

Placentino Elementary School



Paraprofessional Handbook

2011-2012

The following information is intended as a guide to make your experiences at Placentino a success, both for you and for your students.

School Instructional Hours

Placentino School

Preschool Half Day	8:55 AM to 11:25 AM	12:45 PM to 3:15 PM
Kindergarten Half Day	8:45 AM to 11:47 AM	12: 17 PM to 3:15 PM
Full Day K, Grades 1, 2 and Montessori 6-8	8:45 AM to 3:15 PM	

Absence

If it is necessary for you to be absent from school, please notify our substitute teacher coordinator, Mrs. Anne Marie Osmer at 508-429-6672. **You may leave your message 24 hours a day.**

1. We encourage you to call in as soon as you know that you will be absent, but the preferred calling times are:

Sunday through Friday from **1:00PM to 7:00PM**

Monday through Friday mornings from **6:00AM to 7:00AM**

In the mornings, any calls **after 7:00AM must be made directly to your Principal's Office.**

Mrs. Osmer is not available after 7:00AM to receive calls on her answering machine so it is essential that the office be called promptly for an unexpected absence that occurs after 7:00AM.

Under no circumstances is any staff member to engage a substitute. Early notification of an absence is the key to ensuring that a good substitute will be available to cover your absence.

2. When calling, please leave the following information on the machine: your name, phone number, your assignment (grade and/or information on your duties), and reason for the absence. If you do not need a substitute, please make that clear. If you are not going to absent for the entire day, please specify **the time of day** (i.e. 8:00AM – 11:30AM) that you will be absent.

3. All Personal Leave, except under emergency circumstances, must receive the prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools; however, please call Mrs. Osmer as soon as you send your Personal Day request form to Central Office.

Please remember:

- **It is your responsibility to complete the Personal Day request form, send the completed form to the Superintendent (Brad Jackson) at Central Office and contact the Ann Marie Osmer at least 2 days before the date of your Personal Day/s.**

Attendance

Occasionally situations arise (a car fails to start, a car is stuck in the snow, etc.) which may cause a paraprofessional to be late for school. **Please notify the Placentino School Office by phone when such situations arise.** This will allow us to arrange for coverage until your arrival. When you do arrive at school, please check in with the office.

The Placentino School telephone number is: **508-429-0647. Hit “0” for the Office.**

Staff members are expected to remain in the building when school is in session. They may leave Placentino during their lunchtime provided no professional responsibilities are left unattended. There is a “sign-out” book located in the office. Please remember to “sign-out” as you leave the building and “sign in” when you return.

If an emergency arises that requires a staff member to leave the building during the school day, the Principal, Assistant Principal, or the Administrative Secretary, Faith Antonioli, must be notified. A note stating the specific emergency necessitating departure from school during this time should also be placed in the Principal’s mailbox.

General Paraprofessional Duties

Paraprofessionals at the Placentino School perform varied roles as dictated by the needs of our children and classrooms. There are varying responsibilities for our paraprofessionals dependent on their assignment. Please be sure to clearly understand your responsibilities depending on your assignment. Each paraprofessional should have a teacher who guides and directs the daily/weekly expectations for the various positions. A general expectation is that our paraprofessionals will support the classroom teachers by working with individual, small group and large groups within the classroom as directed by the teacher. They also support the needs of the classroom by assisting with the preparation of the work for the day/week, setting up the classroom for the day, and other needs that may arise on a daily basis based on their assignment.

Currently, Our Preschool and Kindergarten classrooms include a minimum of the classroom teacher and one full time Paraprofessional. These paraprofessionals provide the daily support needed in classrooms with our very youngest children on a daily basis. Other paraprofessionals may also be assigned to these classrooms to support the needs of the children.

In our Grade One, Grade Two and Montessori 6-8 classrooms, paraprofessionals are often assigned to work in tandem with the classroom teacher and a special needs teacher to provide support to our children while the teachers work with small groups, work one-to-one with children with a specific need, or work with a small group of children on a daily basis. Support

is based on the needs of the children and the classroom. There are also classrooms that receive support from our paraprofessional staff for one hour each day, and in some cases a paraprofessional may be assigned to several classrooms for this support service.

