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SECTION A: FOUNDATIONS AND BASIC COMMITMENTS

Non-Smoking/Tobacco

In accordance with State RSA 126-K: 7:

The use of tobacco products in School Department buildings, facilities, or on School Department grounds is prohibited at all times. Tobacco products shall mean any tobacco-containing product including but not limited to:

- Cigarettes
- Smoking tobacco
- Cigars
- Chewing tobacco
- Snuff pipe tobacco
- Smokers' tobacco
- Smokeless cigarettes

Employees who violate this policy shall be subject to penalties including but not limited to:

- Written reprimand
- Suspension without pay
- Dismissal for cause

Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to waive the School Department's right to seek enforcement of penalties pursuant to RSA 155:76 or RSA 126-K: 7.

First Reading Approved: November 28, 2006

Legal References:

RSA [155:64 – 77](#), Indoor Smoking Act

RSA [126 K:6](#), Possession and Use of Tobacco Products by Minors

RSA [126 K:7](#), Use of Tobacco Products on Public Educational Grounds Prohibited

Procedures Implementing Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act, 1973

Identification

The Portsmouth School Department defines a qualified handicapped individual under Section 504 as a student three to six years old who is educationally disabled under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), or a school-aged child, aged 6 through 20, who has not graduated and who meets one of the following criteria:

- Has a physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activity. The term does not cover children disadvantaged by cultural, environmental, or economic factors.
- Has a record or history of such impairment
- Is regarded or treated by the School Department as having such an impairment.

Placement and Accommodations

I. Placement

Placement is defined as a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

Placement Policy

For students identified as educationally disabled using Special Education criteria, placement will be determined according to IDEA regulation. For students whose current physical, mental or psychological condition would qualify him/her as handicapped under 504 but not for Special Education, placement will be determined by the School Department designees who are knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options. Designees may include teachers, school nurses, guidance counselors or school administrators.

All information made available from a variety of sources will be considered and so documented in the decision making process. Placements must meet the following criteria:

- No cost to the parent;
- Accessible;
- Least restrictive environment.

II. Accommodations

504 accommodations are defined as considerations and/or modifications geared to assure access to a free and appropriate public education.

Accommodation Policies:

For students who qualify as handicapped under 504: reasonable accommodations will be determined by the School Department designees who are knowledgeable about the child and knowledgeable about the evaluation data related to that child.

All information made available from a variety of sources will be considered. In determining the needed accommodation(s), the following criteria should be used:

- Accommodations should be reasonable and not seriously diminish the quality of the program,
- Environmental factors which would create a barrier should be identified and modified if needed,
- Accommodations may include alterations of school/classroom policies and procedures to allow access to programs.

Accommodation Procedures:

A written referral form is completed by a teacher, parent, or student and forwarded to the Review Team. The Review Team shall be the SEPT or a similar team whose members are selected by the school principal.

The Team reviews all the available evaluation data.

The Team may make the following determinations:

- That additional information and/or further evaluation is needed (permission for testing); or
- That the student is not handicapped under Section 504; or
- That the student is handicapped Under Section 504. The Team develops an accommodation plan.
- That the student is an eligible student according to IDEA.

After the above decisions (a, b, c, d) are made, the parents are:

- Notified of the Team's determination
- Given Section 504 Student/Parent's Rights and IDEA Parental Rights.

Re-evaluation/Review

The accommodation is reviewed periodically, or upon any significant change in the placement.

Grievance Procedure:

A complaint regarding a violation of law concerning discrimination on the basis of sex or handicap in our educational programs as required by Title IX of the Educations Amendment Act of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, shall provide for prompt and equitable resolution of disputes in the Portsmouth School Department as follows:

Level I

The complainant (student or employee) will first meet informally with the designated school administrator. The site administrator shall be the principal of the school or his/her designee. If the complainants' concerns are not clear, or cannot be resolved informally through discussion, the designated school administrator shall respond within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the written complaint. In the event that the complaint is unable to be resolved at this level, the complainant may/shall be referred to the School Department Compliance Coordinator.

504 Coordinator, - Student Services Director
Portsmouth School Department,
50 Clough Drive
Portsmouth, New Hampshire
Telephone: (603) 431-5080

Level II

Upon receipt, the School Department Compliance Coordinator will provide a copy of the School Department's grievance procedure to the complainant. The person who believes he/she has a valid basis for a grievance shall discuss the grievance informally with the School Department Compliance Coordinator, who in turn shall investigate the complaint and respond within ten (10) days to the complainant in writing. If not satisfied with the response, the complainant may initiate formal procedures according to the following steps:

Step 1. A written statement of the grievance, signed by the complainant, shall be submitted to the School Department Compliance Coordinator within five (5) business days of receipt of answer to the informal complaint. The Coordinator shall further investigate the matters of grievance and reply in writing to the complainant within five (5) business days.

Step 2. If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision of the School Department Compliance Coordinator, he/she may submit a signed statement of appeal to the Superintendent of Schools within five (5) business days after receipt of the Coordinator's response. The Superintendent shall meet with all parties involved, formulate a conclusion, and respond in writing to the complainant within ten (10) business days of receipt.

Step 3. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, he/she may appeal through a signed written statement to the local School Board within five (5) business days of complainant and his/her representative(s) within thirty (30) business days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Portsmouth School Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) business days of this meeting. In cases where the local School Board wishes to recuse itself, the Portsmouth School Department may appoint and compensate one or more persons to review the decision of the Superintendent, or an alternative hearing officer in Step 2. The time limits set forth in this procedure may be extended by mutual agreement.

Step 4. If at this point the grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved, further appeal may be made to:

Office for Civil Rights, Region 1
U.S. Department of Education
33 Arch Street, Suite 900
Boston, Massachusetts 02109

Policy approved by Portsmouth School Board: June 14, 1994

Public Health and Safety Agencies

The superintendent shall work cooperatively with the Police, Fire and Health departments of the City to promote education and a safe learning environment through proper planning and the integration of cooperation and collaboration. The Superintendent is authorized to formulate administrative regulations necessary to implement this policy.

Education:

Building principals shall be responsible for maintaining contact with the police, fire and health departments to promote health and safety programs within the schools. The principal shall:

- Coordinate with faculty in selecting and scheduling cooperative educational efforts.
- Coordinate and supervise planned activities.
- Ensure periodic fire drills are conducted prescribed by state and local regulations.
- Make referrals to the school nurse for families who cannot afford medical or dental care, especially in the case of required vaccinations and immunizations.
- Provide educational activities conducive to good health and safety practices incorporating both home and school settings.

Safety:

- **Safe Schools Team**

The Portsmouth School Department shall be a member of the Portsmouth Safe Schools Team to promote a safe learning environment for students. The team shall be comprised of representatives of the School Department as determined by the Superintendent of Schools, Portsmouth Fire and Police Departments, Department of Justice, City and County Attorneys, parents and members of the community.

The Superintendent of Schools is authorized to enter into Memoranda of Understanding with other municipal departments to implement this policy.

- **Emergency Management Team**

Each school within the district shall have an Emergency Management Team to meet on a regular basis to review school safety, preparedness and response procedures.

The team shall consist of the building principal, teachers, custodian, counselor, nurse, secretary, resource officer, parent and community members selected by the Superintendent of Schools.

First Reading Approved: July 11, 2006

SECTION B: SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

Adoption and Amendment of Policies

Policy proposals and suggested amendments to or revisions of existing policies shall be submitted to all members of the Board and to the superintendent in writing prior to a regularly scheduled Board meeting in which such proposed policies, amendments, or revisions shall be read and discussed. A vote for adoption shall take place at the next succeeding regular meeting of the Board. Action shall be by majority vote of those present. .

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Amendment and Administrative Regulations

The Board does not adopt administrative regulations unless specifically required to do so by law, or unless requested to do so by the superintendent.

The Board reserves the right to review and veto administrative regulations should they, in the Board's judgment, be inconsistent with the policies adopted by the Board.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Area School Advisory Committee

There shall be established an Area School Advisory Committee which may suggest improvement or changes in curriculum and other school programs and services as a part of the regional enrollment area for grades nine through twelve, with the Portsmouth Senior High School as the receiving district and Greenland, New Castle, Newington and Rye as the sending districts.

- The committee shall consist of one School Board member and the superintendent of schools from each of the school districts
- This committee shall meet at least two times during the school year
- This committee shall elect annually one of its members to be the authorized representative of the Area School Advisory Committee to the Portsmouth School Board
- This member must be from a sending district
- The above named representative shall handle all liaison between the receiving district and the Area School Advisory Committee

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Chairperson Duties

The duties of the chairperson of the School Board shall be.:

- To preside at all meetings
- To call special meetings as he/she considers necessary or on request
- To appoint all committees
- To act as an ex-officio member of all committees
- To execute documents on behalf of the board
- To perform the usual and ordinary duties of the office

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Committee of the Whole

The Board shall act as a committee of the whole. No individual board member or combination of members less than the full membership of the Board have the authority to take independent action.

All powers of the School Board lie in its action as a corporate body. Individual board members may not exercise authority over District affairs.

An individual board member, including the chairperson, has power only when the Board by vote has delegated authority to him or her.

No legal action can be taken except at a duly warned meeting of the Board and by a quorum acting as a unit.

The decisions of the Board shall be binding until rescinded by the Board at a duly called regular or special meeting.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Reviewed and First Reading December 1, 2009

Revised and Approved January 12, 2010

Legal References:

N.H. Code of Administrative Rules-Section Ed. [303.01](#), Substantive Duties of School Boards

Appendix: [BBA-R](#)

Executive Sessions

The Board may hold executive sessions but any decisions made during any executive session must be recorded and made available for public inspection promptly, and no orders, rules, regulations, contracts, appointments or other official action shall be finally approved in executive sessions.

Executive sessions may be held to consider or act upon the following:

- The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him/her, unless the employee affected requests an open meeting.
- The hiring on any person as a public employee
- Matter which if addressed in public would be likely to affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of the body itself
- Consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of land which, if discussed in public, would be likely to benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community.

For further clarification, please refer to RSA.91A

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Formulation of Administrative Regulations

The Board shall delegate to the superintendent the day-to-day operation of the school system. The operation must be in every respect consistent with the policies adopted by the Board.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Formulation of Policies

The Board, representing the voters of the district, is the governing body, which determines all questions of general policy to be employed in the conduct of the public schools.

Proposals regarding school district policies and operations may originate from any of several sources: a parent, a taxpayer, a professional employee, a member of the Board, a clerk, the Superintendent, a professional consultant, a civic group, etc.

Actions on such proposals, whatever their source, is taken finally by the Board, The Board shall take action on most matters upon the basis of recommendations presented to the Board by the Superintendent.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Individual Members

It is understood that the members of the Board have authority only when acting as a board legally in session. The Board shall not be bound in any way by any action or statement on the part of any individual board member except when such statement or action is in pursuance of specific instruction from the Board.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Opportunities for Development

Board members shall be encouraged to attend meetings related to education or school matters.

The superintendent shall notify Board members of all relevant scheduled meetings..

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Organization

The organization, management and control of the Portsmouth School Department is vested in the Board, which exercises the powers and discharges the duties imposed by New Hampshire statutes. It shall be the purpose of the Board to provide education of the best quality for Portsmouth School Department students, within the limitation imposed by the taxpayer's ability to pay and to support the educational program. The Board shall be the legal representative, not only of the citizens of Portsmouth, but of the State Board of Education as well.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Orientation

School Board membership calls for knowledge of and orientation in many areas. Orientation is an ongoing process but is especially important for new board members. Orientation will be provided to new board members through the following activities:

1. Orientation for new board members is conducted by the New Hampshire School Boards Association.
2. Discussions and visits with the superintendent of schools and other members of the school staff.
3. Provision of printed and audio-visual materials on school board and administrative policies and procedures.
4. Attendance at school board and administrative conferences and conventions on a local, area, state and national basis.
5. Exchange of ideas through joint meetings with neighboring school boards.
6. Periodic visitations to schools during the operation of a normal school day.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Public Commentary Procedure

While the primary purpose of School Board meetings is to conduct the business of the Board as it relates to school policies, programs and operations, the Board does wish to provide an avenue for any citizen to express interest in and concerns for the schools. Accordingly, the public is cordially invited to attend any and all meetings of the Board.

Included on the agenda for meetings of the Board shall be a time, not to exceed thirty minutes, to receive public comments. Members of the public wishing to be recognized during the public comment section shall sign up prior to the meeting on a sheet supplied for that purpose. Public comments shall be limited to three minutes per speaker. Time may be extended by a motion of any Board member, approved by a majority present.

First Reading Approved by Portsmouth School Board: August 18, 1998

Revisited January 12, 2010

Approved February 9, 2010

Legal Reference:

RSA [91-A:2](#), *Meetings Open to Public*

RSA [91-A:3](#), *Non-Public Sessions*

Purpose and Role of the Board

The powers and duties of the Board shall be as conferred and prescribed by law. Complete and final control as to all matters pertaining to the educational system shall be vested in the Board.

In the interpretation of the powers and duties of the Board, it is understood that the Board shall act as a governing body in the determination of general policies for the control, operation, maintenance and expansion of the public schools.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Quorum

The quorum of the School Board shall be the majority of the total members.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Remuneration and Reimbursement

Members of the Board shall be reimbursed in accordance with the City Charter, as well as for board-related legal expenses and official, authorized travel.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Reorganization Meeting

The reorganization meeting of the Board shall be held the first meeting in January following the biennial election. The Board shall elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson from its membership for two-year terms.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Respect

The policy of the Portsmouth School Board is that all employees and students have the right to be treated with respect in their working and learning environments. Respectful behavior is defined as courteous regard or treatment. In order to ensure a climate characterized by mutual respect, employees, students, parents, community members, and elected officials will practice common courtesy and civil behavior toward one another in all situations.

Procedures

Employees are asked to immediately report an violation of this policy to a teacher, an administrator, the assistant superintendent or the superintendent.

Students are asked to report any violation to a counselor, administrator, the assistant superintendent or the superintendent.

Retaliation

There shall be no retaliation against any person reporting or confirming a violation of this policy.

Discipline

A substantiated charge against a staff member will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

A substantiated charge against a student will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

A substantiated charge against a parent will result in action up to and including exclusion from the school building.

A substantiated charge against an elected official will result in a recommendation for a sanction against the official to his/her governing body.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

School Board Meetings

Meetings of the School Board are held in public with the exception of non-public sessions, as set forth in RSA 91-A. The Superintendent of Schools shall be responsible for establishing an agenda for meetings of the Board.

The Board shall meet at least once every two months. Unless otherwise determined by Board action, regular meetings of the Board shall be held at Portsmouth City Hall Chambers on the 1st Tuesday of each month.

Notice of all Board meetings will be posted in two appropriate places and published on the city's webpage. The Board reserves the right to amend the agenda during the meeting, should a majority of the Board vote to do so.

All changes of regular meetings from normal dates shall be advertised at least 24 hours prior to the date of the meeting. Special meetings shall be held at the call of the Chairperson.

