effect a change in coverage outside of the open enrollment period.

Upon written request to the Superintendent, any employee who retires under the terms of the Massachusetts Teachers’ Retirement Board, as well as the surviving spouse and dependent(s) as defined by the District’s group health insurance plans, shall continue as a member of those health insurance plans.

In the event that an employee who has retired under the terms of the Massachusetts Teachers’ Retirement Board is eligible for Medicare Part A, the employee, having reached the age required to be eligible for benefits, shall be required to file for Medicare Parts A and B, and to select either a Medicare “Supplement” or Medicare “Risk” plan offered by the Massachusetts Bay Health Care Trust. The District will contribute 50% of the cost for either a Medicare “Supplement” plan or a Medicare “Risk” plan.

A retiree who is not Medicare eligible will be entitled to a 50% contribution by the District to the employee’s “premium” plan.

The District shall continue a 50% contribution for the surviving spouse and dependent(s) of the retired teacher. Should the surviving spouse remarry, the District’s contribution shall cease. The surviving spouse of the employee and the dependent(s) may continue as members of the District group health insurance plans and pay 100% of the cost.

To obtain detailed information about available health insurance options, contact the Town Benefits Coordinator at 978-777-0001, x3032.

COBRA (CONSOLIDATED OMNIBUS BUDGET RECONCILIATION ACT)

If employment should terminate or an employee becomes ineligible to participate in a group health insurance plan, the employee and/or dependents have the right to continued participation in the District group health insurance plan for up to eighteen (18) months (thirty-six months under certain circumstances) under federal COBRA legislation. The employee will be required to pay the full cost of the premium plus an administrative fee. Under COBRA continuation, the District will no longer contribute to the cost of health insurance premiums. For additional information about this option, please contact the Town Benefits Coordinator at 978-777-0001, x3032.

LIFE INSURANCE

New employees who work twenty (20) or more hours per week are eligible for life insurance benefits and must enroll within thirty (30) calendar days from the date of hire. Forms are available from the Town Benefits Coordinator at 978-777-0001, x3032.

RETIREMENT PLANS

1. Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement Plan: Eligible teachers and administrators participate in the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System (MTRS) pension plan, a state-administered plan. If an employee is eligible for this plan, after completing and submitting the application, the employee will be enrolled at the time the employee completes the new-hire paperwork. Information on the provisions of this plan may be obtained from the MTRB.

2. Town of Danvers Retirement System: Other regular full-time and part-time employees who work a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week may participate in the Town of Danvers Retirement System. Participation in the plan begins on the first day of qualified employment. New employees will be enrolled in the plan through the Human Resources Department.

The Town of Danvers Retirement System provides a monthly retirement allowance to eligible employees who have completed sufficient service upon retirement. This plan provides a minimum retirement benefit as early as age 55 with 10 years of creditable service. The amount of pension benefit increases as age and amount of creditable service increases. Disability retirement benefits are also available for permanently disabled employees who meet certain other qualifications. Detailed information about employee contributions, vesting, plan administration, etc. is available from the Danvers Retirement Board Administrator at 978-777-0001, x3040.

DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN

Employees who do not qualify for membership in either the MTRS or the Danvers Contributory Retirement System are required under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations to make a 7.5% contribution to a Deferred Compensation Plan (DCP) as an alternative to Social Security (FICA) contributions. Upon leaving the employ of the District, individuals have the option to withdraw DCP contributions.

TAX SHELTERED ANNUITIES (TSAs)

Tax sheltered annuities (403) (b) plans are available to school employees wishing to supplement their retirement and defer federal and state income taxes. Such plans are established as a salary reduction agreement. This contract is between the employee and an authorized investment firm. These plans are 100% employee funded. For information about these funds, consult a financial advisor.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Workers' Compensation, under state law, is designed to provide benefits in the event that an individual is injured in connection with employment. If an employee is injured on the job, the employee should immediately notify a supervisor and report the accident, no matter how minor it may seem. An Accident Report Form, available from the Health Office or from the Superintendent's office, should be completed.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

Unemployment Compensation provides temporary income for those who have lost their jobs under certain conditions. For more information about Unemployment Compensation, or to apply for benefits, contact the local office of the Massachusetts Department of Employment and Training.