Daily Schedules

Schedules are not to be changed without the permission of the Principal/Assistant Principal.

Bus Duty

Bus duty is an important part of our day. Given the age of our children, it is essential that we ensure their safety exiting the buses, exiting their parent's vehicles, being dismissed to a designated adult at the end of the day, and that they board the buses safely at dismissal. We expect our paraprofessionals to carefully monitor the children during this time.

Some paraprofessionals are assigned to bus duty before, during and after school hours. When bus duty is assigned before or after the school day, paraprofessionals are paid for the extra time needed to perform these duties. If the bus duty is within the regular school day (at mid-day for the half-day classes, etc.), this is considered part of the working day.

Cafeteria Duty

Our cafeteria is a very busy place. We begin lunch at 11AM and finish at 1PM. At any given time, we have up to 180 children in the cafeteria. Paraprofessionals are expected to assist the Assistant Principal and the Cafeteria staff by providing the children with any essentials that they may have forgotten to take from the serving area thus limiting the "up and down" movement that can be disruptive. They are also expected to assist by maintaining order and a "quiet" atmosphere (however with over 100 children this can be relative) during lunch. Classes come and go in half hour blocks of time. Reminders of the "YUMMY" rules and appropriate use of the red, yellow, and green cups as reminders to the children is part of the paraprofessionals responsibility in the Cafeteria.

Some Paraprofessionals are assigned specific times to work in the cafeteria within the 2 hour lunch period.

As Needed Requests

Our paraprofessionals are an integral part of our school. We often rely on them to be flexible and support other classrooms when schedules vary due to classroom assessments, personal emergencies, scheduled and unexpected meetings, etc. We are always grateful for the flexibility of our paraprofessional staff during these situations, but we are aware that there may be situations where our request is in conflict with classroom plans. Your honesty and openness in these situations is always appreciated.

Substitute Responsibilities

On occasion, paraprofessionals are asked to substitute for our classroom teachers. If you wish to be the classroom substitute you will be compensated in accordance with the paraprofessional's contract requirements (Article 19, Section 1).

You will be provided with substitute lesson plans that have been written by the classroom teacher. There are "emergency plans" in the office that are available in case of an unanticipated emergency absence of a teacher.

In addition to substitute lesson plans, you will find a folder in the top drawer of the teacher's desk that contains a copy of the classroom schedule (including specialists, lunch and recess), class lists, and any necessary medical information.

Students Excused From Physical Education/Movement classes

Students will be excused from physical education /movement classes when:

1. The teacher receives a note from home signed by a parent or guardian.
2. Our school nurse receives a note from the child's physician indicating that the child will be unable to participate in physical education/movement for an extended period of time. A follow up note should be sent when the student may return to class.
3. At the discretion of the school nurse or the physical education instructor it is determined that the student should be excused from physical education/movement.

The classroom teacher must make a copy of any note received from a parent or medical professional excusing a student from physical education/movement and provide the copy to the Physical Education or Movement Teacher.

At the end of each day, the substitute will leave a report in the teacher's mailbox or in the substitute folder indicating the work covered in the classes and notes about any difficulties encountered.

Your Car at School

At Placentino School: To insure the safety of every child, please drive with extreme caution and respect the stop signals displayed by the school buses. It is a state law that cars cannot pass school buses when the bus has its lights flashing.

School Safety Information

We welcome parents into our schools. However, we wish to protect the safety of our children and avoid disrupting class lessons. **When visiting school for any reason, visitors must first check in at the Main Office and obtain a Visitor's Badge. Anyone not wearing a Visitor's Badge should be stopped immediately and redirected to the Office to obtain a badge.**

All staff should immediately report any strangers to the Office.