A majority of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

The School Board recognizes that the consistent attendance of School Board members at Board meetings is essential for the efficient, effective operation of the Board's duties as well as fulfilling our individual obligations as elected officials.

The Chair and vice-chair will formally question any Board member who misses three consecutive meetings or more than 30% of scheduled meetings, for reasons of absences. The Board may take such action that is appropriate. The Board Secretary is responsible for tracking attendance and providing the Chair with attendance reports.

Policy Approved September 10, 2009

Revisited January 5, 2010

Approved February 9, 2010

Legal References:

RSA [91-A](#), *Access to Public Records and Meetings*

N.H. Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. [303.01\(f\)](#), Substantive Duties of School Boards

School Visits

School Board members who visit schools on their own volition have no more authority than any other citizen. Board members have authority only in regularly called meetings of the Board, or , when delegated specific tasks by Board action.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Secretary - Duties

The Superintendent of Schools shall act also as Secretary of the School Board and shall serve as executive officer of the School Board.

As secretary he/she shall:

- Attend all meetings and keep minutes of the same
- Prepare and distribute in advance minutes of previous meetings for approval at scheduled meetings
- Distribute notices of all regular and special meetings to Board members and the administration and inform the general public

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Suspension of Policies, Bylaws and Regulations

The unanimous consent of those present at a regular meeting, or one month's notice and a two-third vote of those present, shall be required for a suspension of any policy of the School board.

No policy or bylaw shall be operative if it is found to be in conflict with any law of the State of New Hampshire.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Temporary Board Committees

It shall be the responsibility of the chairperson to appoint special committees whenever necessary. The chairperson shall outline the duties and responsibilities of each committee at the time of appointment and serve as an ex-officio member of the committee. Special committees shall be considered dissolved upon submission of a final report or the reorganization of the Board.

To alleviate the need for a multitude of special committees, the chairperson shall, whenever possible, refer these assignments to the administration for study and report to the full Board with recommendations.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Vice Chairperson Duties

The Vice Chairperson shall assume all duties of the Chairperson in his/her absence.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

SECTION C: GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent's Evaluation

The School Board will evaluate the Superintendent of Schools after each year of employment in June.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

SECTION D: FISCAL MANAGEMENT

Annual Budget

A. School Department Budget – Policy

The Superintendent shall present to the Board the proposed school department budget for the next fiscal year in a timely manner to be determined by the School Board which will enable the Board to submit its approved budget to the City Manager not later than March 15, as per City Charter.

B. Preparation of Budget Document – Procedures

The preparation of the school department budget involves input from school personnel at all levels.

After reviewing all instructional and non-instructional needs, principals, directors, and department heads will submit proposed budgets to the superintendent.

The superintendent will meet with principals and other personnel to review the proposed budget prior to submission of the budget to the School Board.

Policy Approved by Portsmouth School Board: June 26, 2001

Policy Approved by Portsmouth School Board: March 14, 2000

Legal References

RSA [32:4](#), Preparation of Budgets: Estimate of Expenditures and Revenues

RSA [32:5](#), Budget Preparation

RSA [197:5-a](#), School meetings and Officers: Budget

Federal and State Funds

Federal and state funds for educational purposes will be accepted by the school district so long as the conditions are consistent with the purposes and policies of the district, City Charter, and of the State statutes.

Policy Approved by Portsmouth School Board: March 11, 2003

Local Purchasing

Local purchasing will be favored whenever the following factors are comparable between local and non-local vendors:

- Quality of product
- Suitability of product
- Price
- Conformance of specifications
- Convenience of delivery
- General reputation of business firms
- Past services to school districts

Policy Adopted by the Portsmouth School Board: June 11, 1991

Reviewed and Approved: September 13, 2001

Outside Funding

The Board supports, authorizes and encourages the superintendent to seek available outside funding to advance the goals of the school department.

Policy Approved by Portsmouth School Board: March 14, 2000

Preparation of Budget Document

The preparation of the school department budget involves input from administrators, professionals and school personnel at all levels. Principals, directors and teachers shall work with the assistant superintendent to plan for instructional needs. Principals, maintenance supervisor and custodians shall work with the business administrator to plan for the non-instructional needs of the department. After reviewing all of the various needs, individual school budgets shall be prepared by the appropriate principal and submitted to the superintendent.

Wherever possible, the budget shall be developed using the principles of zero-based budgeting and the concept of quality improvement.

The superintendent shall meet with principals and other personnel to review each proposed budget prior to submission of the school department budget to the School Board.

Policy Reviewed by Portsmouth School Board: June 26, 2001

Policy Approved by Portsmouth School Board: March 14, 2000

Legal References:

RSA [32:4](#), Preparation of Budgets: Estimate of Expenditures and Revenues

RSA [32:5](#), Budget Preparation

RSA [197:5-a](#), School meetings and Officers: Budget

Sale and Disposal of Books, Equipment and Supplies

The superintendent shall be authorized to dispose of obsolete books, equipment and supplies with residual value by offering their sale consistent with the City Policy and ordinance on disposal of assets. If it is determined there is no value, the superintendent may dispose of books, equipment and supplies as in any manner convenient and appropriate.

A. Property Valued at less than \$500

The superintendent shall conduct a sale of any books, equipment, and supplies valued at less than \$500 and no longer required by the schools.

B. Property Valued at \$500 or more

The superintendent shall notify the Board of any books, equipment, and supplies valued at \$500 or more prior to sale.

Policy Adopted by the Portsmouth School Board: June 11, 1991

Revised and Approved: September 13, 2001

Legal References: [*CFR 34, Sec. 80.32*](#)

Tuition Fees

Portsmouth School District, having been designated as a receiving district for pupils in grades nine through 12 from Greenland, New Castle, Newington and Rye, shall receive from these districts tuition based on the AREA agreement of grades nine through 12 in the Portsmouth Senior High School for the school year preceding the school year to which the tuition rates are applicable. Tuition rates shall be based on a daily rate for partial year attendance.

The AREA agreement shall determine the formula for the annual calculation of the tuition rate, the timing and preparation of the billing to the sending towns, and the tuition payment dates by the sending towns.

Such federal or state aid funds, excluding state building aid, that are received by the Portsmouth School District as a result of the attendance of pupils from the sending districts to the AREA schools shall be deducted from the total of the items used in calculating the per pupil cost at the Senior High School level before determination of the tuition rates for the sending districts.

The estimated tuition rate shall be made available to the sending districts by December 31 of each year and the official tuition rate shall be forwarded to the sending districts in accordance with the provisions of the AREA agreement.

Other non-resident pupils shall be charged a rate comparable with the tuition charged pupils from sending districts.

Policy Approved by Portsmouth School Board: June 26, 2001

Legal References:

RSA [198:20-b](#), *Appropriation for Unanticipated Funds Made Available During*

SECTION E: SUPPORT SERVICES

Acceptable Use Policy (Portsmouth School Department Computer Network)

Preamble:

The purpose of this document is to serve as a statement on the proper and acceptable use of various aspects of the Portsmouth School Department Computer Network (PSDCN) including but not limited to the Internet connection(s), computers, and associated peripherals owned/leased and operated by the Portsmouth School Department. All terms and conditions as stated in this policy are applicable to all users of the network.

These rules provide general guidelines and examples of prohibited uses but do not attempt to state all required or prohibited activities by users. Users who have questions regarding whether a particular activity or use is acceptable should seek further guidance from the Computer Technology Director.

One component of the PSDCN is a connection to the Internet. Because of its enormous size and multifaceted resources, the Internet's potential for educational benefit is boundless. However, with the great potential also comes some potential for abuse. Because access to the Internet provides connections to other computer systems located all over the world, users (and parents/guardians of users who are minors) must understand that neither the Portsmouth School Department nor any of its staff members controls the content of the information available on these other systems. Some information may be controversial and sometimes may be offensive. The Portsmouth School Department does not condone the use of such materials.

Users should be aware that some material accessible via the Internet might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people. While our intent is to make Internet access available to further educational goals and objectives, users may find ways to access other materials as well. We cannot vouch for the appropriateness of all materials found on the greater Internet. Although the school department uses various filtering and monitoring strategies, it is technologically impossible to filter all access while still retaining a meaningful connection. During school activities, staff and/or trained volunteers will monitor and guide students toward appropriate materials.

Educational Purposes

The purpose of the PSDCN is educational. Users are responsible for ensuring that their activities adhere to the provisions of this policy and to generally accepted educational standards. The Portsmouth School Department reserves the right to regulate use for valid educational purposes. The school department will not unreasonably restrict use on the basis of disagreement over content.

It is the purpose of the PSDCN to enhance established school curriculum. While there will be need to instruct learners in the skills needed to make use of the network, its purpose will be to serve as a resource for improving, extending, and enriching the teaching and learning in the Portsmouth School Department.

Privilege:

The use of the PSDCN is a privilege and not a right. Inappropriate use will result in restriction or cancellation of access privileges. Just as there are developmental levels that determine the concepts taught or the activities carried out at various grade levels, so there will be varying degrees of access to the Portsmouth School Department Network that will be allowed to users at different levels. Some of these levels will be determined by age or grade, and some by demonstration of acceptance of responsibility.

No Expectation of Privacy:

The PSDCN is maintained and managed by the network administrator in such a way as to insure its availability and reliability in performing its educational mission. Users have no reasonable expectation of privacy concerning any materials transferred over or stored within the PSDCN. The school department reserves the right to monitor all computer, Internet, e-mail, and other network activity through random checks and electronic means in order to ensure system security/integrity and to ensure usage consistent with this policy.

Filtering, Monitoring, and Other Protection Measures:

The Portsmouth School Department relies on the honor of its students and staff to exercise appropriate, polite, respectful, and responsible use of computers and Internet access. In compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Public Law 106-554], the PSDCN employs various filtering hardware and software. These measures are intended to block sites that may contain content considered to be "visual depictions" of material that is obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors. These filtering measures apply to all school department computers. However, since it is technologically impossible to block all such potential sites, it is also the policy of the Portsmouth School Department that student Internet use will be monitored by an adult employee or adult volunteer at all times. An adult user may submit a request to the network administrator to temporarily override these filtering measures for bona fide research by that adult user.

To further protect students from dangerous or objectionable activities and to ensure the PSDCN is only used for its intended purposes, the Portsmouth School Department prohibits use of the following:

- Chat Rooms
- Web based and personal e-mail accounts (school based accounts will be used as described herein)
- Peer-to-peer file sharing (including, but not limited to: Morpheus, Scour, and Gnutella)
- Instant Messaging (including, but not limited to: AOL IM, MSN Messenger, and Yahoo Messenger)
- On-line games (unless specifically authorized by a teacher for instructional purposes)

The Portsmouth School Department reserves the right to make individual exceptions to the above restrictions upon requests to the network administrator.

E-Mail Accounts:

In order to foster communication, students (Grades 9-12), faculty, staff, and administrators will be issued school department e-mail accounts upon request. These accounts are intended to be used for educational and school-related activities. Incidental personal use of school department e-mail is allowed only to the extent that it does not interfere with the user's school-related work and the system's operation and integrity. Students in grades K through 8 will not be issued personal e-mails accounts. Teachers at all grade levels for class activities may use Classroom group accounts. The following procedures and restrictions shall apply to all school department e-mail accounts:

- Students will not post personal information such as home addresses, phone numbers, or other identifying information about themselves or others in e-mail messages.
- Students will promptly report to a school staff member any message they receive that may be deemed inappropriate or that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Users (students or staff) will not use the school department's e-mail system or other computer resources for private financial gain, advertising, political lobbying, or solicitation purposes.
- All users are expected to use judgment and caution in communications concerning students and staff to ensure confidentiality.

Behaviors that can result in restriction/revocation of access privileges include but are not limited to:

- Involvement in any activity prohibited by law
- Any attempts to gain unauthorized access to any computer, network, or communications system (e.g., "hacking")
- Intentional use of invasive software such as "viruses," "worms," and other detrimental activities
- Using profanity, vulgarities, obscenity or other language which tends to be offensive to or tends to degrade others
- Using the network for financial and/or personal gain or for political lobbying except as expressly allowed during a school activity
- Viewing, storing, or transferring obscene, sexually explicit or pornographic materials
- "Chain" type letters, hate mail, anonymous messages, threatening messages, harassment, racial, sexist and discriminatory remarks, and other antisocial behaviors
- Sharing passwords or using someone else's password
- Transferring, utilizing, or storing materials in violation of copyright laws or license agreements
- Intentionally infringing upon the intellectual property rights of others in computer programs or electronic information including plagiarism and/or unauthorized use of reproduction
- Trespassing in another's folders, work, or files
- **Any additional activity or behavior considered to be unacceptable**

The Portsmouth School Department reserves the right to include additional activities to this listing of restricted activities as the need arises.

Responsibilities:

All users shall assume full liability - legal, financial, or otherwise - for their actions when using the PSDCN. Responsible use of the PSDCN requires that users NOT:

- Interfere with the normal and proper operation of this network or the Internet
- Adversely affect the ability of others to use equipment or services
- Conduct themselves in ways that are harmful or deliberately offensive to others
- Use the network for any illegal purpose
- Change computer files that do not belong to the user
- Store or transfer unnecessarily large files
- Create, transfer, or otherwise use any text, image, movie, or sound recording that contains pornography, profanity, obscenity, or language that offends or tends to degrade others

All users of the PSDCN will be held fully responsible for the use of their account to transfer or store materials. Any inappropriate activities carried out will be considered to be the actions of the account holder. Therefore, passwords must not be shared or transferred. Users should take reasonable precautions to protect their passwords and prevent others from being able to use their account.

Students are not to reveal their personal home address, home phone number, or the home address or home phone number of any other individuals. Students must notify a parent/guardian and a teacher or staff member immediately if any individual is trying to contact them for illicit or suspicious activities.

The responsibility of the user is to familiarize himself/herself with and abide by the rules of this Acceptable Use Policy and make appropriate use of the available resources.

Portsmouth School Department Website:

The Portsmouth School Department maintains a website for the purpose of publishing information that is considered important to parents, students, and other community members. This website is hosted as a subset of the City of Portsmouth Website. Whenever information or photographs of students or student work will be published, the students' parents or guardians must sign a Permission to Publish form. The following rules apply to all information published on the website:

- Students will be identified by first name only
- No personal information (home address, home phone, etc.) will be published
- Documents will not contain information that indicates the physical location of a student at a given time other than attendance at a particular school or participation in an activity
- All published materials shall adhere to the guidelines of the City of Portsmouth Website and the Portsmouth School Department Acceptable Use Policy

Copyrighted and Proprietary Materials, and Plagiarism:

All users shall respect copyright and proprietary interest of any materials accessed through the PSDCN. Users may not duplicate copyrighted software, including school owned software, without permission from the copyright holder whether for personal use or the use of others. Duplicating copyrighted materials or the use of such materials are offenses subject to criminal prosecution. Plagiarism is expressly forbidden (plagiarism is the claiming of another's work as your own). Proper citations will be used when citing electronic information.