CREDIT UNION

All employees of the District are eligible to join the Danvers Municipal Credit Union. Information and forms, including payroll-withholding forms, are available directly from the Credit Union by calling 978-777-0001, x3047.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The MIIA Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a free, confidential service for any employee in the Danvers Public Schools. It is a confidential counseling and referral service providing professional help for managing personal difficulties or life challenges. All employees, their dependents, and members of their household are entitled to call for services 24 hours a day. Their caring staff consists of licensed professional counselors with a wide range of experience. The phone number is 800-451-1834 or visit the website at <https://allonehealth.com/miia-eap/>

VIII. TIME OFF

HOLIDAYS

Paid holidays for employees are specified in various union contracts. Teachers and certain other salaried staff who work on a school calendar basis do not receive separate paid holidays. Other employees may be eligible for paid holidays. Consult relevant employment agreements.

Our school district recognizes the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents Day
- Patriots' Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day

In some instances, a holiday that falls on a Saturday is observed on the preceding Friday, and a holiday that falls on a Sunday is observed on the following Monday. Union contracts should be referred to for specific details.

In order to be eligible for a paid holiday, the holiday must fall within the employee's regular work week. For instance, an employee whose regular work year is from September to June would not be eligible for the July 4th holiday. Similarly, an employee who normally works a three-day schedule consisting of Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays would not be eligible to be paid for Labor Day, which traditionally falls on a Monday.

Employees who are on unpaid leave of absence or are otherwise absent without pay are not eligible to be paid for holidays.

PERSONAL BUSINESS DAYS (Non-DTA Employees please refer to their contracts)

PERSONAL LEAVE

1. Each full-time employee may have three (3) days with pay per year, non-cumulative, for the purpose of transacting or attending to personal business or household matters which require the absence of the teacher during school hours and which cannot be otherwise scheduled. **Personal days are not intended to be used as vacation days.**

2. Whenever possible, written notice of intention to take such leave shall be filed with the Principal at least one (1) week in advance.
3. In the event of personal days taken on days immediately before and/or after vacation periods and long weekends, and professional development day applications requesting said personal day(s) shall be filed with the Superintendent and must state the reason(s) for the leave in order that it might be determined whether the leave falls within the definition of A-1. Approval of these requests shall not be unreasonably withheld, nor shall the Superintendent act in an arbitrary, capricious, inconsistent or discriminatory manner in acting on such requests. Should a dispute arise concerning the granting of personal leave on days immediately before and/or after vacation periods and long weekends, the teacher may take such leave but shall not be compensated for such leave unless and until the matter is resolved in favor of the teacher.

VACATION

Full-year (12 month) employees are generally eligible for annual vacation leave based on the nature of their position, length of service, employment agreement, and other factors. Bargaining unit employees should consult their collective bargaining agreement for specific vacation eligibility requirements and benefits. Non-union administrator employees employed under an individual employment contract should consult their contract for specific vacation eligibility requirements and benefits.

Full-year employees who are involuntarily terminated or fail to provide at least ten (10) business days in advance of their intention to resign are entitled to prorated pay for the current calendar year vacation. Prorated vacation pay will be computed at the rate of 1/12 for each full calendar month worked since July 1 of the current school year, less any vacation already taken.

Full-year employees who provide notice of their intention to resign at least ten (10) business days in advance of their intended last day of work are entitled to pay for all unused current calendar year's vacation. To be eligible for this vacation benefit, individuals must work as scheduled during the entire agreed upon notice period. Unless excused by the Superintendent, absences during the notice period will result in prorated pay for the current school year vacation as described above.

Retired employees whose paid-through date extends to a new school year are not eligible for the new school year's vacation.

When an employee leaves the employ of the school district, the District will pay the employee for any accrued, unused vacation days in accordance with negotiated contracts.

SICK LEAVE

Regular full-time employees are eligible to accrue sick leave in accordance with relevant contract provisions, to be used only in accordance with relevant contract provisions. Consult relevant contract for specific sick leave provisions.