Incidents of violence within our schools have driven home the need to focus staff and parent attention on ensuring the safety and security of all students and staff in our schools. We hope that that these procedures will provide a safe school and positive school climate. All exterior doors except for the front door will be locked after our students arrive at school. **All doors must remain locked during student recess times.** Teachers are responsible for picking-up and returning the grade level outside door key to the office at the end of the school day. The following safety procedures are in place:

Placentino School: The Kindergarten and Cafetorium doors will be unlocked only during the times when children are entering the school at the opening and closing times of the day. Parents and visitors will be required to enter the Placentino School using the front entrance. **All parents and visitors must sign in and sign out in the Main Office upon entering the school. All parents and visitors must wear a visitor's badge.**

(Please note: The kindergarten recess door is open for teachers' arrival in the morning. It is locked as soon as all the incoming buses have arrived.)

Class Attendance

E-attendance is to be taken by every teacher in each class at the start of the school day. **Paraprofessionals and students may not be assigned attendance-taking responsibilities.** If you are substituting for a classroom teacher, a paper attendance form should be available for you to complete and send to the office. **All attendance must be completed by 9:15AM for all classes and by 1:00PM for PM classes only.**

To ensure the safety of our students, in cases of tardiness or absence parents must call the school and leave a voice-mail message on a "Call-Back" line.

Children who have been absent must provide the classroom teacher with a written note from their parents. Please leave these notes with your daily report for the teacher.

Student Absences – Tardiness - Dismissals

The following information concerning student absence, tardiness and dismissal is contained in the Placentino School Student-Parent Handbook. Parents must inform the classroom teacher if there is any change to any child's expected schedule (i.e. dismissal or dismissal with an adult

who is not a family member). A written note is requested when communicating with the school or teacher around any changes in a child's usual daily schedule.

Absences

(from the Placentino Student-Parent handbook)

Every child returning from an absence is required to bring to his/her teacher a note containing the date(s) and the reason(s) for the absence(s). If you are the substitute teacher the classroom, please leave any notes from families with your report to the classroom teacher at the end of the day.

Families are strongly encouraged to plan their vacation times during scheduled "school vacations." Absence during the school year may be disruptive to the child's academic schedule.

Tardiness

(From the Placentino Student-Parent Handbook)

An explanatory note should be sent to school with the student. Tardiness caused by bus delays is not recorded. Students who are tardy must report to the Office with a parent and sign in before going to their classroom. **Please do not admit tardy students who do not have an admittance slip from the Main Office.**

Dismissals

(From the Placentino Student-Parent Handbook)

Requests initiated by the parent should be explained **in a note sent with the child.** **Children will be released to designated adults only.** Parents whose children leave school early must sign children out in the Placentino School Office.

If a child is being dismissed to an adult other than a parent, please send the note with the child to the designated dismissal area.

To reduce the disruption to your classrooms at dismissal time, all early dismissals from the Office must be completed by 3:00. After 3:00 children being picked-up will report to the appropriate grade-level pick-up location.

No Smoking

Chapter 71, Section 37H of the State Law has been amended to prohibit the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, on the school grounds, or on school buses. We respectfully request that all adults honor the law and refrain from the use of tobacco products at any and all school functions. (Note: Fines may be imposed according to the Town of Holliston regulations.)

Telephones

Telephones are provided in each classroom for staff use. Personal calls should be kept at a minimum. Paraprofessionals should not make a personal long distance call that will be charged to the school phone. Please use a personal calling card or a personal cellphone for these long distance calls. Classroom phones have limited access to local area codes only.

Technology and Doors/Windows Security

At the end of the school day, it is important to ensure that all classroom windows are closed and locked. Classroom doors must also be locked each evening. **To conserve energy and ensure security, computers must be shut down at the end of each day.** Shutting down the computers during hot weather will also help reduce the temperature in your classroom.

Keys

During the day, the classroom teacher's key must be clipped to the plastic emergency file container located in each classroom. This provides the availability of a key to secure the class in the event of a lockdown situation.