Disciplinary actions:

Violations of **the provisions** of this Acceptable Use Policy **may** result in one or more of the following disciplinary actions:

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Restriction of access privileges
- Removal from a class activity
- Removal from a course
- Student detention, suspension, or expulsion
- Referral to the appropriate legal authorities for possible criminal prosecution

Internet Log Files:

The PSDCN servers are configured to maintain log files of various activities including Internet access. These logs are used to monitor the network functions and integrity as well as to gather information for system maintenance and educational decision-making. Log files may also be used as evidence in disciplinary actions. The network administrator will maintain log files for a period of 10 calendar days. The contents of these log files are available to the public under RSA 91-A: Access to Public Records and Meetings.

References and acknowledgments:

The policies and regulations outlined here are modeled after sample documents and recommendations from:

- NHEMA/NHSTE (New Hampshire Educational Media Association/New Hampshire Society for Technology in Education) Internet Policy Toolkit
- Acceptable Use Policies from various New Hampshire school districts (Exeter, Manchester, Merrimack, Moultonborough, Nashua, Rochester, Salem, and others)
- Acceptable Use Policies from various other school districts (Auburn, ME, Kennebunk, ME, Bellingham, WA, Los Angeles Unified School District, and others)
- Iowa State University Code of Computer Ethics

First reading Approved: June 11, 2002

Reviewed and Revised: June 23, 2008

Access to Public Records

The Superintendent is hereby designated the custodian of all records, minutes, documents, writings, letters, memoranda, or other written, typed, copied, or developed materials possessed, assembled, or maintained by this District.

1. All requests for public information are to be forwarded to the Superintendent immediately upon receipt. The Superintendent shall thereupon make a determination as to whether or not the information requested is public in nature. If public, the Superintendent shall provide the information in a timely manner.
2. In accordance with RSA 91-A:4, if the Superintendent finds the information to be public in nature, he or she shall direct that it be reproduced on the premises. The party requesting the information is to be charged the cost of reproduction. If the requested record or document is in active use by the district or is otherwise unavailable, the party requesting the information will be informed that the record is not currently available and that he or she will be notified immediately upon it becoming available.
3. If the Superintendent finds the information not to be public in nature, he or she shall so inform the requesting party that the information is not a public record.
1. 4. If the Superintendent is unable to ascertain whether or not the information requested is public in nature, he or she is hereby authorized to request, on behalf of the Board, an opinion from the Board's attorney as to the nature of the information. Such opinion requests will be made within ten (10) days of the original request for the information. The Superintendent shall notify the person requesting such information that an opinion is to be requested of the attorney and shall notify such person immediately upon receipt of an answer from the attorney.

First Reading: January 12, 2010

Legal References:

RSA [91-A:4](#), *Minutes and Records Available for Public Inspection*

Bomb Threats

Whether the threat is real or a hoax, a bomb threat represents a potential danger to the safety and welfare of students, staff, and school property.

Any bomb threat will be regarded as a serious matter and will be treated accordingly.

No person shall make or communicate, by any means, a threat that a bomb has been or will be placed on school premises.

In the event a bomb threat is made, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. All bomb threats will immediately be reported to the police and fire departments. The administration, with input from the police, will determine the appropriate action.
2. The building may be evacuated while a quick search is undertaken by volunteers from the school staff under the supervision of police and fire personnel. Once the building is searched and secured, a decision whether to resume school for the balance of the day will be decided.
3. Cancellation of school for the balance of the day may occur if, in the opinion of the superintendent, the situation warrants.

Any decision to re-enter the school or buildings will be made by the Superintendent, or designee, and only after such clearance has been given by the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Making a bomb threat is a crime. As such, any person found to have made a bomb threat will be subject to arrest and prosecution according to law. Any student suspected of making a bomb threat will be reported to law enforcement authorities for investigation and possible prosecution. Apart from any penalty imposed by law, and without regard to the existence or status of criminal charges, a student who makes a bomb threat shall be subject to disciplinary action, in accordance with applicable Board policy.

Policy approved by the School Board: May 12, 1998

Reviewed and First Reading December 1, 2009

Policy Approved January 12, 2010

Legal References:

RSA [158:9](#), Possession of Explosives

RSA [644](#), Breaches of the Peace and Related Offenses

First Aid and Emergency Medical Care

School personnel have responsibilities in connection with accidents occurring in school and at school sponsored events as follows:

1. Administering first aid
2. Summoning medical assistance
3. Notification to administration
4. Notification to parents
5. Completing of written accident reports

All personnel are responsible for the knowledge of the procedures to be followed in the event of an accident. Teachers should be aware of the physical condition of students for whom they are responsible in order to meet medical emergencies that may arise.

The school physician, school nurse and specially trained staff members shall be available to assist in the treatment of accident victims. The school nurse has the authority to administer oxygen in the case of a medical emergency without prior notification to the parent or guardian.

Accidents shall be reported by the personnel in charge to the building principal, or in his/her absence, the school nurse, in accordance with established procedures.

A group plan of student accident insurance shall be made available on a voluntary basis to every student enrolled in grades kindergarten through twelve. The School Department will not provide student accident insurance.

Health examinations shall be administered in accordance with applicable state laws and regulations.

Approved: June 10, 2008

Operation and Maintenance of School Buildings

The principal of each school shall, with the cooperation of the maintenance supervisor:

1. Be responsible for the care and maintenance of the buildings and grounds.
2. Supervise the custodial staff of the school in maintaining an adequate program for such care and maintenance.
3. Insure that the building custodial supervisor coordinates operational and maintenance activities with the maintenance supervisor on a regular basis.

Policy Adopted by the Portsmouth School Board: June 11, 2001

Revised and Approved: September 13, 2001

Personal Network Device Policy

Personal network devices may be used in the Portsmouth School Department in accordance with the following policy. This policy is designed to protect the guest and the Portsmouth School Department Network. Network access is available through the guest wireless network. This guest wireless network operates parallel to the existing Portsmouth School Department wireless network and may be accessed by any wireless device. This guest wireless network provides filtered Internet access and related web-based services only. This Internet access will operate with the same Internet filter that school devices currently use.

Each time someone accesses the guest wireless network they agree to the terms listed below. If you wish to use the guest wireless network at the Portsmouth School Department, please familiarize yourself with the information below.

- Personal network devices include any privately owned networkable electronic device. These devices include, but are not limited to the following: laptop, tablet PC, netbook, PDA, smartphone (Blackberry, iPhone), digital media device (iPod, iTunes, MP3 player)
- The Portsmouth School Department will not be held liable for any damage that may occur as a result of connecting to the guest wireless network or any electrical power source.
- The Portsmouth School Department will not be held responsible for any damage, loss or theft of the personal network device.
- The guest wireless network is provided as is with no warranty as to usability for a particular purpose. The Portsmouth School Department will not be held liable for any disruption of service.
- The Portsmouth School Department reserves the right to inspect, at any time, any personal network device while connected to the guest wireless network. The Portsmouth School Department also reserves the right to disconnect any personal network device from the network for any reason without notice in order to protect the integrity of the Portsmouth School Department Network.
- Guest wireless network access is provided for filtered Internet access and related web-based services only. Personal network devices will not be allowed access to Portsmouth School Department printers, servers, user files, or user home directories.
- Personal network devices may be connected exclusively to the guest wireless network in Portsmouth School Department buildings in the areas where this coverage is available.
- Illegal, destructive, harmful, or any other inappropriate activities including but not limited to computer hacking, harassment, accessing offensive/obscene materials, or engaging in illegal activity are strictly prohibited.
- Any person using a personal network device must abide by the Portsmouth School Department Acceptable Use Policy while connected to the guest wireless network or on school department property.

- The owner of the device is exclusively responsible for how the device is used.
- The owner of the device is exclusively responsible for the configuration of the device. This includes network configuration. The Portsmouth School Department is not responsible for providing technical support for personal network devices.
- The owner is exclusively responsible for the security of the device.
- Student use of personal network devices in the classroom setting will be at the discretion of the classroom teacher.
- The device must not interfere with the normal function of the Portsmouth School Department Network or other wireless devices.
- The device must have the latest security patches for its operating system installed.
- The device must be running anti-virus software with the latest virus definition files.
- The device must be free of spyware, adware, worms, viruses, Trojan horses, and peer-to-peer software.
- The device must be used as a client only and may not run server related services including but not limited to web hosting services, email services, or proxy services.
- The owner of the device, or in the case of a student their parents and/or guardians, agrees to be responsible for and to reimburse the Portsmouth School Department for any damage that may be caused by the personal network device or use there of while connected to the guest wireless network.

Draft June 8, 2009

Approved June 23, 2009

Safety

The physical plant should provide an environment that contributes to the educational process and safety of the students, educators and administrators. The Board wishes to make clear that the safety of pupils and staff is the FIRST responsibility of operation and maintenance personnel and their supervisors.

Policy Approved: June 11, 1991

Revised and Approved: September 13, 2001

School Nutrition

The Portsmouth School Department strives to create a healthy school nutrition environment in which all food and beverages on campus contribute to healthy eating patterns and support the health curriculum. All food and beverages offered to students on school premises during normal school hours shall be items, which represent healthy food choices, according to State and Federal guidelines.

Funds from any food or beverage sold from vending machines during the normal meal times must benefit the non-profit school nutrition program.

Vending machines not controlled by the school nutrition program may be operated during non-meal times and after school.

This policy shall not apply to employee lounge vending machines, which are for employee use only.

Policy First Reading Approved by the Portsmouth School Board March 8, 2005

Security of Buildings and Grounds

The Board policy concerning security of buildings and grounds is to:

1. Insure compliance with all building codes, life safety codes and hazardous materials requirements.
2. Minimize fire and workplace safety hazards.
3. Ensure that all plant equipment is operating at maximum efficiency.
4. Perform preventive maintenance as scheduled and in a professional manner.
5. Maintain current records on all equipment and control accessibility to school facilities and assets.
6. Protect against vandalism and burglary.

The superintendent of schools is directed to establish such rules and regulations as may be needed to carry out this policy.

Revised and Approved: November 13, 2001

Policy Approved by Portsmouth School Board: June 11, 1991

Transportation/Purpose(s)

The school district shall provide transportation for pupils to and from school in accordance with state law. The School Board may authorize the superintendent to approve transportation for shorter distances than required by state law for safety reasons and other extenuating circumstances.

In cases where transportation is needed but is not considered feasible to furnish bus transportation, contracts, also in accordance with state law, may be established with parents or private carriers for furnishing transportation.

Policy Approved by Portsmouth School Board: June 11, 1991

Revised and Approved: November 13, 2001

SECTION F: FACILITIES PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

SECTION G: PERSONNEL

Evaluation of Professional Staff

The Superintendent will cause all professional staff to be evaluated as a basis for contract recommendations. The principal or administrator designee will conduct the evaluations. Evaluations should occur at least once per year, but may occur more than once per year if the Superintendent or Principal determines additional evaluations are necessary.

In conjunction with professional evaluations, the Principal may implement an “improvement plan” if the Principal believes the professional staff member isn’t meeting the district’s performance standards.

Subject to collective bargaining provisions and individual teaching contracts.

Legal References:

RSA 189: 14-sa, Failure to be Re-nominated or Re-elected

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 302.02 (n), Substantive Duties of Superintendents

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 304.01 (b), Substantive Duties of School Principals

First Reading March 9 2010

Gifts to School Personnel

Students and their parents will be discouraged from giving gifts to district employees. The Board considers the writing of letters to staff members expressing gratitude or appreciation as more appropriate.

These provisions are not meant to discourage acts of generosity in unusual situations.

Policy Approved by Portsmouth School Board: June 11, 1991

Non-Smoking/Tobacco

In accordance with State RSA 126-K: 7:

The use of tobacco products in School Department buildings, facilities, or on School Department grounds is prohibited at all times. Tobacco products shall mean any tobacco-containing product including but not limited to:

- Cigarettes
- Smoking tobacco
- Cigars
- Chewing tobacco
- Snuff pipe tobacco
- Smokers' tobacco
- Smokeless cigarettes

Employees who violate this policy shall be subject to penalties including but not limited to:

- Written reprimand
- Suspension without pay
- Dismissal for cause

Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to waive the School Department's right to seek enforcement of penalties pursuant to RSA 155:76 or RSA 126-K: 7.

First Reading Approved: November 28, 2006

Legal References:

RSA [155:64 – 77](#), Indoor Smoking Act

RSA [126 K:6](#), Possession and Use of Tobacco Products by Minors

RSA [126 K:7](#), Use of Tobacco Products on Public Educational Grounds Prohibited

Physical Relationships

No School Department employee or volunteer shall engage in a physical relationship of a sexual nature of any kind with a student of the Portsmouth School Department regardless of the age of the student while the student is enrolled in the school system.

Policy approved by the School Board: November 24, 1998

Resignation of Staff Member

All staff members who sign a contract are expected to honor the contract.

The Portsmouth School Board authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to accept all employee resignations. Such acceptances shall be effective when first communicated to the employee orally or in writing. Acceptance shall be confirmed in writing to the employee. The resignation and its acceptance should be reported out as information to the School Board at its next regular or special meeting.

First Reading January 12, 2010

Approved February 9, 2010

Sexual Harassment Policy

Statement

The policy of the Portsmouth School Board is that all employees and students have the right to a working and learning environment, which is free of intimidation, hostility and offensiveness. In order to ensure such an environment, employees and students are not to engage in the harassment of any other person. While all forms of harassment are prohibited, this policy specifically prohibits sexual harassment.

Definitions

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

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic standing; or
- Submission to or refection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting that individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance or creating a hostile, intimidating or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to: sexual innuendo; verbal harassment, including epithets, derogatory comments or slurs; physical harassment; or visual harassment such as derogatory cartoons, drawings, posters or graffiti.

Sexual harassment can be against members of the same sex as well as against members of the opposite sex. It is determined from the perspective of the recipient as determined by the standards of how a reasonable person of the same gender/position would interpret the incident.

Procedures

Employees are required to immediately report any disclosure of a potential violation of this policy or any suspicion of a violation to the teacher designates, their building principal, and/or the assistant superintendent.

Students should immediately report any occurrences of sexual harassment to a teacher, counselor and/or administrator.

To the greatest extent possible, such complaints will be treated in a confidential manner. Limited disclosure may be necessary in order to complete a thorough investigation.

Some forms of sexual harassment are considered violation of criminal law and, as such, must be referred to legal authorities.

Retaliation

Individuals shall not be retaliated against, reprimanded or discriminated against in any way or initiating an inquiry or complaint or testifying, or participating in any manner in an investigation, proceeding or hearing. The rights of an individual against whom a complaint is brought will also be protected.