The Superintendent shall notify employees of the extent of their accrued sick leave on or before October 1 of each year.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Eligible employees are able to take up to twelve (12) unpaid weeks for family or medical leave under Federal law, within a rolling 12-month period. The Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) applies to employees who have been employed for at least twelve (12) months and who are seeking leave for the purpose of either: a) caring for a child within the first 12 months after birth, adoption, or placement for adoption or foster care; b) caring for a spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition; or c) an employee's own serious health condition which makes the individual unable to perform his/her job. Thirty (30) days notice is required whenever possible.

It is important to note that Family Medical Leave is cumulative for all covered purposes; that is, individual sick leave days, medical leave, maternity leave, doctor's visits, etc. counts cumulatively against the

annual entitlement of twelve (12) weeks. Restrictions are in place, as well, for spouses employed by the same employer and the timing of leaves.

During approved Family Medical Leave, either paid or unpaid, group health and life insurance benefits will be continued under the same terms as when the individual was working, for a maximum of twelve (12) weeks within a 12-month period. Under negotiated contracts, employees may be able to apply a limited amount of their sick leave to care for a seriously ill family member in accordance with contract terms.

If an employee's need for leave extends beyond twelve (12) weeks due to the employee's own medically documented illness or disability, the employee may request to continue to be paid using accumulated sick leave. Once personal sick leave and personal days are exhausted, the leave shall be unpaid. In special circumstances, additional, limited leave may be granted. While on an approved personal medical leave, employees are eligible for group health insurance coverage on the same basis as when they were working, including premium contributions from the District. Requests to extend personal medical leaves of absence must be made in writing to the Superintendent, including anticipated duration.

PARENTAL LEAVE

Each employee should consult the relevant contract for specific language / provisions, which meet or exceed any leave available to an eligible employee under applicable law.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Each employee should consult the relevant contract for specific language / provisions.

MILITARY LEAVE

Each employee should consult his or her contract for specific language / provisions.

JURY DUTY

Employees are granted time off with pay to serve jury duty. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the Superintendent's office for submittal to the Payroll Department. The School Department will make up the difference between jury duty pay and regular salary, if any, for the period of jury service.

UNPAID LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Unpaid personal leaves of absence may be requested and are subject to approval of the Superintendent or designee. Such leaves may not exceed one year, except as otherwise specified in a relevant contract. The deadline for receipt of a request for such an unpaid leave is February 1, unless specified otherwise in a relevant contract.

IX. ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY – TECHNOLOGY

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

A. Purpose: To ensure the proper use of the Danvers Public Schools digital Communications systems, which includes but is not limited to telephones, personal computers and other devices, electronic mail (e-mail) and the Internet. These systems are under the control of the Technology Department.

B. Policy: The Danvers Public Schools provides staff with the ability to send messages and information through voice mail, fax mail, electronic mail (e-mail) and, in some cases, through the Internet. The purpose of this technology is to allow the schools to serve the public more effectively. Therefore, it is the Danvers Public Schools policy that use of these technologies are subject to the same management oversight as any other employee resource. The Digital Communications systems are the property of the Danvers Public Schools and should generally be used only for appropriate educational/work related purposes.

C. Procedures:

Electronic Communication and Storage Systems:

1. Electronic communication and storage systems are the property of the Danvers Public Schools and should generally be used for educationally-related purposes only. While sending and receiving personal messages is not expressly prohibited, any personal use of the system must be at a level that will not interfere in any way with the system's ability to serve its intended official purpose, nor detract in any way from the employee's performance of duties. Employees should use discretion in utilizing this resource. Abuse of Danvers Public Schools technology resources could result in loss of the privilege for the individual and possibly others throughout the organization.
2. The Danvers Public Schools reserves the right to retrieve and read any electronic communication messages or other data stored on school-owned equipment or in school-owned accounts for any purpose without prior notice or limitation including systems maintenance and compliance monitoring. Employees should not assume that voice mail, fax mail, e-mail messages, Internet postings, or accessing Internet websites are personal or confidential. In fact, the opposite is true. Electronic communications may be discoverable even though the messages have been deleted. Subject to certain exceptions in the law, electronic communications may also be considered public records.
3. Data and messages should be treated as confidential by other employees and should be accessed only by the intended recipient, except as otherwise provided herein. Employees are not authorized to retrieve or read any messages or data that are not sent to them unless the intended recipient gives express permission, or if required in the course of job duties or to comply with applicable law. In addition, employees should not use another employee's user identification and/or password to access or retrieve any information unless authorized to do so.