Housekeeping

We work hard to maintain a high quality of cleanliness in our school so that it will be fully operational at all times. The custodial staff and maintenance crew are responsible for keeping the building clean and in good order. Your assistance is sincerely appreciated. At the end of each school day, we ask that children pick up crayons, pencils, and paper from the floor and to put all chairs on top of tables and/or desks. If something in your room needs to be repaired, please speak to the classroom teacher so that a Request for Maintenance form can be completed in the main office.

Requests for Information

From time to time, information is requested by office personnel, curriculum committees, and parent groups. Please promptly comply in meeting the established date for return of information. If you have any questions or concerns, please see the Principal or Assistant Principal.

Supplies and Materials

When classrooms need supplies which are not contained in the supply rooms that are directly available to staff, the classroom teacher should submit a supply request form to the administrative secretary, Faith Antonioli.

Please remember:

- When laminating, please position materials to be laminated in a way that minimizes waste of the laminating paper.
- Please remind your students to take “responsible care” of their crayons, pencils etc.
- Post-its and other office supplies at a minimum. Copying should be double-sided when possible.

Textbooks

Textbooks are an expensive resource for our school. Please frequently check the books used by students to ensure that they are free of marks and not damaged. If you find that a textbook has been damaged, please advise the classroom teacher immediately so that proper action may be taken.

Sending Home Information

Any information that is sent home in backpacks must be approved by the Principal. The Holliston Public Schools is committed to significantly reducing paper notices.

Parents may access all notices through the Holliston Public Schools website.

All school related notices and flyers are accessible through:

The Holliston Public Schools website, www.holliston.k12.ma.us
(follow the directions on the RSS Subscribe link at the bottom of the left column.)

OR

The Holliston Public Schools website, www.holliston.k12.ma.us and click on the Placentino School icon and go to "Backpack Express."

Any family that does not have computer/internet access should notify the Placentino School Office immediately, and paper copies of all notices and flyers will be provided.

Field Trips

The purpose of field trips is to enrich the regular school curriculum. Three field trips are allowed per classroom per year. Additional “local” field trips will also be allowed at the discretion of the Principal. Depending on your specific paraprofessional assignment, you may accompany a class on their field trips. In those situations, the paraprofessional and the classroom teacher should discuss the expectations for the day prior to leaving for the field trip.

Students must not be transported in private cars.

PBIS

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

PBIS is a positive, school-wide systems approach, that is research-based and data driven. It is designed:

1. establish clearly defined expectations within the school setting and define consistent responses to those positive and negative behaviors
2. explicitly teach and reinforce appropriate behaviors across all areas of the school
3. provide a common school-wide language
4. pro-actively utilize data to guide decision-making with the goal of increasing positive student behaviors in all areas of the school

Placentino students...

CARE

Cooperation Acceptance Responsibility Effort

Student Misbehavior

Whenever a student is referred to the Principal for reasons of serious misbehavior, the teacher or a paraprofessional will accompany the student or call the Main Office to describe the misbehavior.

Student Discipline

All staff members have a responsibility to insure proper supervision of all students. Students are to be held accountable for discourteous and disrespectful behavior in corridors, playgrounds, cafetorium, lavatories, and the gymnasium and in classrooms. There is to be no running in the corridors, no pushing or shoving, and no fighting. Students who are walking through the hallways should be encouraged to keep their voices low so as not to disturb others.

Supervision of Students

Students in your care must be under the supervision of a staff member at all times.

Therefore, students should not work unsupervised in the corridors or in empty rooms. Failure to follow this procedure could result in personal liability should any accident occur.

Similarly, students should not be sent to the corridors for discipline. If a child cannot be controlled in the classroom, he or she should be sent, with a short note or explanation and an escort, to the Principal, Assistant Principal.

All staff members must avoid using either derogatory comments or physical contact to control students' inappropriate behavior. Many discipline cases can be resolved by early contact with the student's home. Notify the classroom teacher immediately of any unacceptable behavior on the part of any student/s.