Discipline

A substantiated charge against a staff member will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. A substantiated charge against a student will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Policy Approved: April 27, 1994

Legal Reference:

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. [303.01\(j\)](#), Substantive Duties of School Boards; Sexual Harassment Policy

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section [306.04\(a\)\(8\)](#), Student Harassment

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section [306.04\(a\)\(9\)](#), Sexual Harassment

RSA [354-A:7](#), Unlawful Discriminatory Practices

Appendix: [GBAA-R](#)

[BBA-R](#)

SECTION H: NEGOTIATIONS

SECTION I: INSTRUCTION

Advanced Course Work/Advanced Placement Courses

Any student who is capable of and wishes to do advanced course work or take advanced placement classes while in high school should be permitted to do so. School district administrators and guidance counselors will provide assistance to students who wish to enroll in such courses. If advanced course work or advanced placement courses are not available within the school district, administrators or guidance counselors are instructed to assist students in identifying alternative means of taking such classes. These means may include taking courses at a different public school or a private school, or through distance education courses or other suitable means.

Any student whose eligibility for taking advanced course work is recommended by his/her counselor may enroll in a course. Credit may be given, provided the course comports with applicable District policies and state standards. The District will not be responsible for any tuition, fees, or other associated costs incurred by the student for enrollment in such courses.

First Reading January 12, 2010

Approved February 9, 2010

Legal References:

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.14(g), Advanced Course Work

Alternative Learning Plans

Purpose

In an effort to reduce the number of students who do not complete the requirements to graduate from high school and earn a diploma, the Board establishes a program for alternative learning plans for students to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent. The District, through an Alternative Learning Plan team comprised of teachers, administrators, and guidance counselors, are directed to identify students who may be at risk for dropping out of high school, for developing alternative learning plans consistent with this policy, and for assisting students who are participating in alternative learning plans.

Alternative learning plans may include, but are not limited to, extended learning opportunities, independent study, private instruction, performing groups, internships, community service, apprenticeships, online courses/distance education, or other opportunities approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee, in conjunction with Board policies.

The purposes of alternative learning plans are to provide students with educational experiences that are meaningful, to provide students with opportunities to explore and achieve at high levels, and to meet State and District requirements to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent. In order to maximize student achievement, this policy permits students to employ alternative learning plans that fulfill or exceed the expectations set forth by State minimum standards and applicable Board policy.

Alternative learning plans may include extended learning opportunities taken for credit or taken to supplement regular academic courses. If the alternative-learning plan includes extended learning opportunities taken for credit, the provisions of INAA, *Extended Learning Opportunities*, will apply. The granting of credit shall be based on a student's mastery of course competencies. If credit is not granted, the extended learning opportunity may be used to fulfill prerequisite requirements for other courses.

Roles and Responsibilities

Alternative learning plan components shall have specific instructional objectives aligned with the State minimum standards and District curriculum standards. All alternative learning plans will comply with applicable laws and regulations, including child labor laws and regulations governing occupational safety.

Teachers, Guidance Counselors and Administrators should inform students of the District's promotion of alternative learning plans and similar programs. District employees who believe a student may be at risk for dropping out of high school should inform either the Principal or the Guidance Counselor of the Teacher's concerns. The Principal will then schedule a meeting with the student, the Principal, the Guidance Counselor, and the student's parent/guardian to discuss the student's participation in an alternative learning program.

Students expressing interest in pursuing such a plan or program should be referred to the Guidance Counselor, Principal, or the Principal's designee.

The Guidance Counselor or Principal's designee is responsible for assisting students and their parents/guardians in preparing application forms and other necessary paperwork for alternative learning plans. The alternative learning plan components will be determined through a team consisting of the student, school personnel, parent/guardian and other appropriate people based on the individual student need.

The Principal or Principal's designee and the designated team will have primary responsibility and authority for approval and implementation of alternative learning plans and will oversee all aspects of such programs. The Principal will be responsible for reviewing and approving alternative learning plans and credits awarded toward the attainment of a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Parents/guardians and/or students may appeal decisions rendered by the Principal within the provisions set forth below (see Appeal Process).

Students approved for alternative learning plans must have parent/guardian permission to participate in such a program. Such permission will be granted through a Memorandum of Understanding for Educational Services signed by the parent/legal guardian and returned to the district before beginning the program. For alternative learning plans that require off-campus attendance, the District will require a signed agreement among the school, the student, and a designated agent of the third-party host. The agreement should specify the roles and responsibilities of each party.

Students engaged in alternative learning plans will remain as enrolled students of their district.

Approval Process

1. The student/parent/guardian seeking an alternative learning plan shall meet with the guidance counselor or principal to discuss alternative learning plan options and initiate the formation of an alternative learning plan team. The team, including the student and parent/guardian, will meet to design the alternative learning plan designed to enable the student to remain enrolled in school and complete educational requirements.
2. The Superintendent or Superintendent's designee will review the paperwork and will determine whether or not to approve the alternative learning plan. The Superintendent or designee's decision will be made within ten (10) days of receipt of the paperwork. The student and parent/guardian will be notified in writing of the decision. If additional information is requested, the information must be submitted within ten (10) days of receipt of the request.
3. It is the student's responsibility to maintain academic standing and enrollment in the approved program. Any failure to complete an approved program may jeopardize the student's ability to remain in the program and receive credit towards obtaining a high school diploma or its equivalent. The student and parent/guardian recognize that in the event the student withdraws from an approved program, the District cannot guarantee placement in an equivalent District-offered course.
4. The District reserves the right to determine the number of credits to be awarded. The course name and actual grade earned will be noted on the student's official transcript.

Evaluation Criteria

The Superintendent or designee will evaluate all applications of students wishing to participate in an alternative learning plan or program. At a minimum, any alternative learning plans must meet the following criteria:

Provides for proper administration and supervision of the program or plan

- Provides that certified school personnel oversee and monitor the program
- Requirement that each extended learning opportunity, if included in the alternative learning plan, meets rigorous standards, including the minimum standards established by the State Board of Education and all other applicable District standards
- Includes age-appropriate academic rigor and the flexibility to incorporate the student's interests and manner of learning
- Are developed and amended, if necessary, in consultation with the student, a school Guidance Counselor, the school Principal and at least one parent/guardian of the student

Appeal Process

If the submitted plan is rejected, the Superintendent or designee will provide the student/parents with a rationale as to why the proposal was rejected. Students whose application has been denied by the Superintendent may appeal that decision to the School Board. The School Board will place the item on its agenda for its next regularly scheduled meeting. Alternatively, if scheduling and time constraints do not allow for the matter to be placed on the agenda at the Board's next meeting, the Board may hold a separate meeting to hear the matter. The matter will be discussed in non-public session, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II, unless the parents request the Board hear the matter in public session, in which case the request will be honored. If the School Board upholds the Superintendent's determination, the decision of the School Board may be appealed to the State Board of Education, consistent with applicable law. The School Board will inform the student/parents of their appeal rights.

Program Integrity

In order to insure the integrity of the learning experience approved under this program, the student will be required periodically or upon demand to provide evidence of progress. The Principal will be responsible for certifying completion of the plan or program and the award of credits, consistent with the District's policies on graduation.

If a student is unable to complete the alternative learning plan for valid reasons, the Principal will evaluate the experience completed to date and make a determination for the award of partial credit or recommend an alternative experience. The Principal will determine the validity of such reasons on a case-by-case basis.

If a student ceases to attend or is unable to complete alternative learning plan for insufficient reason (lack of effort, failure to follow through, indecision, etc.), the Principal may determine that the student's transcript be adjusted to reflect the experience as a failure.

In order to certify completion of curricular programs and activities based upon specific instructional objectives aligned to the standards, the Principal will develop appropriate mechanisms to document student progress and program completion on student personnel records.

First Reading January 12, 2010

Approved February 9, 2010

Legal References:

RSA 193:1, Duty of Parent; Compulsory Attendance by Student

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.04(a)(13), Extended Learning Opportunities

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.27(b)(4), Extended Learning Opportunities – High School

Awards for Achievement

Staff may recognize student scholastic and distinguished service achievements through awards. No offer of award will be accepted by the School Board that discriminates on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, or sex.

The professional staff is authorized to review, approve or reject proposed awards (trophies, prizes, scholarships or other awards from non-school donors) based upon all of the following criteria being met:

1. The proposed award free from motives personal or corporate gain and publicity.
2. The criteria and process for making the award is under the control of the Portsmouth School Department.
3. The purpose of the award is consistent with the mission of the Portsmouth School Department.

The award reflects the relationship between the goal/goals to be achieved.

Approved by Portsmouth School Board June 8, 2010

Character and Citizenship Education

Those in charge of curriculum development will have the responsibility for integrating into the curriculum, as appropriate, the following principles:

1. Each individual has dignity and worth.
2. A free society requires respect for persons, property, principles and self.
3. Each individual has a right to learn and freedom to achieve.
4. Each individual, regardless of age, gender, race, creed, color, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, or disability, has the right to equal opportunity.
5. Each individual has the right to personal liberties.
6. Each individual is responsible for his/her own actions, and should exercise self-discipline where and when appropriate.
7. Each individual has a responsibility to the group as well as to the total society.
8. A democratic government is established by majority vote.
9. Democratic societies are based on law.
10. Problems are solved through reason and orderly processes.
11. An individual should be tolerant of another's beliefs and should have the freedom to express his/her own.
12. Each individual has the right to work, to pursue an occupation, and to gain satisfaction from personal efforts.

Teaching in the area of character and citizenship will take place throughout the K-12 program.

Legal References:

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306:04\(a\)\(5\)](#), Character and Citizenship
NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306:04\(i\)](#), Character and Citizenship

Approved by Portsmouth School Board June 8, 2010

Curriculum

Curriculum shall be developed by the professional staff based upon the following considerations:

- New Hampshire Minimum Standards
- Actual studies and information concerning the needs of students within the Portsmouth School Department,
- The range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of all students,
- The aspirations of residents of the School District for the students,
- Diversity of the local populations,
- Research based upon best practices of teaching and learning.

The curriculum may also include innovative programs and pilot studies within the curriculum that have the approval of the Principal and/or the Superintendent.

Policy Approved by Portsmouth School Board: May 11, 2004

Legal References:

N.H. Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.26\(a\)\(2\)](#), Kindergarten through Grade 8 Curriculum, Instructional Program

N.H. Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.27\(b\)\(3\)](#), High School Curriculum, Instructional Program

Earning of Credit

Students can earn course credit by demonstrating mastery of the required coursework and material. Mastery is defined as: sufficient evidence of attainment of the required content, concepts, and skills of a particular course. Student assessment of mastery is the responsibility of the building principal.

Credit will be awarded upon satisfactory demonstration and mastery of the required course competencies. Additionally, credit may also be awarded if a student is able to demonstrate learning experience in compliance with the district-specified curriculum and assessment standards.

First Reading January 12, 2010

Legal References:

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.04(a)(14), Earning of Credit

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.14(f), Awarding of Credit

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.27(d), Mastery of Required Competencies

Extended Learning Opportunities

The Portsmouth School District shall allow students to request extended learning opportunities (“ELOs”) at the high school level as a means of meeting their diverse learning styles, talents, and interests. ELOs may include, but are not necessarily limited to, internships, independent study, on-line courses and community service. All ELOs must be aligned with District educational goals and objectives, as well as Portsmouth High School’s established academic competencies. It is anticipated that this policy will be revisited as ELO’s become recognized by more post secondary education programs.

Awarding of Credits for ELOs

In general, students will be limited to a total of four credits for ELOs, and no more than two credits in each of their junior and senior years. ELO credit will generally only be approved for elective graduation credits and not as a replacement for Portsmouth High School core subject area graduation credits.

In order for core, subject area graduation credits to be approved for an ELO, one of the following conditions must apply:

1. The ELO is being utilized as a credit recovery opportunity for a course, which the student did not pass. In such cases, the course may fulfill a subject area credit requirement, but the grade will not be computed in the student’s GPA or class rank.
2. The course of study is not available at Portsmouth High School, but is offered on-line and is aligned with New Hampshire State education standards, GSEs and is overseen by a certified teacher. In such cases, the course may fulfill a subject area credit requirement, but the grade will not be computed in the student’s GPA or class rank.
3. A student completes a Portsmouth High School course as an independent study because the course is not offered due to low enrollment or when a student has a schedule conflict that prevents him/her from taking the course. In such cases, the course may fulfill a subject area credit requirement and the grade will be computed in the student’s GPA and class rank.

Exceptions to the conditions above may only be made with the recommendation and support of both the Principal and Guidance Director.

ELO Standards and Approval Process

For an ELO to be approved for credit, it must meet rigorous, measurable standards comparable to Portsmouth High School course competencies. A student must have the permission of his/her parents and have a sponsoring teacher or guidance counselor (except that a sponsoring teacher/guidance counselor is not required for on-line courses taught by certified teachers).

All ELO requests require the recommendation of the Guidance Director and approval of the Principal. In cases where ELO requests are not approved for credit purposes, the Principal has the discretion to allow the ELO to be used as a prerequisite for advanced courses if the student can demonstrate the appropriate competencies for the particular course.

ELO Expenses

Students and/or their parents shall be responsible for ELO expenses, including but not limited to tuition, textbooks, supplies and transportation and extraordinary administrative experiences. In extenuating circumstances, the District may pay a portion of the expenses. The Principal and the Superintendent must approve any such request.

Procedures

The Portsmouth High School Principal, in consultation with appropriate school staff, shall develop procedures to implement this policy. All such procedures must be consistent with applicable laws and this policy, and be approved by the Superintendent.

Legal References: NH Code of Admin. Rules 306.04 (a) (4); 306. 22; 306. 26(f); 306.27 (b) (4); 306.27 (q)

First Reading January 12, 2010

Approved February 9, 2010

Evaluation of the Instructional Program

Evaluation:

Faculty and the administration shall regularly evaluate the education program. Such evaluation is expected to lead to recommendations to the Board for modifications of best practices, changes to the curriculum and for new courses.

The Assistant Superintendent of Schools shall be primarily responsible for the coordination and the development process of the curriculum working closely with the Curriculum Council. All staff are expected to participate in curriculum development.

New Course Recommendation:

- All new courses shall be approved by the School Board
- New courses shall be planned by the faculty and approved by the Administration and Curriculum Council
- New courses shall be planned by the faculty and approved by the Administration and Curriculum Council
- Courses may be offered on a trial basis if recommended by the Administration and approved by the School Board
- The Assistant Superintendent shall make periodic reports to the School Board on the status of curriculum development activities

First reading approved: March 8, 2005

Legal References:

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.08](#), Instructional Resources

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.14\(e\)](#), Basic Instructional Standards

Field Trips

The Portsmouth School Board supports field trips that:

- Meet educational objectives and related to the curriculum;
- Fulfill obligations in inter-scholastic activities; and
- Allow participants and non-participants to carry on their schoolwork with a minimum of lost school time.

The building principal may authorize field trips, with notification to the Superintendent of Schools and upon compliance with field trip request procedures.

- Permission for Field Trips
- The teacher, in requesting permission to take a class off school grounds on a field trip, should submit the details of the trip to the Principal pursuant to the field trip request procedures. Upon authorization of a field trip, a signed permission form by the parent or guardian is required for each student participating in the trip. No student may leave the school grounds on a field trip unless a parent or guardian has properly signed the form.

Permission forms of those participating in the field trip shall be maintained on file at the direction of the Principal.

Financial arrangements for field trips must be made prior to the trip at the direction of the Principal. If fees are involved, all necessary funds must be submitted to the Principal prior to the trip.