SECURITY

1. The telecommunications systems may not be used to create any offensive or disruptive messages or images. Among those which are considered offensive are any messages or images which contain sexual implications, racial slurs, gender-specific comments, or any other comment which might constitute intimidation, hostile or offensive material based on sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, sexual orientation or physical or mental disability.
2. The telecommunications systems may not be used for any illegal activity, including, but not limited to, the transmission of copyrighted or trade secret material, the transmission of obscene, defamatory, or threatening material, or the propagation of any type of criminal activity.
3. The Danvers Public Schools retains the right to monitor computer and telecommunications systems as may be necessary. Reasons for monitoring include, but are not limited to, review of employee productivity, investigations into claims of possible criminal activity, and investigations into violations of this policy.
4. Executable programs imported from other sites to school computers must not be used unless they have been authorized by the Technology Department. The Department may from time to time impose additional restrictions or regulations on the importing of remote files and such restrictions or regulations shall be considered part of this policy.
5. Public record laws and regulations provide for citizen access to public entity records, subject to exemptions, and require governmental accountability. However, they do not require unlimited access to governmental databases, or necessarily require governmental employees to use their time responding to specialized data requests free of charge.
6. All Danvers Public Schools business must be conducted through the official District email system, danvers.org. According to the December 1, 2006 U.S. Supreme Court ruling, email is subject to discovery in a court proceeding and must be saved and archived by the District.
7. All laptop and desktop computers belonging to staff may not be placed on the District network without prior approval and inspection by the Technology Department.
8. Electronic communication users shall not give the impression that they are representing, giving opinions, or otherwise making statements on behalf of the Danvers Public Schools. Neither should they construct a communication so it appears to be from someone else (false identity).

ENFORCEMENT

The use of the District's telecommunications system constitutes employee consent to the District, its agents, servants, and employees to enforce this policy in any reasonable way, including taking disciplinary actions in enforcement hereof.

X. MANDATORY REPORTING - REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

The School Committee prioritizes full compliance with laws requiring reporting child abuse or neglect.

All school staff are mandated reporters. By law, information about child abuse and neglect must be communicated by school employees to the Massachusetts Department of Children & Families (DCF) according to DCF protocol, and/or to the Principal (or their designee), who in turn are responsible for notifying DCF according to DCF protocol. The duty to report is triggered when a mandated reporter, in their professional capacity, has reasonable cause to believe that a child is: (i) suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon them which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare including, but not limited to, sexual abuse; (ii) suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from neglect including, but not limited to, malnutrition; (iii) a sexually exploited child; or (iv) a human trafficking victim, as defined by section 20M of chapter 233; provided, however, that an indication of prenatal substance exposure shall not solely meet the requirements of this section.

In schools, mandated reporters must fulfill their mandatory reporting duty by:

1. immediately making an oral report directly to DCF and then following up with a written report (which can be filed online, by fax, or mail) to the DCF local area office within 48 hours; **or**
2. immediately notifying the Principal (or their designee), in which case that individual becomes responsible for immediately making the oral report to DCF and submitting the written report (which can be filed online, by fax, or mail) to the DCF local area office within 48 hours.

A mandated reporter who works for a school *may* also choose to immediately notify both DCF and the person in charge of the school. In addition, mandated reporters may contact the police or the Office of the Child Advocate.

If a mandated reporter believes a child is in imminent danger, they should call 911 immediately.

If school officials believe that criminal laws may have been violated, whether or not the violation is included under § 51A, they should report such matters to the police.

Any person, even if not a mandated reporter, may file a report with DCF if that person has reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering from, or has died as a result of, abuse or neglect.