Teachers may not ask paraprofessionals:

1. To supervise the classroom except in emergency situations.
2. To assume any duties for which the teacher is responsible.

Bullying

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed an *Act Relative to Bullying in Schools*. This new law prohibits bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to address bullying incidents. Parts of the law (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O) that are important for students and parents or guardians to know are described below.

Definitions

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying includes cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings.

Hostile environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation is directed.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Prohibition Against Bullying

Bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds,
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds,
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place on or off school grounds,
- at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by a school district or school (for example, on a computer or over the Internet),
- at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic device, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

Reporting Bullying

Anyone, including a parent or guardian, student, or school staff member, can report bullying or retaliation. Reports can be made in writing or orally to the principal or another staff member, or reports may be made anonymously.

[Contact – Linda Weene, Principal, 508-429-0647 ext.1204, weenel@holliston.k12.ma.us and/or Therese Stewart, Assistant Principal, 508-429-0647 ext.1203, stewartt@holliston.k12.ma.us

School staff members must report immediately to the principal or his/her designee if they witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation. Staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessionals.

When the school principal or his/her designee receives a report, he or she shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the school principal or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he or she shall (i) notify the parents or guardians of the target, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; (ii) notify the parents or guardians of an aggressor; (iii) take appropriate disciplinary action; and (iv) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

Professional Development for School and District Staff

Schools and districts must provide ongoing professional development to increase the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying.

The content of such professional development is to include, but not be limited to: (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying; (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and (vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

Additional information about the school's or district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan [is available on the District website under School Committee – Policies.](#)

Fire Drills, Containment and Lockdown

Each classroom has its specific emergency exit plan posted near the hall door entrance. Please make sure that you are familiar with the location of the plan and that you review the exit procedure for each classroom that you work in.

In the event of a fire drill:

- If a paraprofessional is at lunch, they must evacuate the building and immediately go to the location where their students have been evacuated.
- Volunteer members of the staff will be asked to check bathrooms, empty classrooms, and be sure that all doors are closed.

In the event of a Containment Situation:

- **Scan hallway and bring children into classrooms**
- **Pull down shades**
- **Assigned teachers check bathrooms**
- **Email Faith (antoniolif) and the appropriate classroom teacher advising him/her that you have “taken in” a student not assigned to your classroom.**
- **After 5 minutes, if you have any “missing” children call office (ext. 1101, 1102, 1103)**
- **Medical emergencies dial “4444”**
- **Business as usual in all classrooms**

In case of a Lockdown Situation:

- **Teachers with “Lockdown” signs place them on exterior doors.**
- **Scan hallway and bring children into classrooms**
- **Lock all doors**
- **Pull down shades**
- **Place children in a safe place not visible from door or exterior windows.**
- **Slide red, yellow or green card under door and into the hall and place same color card in an exterior window.**
- **Assigned teachers check bathrooms and lock any empty rooms.**
- **Email Faith (antoniolif) and the appropriate classroom teacher advising him/her that you have “taken in” a student not assigned to your classroom.**
- **After 5 minutes, if you have any “missing” children call office (ext. 1101, 1102, 1103)**
- **Medical emergencies dial “4444”**

Accidents-Medical Needs-Illness-School Nurse

The elementary nurse is on duty from the time that school opens until school closes. Students who become ill should be sent to the nurse. As a paraprofessional, you may be asked to accompany a sick child to the nurse. Once at the nurse's office, take your lead from the nurse as to whether you should stay with the child or return to the classroom. PreK and K paraprofessionals usually stay with the child until the nurse has determined the child's condition.

- **In case of a medical emergency, dial 4444, the Placentino Emergency Number which connects you directly with the "RED Phone" in our nurse's office.**

All accidents must be reported to the school nurse and the Principal. This includes accidents that may seem trivial. All staff members should follow Universal Precautions when dealing with accidents involving blood or other bodily fluids. Gloves will be distributed to all classrooms. The individual in charge of the class or activity in which the accident occurred must report the accident to the Main Office and to the school nurse immediately. That individual will be expected to provide the information necessary for the nurse to complete a detailed accident report.

All staff are reminded to follow the appropriate protocols for safety when dealing with bodily fluids of any origin. Gloves are provided in every classroom for use when a situation arises that requires potential contact with bodily fluids. When dealing with young children, the possibility of exposure to blood is very possible. It is essential that staff take proper precautions by using the gloves provided in these situations. At a minimum, tissues should be used for protection if gloves are not immediately available.

CLASSROOM FOOD AND SNACK GUIDELINES

In order to ensure the safest environment possible for all of our students, the following limitations apply to ALL of the classrooms at Placentino:

1. ALL classrooms are "nut free." No food containing any type of nuts or that is produced in a facility that includes nut products may be brought into any classroom. The only exception would be an item that is contained in a lunch box for a student's lunch.
2. No food may be provided for any classroom birthday celebrations.
3. We are continuing the "Wellness Wednesday" snack initiative and request that families provide a "healthy" snack for their students on Wednesdays.

All staff are reminded to follow the appropriate protocols for safety when dealing with bodily fluids of any origin. Gloves are provided in every classroom for use when a situation arises that requires potential contact with bodily fluids. When dealing with young children, the possibility of exposure to blood is very possible. **It is essential that staff take proper precautions by using the gloves provided in these situations. At a minimum, tissues should be for protection if gloves are not immediately available.**

Grounds for Suspension

In certain cases, students are suspended from the Placentino School. The length of the suspension is determined by the administration but will not exceed five days.

Possession or Use of Weapons, Possession or Use of Illegal Substances or Weapons, The Use of Force, Vandalism, or Violation of Other Students' Civil Rights

In cases involving the possession or use of weapons, the possession or use of excessive force, provided that the violation occurs on school property, the principal of every school system within each city, town or district shall have the authority to suspend a student, including an indefinite suspension, and no other disciplinary measure adopted as a rule or regulation may inhibit this authority to suspend. When a student has been suspended by a principal or headmaster under the authority of the previous sentence, the superintendent may review such suspension and alter the disciplinary measure after a hearing. Codes of discipline shall be filed with the Department of Education. (Chapter 71, Section 37H.)

Tobacco on School Premises

Use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, school facilities, or on school grounds, school buses or school sponsored trips by an individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times. Additionally, possession of tobacco products by students is prohibited within the school buildings, school facilities, or on school grounds, school buses or school sponsored trips.

Touching and Threatening

All students have the right to come to school without being afraid of physical harm, threats or being touched inappropriately. Students may not fight with, push, trip or hit anyone else. (This includes play fights.) An out-of-school suspension will be considered when disciplining students who are involved in physical conflict. A student may not do anything that may hurt another person. A student may not threaten another person or ask someone else to threaten another person. Hazing is not allowed. These are serious offenses, with a suspension possible for up to five days, if a student harasses, bullies or threatens another student.

Discrimination

Discrimination or lack of opportunity to equal access to the programs and offerings of the Holliston Public Schools to any person because of race, age, color, creed, religion, national origin, ethnic background, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation or unless required by law by membership or activity in an employee organization or political party is forbidden. Staff members will act in a way that insures that this philosophy is maintained and will work towards a goal of equality in all situations. Discrimination in any form violates state and federal laws and therefore is a violation of the policies of the Holliston School Committee.

Any student or member of the staff who feels he or she has been, or is currently, the subject of discrimination must report the discrimination to the building Principal or to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee.

Harassment

Holliston School Committee Policy ACAA

I. Statement of Policy:

The Holliston Public Schools are committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment. This includes, but is not limited to, harassment based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age or disability. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and all other individuals at school, at school sponsored events or on school transportation is unlawful and is strictly prohibited. The Holliston Public Schools requires all employees, students and visitors to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect for their fellow employees, students and all members of the school community. Any individual who believes she/he has been harassed or who has witnessed or learned about the harassment of another person in the school environment, should inform the Principal as soon as possible.