Transportation for field trips shall be on a certified school bus with a certified bus driver wherever possible. If transportation is by private vehicle, proof of insurance is required in the amount of \$100,000/\$300,000 in bodily injury and \$100,000 in property damage liability.

A report shall be made to the Office of the Superintendent of Schools on the day students will be offsite on field trips.

Out of State Trips and Overnight Trips, including On-Site Overnight Events

Requests for permission for out-of-state, overnight trips and on-site overnight events shall be made to the Superintendent of Schools.

Requests for permission must:

- Be made at least one month prior to the proposed trip or event
- Be made by the Principal, advisor and student (where applicable);
- Include signed permission slips
- Include arrangements for transportation
- Include the staff to student ratio, including non-school chaperones
- Include a list, by name, of non-school chaperones

- Include cost of trip and any fundraising activities associated with financing the trip
- State the educational objective and how it is related to the curriculum

Upon satisfactory completion of the foregoing, the Superintendent is authorized to grant permission for the trip, subject to final approval by the School Board. The Superintendent may consider other factors in the decision to grant permission including security for the students and staff on the trip.

Motor vehicle transportation for trips shall be on a certified school bus with a certified bus driver wherever possible. If transportation is by private vehicle, proof of insurance is required in the amount of \$100,000/\$300,000 in bodily injury and \$100,000 in property damage liability.

Post trip:

Within two weeks of the completion of the trip there shall be a follow-up meeting with the Superintendent to insure that all objectives were met.

Policy Approved by School Board: 02-12-08

Appendix: [IJOA-R](#)

Graduation Requirements

Students will receive a Portsmouth High School Diploma upon the completion of the following:

- The completion of the Individual Education Plan and upon the recommendation of the Student's Evaluation/Placement Team, the Principal of the High School and the Student Services Director for those students with an identified disability pursuant to the New Hampshire Rules for the Education of Children with Disabilities.

OR

- Twenty-six (26) credits have been completed in the areas indicated.

	<u>Credits</u>
ENGLISH	4 credits
SCIENCE , including at least one (1) credit in: Physical Sciences Biological Sciences	3 credits
SOCIAL STUDIES , including one (1) credit in: US and NH History And at least one-half credit (1/2) in: US and NH Government/civics World History, Global Studies or Geography	3 credits
MATHEMATICS , Including an algebra credit that can be earned through a sequential, integrated, or applied program	3 credits
ECONOMICS	½ credit
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	1 credit
COMPUTER COURSE	½ credit
FINE ARTS EDUCATION (drama, music, visual arts, architecture media or dance)	½ credit
HEALTH EDUCATION	½ credit
ELECTIVES	10 credits
MINIMUM CREDITS TO GRADUATE	26

Legal References:

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.04\(a\)\(14\)](#), How Credit Can Be Earned

N.H. Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.14\(f\)](#), Awarding of Credit for Required Subjects and Open Electives

N.H. Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.27\(d\)](#), Mastery of Required Competencies

N.H. Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.27\(m\)](#), Credits Required for Graduation

Approved by Portsmouth School Board June 8, 2010

Homework

Homework is a constructive tool in the teaching/learning process when geared to the needs and abilities of students. Purposeful assignments not only enhance student achievement, but also develop self-discipline and associated good working habits. As an extension of the classroom, homework must be planned and organized, must be viewed as purposeful to the students, and should be evaluated and returned to students in a timely manner.

Teachers may give homework to students to aid in the student's educational development.

Teachers may assign homework as part of their curriculum. If homework is to be used by teachers as part of a student's grade, the teacher will explain to students how such homework assignments relate to the teacher's grading system. Homework should be an application or adaptation of a classroom experience, and should not be assigned for disciplinary purposes.

First Reading January 12, 2010

Approved February 9, 2010

Legal References:

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.14(b), Policy on Homework

Instructional Needs of Students With Different Talents

The Board recognizes that each student has unique and distinctive learning styles, and that not all students will excel in traditional classroom settings. To that end, the administration will design the district's instruction and curricular program to meet the instructional needs of students with different talents, interests, and development.

Administrators and teachers should collaborate to consider and address students' different talents, interests and academic development when planning the district's educational programs and curriculum.

In order to meet the instructional needs of students with different talents, administrators and staff should explore alternative learning programs such as extended learning opportunities, alternative learning plans, distance education, vocational/technical education, and others.

First Reading January 12, 2010

Approved February 9, 2010

Legal References:

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.04\(a\)\(6\)](#), Instructional Needs of Students With Different Talents

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.04\(j\)](#), Instructional Needs of Students With Different Talents

Interdisciplinary Credit

High school students may earn course credit in one content area required for graduation, and apply said credit in a different content area through the awarding of interdisciplinary credit.

Interdisciplinary credit may be counted only once in meeting graduation requirements.

The high school Principal is charged with approving courses for interdisciplinary credit if: (1) the course has been adopted by a faculty team/committee; and (2) the course addresses the objectives for the subject area in which the credit is to be counted.

First Reading January 12, 2010

Approved February 9, 2010

Legal References:

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.04(a)(14), Earning of Credit

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.14(f), Awarding of Credit

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.27(d), Mastery of Required Competencies

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed 306.27(p), Counting Credits

Procedures Implementing Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Identification

The Portsmouth School Department defines a qualified handicapped individual under Section 504 as a student three to six years old who is educationally disabled under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), or a school-aged child, aged 6 through 20, who has not graduated and who meets one of the following criteria:

- Has a physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activity. The term does not cover children disadvantaged by cultural, environmental, or economic factors.
- Has a record or history of such impairment
- Is regarded or treated by the School Department as having such an impairment.

Placement and Accommodations

II. Placement

Placement is defined as a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.
Placement Policy

For students identified as educationally disabled using Special Education criteria, placement will be determined according to IDEA regulation. For students whose current physical, mental or psychological condition would qualify him/her as handicapped under 504 but not for Special Education, placement will be determined by the School Department designees who are knowledgeable about the child, the meaning of the evaluation data, and the placement options. Designees may include teachers, school nurses, guidance counselors or school administrators.

All information made available from a variety of sources will be considered and so documented in the decision making process. Placements must meet the following criteria:

- No cost to the parent;
- Accessible;
- Least restrictive environment.

II. Accommodations

504 accommodations are defined as considerations and/or modifications geared to assure access to a free and appropriate public education.

Accommodation Policies:

For students who qualify as handicapped under 504: reasonable accommodations will be determined by the School Department designees who are knowledgeable about the child and knowledgeable about the evaluation data related to that child.

All information made available from a variety of sources will be considered. In determining the needed accommodation(s), the following criteria should be used:

- Accommodations should be reasonable and not seriously diminish the quality of the program,
- Environmental factors which would create a barrier should be identified and modified if needed,
- Accommodations may include alterations of school/classroom policies and procedures to allow access to programs.

Accommodation Procedures:

A written referral form is completed by a teacher, parent, or student and forwarded to the Review Team. The Review Team shall be the SEPT or a similar team whose members are selected by the school principal.

The Team reviews all the available evaluation data.

The Team may make the following determinations:

- That additional information and/or further evaluation is needed (permission for testing); or
- That the student is not handicapped under Section 504; or
- That the student is handicapped Under Section 504. The Team develops an accommodation plan.
- That the student is an eligible student according to IDEA.

After the above decisions (a, b, c, d) are made, the parents are:

- Notified of the Team's determination
- Given Section 504 Student/Parent's Rights and IDEA Parental Rights.

Re-evaluation/Review

The accommodation is reviewed periodically, or upon any significant change in the placement.

Grievance Procedure:

A complaint regarding a violation of law concerning discrimination on the basis of sex or handicap in our educational programs as required by Title IX of the Educations Amendment Act of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, shall provide for prompt and equitable resolution of disputes in the Portsmouth School Department as follows:

Level I

The complainant (student or employee) will first meet informally with the designated school administrator. The site administrator shall be the principal of the school or his/her designee. If the complainants' concerns are not clear, or cannot be resolved informally through discussion, the designated school administrator shall respond within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the written complaint.

In the event that the complaint is unable to be resolved at this level, the complainant may/shall be referred to the School Department Compliance Coordinator.

504 Coordinator , - Student Services Director
Portsmouth School Department,
50 Clough Drive
Portsmouth, New Hampshire
Telephone: (603) 431-5080

Level II

Upon receipt, the School Department Compliance Coordinator will provide a copy of the School Department's grievance procedure to the complainant. The person who believes he/she has a valid basis for a grievance shall discuss the grievance informally with the School Department Compliance Coordinator, who in turn shall investigate the complaint and respond within ten (10) days to the complainant in writing. If not satisfied with the response, the complainant may initiate formal procedures according to the following steps:

Step 1. A written statement of the grievance, signed by the complainant, shall be submitted to the School Department Compliance Coordinator within five (5) business days of receipt of answer to the informal complaint. The Coordinator shall further investigate the matters of grievance and reply in writing to the complainant within five (5) business days.

Step 2. If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision of the School Department Compliance Coordinator, he/she may submit a signed statement of appeal to the Superintendent of Schools within five (5) business days after receipt of the Coordinator's response. The Superintendent shall meet with all parties involved, formulate a conclusion, and respond in writing to the complainant within ten (10) business days of receipt.

Step 3. If the complainant remains dissatisfied, he/she may appeal through a signed written statement to the local School Board within five (5) business days of complainant and his/her representative(s) within thirty (30) business days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Portsmouth School Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each concerned party within ten (10) business days of this meeting. In cases where the local School Board wishes to recuse itself, the Portsmouth School Department may appoint and compensate one or more persons to review the decision of the Superintendent, or an alternative hearing officer in Step 2. The time limits set forth in this procedure may be extended by mutual agreement.

Step 4. If at this point the grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved, further appeal may be made to:

Office for Civil Rights, Region 1
U.S. Department of Education
33 Arch Street, Suite 900
Boston, Massachusetts 02109

Legal References:

[20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.](#), *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*

[34 C.F.R. § 300 et seq.](#), *Assistance to the States for the Education of Children with Disabilities RSA 186-C, Special Education*

N.H. Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 1100, Standards for the Education of Students With Disabilities, Appendix JICD-R, page 13

Policy approved by Portsmouth School Board: June 14, 1994

Promotion or Retention of Students

The decision to promote or retain a student shall be considered on an individual basis. In the event that the professional staff is considering retention, parents should be notified as early in the process as possible.

A decision to retain a student shall be made with input by pertinent school staff to include the principal, teachers, guidance, reading, special education staff, nurse or any other professional staff knowledgeable about the student and the parents or legal guardian.

The decision should consider the following factors:

1. Academic achievement
2. Intellectual development
3. Developmental and chronological aspects
4. Social development

The final decision to promote or retain the student shall be made by the principal and the decision may not be appealed. The results of any conference regarding retention must be summarized in writing and included as part of the student's cumulative record. The conference summary must include those who attended the meeting, major concerns presented, and the rationale for the decision. Parents shall be given a copy of the meeting summary.

The final decision to promote a student shall be made by the principal and that decision shall be final.

First Reading Approved: March 27, 2007

Schedules

The principal shall be responsible for the development of the master schedule, to include assignment of teachers and students, and approved by the Superintendent of Schools.

Policy approved by Portsmouth School Board: May 27, 2003

Legal References:

N.H. Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.26\(b\)](#), Local Time Schedule

School Calendar

The Portsmouth School Board shall be presented a proposed calendar for the ensuing school year at a regular meeting of the Board no later than the first meeting in February. After consideration, the Board shall adopt a calendar satisfying the requirements of RSA 189:1.

Policy Approved: March 23, 2004

Legal Reference:

RSA [189](#):1, Days of School

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. [306.18](#), School Year

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. [306.19](#), School Calendar

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. [306.27 \(q\)](#), High School Schedule for Seniors/Graduation

Subject Areas

Each school level shall provide instruction in the following subject areas:

Elementary

1. Reading/Literacy
2. Mathematics
3. Music, Performing Arts, and Visual Arts
4. Science
5. Social Studies
6. Physical and Health Education
7. Technology

Middle School:

1. Language Arts
2. Social Studies
3. Mathematics
4. Physical and Health Education
5. Music, Performing Arts, and Visual Arts
6. Physical and Natural Science
7. Fundamentals of International Languages
8. Technology

High School:

1. English
2. Mathematics
3. Social Studies
4. Science
5. Technology
6. Physical Education and Health
7. Music, Performing Arts, and Visual Arts
8. International Languages
9. Business & Consumer Science
10. Career Education

Instruction in additional subject areas may be determined at each level in order to provide a child specific education for children of all abilities.

Policy Approved by Portsmouth School Board: March 23, 2004

Legal References:

N.H. Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.26\(a\)\(2\)](#), Kindergarten through Grade 8 Curriculum, Instructional Program

N.H. Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.27\(b\)\(3\)](#), High School Curriculum, Instructional Program

Summer Activities

To promote summer learning by students, each grade level shall be provided with a suggested summer reading list, community resources such as library programs, and other activities that support student learning.

Legal Reference:

NH Code of Administrative Rules Section Ed. [306:14\(h\)](#), Instructional Program; Summer Activities That Support Student Learning

Approved by Portsmouth School Board June 8, 2010

Teaching About Religion

The Portsmouth School Board believes that the observance of religious holidays is not the responsibility of the public schools. Because a public school is not a place of worship, instructional materials, activities, decorations or assembly programs should not promote any religion. They should be seasonal, not religious.

The Board recognizes, however, that religion influences many areas of education, such as literature and history, and that teaching about religion's role in civilization does have a place in the public schools. Moreover, it is proper for teachers to teach and emphasize the generally accepted moral and ethical principles of all religions and to provide information and opportunities, which allow the study of various forms of religion. In summary, it is proper for teachers to teach about religion, rather than to teach particular sectarian beliefs.

In the process of teaching about religion, use of the Bible or other sacred documents as literary forms, or the use of music, art, drama, or other materials is acceptable. Such curricular aids should be utilized in a prudent and objective manner while teaching about the cultural and religious heritage of a particular holiday.

The use of religious symbols, provided they are used only as examples of cultural or religious heritage, is permissible as a teaching aid or resource. Religious symbols may be displayed only on a temporary basis as part of the academic program. Students may choose to create artwork with religious symbols, but teachers should not assign or require such creations. Decorations not tied to an academic program should be seasonal in nature, rather than religious.

While there are appropriate educational benefits to teaching about diverse religious traditions and cultures, teachers and administrators must avoid creating the impression that one set of holidays or beliefs is favored, or more acceptable than any other. It is imperative that tolerance of all religious beliefs, and the respect of others' rights to have different beliefs, be a central focus of those aspects of the curriculum, which touch on religion. Further, the Portsmouth School Board provides the following questions/guidelines for staff as they plan holiday activities.

- Do I have a distinct educational purpose in mind? If so, what is it? It should not be the purpose of the public schools to celebrate or observe religious holidays.
- If I use holidays as an opportunity to teach about religion, am I balanced and fair in my approach?
- Does the planned activity have the primary effect of advancing or inhibiting religion? Does it, for example, promote one faith over another or even religion in general? Remember that the school's approach should be academic not devotional. It is never appropriate for public schools to proselytize.