Any suspected abuse or neglect of a person with a disability aged 18 and over must be reported to the Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC), 300 Granite Street, Braintree, MA, 02184. Tel: (617) 727-6455.

The School Committee is responsible for informing teachers, administrators, and other professional staff of the reporting requirements for child abuse and neglect under M. G. L. c. 119, § 51A. See M. G. L. c. 71, § 37L. The District is knowledgeable about this protocol and will ensure that staff are informed of their reporting obligations under M. G. L. c. 119, § 51A.

Any person who, in good faith, participates in making such reports or in any judicial proceeding resulting therefrom will be immune from civil or criminal liability.

It is not the responsibility of the school official or employee who initiated the report to prove that the child has been neglected or abused; Report then investigate – do not wait to report.

The Superintendent will prepare and implement such procedures as are necessary to accomplish the intent of this policy and of the law.

XI. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Public schools have the responsibility to overcome, insofar as possible, any barriers that prevent students from achieving their potential. This commitment to the community is affirmed in the following statements of the School Committee's intent to:

- A. Promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the state and federal constitutions, pertinent legislation and applicable judicial interpretations
- B. Encourage positive experiences in human values for children and youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups
- C. Work toward a more integrated society and enlist the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort
- D. Use appropriate communication procedures to resolve the grievances of individuals and groups
- E. Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school system, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society
- F. Regularly review the policies and practices of this school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement

This policy of nondiscrimination extends to students, staff, the general public and individuals with whom they do business; and applies to race, national origin, religion, sex, economic status, political party, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, veterans' status, and other human differences.

The District prioritizes compliance with applicable law relating to anti-discrimination, including but not limited to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI, Title VII), Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, M.G.L. c. 151B, M.G.L. c. 151C, and the Massachusetts Pregnant Workers Fairness Act.

XII. NEED TO KNOW

All employees must safeguard student, personnel, and financial records, and take appropriate measures to protect confidential information from unauthorized access or disclosure. Records containing personal information of staff or students should not be left unattended or unsecured, and records requiring heightened confidentiality (special education records, 504 records, health/medical records, disciplinary records, personnel records, etc.) should be maintained in locked files or other secure locations. Employees may not remove cumulative folders, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), 504 Plans, or other confidential student records from District premises or download or store such records on personal devices.

Being an employee of a single school, department, or district does not entitle everyone to information about every situation. Details of discipline cases, student academic performance, and confidential information may not be shared simply because one works in the same school or building. Information is provided solely on a "need to know" basis and in compliance with District policy and state and Federal law.

XIII. RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS

Teachers and other school staff working with students have greater responsibility in today's society. In order to maintain the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents and of members of the community, staff members should strive for the highest possible degree of ethical conduct at all times. Whenever there is doubt about the intentions of a staff member in his or her relationship with a student(s), student(s) and the staff member are at risk.

These guidelines are intended to maximize the safety and protection of students, as well as to protect staff members from allegations that may adversely affect their professional reputation and their livelihood:

- A. All staff members are encouraged to form positive, professional relationships with students that are appropriate to their school roles.

- B. Staff should treat all students fairly and avoid situations that appear to show favoritism for an individual student or selected group of students.
- C. Staff members may invite students to activities outside of school provided that the activity stems from a school activity and the invitation is extended in general to all students in a class, rather than to a particular student(s). Examples: a class picnic, a class or club trip to a movie, an end-of-year barbecue.
- D. Ordinarily, staff should not invite *individual* students to activities outside of school, other than school-sponsored activities.
- E. Staff not hired specifically for the purpose by the school should not transport students to and from school. With prior approval of the principal and parent, non-driving staff may transport students to a school-sponsored event, when other transportation is not available.
- F. Within school, staff members should avoid meeting with individual students in locations that are not ordinarily and routinely accessible by other students and staff.
- G. All types of electronic communications with students should be limited to school functions and classroom activities.

XIV. PHYSICAL CONTACT BETWEEN EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS

What constitutes appropriate physical contact in one circumstance may be totally inappropriate in another.

Any physical contact between employees and students should have a valid educational or safety purpose and objective, meeting only the students' needs. All physical contact between employees and students must comply with applicable law.

The use of physical contact or force in order to impose the staff member's will upon a student is strictly prohibited, except when such contact is reasonably necessary to protect students, other persons, or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. In those circumstances, only that amount of contact which is necessary to protect a student or another person from assault or imminent, serious physical harm, may be used.

Physical restraint shall be considered an emergency procedures of last resort and shall be prohibited in public education programs except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent serious, physical harm to self or other and the student is not responsive to directive or other lawful and less instructive behaviors interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstance. Physical restraint does not include brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort. Employees who observe physical contact between students and employees which they deem to be inappropriate are expected to report said observations to the principal and/or the Superintendent as soon as possible. If the contact is perceived to be immediately harmful by the observer, prompt intervention to prevent further harm is expected.

Questions of the appropriateness of physical contact are to be determined by the context of the contact on a case-by-case basis. Issues such as intent, context, location, circumstance, age, and sex are all considerations which may be relevant.

Whether or not an emergency situation exists depends upon an objective rather than a subjective standard.

Instances of inappropriate physical contact initiated, encouraged, practiced and/or tolerated by employees, in even a single instance, will result in disciplinary action which may include dismissal.

It is expected that any physical contact between an employee and a student will have a legitimate purpose consistent with the school's role as educator and caretaker of minor children.

To view the DPS School Committee Policy JKAA (PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS), please visit: <https://policies.sparqdata.com/masc/browse/danversset/danvers/JKAA>

XV. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE

Every teacher and employee is expected to know their school's general plan for student behavior management, communications with parents/guardians and other procedures. Every teacher and employee is expected to have a plan to establish norms or rules for their classroom/setting with a plan for prevention and appropriate responses to student misbehavior or actions. They should be reviewed with the principal or designee. Teachers and department coordinators should acquire techniques on behavior management, de-escalation techniques, and active listening.

XVI. USE OF EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES

Equipment and vehicles essential to accomplishing work assignments are expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using District equipment and vehicles, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance and follow all operating instructions, safety standards and guidelines.

Employees are required to notify their supervisor and the Central Office Administration if any equipment, machine, tool or vehicle appears to be damaged, defective or in need of repair, in order to prevent deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or the public.

The improper, careless, negligent, destructive or unsafe use or operation of equipment vehicles, as well as excessive or avoidable traffic and/or parking violations while using District vehicles, can result in disciplinary action, including termination.

If an employee is involved in a vehicular accident in a District vehicle, the employee must report the accident to their supervisor and the Central Office Administration immediately and complete all required forms.

XVII. STAFF SOLICITATIONS

No person shall be admitted to the school, except by written permission of the Superintendent for the purpose of soliciting, canvassing, or selling books, papers or other commodities.

No teacher shall communicate or distribute or permit other persons to communicate or distribute notices relating to anything other than school matters without first obtaining the Superintendent's permission. Unless authorized by the principal, a teacher shall not permit the subscription or collection of money on school premises or allow any article to be exhibited thereon for the purpose of sale.

In spirit, the School Committee supports the many worthwhile charitable drives that take place in the community and is gratified when school employees give them their support. However, the solicitation of funds from staff members through the use of school personnel and school time must be held at a minimum. Therefore, no solicitations of funds for charitable purposes will be made among staff members except with specific Superintendent approval. Whenever such solicitations are made, no pressure will be exerted to obtain contributions even though the drive is one that the Superintendent has specifically approved.

XVIII. SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

In accordance with the requirements of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 151B and Title IX, the school district hereby affirms its commitment to promoting a workplace free of sexual harassment.

It is the goal of the District to promote a workplace that is free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment of employees occurring in the workplace, whether it be in the form of physical or verbal harassment, and regardless of whether committed by administrative or non-administrative personnel, teachers, consultants or community members, is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the District. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is also unlawful and will not be tolerated. To achieve our goal of providing a workplace free of sexual harassment, the conduct that is described in this policy will not be tolerated, and the District has established procedures by which inappropriate conduct will be investigated and addressed as appropriate.

The District will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment, and when it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action when appropriate.

DEFINITION: Massachusetts General Law Chapter 151B defines sexual harassment as “sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions; or (b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive educational environment.”

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

- Sexual advances - whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to an individual’s sexual conduct, gossip regarding one’s sex life; comment on an individual’s body, comment about an individual’s sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- 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.

CONSEQUENCES: Staff members found to have engaged in acts of sexual harassment will face one or more of the following consequences: (1) written reprimand and warning, (2) suspension without pay, (3) dismissal, and/or (4) referral to the police.

Reprisals, threats or intimidation of the victim will be treated as serious offenses, which could result in dismissal from employment.

PROCESS FOR FILING INTERNAL COMPLAINTS: Because of the important nature of this problem, immediate and direct attention will be given to complaints.

Please contact Ms. Christina Ryan, Title IX Coordinator, 978-774-6112, x2232, for information about filing a complaint or refer to the “Complaint Procedure for Allegations of Discrimination.”

Workers who believe they have been subjected to sexual harassment may also, or instead, report this to the following State and/or Federal agencies:

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD):

One Ashburton Place, Suite 601
Boston, MA 02108

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-1475

XIX. TEACHING AND LEARNING

504 ACCOMMODATION PLANS

Danvers Public Schools has one individual who is designated as the 504 Compliance Officer. This officer is located in the Department of Student Services. At the beginning of the school year, the Principal will provide each classroom teacher with a copy of the 504 Accommodation Plan for any student in their class for whom there is a current plan.

During the school year, if a teacher or other member of the professional staff identifies a student who may be eligible for accommodations, or if a parent expresses in writing concerns about the student's development or a suspicion that the student may have a disability, the Student Study Team shall convene and a referral form (available in Student Services) shall be completed and submitted to the 504 Compliance Officer, Student Services Department, 978-774-6112.

STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS, FOSTER CARE, STATE CUSTODY

Students living in a shelter, motel, vehicle, campground, on the street, in an abandoned building or trailer, or doubled-up or "couch surfing" with friends or relatives are deemed homeless under Federal McKinney-Vento and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. These students have the right to immediately enroll in school, automatically qualify for free lunch, and receive the same services as all other students. If you believe one of your students is experiencing homelessness, is in foster care, or is in state custody, promptly contact the McKinney-Vento Liaison, at 978-777-4539, x2441, for guidance.

SUBSTITUTE PLANS, SEATING CHARTS AND RECORDS OF ASSESSMENT

All teachers must keep substitute plans that are current and readily available. All teachers must have class lists and seating charts available for substitutes. All grade books must be kept current.

PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING

All teachers are reminded that they are to work under the umbrella guidelines of the *Principles of Effective Teaching*. These principles include:

- Currency in the Curriculum
- Effective Planning and Assessment of Curriculum and Instruction
- Effective Management of Classroom Environment
- Effective Instruction
- Promotion of High Standards and Expectations for Student Achievement
- Promotion of Equity and Appreciation of Diversity
- Fulfillment of Professional Responsibilities

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURE

Any staff member wishing to attend a professional conference will submit a requisition with pertinent information (source of funding, title, date(s), location of the conference, and the participant's name) through Vector Solutions (formerly TeachPoint) <https://tp1.goteachpoint.com>

Staff requesting reimbursement for personal expenses must submit original receipts to the office of the Assistant Superintendent. All professional development offerings are accessible and available to staff on TeachPoint.

REPORT CARDS

A report card will be mailed/sent home (elementary) or sent electronically (middle/high school) to each student's parent/guardian at the close of each term.

Communication with parents/guardians is always important, especially when students are having academic difficulties.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Students suspected of having a disability may be referred for a special education evaluation by a parent/guardian or school staff member. Upon receipt of a referral, the district will follow applicable state and federal requirements regarding evaluation, eligibility determination, and the development of an Individualized Education Program (IEP), when appropriate.

Eligibility for special education is determined by the IEP Team based on a comprehensive evaluation and consideration of: (1) whether the student has one or more disabilities; (2) whether the student is not making effective progress as a result of that disability; and (3) whether the student requires specially designed instruction and/or related services to access the general education curriculum. Eligible students are provided a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) in accordance with their IEP.

Staff members who work with a student are responsible for reviewing the student's current IEP and implementing the services, accommodations, modifications, and other requirements applicable to their role.

Staff members who suspect that a student may have a disability should follow district referral procedures. Participation in general education interventions or a Student Study Team process may inform supports for a student but may not be used to delay or deny a special education evaluation when one is warranted or requested by a parent/guardian.

TRANSLATION OF WRITTEN MATERIALS

To assure equal access to information disseminated in the District, all written materials including forms, notices, handbooks and applications, will be made available in the native language of families for whom the first language is not English.

XX. OFFICE PROCEDURES

ABSENCE OF STUDENTS

Student absences should be documented and addressed in accordance with district attendance procedures. Concerns regarding a student's attendance, including patterns of frequent or unexplained absences, should be referred to the principal or designee for appropriate follow-up.

Students who are absent due to illness should follow current district health and attendance procedures for returning to school. When medical documentation or clearance is required, it should be provided to the school nurse or other designated school personnel. School nurses will provide guidance regarding return-to-school requirements for communicable illnesses in accordance with applicable public health guidance.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE RECORDS / MONTHLY

Student Enrollment and attendance records should be entered into the computer, utilizing PowerSchool. Those authorized to enter student information should follow the most current guidelines. It is essential to record transfers and withdrawals for cumulative reporting purposes at the end of the school year. Follow the coding contained in the separate instructions for attendance and register keeping.

DISMISSALS

Students should not be dismissed from school before the normal end of instructional time without a dismissal note from the parent/guardian.

VISITORS TO BUILDINGS

All visitors to the buildings must report to the main office and obtain a visitor's pass.

Visitors should sign in and out at the office so that the school has a record of who is in the building at all times. In the event a person without a visitor's badge is present in the school, staff will follow the following procedures:

- Approach visitor(s) and offer assistance.
- Escort visitor(s) to the main office to obtain a visitor's badge and sign in or out.
- If the staff member is uncomfortable approaching a visitor without a visitor's badge, they should ask one or two staff members to assist with approaching the visitor.
- If a visitor(s) refuses to cooperate, do not escalate the situation. If it can be done safely, monitor the direction the intruder is going, then call the office and give a detailed description of the visitor(s). Staff should not send a student to the office to get an administrator.
- The Danvers Police Department may be contacted to address intruder violations.

STUDENT RECORDS

The Principal is responsible for the privacy and security of all student records in the school.

The Superintendent is responsible for privacy and security of all central office records, and any other records not under the direct control of the principal.

The student record consists of the transcript and the temporary record, including all information on recording and computer tapes, microfilm, microfiche, or any other materials regardless of physical form or characteristics concerning a student that is organized on the basis of the student's name or in a way that such student may be individually identified, and that is kept by the public schools of the Commonwealth as defined under state law. The regulations divide the record into two sections, the transcript and the temporary record. The transcript includes only the minimum information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress. This information includes the name, address, course titles, grades, credits, and grade levels completed. The transcript is kept by the school system for at least sixty years after the student leaves the system.

The temporary record of each student will be destroyed within seven (7) years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the school district. Written notice to the eligible student and their parent of the approximate date of destruction of the temporary record and their right to receive the information, in whole or in part, is made at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal. The student's transcript may only be destroyed 60 years following their graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school system.

Danvers Public Schools is committed to maintaining accurate, comprehensive, and confidential student records in accordance with the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations at 603 CMR 23.00 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the building principal serves as the custodian of student records and is ultimately responsible for their proper maintenance and access. To ensure consistency, compliance, and timely processing, all student records requests must be forwarded to the District Records Officer (via email) for centralized handling and documentation. The district legally has ten (10) calendar days following the date on which the request was received to respond to any student records request.

All requests received by a District staff member for access to, or copies of, student records must be forwarded within one (1) calendar day to the DPS Records Access Officer James Sullivan, Director of Technology & District Operations via email to sullivan@danvers.org.