II. Definition of Harassment:

A. **In General.** Harassment includes communication such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct, which offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age or disability.

By law, what constitutes harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic(s) on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior, may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

- B. Sexual Harassment. While all types of harassment are prohibited, sexual harassment requires further definition. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
1. Acceptance of or submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or education;
 2. The individual's response to such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting a student;
 3. Such conduct interferes with an individual's job duties, education or participation in extra-curricular activities; or
 4. The conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment.

III. Harassment and Retaliation Prohibited

Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and all other individuals in school or at school related events. In addition, retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of the school, or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy, is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Holliston Public Schools.

Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation are subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or school committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

IV. Investigation

Any individual, who believes she/he has been harassed or who has witnessed or learned about the harassment of another person in the school environment, should inform the Principal as soon as possible. If the individual does not wish to discuss the issue with the Principal, or if the individual believes that the issue requires further attention, the individual should inform the Superintendent of Schools at 370 Hollis Street, Holliston MA 01746, (508) 429-0654; the Director of Pupil Personnel, 370 Hollis Street, Holliston, MA 01746, (508) 429-0661; or Title IX/622 Coordinator who can be reached at 370 Hollis Street, Holliston, MA 01746, (508) 429-0654.

Any staff member who observes a student being harassed should intervene to stop the harassment and encourage the student to bring the matter to the attention of the building principal and shall report the matter him or herself.

The Holliston Public Schools will promptly investigate every complaint of harassment. If it determines that harassment has occurred, it will take appropriate action to end the harassment and to ensure that it is not repeated. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law and under applicable collective bargaining agreements.

In certain cases, the harassment of a student may constitute child abuse under state law. The Holliston Public Schools will comply with all legal requirements governing the reporting of

suspected cases of child abuse and will report suspected criminal activity to the appropriate authorities.

V. Closure of Complaint

When an investigation has been completed, school personnel will inform the complainant of the results and file a report with the Coordinator for the Title IX/Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act/Chapter 622.

VI. Notifications

Notice of this policy will be circulated to all schools and departments of the Holliston Public Schools and distributed to all employees on an annual basis. It will be incorporated into teacher and student handbooks. The Superintendent is charged with establishing procedures that include scheduling regular training for staff and students in the prevention of harassment, the scope of the harassment policy, and the proper procedures to be followed when complaints arise.

VII. Other Resources

The Holliston Public Schools urges all individuals in the school community to bring any concerns or complaints of harassment to the attention of school personnel so that they can address the issue. The state agency responsible for enforcing laws prohibiting harassment in public schools is the Massachusetts Department of Education, or the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination. The agency responsible for enforcing federal laws prohibiting harassment in the employment context is the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The agency responsible for enforcing the federal law prohibiting harassment on the basis of sex in public school settings is the Office for Civil Rights within the United States Department of Education.

Addresses and telephone numbers for the above named agencies are:

- Massachusetts Department of Education, 75 Pleasant St., Malden, MA (781-338-3000)
- Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, One Ashburton Place, Sixth Floor, Room 601, Boston, MA (617-994-6000) TTY- 617-994-6196
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, JFK Building, 475 Government Center, Boston, MA 02203 (617-565-3196) TTY – 1800 669-6820
- Office for Civil Rights within the U.S. Department of Education, John W. McCormack Building, Post Office Square, 8th floor, Boston, MA 02109-4597 (617-289-0111).
- This list will be updated annually to ensure accuracy.

Child Abuse/Neglect Information and Reporting Procedures

Rules and Regulations for Reporting Child Abuse

Authority: Chapter 1076 of the Acts of 1973, through amendments and additions to Chapter 119 of the Massachusetts General Laws, establishes for Massachusetts a new system for the reporting, investigation, evaluation and management of cases or alleged serious physical or emotional injuries to children due to abuse, neglect or addiction at birth. The regulations in this part are adopted pursuant to this authority.

Purpose: “It is hereby declared to be the policy of the Commonwealth to direct its efforts, first to the strengthening and encouragement of family life for the protection and care of children: to assist and encourage the use by any family to all available resources to this end; to provide substitute care of children only when the family itself or the resources available to the family are unable to provide the necessary care and protection to insure the rights of any child to sound health and normal physical, mental, spiritual and moral development.” G.L.C. 119 s. 1

Definitions: Since the law does not define abuse or neglect, the Department has formulated its own definitions in an attempt to clarify any misconceptions.

Abuse: A. A physical injury or emotional injury by other than accidental means which causes or creates a substantial risk of death or protracted impairment of the function of any bodily organ.
B. The commission of a sex offense against a child as define in the Criminal Laws of Massachusetts.

Neglect: A condition in which a caretaker responsible for the child either deliberately or by extraordinary inattentiveness permits the child to experience avoidable present suffering by failing to provide one or more of the ingredients generally deemed essential for developing a person’s physical, intellectual and emotional capacities, such as:

- A. Adequate food, clothing, shelter, or education, or medical care, though financially able to do so or offered financial or other reasonable means to do so.
- B. Proper supervision or guardianship
- C. Physical dependence of a child upon an addictive drug at birth

Child: Any male or female under the age of eighteen years.

Mandatory Reporter: Any physician, medical intern, medical examiner, dentist, nurse, public or private school teacher (including personnel or licensed day care center who have supervisory responsibilities towards the children in such centers), educational administrator, guidance or family counselor (including any psychologist, who as part of his/her duties, performs the duties usually performed by a guidance or family counselor), probation officer, social worker or policeman. All members of the professional staff and health units are mandatory reporters under the rules and regulations covering reporting of child abuse.

Recommended procedures for cases where child abuse and/or neglect is suspected:

1. Report your concerns to the student’s counselor or to your administrator.
2. The counselor or administrator will see the child under some other pretense to gather more data.
3. The counselor or administrator will notify the school nurse who will also see the student.
4. The counselor, nurse and the teacher involved will consult with the building administrator.

5. The principal will assume the responsibilities of the mandatory reporter and take appropriate action, if any one member believes that such reporting action is warranted.

Note: Child abuse cases may be reported directly to the Department of Welfare by any member of the staff.

Crisis Intervention Plan of Action

This plan of action is intended to be a general guideline for the Crisis Intervention Team to follow in the event of any crisis or traumatic incident affecting the school community. It is a resource document that can be used in part or in total depending on the need at the time of the crisis.

The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) will include the Principal, guidance counselor, and any other appropriate personnel (i.e. teachers, nurse, fire chief, police chief, school psychologist) under the direction of the Principal.

Understanding the Crisis

After any crisis, or rumor of crisis, the facts regarding that particular matter should be verified by the principal or her designee. The CIT will be activated. The Superintendent of Schools will be notified. The Principal or other designated person will make a concerted effort to contact the family and determine their wishes regarding kinds of information that should be disseminated to the school community. The family's right to privacy will be of utmost importance.

A staff meeting may be held at the end of the school day to discuss the day's happening. (Parents should be contacted if their son/daughter shows undue emotional stress).

Grieving and Commemorating

In order to assist and support students and faculty in dealing with a crisis, counselors, members of the CIT and /or other appropriate personnel should be available to talk with individuals or small groups. Guidance counselors and a psychologist will be available. Religious leaders in the community can be contacted.

Each crisis should be handled individually. Faculty and students (if appropriate) should meet to discuss the possibility of sending representatives to a wake or funeral. Time should be granted for such an endeavor. Allowances will be made for any member of the school community to attend the services.

Going On

The school will do all it can to stay in tune with the feelings of the family and students in crisis. If a person is having a particularly difficult time coping, it will be up to parents and friends to inform the school. Cooperation, assistance and communication are needed in order to support people who need it. The school, after dealing with the crisis, should take the lead in returning to a desirable state of normalcy.