First Reading Approved by Portsmouth School Board: July 1991

SECTION J: STUDENTS

Administering Medication to Students

The Superintendent shall be responsible for establishing specific procedures to protect and control medications administered in schools.

In the case where medication must be taken during school hours, medications are to be administered by the School Nurse. In the absence of the School Nurse, the building principal or his/her designee is permitted to assist students in taking medication by:

- Making such medications available to the student as needed
- Observing the student as he/she takes the medication

A student may possess and self-administer an epinephrine auto-injector if he or she suffers from potentially life-threatening allergies. Both the student's parent or legal guardian and physician must authorize such self-possession and administration. In the event the student uses the auto-injector the student shall immediately report to the school nurse or the principal for appropriate follow-up care. The school nurse or building principal shall maintain, for a student's use, at least one epinephrine auto-injector, provided by the student, in the nurse's office or other suitable location.

A student may possess and self-administer a meter dose inhaler or a dry powder inhaler to alleviate or prevent asthmatic symptoms; auto-injectors for severe allergic reactions, and other injectable medications necessary to treat life-threatening allergies. Both the student's parent or legal guardian and physical must authorize such self-possession and administration.

Parents or legal guardians are required to provide written proof of the student's diagnosis, and verification that the student has the knowledge and skill to safely self-administer the student's medication.

Students shall not share any prescription or over-the-counter medication with other students. Notice of this prohibition will be provided in student handbooks. Student acting in violation of this prohibition will be deemed to have violated the Drug and Alcohol policy of the School Department and will be subject to discipline contained in the policy.

This policy applies to all in-school, school sponsored activity, event or program.

A plan for recording medication administered to students will be established. Records of medications administered will be maintained and will conform to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA).

The school nurse may administer non-prescription medication during the school day if written instructions from the parent or guardian have been provided.

The School Department will obtain, at the start of each school year, emergency contact information of the parent or legal guardian for each student enrolled in the district.

Parents and guardians are required to up-date the information during the school year in the event of changes. Inoculations given by school nurses shall be administered in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

First Reading Approved: June 11, 2002, Reviewed and Revised: May, 2008

Legal References:

*RSA [200:40](#), Emergency Care, RSA [200:40-a](#), Administration of Oxygen by School Nurse
NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. [306.12\(b\)](#), School Health Services*

Admission

All students who reside in Portsmouth and who have attained the minimum age for admission are eligible to be admitted and to attend school in Portsmouth. Admission decisions will be made in accordance with RSA 193:12.

Legal Residence Required

Proof of legal residence in Portsmouth or in a SAU #50 town shall be a condition of admission of students into school in Portsmouth. In addition, a certificate of residency shall be filed annually by the parent or legal guardian of each student enrolled in a school in Portsmouth.

Minimum Age Requirement

Students will generally be admitted into kindergarten if they will have attained the age of 5 by September 30 and to Grade 1 if they will have attained the age of 6 by September 30.

Parents who wish to request an exception from the minimum age requirement may make a request in writing to the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent will consider all relevant information, including input from the building principal, when considering an exception to the minimum age requirements. The decision of the Superintendent shall be final.

Class Assignment

Students will be placed at the grade level to which they are best adjusted academically, socially and emotionally after consultation with teachers, staff and parents.

SAU #50 Students

Students from towns that comprise SAU #50 (Newington, New Castle, Rye and Greenland) admission is authorized pursuant to and AREA (Authorized Regional Area Enrollment Agreement) agreement between SAU #50 and the Portsmouth School Department authorized by RSA-A. The method of calculating the "per pupil cost" for tuition purposes will be in accordance with applicable State law.

Policy Revised and Approved by Portsmouth School Board: November 10, 2003

Legal References:

RSA [193:1](#), Duty of Parent, Compulsory Attendance by Pupil

RSA [193:12,II](#), Legal Residence Required

Admission and Attendance of Non-Resident Students

No person shall attend school, or send a pupil to a Portsmouth School Department school if the pupil is not a legal resident of the City of Portsmouth, without the express consent of the Superintendent of Schools or the Portsmouth School Board. The definition of the term “legal resident” is intended to have the same meaning as the definition found in RSA 193:12.

Upon written request, the Superintendent of Schools is authorized to grant permission for attendance by non-residents in the following circumstances:

- Where the student is a senior who has completed the first semester and is eligible for graduation and who has been a legal resident through the end of the first semester and who becomes a non-resident through no action of their own.
- Where it is less than two weeks to the end of the marking period, permission may be granted to complete that marking period.
- Where the student becomes a non- resident through no action of his or her own after April first of the school year.
- Where arrangements have been made for the student to attend on a tuition basis.

In order to grant or deny permission, the Superintendent may consider the discipline and academic record of the student.

Legal custody or guardianship means that a court of competent jurisdiction has determined custody or guardianship. Parental transfers of custody without court action are not considered effective to establish residency for the purposes of school attendance.

Students will not be permitted to attend under those circumstances where custodial arrangements are made for the sole purpose of school attendance.

Policy Approved: November 10, 2003

Legal Reference:

RSA [193:12](#), Legal Residence Required

Admission of Homeless Students

Students considered homeless are authorized to attend school and will be provided School Department services for which they are eligible.

Pursuant to the McKinney-Vento Homelessness Assistance Act of 2001 – Title X, Part C of the No Child Left Behind Act – Section 725 (NCLB), homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- Are abandoned in hospitals;
- Awaiting foster care placement;
- Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- Are migratory children living in conditions described above.

An unaccompanied youth is homeless youth not in the physical custody of a parent or legal guardian.

The Superintendent of Schools shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the liaison for homeless students and their families.

To the extent feasible, homeless students will continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing.

Parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area the student is actually living,

In the event of an enrollment dispute, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or guardian shall be informed, in writing, of the School Department's decision and the right to appeal the decision.

Once the enrollment decision is made, the student shall be immediately enrolled pursuant to School Department policies and procedures. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization or other required records, the student shall be admitted under a personal exception. Upon request, the designated School Department liaison may assist the family in obtaining immunization records. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with School Department policies and procedures.

Homeless students are entitled to transportation to their school of origin or the school where they are to be enrolled. If the school of origin is in a different district from Portsmouth, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his or her school of origin in this district, the School Department will make reasonable efforts to coordinate the transportation services necessary with the other district. When one or more districts are involved, every effort shall be made to agree upon a method to apportion the cost and responsibility of transportation. A dispute as to transportation shall delay the immediate enrollment of a homeless student.

The School Department Liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with other agencies for the following:

- Social services provided to homeless children and youths and their families;
- Other school districts regarding transportation and records transfers;
- State and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies;
- Review and recommendations regarding policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

First Reading Approved: May 8, 2007 \

Legal References:

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.04\(a\)\(17\)](#), Homeless Students

RSA [193:12](#), Legal Residence Required

[No Child Left Behind Act, 2002](#)

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 11431, et seq.

Attendance

A core value of the Portsmouth School Department is the importance of regular attendance at school. This value is consistent with the State of New Hampshire statutes and laws that are intended to insure a student's attendance. Lack of regular attendance and school truancy increases the risk of poor academic progress and performance, delinquent behavior, school avoidance and poor self-esteem. Tardiness to class and frequent absences from school causes a disruption to the teaching and learning process and is a distraction to both teachers and students. The Portsmouth School Department staff and administration are committed to working collaboratively with parents and students with issues associated with attendance.

Parents and legal guardians are expected to become familiar with the School Department policies and procedures for attendance and truancy that will be disseminated through the use of school newsletters, correspondence and agenda books.

It is expected that parents and legal guardians will not schedule vacations when school is in session. It is also expected that medical and dental appointments, whenever possible, will not be scheduled during the school day.

The building principals or his/her designee are responsible for truancy and attendance issues.

Procedures

The administrative staff shall be responsible for the development and dissemination of attendance procedures stating that continued truancy of student in Portsmouth schools, is an issue that presents a formidable barrier to student learning and success. Attendance procedures shall include the following:

- Opportunities for educators, parents and students to collaborate to improve school attendance including guidance counselors serving as a resource, directing families to community resources, and providing written materials on the importance of regular school attendance.
- Interventions, which may include the following: telephone calls to the parent or legal guardian, home visits by the administration with the family, in school meetings with the administration, parents/legal guardian or student, referrals to the School Resource Officers, meetings with the Superintendent of Schools and court intervention through juvenile court truancy petitions.
- Consequences for unexcused absences, tardiness to school or classes, dismissals, and skipping classes. Consequences may include the loss of recess, in-school detentions, after school detentions, Saturday school, the loss of credit for classes during the quarter and also as listed in the student conduct policy.
- Early dismissals provided that the parent or legal guardian has written an excuse.
- Frequent absences, dismissals, and tardiness to school due to illness will require a signed excuse from a doctor.

Definitions:

Anticipated absences from school are those that are pre-planned should have prior approval of the building principal. All requests should be made in writing to the principal in advance of the anticipated absence.

A Half-Day of Absence is when a student has missed three hours of the school day.

Half Day of Attendance is recorded when a student attends three hours of the regular length of the school day.

Early Dismissals are the release of a student for part of the school day and are permissible when requested in writing, by a parent or legal guardian, for a reason that would constitute an excused absence.

Excused absences are permissible when the principal or his/her designee has authorized the student's non-attendance due to the following:

- A parent or legal/guardian has notified the school by telephone or in writing that the student is ill. If a medical visit has occurred, please provide a note from the medical practitioner.
- Death in family documented in writing by the parent/guardian. School sponsored activities. College visits with written documentation from the college.
- Court appearances with written documentation Religious observances documented in writing by the parent/guardian. Significant extenuating circumstances

Tardiness is the late arrival of a student to school or class. By level, a student will be considered tardy at the:

- Elementary level after the official start of school
- Middle School after 7:40 a.m.
- High School after 7:30 a.m. or after the bell has rung to begin each block
- PASS after 7:30 a.m.

The District Truant Officer is an administrator assigned by the building principal to deal with the issues concerning excessive and unexcused absences from school.

Unexcused absence is one that is not excused by the principal or his/her designee.

Policy revised and approved: June 23, 2009

Legal References:

RSA [193:1](#), Duty of Parent; Compulsory Attendance by Pupil

RSA [193:7](#) Penalty

RSA [193:8](#), Notice Requirements

RSA [193:16](#) Bylaws as to Nonattendance

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.04 \(a\)\(1\)](#), Attendance and Absenteeism

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.04 \(c\)](#), Policy Relative to Attendance and Absenteeism

Change of School Assignment (under RSA 193:3, III)

Reassignment of Resident Students

The superintendent has discretion to reassign a student from the public school to which the student is currently assigned to another public school in New Hampshire under RSA 193:3, III only if all the following conditions are met:

- The student's parent or legal guardian petitions the superintendent for a change of school assignment or consents to the superintendent's recommendation for such a change; and
- The superintendent determines that such a change would be in the student's best interest as defined below; and
- The total reassignments or transfers in any one school year shall not exceed one percent of the average daily membership in residence of the school district or exceed five percent (5%) of the average daily membership in residence of any single school, whichever is greater.

The parent or legal guardian has the burden of demonstrating that the reassignment is in the student's best interest.

"Best interest" does not mean that a parent has the right to select whichever public school the parent prefers or that a student has the right to attend a school that the parent or student believes is better suited to allow the student to reach his/her full potential. Rather, best interest means that the student's education will be adversely affected if the student continues to attend the public school to which the student is assigned.

The adverse effect must arise from:

- Problems the student has in accessing the assigned school; or
- The physical or mental condition of the student; or
- The availability at the school to which a reassignment is sought offers academic courses, which the student has an obvious educational need to access in order to benefit from education. General conditions or circumstances that affect or could affect numerous children attending the assigned school do not meet this requirement. For example, the availability of extra-curricular activities/athletics or certain advance placement courses in other schools cannot be the basis of a change of school assignment.

The superintendent's decision is final and conclusive and is not appealable. If the parent or legal guardian can file a request for a change of school assignment to the local school board under RSA 193:3, I on the basis of a manifest educational hardship.

The superintendent shall notify the New Hampshire Department of Education within 30 days of any reassignment of a resident student. As soon as possible, the Superintendent shall inform the School Board of any reassignment and decisions.

Requests to Assign Students from Other Public School Districts (Non-Resident Students)

The superintendent has discretion to approve a request from another superintendent to accept a transfer of a student from another school district if:

- The conditions in Section I (A) are met;
- Space is available within the school; and
- The student meets the school's admission requirements.

The superintendent is not required to accept the findings of the sending district's superintendent concerning a student's best interest, and will make an independent decision on the reassignment request. The superintendent's decision is final, conclusive and is not appealable.

Any student accepted under this Section will be permitted to attend our schools for only so long as that student abides by the reasonable rules of the school, failing which the student's right to attend our schools will be terminated.

General Requirements for Resident and Non-Resident Students

The parent or legal guardian of any student reassigned or accepted under this policy shall sign an acknowledgement that he/she has received a copy of this policy, understands it, and agrees to be bound by its terms.

All reassignments shall be limited to the current school year.

The parent or legal guardian is responsible for the student's transportation.

The superintendent involved in the reassignment of a student shall jointly establish a tuition rate for each such student. Some or all of the tuition may be waived by the Superintendent of the receiving district for the good cause shown or pursuant to school board policy of the receiving district.

Notwithstanding anything else to the contrary contained herein, the educational placement of disabled students shall be determined in accordance with the IDEA, RSA 186-C and Section 504. Any student reassigned under this policy whom the receiving district suspects has a disability will be referred to the student's district of residence for evaluation and possible identification.

When a reassignment exceeds the percentage limitations set forth in Section I (A) (3), the school board must approve the assignment.

Policy Approved by the Portsmouth School Board: March 12, 2002

Legal References:

RSA [193:3, III, Change of School Assignment](#)

RSA [193:3, I, II, Manifest Educational Hardship](#)

RSA [193:14-a, Change of School Assignment; Duties of State Board of Education](#)

Cheating/Plagiarism

The School Board expects all students to apply themselves and to work to the best of their abilities within the guidelines of class policies, school policies, and general honesty. Personal honesty and integrity are values that are developed in our students through adult models, reflection, and individual and group efforts.

Students who cheat or plagiarize will be subject to scholastic failure and disciplinary action by the teacher and the administration. After verifying an incident of cheating or plagiarism on the part of a student, the administration will determine the discipline, send a letter to the student's parents, and may record the occurrence in the student's permanent file.

Definitions: *

Cheating – (taking) an examination in a dishonest way, as by having improper access to answers.

Plagiarism – the unauthorized use of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own.

*From the 1990 edition of Webster's College Dictionary, Random House

Approved: February 13, 2001

Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

The use, abuse, possession or being under the influence of **a controlled substance**, unauthorized prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs or alcohol is prohibited on any School Department property, including vehicles owned, leased or approved by the School Department.

The use, sale, transfer or possession of drug-related paraphernalia is also prohibited.

The Portsmouth School Department has identified all school department property to be drug free school zones pursuant to RSA 193-B.

No student shall enter Portsmouth School Department property, or attend school-sponsored activities in possession of, or under the influence of controlled substances, drugs, drug related paraphernalia or alcohol, including in vehicles parked on school property or that are under the control of the student.

A controlled substance is one that is defined in the Controlled Substances Act, 21 U.S.C. 812 or the Controlled Drug Act found in RSA 318-B.

First Offense:

Students who have been found to be in violation of this section of the policy for the first time shall be subject to the following discipline:

- Suspension from school for up to five (5) school days
- Participation in an evaluation conducted by a Certified Substance Abuse Counselor
- Attendance at a meeting between the student, parent or guardian, and school personnel to review and develop a plan to implement the recommendations of the evaluation

The student and/or the parent or guardian may request a meeting with the Superintendent of Schools if there is disagreement with school officials concerning the implementation of any of the recommendations. The Superintendent may impose additional days of suspension if he/she determines that the student and/or the parent or guardian is not reasonably cooperating with the implementation of the recommendations.

Second/Subsequent Offenses:

Students who have been found to be in a subsequent violation of this section of the policy within one (1) calendar year from the prior offense shall be subject to the following discipline:

- Suspension from school for up to ten (10) school days.
- **A meeting with the Superintendent and Building Principal**
- A disciplinary hearing before the Portsmouth School Board with the possibility of expulsion from school
- Re-evaluated by a Certified Substance Abuse Counselor
- Participation in the development and implementation of an initial treatment plan prior to readmission to school

The Superintendent of Schools Superintendent may impose additional days of suspension if he/she determines that the student and/or the parent or guardian is not reasonably cooperating with the implementation of the recommendations.

Selling, Distributing or Transfer of Controlled Substances

Selling, distributing or transfer of controlled substances, or substances represented to be a controlled substance, including prescription drugs and over-the-counter drugs, or alcohol is prohibited. Selling, distributing or transfer is defined as selling, supplying, distributing or giving it to another. In addition, if the student is found in possession of a sufficient quantity of a controlled substance to sell or distribute it will be considered possession with intent to sell and will be a violation of this section of the policy.

All Offenses:

Students found to have violated this policy will be subject to the following discipline:

- An automatic suspension of ten (10) school days
- **A meeting with the Superintendent and Building Principal**
- Referral to the School Board for a disciplinary hearing
- The School Board may impose discipline as it deems appropriate under the facts and circumstances of the matter up to and including expulsion from school.
- Evaluation by a Certified Substance Abuse Counselor and a treatment plan must be developed prior to readmission to school.

All violations of this policy will be reported to the Portsmouth Police Department.

Policy Approved: June 26, 2001

Reviewed and Revised: August 24, 2010

Legal References:

[21 U.S.C. § 812\(c\)](#), *Controlled Substances Act*

[RSA 318-C](#), *Controlled Drug Act*

[RSA 571-C:2](#), *Intoxicating Beverages at Interscholastic Athletic Contests*

Due Process

The school administration will provide due process for students in the enforcement of RSA 193:13 and 193-D as follows:

Short-term suspensions (ten days or less):

- Upon the issuance of a short-term suspension, there shall be a meeting with the student and the Superintendent or designee, with written or oral notice to the student, of the charges and an explanation of the evidence against the student.
- An opportunity for the student to present his/her side of the story.
- A written statement to the student and at least one of the student's parents or guardian, explaining the disciplinary action taken against the student.

Long-term suspensions (in excess of ten days):

- Upon the issuance of a long-term suspension, there shall be a written communication to the student and at least one of the student's parents or guardian, delivered in person or by mail, of the charges and an explanation of the evidence against the student.
- The Superintendent's written or oral recommendation for the student action to correct the discipline problem.
- A written decision including the legal and factual basis for the conclusion that the pupil should be suspended.
- Notice that the decision of the School Board may be appealed to the State Board of Education.

Expulsion:

- The Portsmouth School Board may expel a student after there has been a formal hearing with the Superintendent of Schools prior to an expulsion.
- The hearing may be held either before or after the short-term suspension has expired and, pending the disciplinary hearing, may result in expulsion by the Portsmouth School Board.
- Written notice to the student pupil and at least one of the student's parents or a guardian will be delivered in person or by mail, of the date, time and place for a hearing before the Portsmouth School Board.
- A written statement of the charge and nature of the evidence against the student, the Superintendent's written recommendation for School Board action, and a description of the process will be used by the Superintendent to reach the recommendation.
- School Board proceedings shall be in accordance with the New Hampshire Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. 317 (04)g.

Approved by Portsmouth School Board: September 25, 2007

Legal References: RSA [189:15](#), Regulations

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.04\(a\)\(3\)](#), Student Discipline

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.04\(f\)](#), Student Discipline

Electronic and Amusement Devices

Radios, audible beepers, cellular phones, boom boxes and electronic games are not permitted in school without the permission of the principal. Rollerblades, skateboards and laser pointers are also not permitted. Personal walkmans may be used only during lunch. Items that disrupt and/or interrupt the learning process will be confiscated and held by the principal, including those devices listed above. In granting permission, the principal may, at his or her discretion, set a reasonable time and place for the use of the device.

Any student who brings an electronic or amusement to school in violation of this policy may be subject to suspension from school.

DRAFT CREATED MAY 4, 2000

Employee – Student Relations

Staff members are expected to maintain courteous and professional relationships with students, maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, through consistently and fairly applied discipline and established professional boundaries.

No School Department employee or volunteer shall engage in a sexual relationship of any kind with a student of the Portsmouth School Department regardless of the age of the student while the student is enrolled in the school system. Violation of this policy will result in dismissal.

1. Staff members shall not make derogatory comments to students regarding the school and/or its staff.
2. The exchange of purchased gifts between staff members and students is discouraged.
3. Staff members shall not fraternize, written or verbally, with students except on matters that pertain to school-related issues.
4. Staff members shall not associate with students in any situation or activity which could be considered sexually suggestive or involve the presence or use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs.
5. Dating between staff members and students is prohibited.
6. Staff members shall not use insults or sarcasm against students as a method of forcing compliance with requirements or expectations.
7. Staff members shall maintain a reasonable standard of care for the supervision, control and protection of students commensurate with their assigned duties and responsibilities.
8. Staff members shall not send students on personal errands.
9. Staff members shall, pursuant to law and Board policy, immediately report any suspected signs of child abuse or neglect.
10. Staff members shall not attempt to counsel, assess, diagnose or treat a student's personal problem relating to sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental or physical health and/or family relationships but, instead, should refer the student to the appropriate individual or agency for assistance.
11. Staff members shall not disclose information concerning a student, other than directory information, to any person not authorized to receive such information. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning assessments, ability scores, grades, behavior, mental or physical health and/or family background.
12. Staff members who violate this policy may face disciplinary measures, up to and including termination, consistent with state law and applicable provisions of a collective bargaining agreement.
13. Any employee who witnesses or learns of any of the above behaviors shall report it to the building principal or Superintendent immediately.

First Reading December 1, 2009

Policy Approved January 12, 2010

Expelled Students' Readmission to School

Expelled students will petition the School Board prior to readmission to school unless the Board determines at the disciplinary hearing that the student should petition to the administration. If the administration decides against readmitting the student, the student and his/her parents may appeal to the School Board.

Policy approved by the School Board: November 24, 1998

Legal References:

RSA [193:13](#), Suspension & Expulsion of Pupils

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.04\(a\)\(3\)](#), Student Discipline

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.04\(f\)](#), Student Discipline

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [317.04\(b\)](#), Disciplinary Procedure

Fund Raising

All fund raising on behalf of the Portsmouth School Department, including fund raising for extra-curricular activities, and must be authorized by the School Board through the Superintendent of Schools.

The building principal in writing must authorize any fundraising activity in which students participate. A request to include student participation in the fundraising must include the description of the activity and the manner in which students will participate.

School Sponsored Activities

All school sponsored activities requiring admission fees must be approved in writing by the building principal and the Superintendent of Schools.

All requests for school sponsored activities requiring admission fees must include the specified time of the event, the cost of admission, and the location, date and times of ticket sales.

Parent Teacher Association Activities

All fundraising activities of Parent Teacher Associations must have the written approval of the building principal.

All requests for fundraising activities must include a description of the activity, date of the event, associated costs and a detailed description of the participation of students in the fundraising activity.

Clubs and Groups Affiliated with School Sponsored Activities

No group may raise funds for school sponsored activities unless they have filed an information sheet with the Business Administrator of the Portsmouth School Department and have been approved by the Portsmouth School Board.

Those clubs and groups approved by the Board and that have independent taxpayer ID numbers must complete the information sheet and submit it to the Business Administrator of the School Department annually prior to September 1 and must include the name, address and telephone number of a responsible contact from the club or group.

No group may raise funds in the name of the Portsmouth School Department or may use the School Department taxpayer ID number unless specifically authorized by the Board. If approved, the Portsmouth School Board shall maintain all financial records and checkbooks. If approved, all financial records and checkbooks shall be maintained by the Portsmouth School Department. In addition, the information sheet must be completed and submitted to the Business Administrator of the School Department annually prior to September 1 and must include the name, address and telephone number of a responsible contact from the club or group.

The Superintendent may require additional information if it is deemed appropriate.

Other Approved Community Service Activities Affiliated with Non-Profit Organizations

Students may engage in raising funds, under the control of the School Department, for certain approved community service activities affiliated with non-profit organizations. An activity may be approved, in writing, by:

- Providing a complete description of the activity including the identification of the non-profit organization.
- Designating the beneficiary of the fundraising, i.e. American Heart Association.
- Description of the method of fund collection and deposit of funds collected.
- All such activities must be approved, in writing, by the building principal with notice to the Superintendent of Schools.

Commercial Activities

Students and staff are not permitted to engage in commercial or personal enterprises on school premises during school hours.

Vending Machine Revenue

The placement of all vending machines not operated by the school nutrition program of the Portsmouth School Department must have the approval of the building principal. All products dispensed from vending machines shall offer products consistent with School Department policy. All revenue received from vending machine sales shall be accounted for at the building level and expended on behalf of students (field trips, etc.).

This policy shall not apply to the establishment and administration of “flower, sickness, bereavement and anniversary funds.”

Policy Approved by School Board: September 9, 2003

Harassment

The Portsmouth School District will not tolerate unlawful harassment of any student while in attendance in the Portsmouth Public Schools or engaged in co-curricular activities, whether the harassment is from another student, a teacher, aide or staff member, public official, member of the public, or any person. Harassment on the basis of the student's sex, race, national origin, color, religion, age, sexual orientation or disability is prohibited.

The issue of sexual harassment deserves special mention. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, physical, and non-physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for educational decisions affecting the person who did the submitting or rejecting, or for awarding or withholding a favorable educational opportunity, evaluation, or assistance; or
- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a condition of the individual's initial or continued receipt of educational services; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's education or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

Sexual harassment includes a wide range of behaviors from the actual coercion of sexual relations to unwelcome touching to offensive jokes, stories and other sexually oriented statements. Sexual harassment may be indirect and even unintentional. Students, staff and members of the public are prohibited from bringing into the schools or otherwise displaying any written materials or pictures that are sexually suggestive or offensive in nature.

Any employee who violates this policy by failing to follow provisions or who refuses to cooperate in any investigation of a complaint filed under this policy may be subjected to discipline up to, and including, discharge. Failure to cooperate shall include failure of an employee to report any conduct that is known to or observed by them to constitute sexual harassment.

Reporting Procedures for Sexual and Other Unlawful Harassment

Any complaints of sexual or other unlawful harassment shall be reported immediately to the Superintendent of Schools, Assistant Superintendent, School Principal or Assistant School Principal who shall immediately notify the Title IX Coordinator(s) for the School Department. Complaints may also be made directly to the Title IX Coordinator(s).

Teachers or staff members who become aware of harassing conduct and/or a complaint of harassment must report to the conduct and/or complaint immediately.

The complaint will be promptly investigated and appropriate action will be taken, depending on the nature and severity of any incident. Investigations will be conducted as discreetly as possible, consistent with the need to conduct a prompt and thorough investigation and in order to provide as much confidentiality as possible.

Within two (2) school days after receipt of the complaint, the Principal will make a decision with regard to the status of the alleged harasser(s) pending the completion of the investigation. In some instances, the alleged harasser(s) may be suspended or other actions taken to facilitate the

investigation and/or to minimize the possibility of retaliation or reoccurrence of the harassment. Depending on whether the alleged harasser(s) is/are students or employees, the appropriate procedures for suspensions in School District policies or collective bargaining agreements shall be observed.

- The investigation by the Title IX Coordinator(s) will be completed within five (5) school days after the receipt of the complaint unless unique circumstances prevent completion of the investigation in that time period. In such case, the investigation shall be completed as promptly as reasonably possible.
- Within two (2) school days after receiving the investigative report, the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent or building Principal shall initiate action to resolve the complaint. Depending on the status of the alleged harasser(s) (student, staff member, etc.) and the findings of the investigation, examples of possible actions might include a recommendation to the School Board to expel a student or dismiss an employee, a report to the Police Department, a conference with parents, or training sessions with students and staff. In all cases, the rights of students and staff as established by School District policy or collective bargaining agreements shall be observed.
- The reporting party and respondent will be kept informed of the status of the investigation and will be provided timely notice of its conclusion.

There will be no retaliation or reprisals permitted against any student or employee who reports, testifies, cooperates, or otherwise assists in the investigation of a complaint. Retaliation is a form of unlawful harassment and will be handled in the same manner as a harassment complaint.

Title IX Coordinator(s)

The Title IX Coordinator(s) shall be the designated personnel assigned to investigate the complaints of harassment. The Coordinator(s) shall respond to complaints in the time periods contained in this policy. Upon completion of an investigation, the Coordinator(s) shall issue written finds and recommendations, where appropriate.

The Coordinator(s) will maintain written records documenting the names of persons involved, the date the complaint was received, a summary of the allegations, and a summary of the resolution of the complaint. Complaints will be jointly investigated whenever possible with (name) having primary responsibility.

The designated Title IX Coordinator(s) for the Portsmouth School Department are the following:

STUDENT SERVICES COORD

Portsmouth School Department
50 Clough Drive
Portsmouth, NH 03801
(603) 431-5080, ext. 247

PEEP DIRECTOR

Portsmouth School Department
50 Clough Drive
Portsmouth, NH 03801
(603) 422-8228

Policy revised and approved by the School Board: August 12, 2003

Legal Reference:

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. [303.01\(j\)](#), Sexual Harassment Policy

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section [306.04\(a\)\(8\)](#), Student Harassment

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section [306.04\(a\)\(9\)](#), Sexual Harassment

RSA [354-A:7](#), Unlawful Discriminatory Practices

Married/Pregnant Students

Pregnancy and/or maternal or paternal status shall not affect the rights and privileges to receive a public education.

Pregnant students shall be permitted to continue in school and any variation from continuance in regular school classes shall be based upon their assessed needs as delineated by the expectant student's physician.

First Reading Approved: March 27, 2007

Non-School Sponsored Contests for Students

Non-school sponsored contests may be permitted when the Principal and Superintendent judge that the contests fit into the overall instructional objectives of the school and shall have prior approval of the Superintendent.

Policy Approved by School Board: December 10, 2002

Non-Smoking/Tobacco

In accordance with State RSA 126-K:7:

The use of tobacco products in School Department buildings, facilities, or on School Department grounds is prohibited at all times. Tobacco products shall mean any tobacco-containing product including but not limited to:

- Cigarettes
- Smoking tobacco
- Cigars
- Chewing tobacco
- Snuff pipe tobacco
- Smokers' tobacco
- Smokeless cigarettes

No student shall possess cigarettes, chewing tobacco or any other tobacco products in any school building or on school grounds.

Students who violate this policy shall be subject to penalties including but not limited to:

- School suspension
- Referral to smoking cessation program
- Out of school suspension
- In-house community service
- Expulsion

Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to waive the School Department's right to seek enforcement of penalties pursuant to RSA 155:76 or RSA 126-K:7.

First Reading Approved: November 28, 2006

Legal References:

RSA [155:64 – 76](#), Indoor Smoking Act

RSA [126-K:6](#), Possession and Use of Tobacco Products by Minors

RSA [126-K:7](#), Use of Tobacco Products on Public Educational Facility Grounds Prohibited

Respect

The policy of the Portsmouth School Board is that all employees and students have the right to be treated with respect in their working and learning environments. Respectful behavior is defined as courteous regard or treatment. In order to ensure a climate characterized by mutual respect, employees, students, parents, community members, and elected officials will practice common courtesy and civil behavior toward one another in all situations. Demeaning comments and behavior will not be tolerated.

Procedures

Employees are asked to immediately report any violation of this policy to a teacher, an administrator, the assistant superintendent, or the superintendent.

Students are asked to immediately report any violation to a counselor, administrator, the assistant superintendent, or the superintendent.

Retaliation

There shall be no retaliation against any person reporting or confirming a violation of this policy.

Discipline

- A substantiated charge against a staff member will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.
- A substantiated charge against a student will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.
- A substantiated charge against a parent will result in action up to and including exclusion from the school building.
- A substantiated charge against an elected official will result in a recommendation for a sanction against the official to his/her governing body.

Policy Approved by Portsmouth School Board: January 13, 1998

Reviewed and Approved: February 11, 2003

Legal References:

RSA [193:13](#), Suspension and Expulsion of Pupils

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. [306.04\(f\)\(4\)](#), Student Discipline

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. [306.06](#), Culture and Climate

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed. [317.04\(b\)](#), Disciplinary Procedure

See appendix: [JICD – R](#)

(JICL) Responsible Computer, Network and Internet Use

Overview

The Portsmouth School Department provides its students and staff access to a multitude of technology resources. These resources provide opportunities to enhance learning and improve communication within our community and with the global community beyond our campus. The advantages of having access to these resources are far greater than any potential downside. However, with the privilege of access is the responsibility of students, teachers, staff and the public to exercise appropriate personal responsibility in their use of these resources. The School Department policies are intended to promote the most effective, safe, productive, and instructionally sound uses of networked information & communication tools. The School Department also makes a good faith effort to protect its students from exposure to Internet materials that are harmful or explicit. The School Department maintains a system of Internet content filtering devices and software controls that meet federal standards established in the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

Digital Citizen

The Portsmouth School Department uses information and technology in safe, legal, and responsible ways. A responsible digital citizen is one who:

- Respects One's Self. Users will select online names that are appropriate and will consider the information and images that are posted online.
- Respects Others. Users will refrain from using technologies to bully, tease or harass other people.
- Protects One's Self and Others. Users will protect themselves and others by reporting abuse and not forwarding inappropriate materials or communications.
- Respects Intellectual Property. Users will suitably cite any and all use of websites, books, media, etc.
- Protects Intellectual Property. Users will request to use the software and media others produce.

Expectations

Responsible use of the School Department's technology resources is expected to be ethical, respectful, academically honest, and supportive of the school's mission. Each computer user has the responsibility to respect every other person in our community and on the Internet. Digital storage and electronic devices used for school purposes will be treated as extensions of the physical school space. Administrators, or their designees, may review files and communications (including electronic mail) to insure that users are using the system in accordance with School Department policy. Users should not expect that files stored on servers or disks will be private.

Users also should understand that school servers regularly record Internet activity in log files that are available to the public under RSA 91-A: Access to Public Records and Meetings.

Some activities are expressly prohibited by law. Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. The following guidelines are intended to clarify expectations for conduct, but they should not be construed as all-inclusive.

- Use of electronic devices should be consistent with the School Department's educational objectives, mission and curriculum.
- Transmission of any material in violation of any local, federal and state laws is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, licensed material and threatening or obscene material.
- Intentional or unintentional use of computing resources to access or process, proxy sites, pornographic material, explicit text or files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the network is strictly prohibited.
- Software and/or services may not be installed or downloaded on school devices without prior approval of the Superintendent or designee.
- Use of computing resources for commercial activities, product advertisement or religious or political lobbying is prohibited.
- Users may be held personally and financially responsible for malicious or intentional damage done to network software, data, user accounts, hardware and/or unauthorized costs incurred.
- Files stored on district-managed networks are the property of the school district and, as such, may be inspected at any time and should not be considered private.
- Materials published for electronic publication must be for educational purposes. School administrators, teachers and staff may monitor these materials to ensure compliance with content standards.

Policy Violations

The school reserves the right to refuse access to the Internet to anyone. Violating any portion of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including temporary or permanent ban on computer or Internet use, suspension or dismissal from school, and/or legal action. The School Department may cooperate with law enforcement officers in investigations related to illegal activities conducted through its network. Law Reference: RSA 194:3-d, 47U.S.C. Section 254, Children's Internet Protection Act,

Approved by the Portsmouth School Board August 24, 2010

Legal References:

RSA 194:3-d, School District Computer Networks

Pub. L. No. 106-554, Children's Internet Protection Act (www.ifea.net/cipa.html)

School Assignments and Grade Level Assignments

The Board shall establish the geographical sector for each school within the District.

The criteria for the assignment of students to schools is as follows:

- Students living in any given sector shall be assigned to the designated school for that sector and have priority attendance.
- A request may be made for a change in the assignment of a student in writing to the Superintendent of Schools.
- If the Superintendent approves a change in school assignment, the School Department will not be responsible for transportation.
- If approval has been obtained for a change in school assignment, the Superintendent may reconsider such approval if circumstances require it.
- Students will be enrolled in grades and classes in which they can be expected to master established district instructional and learning objectives. All students who are included under the compulsory attendance law must be enrolled and required to attend all classes prescribed by the state and the district unless exempt by the school authorities.
- Students will be placed in the grade level and class that best meets the student's academic needs, after consultation between the building principal and the student's parent/guardian.
- Students transferring into the school district will be placed in the grade level and class that best meets the student's needs, after review of the records from the student's prior school, and after consultation between the building principal and the student's parents.
- Students receiving special education services will be placed in accordance with applicable law.
- The decision of the building principal regarding student placement may be appealed to the Superintendent.

Policy Approved by Portsmouth School Board: June 11, 1991

Policy Revised and Approved: November 10, 2003

Policy Revisited December 8, 2009

Policy Approved January 12, 2010

Legal References:

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [302.02\(l\)](#), Duties of Superintendent

NH Code of Administrative Rules, Section Ed [306.14\(a\)](#), Instructional Program;

Appropriate Assignment of All Incoming Students

Student Dress

Our students originate from many different social, economic, racial, religious, and ethnic backgrounds. They attend public schools to learn – not only academic and technical subjects, but tolerance and respect, as well. Respectful dress standards are based upon both the school’s desire to enhance the learning process and the student’s need to develop respect for others.

The Board recognizes that student individual dress is primarily a parental responsibility that should reflect concern for health and safety of students, staff and others. When the dress of an individual student constitutes a health problem, is unsuitable for school wear, is a danger to any person, or causes a substantial and material disruption or substantial disturbance, the principal shall take appropriate action to correct the situation

Teachers, administrators, and other school personnel – both in their classes and on campus – will share the responsibility of enforcing the student dress code policy. Teachers shall follow building procedure for disciplinary referrals regarding dress code violations.

Students shall dress in a respectful manner, in order to:

- Promote the health, safety and dignity of all students;
- Help preserve school property (beyond normal wear and tear);
- Strike a balance between absolute freedom of expression and the community’s sense of morality (common courtesy, tolerance, respect, and understanding among all people, without exception);
- Discourage disruptions to the teaching and learning process.

Students who violate this policy will be given an opportunity to correct the situation by either changing the clothing, removing the clothing (if appropriate), wearing it inside-out, or other means as determined by the principal so the student is in compliance with this policy. Students who repeatedly violate this policy may face more severe punishment, including detention, in-school suspension, or out-of-school suspension.

Policy approved by Portsmouth School Board: April 11, 2000

Reviewed and First Reading December 1, 2009

Revised and Approved January 12, 2010

Student Production of Goods and Services

Students may produce services and materials for community organizations or groups only to the extent that such production furthers such students' educational development. The building principals shall determine the conditions of approval.

Policy Approved by School Board: December 10, 2002

Violent Acts by Students To and From School

The Board also recognizes that some out-of-school and off-campus conduct may have an adverse effect upon the school, school property, or school staff.

Therefore, it shall be the policy of this Board that the Board or school administrators may impose disciplinary measures against students for some out-of-school or off-campus conduct. Discipline may be imposed if, in Principal's opinion, such out-of-school conduct causes a significant disruption or substantial interference with the school's educational mission, purpose, or objectives.

Additionally, the Board or school administrators may also meet any off-campus or out-of-school behavior that has a strong potential to disrupt normal school operations with appropriate disciplinary actions.

Out-of-school and off-campus student conduct that may subject a student to discipline includes, but is not limited to:

1. Damaging school property
2. Violence at or near the school's bus stop, either before or after the school day
3. Drinking alcohol, using tobacco products, or using illegal drugs at or near the school bus stop, either before or after the school day
4. Damaging the private property of school staff or employees
5. Any other activity the Board or administration determines impedes the general welfare of scholastic activities

The school administration has the authority to impose disciplinary action on students who have committed acts of violence on the way to and from school. As soon as a school principal learns of a violent act, he/she will take appropriate disciplinary measures and report them to the Superintendent, who will notify the School Board.

First Reading December 8, 2009

Approved January 12, 2010

SECTION K: COMMUNITY – HOME RELATIONS

Advertising in the Schools

All requests from groups or individuals to utilize students for advertising and promotion of non-school sponsored activities will be referred to the office of the superintendent to determine whether the requests comply with school policy.

Neither the facilities, the name, the staff, nor the children of the schools, school system, not any part thereof shall be employed in any manner for advertising or otherwise promoting the interests of any commercial or other non-school agency or organization except that;

The school may cooperate in furthering the work of any nonprofit, community-wide social service agency, provided that such cooperation does not restrict or impair the educational program of the schools.

The schools may use films or other educational materials bearing only simple mention of the producing or sponsoring firm.

The schools may participate in radio or television programs under acceptable commercial sponsorship when such participation is supplementary or beneficial to the program of the schools.

The Superintendent may, at his/her or discretion, announce or authorize to be announced any lecture or other community activity of particular educational merit.

The schools may, upon approval of the Superintendent, cooperate with any governmental agency in promoting activities in the general public interest which are nonpartisan and non-controversial and which promote the education or other best interests of the pupils.

School publications may accept and publish paid advertising under established procedures.

Promotional literature will not be distributed through the schools except for recognized educational and youth-oriented organizations.

Recognition or contribution and/or donation is permissible.

First Reading: December 1, 2009

Policy Approved January 12, 2010

News Releases

The superintendent or his/her designee will be responsible for coordinating the release of information about the school system and actions of the Board. The principal of each school, or his/her designee, upon consulting with the superintendent of schools, will be responsible for disseminating information relating to that particular school.

The use of all media for keeping the public continuously informed is encouraged.

First reading approved by the School Board: February 12, 2002

Revised and Approved: March 12, 2002

Legal References:

H Code of Administration Rules, Section Ed. [306.04\(a\)\(11\)](#), Policy Development

H Code of Administration Rules, Section Ed. [306.04\(k\)](#), Policy Development

Parent Involvement Policy

The Portsmouth School Department recognizes the value of parent involvement and is committed to including parents in all aspects of their child's education. Parental involvement shall be expected from all parents and guardians for students attending Portsmouth schools.

Parents of students attending a Title I school or participating in a Title I program will:

- Be involved in the joint development of the Title I Plan Provisions and the process of school review and improvement through the school planning process.
- Be part of the Parent Advisory Committee for the planning, review and improvement of programs both at the district and school levels.

Title I information:

- Will be available at each school's annual open house and additional parent workshops will be scheduled with topics determined by the Parent Advisory Committee.
- Childcare and transportation will be provided to facilitate participation by both parents and students in Title I sponsored programs.
- A description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of assessment used to measure the student progress, and proficiency levels students are expected to meet will be provided to all parents.
- Home school compacts will be provided for each child, teacher and parent.
- Student progress reports will be issued by the classroom teacher in conjunction with the Title 1 tutor and will be reported as part of the school report card process.

Parent's Right to Know includes the following:

Each Title 1 School will, upon request, provide parents with information:

- Regarding the professional qualifications of the classroom teacher and the Title 1 tutor.
- To parents on the level of their child's achievement on state assessments.
- Notification that their child has been taught for 4 or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.

A copy of this policy will be given annually to parents and it will be reviewed and updated on a periodic basis.

Policy Approved by the Portsmouth School Board: December 9, 2006

Participation in Community Life

School personnel are urged to participate in community activities. Administrative personnel should not accept community responsibilities if such duties interfere with their regular work. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent are expected to participate in public, civic, social and professional affairs to enhance public relations and open channels of communication.

Policy Approved by School Board: November 12, 2002

Publications, Radio and Television

The Board invites and welcomes the active participation of the media in promoting quality education in our district and elsewhere.

Newscasts, spot announcements, sports and other activities dealing with the schools are presented in the public interest. No endorsement by the schools with the promotion of any commercial or political enterprise will be permitted.

The superintendent of schools or his/her designee shall approve all such public interest statements.

First reading approved by the School Board: February 12, 2002

Revised and Approved: March 12, 2002

School Media Information

The superintendent and administrative staff are encouraged to work with the media to keep the public informed of the goals, programs, achievements and needs of the school department.

The Board believes that citizens who are adequately informed will act more constructively regarding school activities.

The superintendent may delegate his authority but not his responsibility to disseminate information to central office administrators and to the school principals.

Policy approved by the School Board: June 11, 1991

Reviewed and Approved: March 12, 2002

Legal References:

NH Code of Administration Rules, Section Ed. [306.04\(a\)\(11\)](#), Policy Development

NH Code of Administration Rules, Section Ed. [306.04\(k\)](#), Policy Development

SECTION L: EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS