This manual contains the official policies of the Regional School Committee (reproduced on white paper); the major regulations intended to implement policy (yellow paper); and certain reference or "exhibit" documents that relate to policies and/or regulations (green paper).

Policy development in a modern, forward-looking school system is a dynamic, ongoing process. New problems, issues, and needs give rise to the continuing need to develop new policies or to revise existing ones. This is why the Committee employs the loose-leaf format for this manual. It is easy to keep up to date.

Each person holding a copy of this manual should make a diligent effort to keep it up to date as new policies, regulations, and exhibits are distributed by the central office.

**How to Use This Manual**

The Region operates according to policies established by the Regional School Committee. The Committee then appraises the effects of its policies and makes revisions as necessary.

In the interests of harmony, efficiency, uniformity of interpretation, coordination of effort, and in fairness to all concerned, the Committee makes this manual available to all who are affected by its policies.

Please Note: All copies of this manual are the property of the Ayer Shirley Regional Schools.

**How the Manual is Organized**

The manual is organized in accordance with the classification system developed by the National School Boards Association. This system provides an efficient means of coding, filing, and finding policies and other documents. There are 12 major classifications each assigned an alphabetical code:

- A -- FOUNDATIONS AND BASIC COMMITMENTS
- B -- SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS
- C -- GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION
- D -- FISCAL MANAGEMENT
- E -- SUPPORT SERVICES
- F -- FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT
- G -- PERSONNEL
- H -- NEGOTIATIONS
- I -- INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM
- J -- STUDENTS
- K -- SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS
- L -- EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS

Sub classification under each heading is based on logical sequence and alphabetical sub
coding. For an example of the sub coding system, examine the white pages immediately following the tab for Section AD--Foundations and Basic Commitments. The white pages that follow the tab for each major section present the classification system, section by section, and serve as the tables of contents for each section or "chapter" of this manual.

**How to Find a Policy**

There are two ways to find a policy (or regulation) in this policy manual:

1. Consider where the policy statement (or regulation) would be filed among the 12 major classifications. Turn to the Table of Contents for that section and glance down the listing until you find the term that most closely fits the topic you are seeking. Use the code letters given for that term to locate the policy you need. The pages are arranged in alphabetical order by code within the section. All pages are coded in their upper right hand corner.

2. Turn to the Code Finder Index at the end of the manual. The code finder is an alphabetical index of all terms used in education. Look up your topic as in any index, find the code, and use the code to locate the correct page in the manual.

What if you can't find the term you are seeking? The code finder index lists more than 1,800 terms, but no index of useful size could include every possibility. If the term you are seeking is not included, look up a synonym or a more general or specific term appropriate to the topic.

What if you can find the term and code, but there is no policy or regulation? This probably means that the Region has no written policy or important regulations in that particular area. All terms used in the classification system appear in the sectional tables of contents and Code Finder Index to accommodate the coding, insertion, and finding of policies or regulations that may be issued later. But there is one other possibility. A brief statement related to the policy you are seeking may be incorporated in a "superior" policy, which covers the area generally. This "superior" policy will be coded under a more general term. To find it, read up the classification system. For example, a policy statement, which relates to all meetings of the Regional School Committee, might be filed under "School Board Meetings" (BD) rather than "Regular Board Meetings" (BDA). (Please note: In the classification system and Code Finder Index, read "School Committee" for "School Board".)

**Using the Signs and Symbols**

Various signs and symbols are used in connection with the classification system. They are for your use in locating and/or in examining policies. Included are the following:

Also: Certain policies bear two codes in the upper right hand corner. The second is in parentheses and is preceded by 'Also'. This means that the identical policy (or regulation) is filed under both codes.

-R This symbol following a code indicates that the statement is a regulation, not Committee policy. The statement appears on a yellow, rather than a white, sheet.

-E Exhibit. This symbol following a code indicates that the statement is a reference
About Policies and Regulations

Generally, the role of a Regional School Committee is to set policy and the role of the administration is to implement it through regulations. Written policies are the chief means by which a Regional School Committee governs the schools, and regulations are one of the means by which the Committee's policies are implemented. The following definitions provide a distinction between these two types of statements:

**POLICIES** are principles adopted by the Regional School Committee to chart a course of action. They are broad enough to indicate a line of action to be taken by the administration in meeting a number of day-to-day problems while being narrow enough to give the administration clear guidance.

**REGULATIONS** are detailed directions usually developed by the administration to put policy into practice.

These definitions are serviceable some of the time. They reflect sound theory of governance and administration. But policies and regulations are obviously closely related. They can and do merge, making it difficult to ascertain where one begins and the other ends. For example:

* State and federal governments require school committees to make or officially approve detailed regulations, and procedures in certain areas.

* A Regional School Committee signs contracts and agreements that may contain
and interweave policies, regulations, and procedural detail.

* The public, staff or Regional School Committee members may demand that the Regional School Committee itself, not the administration, establish specific regulations and procedures in certain sensitive areas.

It is the intermingling of policy and regulation in law, in contracts, and in adopted statements of the Regional School Committee that can cause confusion. Sometimes they are not easily separated. Therefore, the separation of policies and regulations in this manual follows several "rules of thumb" in addition to basic theory:

1. When the school system’s practice in a particular area is established by law, any informational statement covering the practice is presented as "policy" and is printed on a white page. (A law may, of course, be quoted or referred to in a regulation.)

2. When a school system’s practice in a particular area has been established through a negotiated agreement, any statement pertaining to that practice is presented as "policy".

3. Where the Regional School Committee has interwoven regulations with policy and where separation would interfere with their meaning, the entire statement is presented as a policy.

4. Where the Regional School Committee has adopted rules and by-laws concerning its own organizational and operating procedures, these statements appear as policy. As long as the administration operates within the guidelines of policy adopted by the Committee, it may issue regulations without prior committee approval, unless law requires committee action, or unless the Committee has specifically asked that certain types of regulations be submitted for committee approval. The Regional School Committee is to be informed of all school system regulations issued by the administration. All such regulations are subject to Committee review.

**Is the Manual Complete?**
No. The manual contains all of the current written policies of the Regional School Committee to date. But, the need for putting additional policies in writing, for adopting new or revising existing ones, becomes apparent.

Additionally, state laws; and regulations change. No matter how well conceived and well developed, a policy manual can never be 100% complete and 100% up-to-date. Policy development is a continuing process. From time to time, new policies, regulations, and reference documents will be developed, coded under the classification system, and issued for insertion in the manual.

Should the need arise, supplemental sub codes may be added to the classification system to accommodate topics not covered by existing codes. For example, IGA is the code for BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM. The Code Finder Index lists various programs from IGAA, CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION to IGAJ, DRIVER EDUCATION.
**Order of Precedence**
Regional School Committee policies and regulations, as well as negotiated agreements with staff bargaining units, must be read and interpreted in the light of the Massachusetts General Laws and State regulations. Wherever inconsistencies of interpretation arise, the law and state regulations prevail. A conflict between a local policy or regulation and a negotiated agreement must be interpreted in line with the contract for members of the particular bargaining unit.

**Terminology**
The masculine, feminine and neuter genders as used in this manual import one another and the singular shall include the plural whenever applicable.

*****
It is the hope of the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee that this collection of policies and regulations will make greater harmony and efficiency possible in all areas of school operations. This will enable the Committee to devote more time to its primary duty--the development of long-range policies and planning for the future of the school district.

Ayer Shirley Regional School District

**Adoption Date**: October 4, 2011

**Revised**: July 19, 2017
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SCHOOL DISTRICT LEGAL STATUS

The legal basis for public education in the district is vested in the will of the people as expressed in the Constitution of Massachusetts and state statutes pertaining to education.

Under the General Laws of Massachusetts,

“... Every town shall maintain..., a sufficient number of schools for the instruction of all children who may legally attend a public school therein.”

The Regional School District operates under laws pertaining to education and under regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education. The area served by the Ayer Shirley Regional School District is coterminous with the Towns of Ayer and Shirley.

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District has been created to serve the educational needs of the Towns of Ayer and Shirley for students in grades pre-k through twelve, inclusive.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS: Constitution of Massachusetts, Part II, Chapter V, Section II M.G.L. 71:1

Historical Note: Massachusetts has the oldest public school system in the nation. Dating back to 1647, the laws of the Massachusetts Bay Colony required towns to provide for a program of public education.
THE PEOPLE AND THEIR SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Regional School Committee has the dual responsibility for implementing statutory requirements pertaining to public education and local citizens’ expectations for the education of both communities’ youth. It also has an obligation to determine and assess citizens’ desires. When citizens elect delegates to represent them in the conduct of public education, their representatives have the authority to exercise their best judgment in determining policies, making decisions, and approving procedures for carrying out the responsibility.

The Regional School Committee therefore affirms and declares its intent to:

1. Maintain two-way communication with citizens of both communities. The public will be kept informed of the progress and problems of the school district, and citizens will be urged to bring their aspirations and feelings about their Regional School District to the attention of this body, which they have chosen to represent them in the management of public education.

2. Establish policies and make decisions on the basis of declared educational philosophy and goals. All decisions made by this Committee will be made with priority given to the purposes set forth, most crucial of which is the optimal learning of the children enrolled in our schools.

3. Act as a truly representative body for members of both communities in matters involving public education. The Committee recognizes that ultimate responsibility for public education rests with the state, but individual Regional School Committees have been assigned specific authority through state law. The Committee will not relinquish any of this authority since it believes that decision-making control over the children’s learning should be in the hands of local citizens as much as possible.
NONDISCRIMINATION

Public schools have the responsibility to overcome, insofar as possible, any barriers that prevent children from achieving their potential. The public school system will do its part. This commitment to the communities is affirmed in the following statements of the Regional School Committee’s intent to:

1. Promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the state and federal constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
2. Encourage positive experiences in human values for children, youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups.
3. Work toward a more integrated society and to enlist the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
4. Use all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and reduce the grievances of individuals and groups.
5. Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school system, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society.
6. Initiate a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The Regional School Committee, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, declares that the Ayer Shirley Regional School system does not and will not discriminate on the basis of sex in the educational programs and activities of the public schools. The Committee’s policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or limited English-speaking ability. If you have a complaint or feel that you have been discriminated against because of your race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or limited English-speaking ability, register your complaint with the Title IX compliance officer.

LEGAL REFS:
Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972
Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972
Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
M.G.L.71B: 1 Et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
M.G.L.76:5; Amended 2011
M.G.L.76:16
BESE Regulations 603 CMR 26.00 Amended 2012
BESE Regulations 603 CMR 28.00
**NOTE**: This category is for a general policy covering all types of nondiscrimination and relating to students, staff and others. Federal and state laws apply.

If a policy relates to staff only, to students only, or a particular form of nondiscrimination, it is better filed elsewhere. Appropriate codes for such statements are indicated by the cross-references.

Regulations pertaining to all forms of nondiscrimination – or a procedure all persons can resort to for redress of grievances related to nondiscrimination – would follow under code AC-R.

Law in most instances requires official School Committee approval of regulations in this area.
SEXUAL HARASSMENT

All persons associated with the Ayer Shirley Regional Schools including, but not necessarily limited to, the Committee, the administration, the staff, and the students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting as a member of the school community will be in violation of this policy. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

Because the Regional School Committee takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting a workplace and school environment that is free of sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace or school conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE:
The following grievance procedure should be used by an individual who wishes to file a complaint alleging sexual harassment in employment practices and policies or the provision of work related programs, services and benefits by the Ayer Shirley Regional School District:

1. Any alleged act of sexual harassment should be reported in writing to the Superintendent of the Region. Prompt reporting makes investigation and resolution of a problem easier.

2. The grievance should contain as much information as possible about the alleged incident (name, address, phone number, location, date and description of problem, etc.). Grievances should be submitted by the grievant and/or his/her representative to the Superintendent of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District, Ayer, MA, 01432, Tel. (978) 772-8600, Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

3. The Superintendent will interview the complainant within five (5) work days of receipt of the complaint.

4. The Superintendent will respond in writing to the complainant and/or his/her
5. If the Superintendent’s response does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complainant and/or his/her representative may request a hearing before the Regional School Committee, to be held within twenty-one (21) working days of receipt of the Superintendent’s response. The complaint should be addressed to the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee, c/o Superintendent of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District, Ayer, MA, 01432, Tel. (978) 772-8600. The hearing will be scheduled in executive session. The person on whose action(s) the complaint was based (the “respondent”) will be notified by the Regional School Committee and may choose to have the hearing in executive or open session. The Regional School Committee will inform the complainant and/or his/her representative of its decision within thirty (30) working days of the hearing.

6. The Ayer Shirley Regional School District recognizes that the question of whether a particular action or incident is contrary to this policy or is a purely social, personal relationship without discriminatory employment intent or effect, requires a determination based on all the facts related to the matter. The Ayer Shirley Regional School District also recognizes that false accusations of sexual harassment can have a serious effect on innocent persons.

All employees are expected, as a condition of their employment, to act responsibly in carrying out this policy and in establishing a pleasant working environment free of discrimination.

Any person violating this policy shall be subject to discipline, which may include discharge. All complaints received by the Superintendent of the Region and responses from the Regional School Committee will be kept by the Ayer Shirley Regional School District for a period of three (3) years.

ALTERNATE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE:
The following grievance procedure should be used by an individual who wishes to file a complaint alleging sexual harassment in employment practices and policies or the provision of work related programs, services and benefits by the Ayer Shirley Regional School District, when the Superintendent of the Region is the offender:

1. Any alleged act of sexual harassment should be reported in writing to the chairman of the Regional School Committee. Prompt reporting makes investigation and resolution of a problem easier.

2. The grievance should contain as much information as possible about the alleged incident (name, address, phone number, location, date and description of problem, etc.). Grievances should be submitted by the grievant and/or his/her representative to the chairman of the Regional School Committee.
3. The chairman of the Regional School Committee will interview the complainant within five (5) work days of receipt of the complaint.

4. The chairman of the Regional School Committee will respond in writing to the complainant and his/her representative within fifteen (15) working days of the interview. A meeting may be arranged.

5. If the response does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complainant and his/her representative may request a hearing before the Regional School Committee to be held within twenty-one (21) working days of receipt of the response. The hearing will be scheduled in an executive session. The person on whose action(s) the complaint was based (the “respondent”) will be notified by the Regional School Committee and may choose to have the hearing in executive or open session. The Regional School Committee will inform the complainant and/or his/her representative of its decision within thirty (30) working days of the hearing.

6. See regular grievance procedure, previous page.

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
Phone: 1 (800) 669-4000
FAX: (617) 565-3196 TTY: 1 (800) 669-6820

The Massachusetts Commission against Discrimination
Boston Office: Springfield Office:
One Ashburton Place, Rm. 601 424 Dwight Street, Room 220
Boston, MA 02108 Springfield, MA
(617) 727-3990 (413) 739-2145

LEGAL REFS: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended 45
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq. (Title IX)
Board of Education 603 CMR 26:00
NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF HANDICAP

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992 requires that no qualified individual with a disability shall, because the district’s facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, and activities of the district or be subject to discrimination. Nor shall the district exclude or otherwise deny services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability of a person with whom the individual is known to have a relationship or association.

Definition
A “qualified individual with a disability” is an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the district.

Reasonable Modification
The district shall make reasonable modification in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the district can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.

Communications
The district shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. To this end, the district shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy benefits of, a service, program, or activity conducted by the district. In determining what type of auxiliary aid or service is necessary, the district shall give primary consideration to the requests of the individuals with disabilities.

“Auxiliary Aids and Services” includes (1) qualified interpreters, note takers, transcription services, written materials, assistive listening systems, and other effective methods for making aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments; (2) qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, Braille materials, large print materials, or other effective methods for making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments; (3) acquisition or modification of equipment or devices and (4)
other similar services and actions.

**Limits of Required Modification** The district is not required to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. Any decision that, in compliance with its responsibility to provide effective communication for individuals with disabilities, would fundamentally alter the service, program, or activity or unduly burden the district shall be made by the School Committee after considering all resources available for use in funding and operating the program, service, or activity. The decision shall be accompanied by a written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion.

**Notice**
The district shall make available to applicants, participants, beneficiaries, and other interested persons information regarding the provisions of Title II of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its applicability to the services, programs, or activities of the district. The information shall be made available in such a manner as the School Committee and Superintendent find necessary to apprise such persons of the protections against discrimination assured them by the ADA.

**Compliance Coordinator**
The district shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title II of ADA, including any investigation of any complaint communicated to it alleging its noncompliance or alleging any actions that would be prohibited under ADA. The district shall make available to all interested individuals the name, office address, and telephone number of the employee(s) so designated and shall adopt and publish procedures for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited under the ADA. The school system receives federal financial assistance and must comply with the above requirements. Additionally, the School Committee is of the general view that:

1. Discrimination against a qualified handicapped person solely on the basis of handicap is unfair; and
2. To the extent possible, qualified handicapped persons should be in the mainstream of life in a school community. Accordingly, employees of the school system will comply with the above requirements of the law and policy statements of this Committee to ensure nondiscrimination on the basis of handicap.

**LEGAL REFS:**
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504
- Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
- M.G.L. 71B: 1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
- Title II, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992
- Board of Education Chapter 766 Regulations, adopted 10/74, as amended through 3/28/78
PHILOSOPHY AND PRINCIPLES

PHILOSOPHY

In accordance with the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts concerned with the education of the individual, the program for education in the Ayer Shirley Regional Schools shall be designed to provide the opportunity for students to develop to the best of their ability a proficiency in reading, writing, science, technology, and mathematics for use in various future endeavors. Along with basic academic skills, there shall be an opportunity to develop an appreciation of, respect for, and understanding of the creative, emotional, intellectual and physical well-being of each individual.

PRINCIPLES

Certain fundamental principles must be complied with if these opportunities are to succeed. These principles are:

(1) Learning will take place within an atmosphere where the pupil is respected as a unique individual.

(2) Instruction will come from teachers who are competent, compassionate and knowledgeable.

(3) Curriculum will be constantly evaluated against the needs of the students and the fiscal resources of the Region. Resources will be provided that maximize the chances for individual success in all areas of opportunity while accepting the limits of the fiscal resources of the Region.
SCHOOL DISTRICT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The mission of the Ayer-Shirley Regional School District is to educate and graduate all students, to foster a safe environment that develops the skills, character and values needed to become a productive member of a global society.

Five objectives that contribute to the achievement of this goal, listed without priority in arrangement, define desirable outcomes to be incorporated into plans for the school system.

1. To ensure that each student develops proficiency in basic academic skills.

2. To ensure that each student develops the confidence in their own ability to successfully adapt to ever-changing personal and financial circumstances.

3. To ensure the development of empathetic, interpersonal relationships among students, staff and community.

4. To ensure maximum efficiency in the allocation of material resources.

5. To ensure maximum efficiency in the allocation of human resources.
SMOKING ON SCHOOL PREMISES

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

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

A student determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the student discipline code.

This policy shall be promulgated to all staff and students in appropriate handbook(s) and publications.

Signs shall be posted in or on all school buildings informing the general public of the district policy and requirements of state law.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H
ALCOHOL AND GAMBLING POLICY

“No alcoholic beverage may be served or consumed in any Ayer Shirley Regional School District building or on school property at any time or for any reason, including when the building or property is being utilized by a school-related or non-school-related group. Similarly, no gambling (except for raffles for which the prior approval of the Superintendent has been obtained) is permitted in any school building or on school property regardless of who sponsors the activity.”
BACKGROUND CHECKS

It shall be the policy of the Ayer Shirley Regional Schools, as required by law, a state and national fingerprint criminal background check will be conducted to determine the suitability of full or part time current and prospective school employees, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. School employees shall include, but not be limited to any apprentice, intern, or student teacher or individuals in similar positions, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. The School Committee shall only obtain a fingerprint background check for current and prospective employees for whom the School Committee has direct hiring authority. In the case of an individual directly hired by a School Committee, the chair of the School Committee shall review the results of the national criminal history check. The Superintendent shall also obtain a state and national fingerprint background check for any individual, who regularly provides school related transportation to children. The School Committee, Superintendent or principal, as appropriate, may obtain a state and national fingerprint criminal background check for any volunteer, subcontractor or laborer commissioned by the School Committee, school, or employed by the city or town to perform work on school grounds, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. School volunteers and subcontractors/laborers who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children must continue to submit state CORI checks.

The fee charged by the provider to the employee and educator for national fingerprint background checks will be $55.00 for school employees subject to licensure by DESE and $35.00 for other employees, which fee may, from time to time, be adjusted by the appropriate agency. The employer shall continue to obtain periodically, but not less than every three (3) years, from the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services, all available Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) for any current and prospective employee or volunteer within the school district who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children.

Direct and unmonitored contact with children is defined in DESE regulations as contact with a student when no other employee who has received a suitability determination by the school or district is present. “Contact” refers to any contact with a student that provides the individual with opportunity for physical touch or personal communication.

This policy is applicable to any fingerprint-based state and national criminal history record check made for non-criminal justice purposes and requested under applicable federal authority and/or state statute authorizing such checks for licensing or employment purposes. Where such checks are allowable by law, the following practices and procedures will be followed:

Requesting CHRI Checks
Fingerprint-based CHRI checks will only be conducted as authorized by state and federal law, in accordance with all applicable state and federal rules and regulations. If an applicant or employee is required to submit a fingerprint-based state and national criminal history record check, he/she shall be informed of this requirement and instructed on how to comply with the law. Such instruction will include information on the procedure for
submitting fingerprints. In addition, the applicant or employee will be provided with all
information needed to successfully register for a fingerprinting appointment.

Access to CHRI
All CHRI is subject to strict state and federal rules and regulations in addition to
Massachusetts CORI laws and regulations. CHRI cannot be shared with any unauthorized
entity for any purpose, including subsequent hiring determinations. All receiving entities
are subject to audit by the Massachusetts Department of Criminal Justice Information
Services (DJCIS) and the FBI, and failure to comply with such rules and regulations could
lead to sanctions. Federal law and regulations provide that the exchange of records and
information is subject to cancellation if dissemination is made outside of the receiving
entity or related entities. Furthermore, an entity can be charged criminally for the
unauthorized disclosure of CHRI.

Storage of CHRI
CHRI shall only be stored for extended periods of time when needed for the integrity
and/or utility of an individual’s personnel file. Administrative, technical, and physical
safeguards, which are in compliance with the most recent CJIS Security Policy have been
implemented to ensure the security and confidentiality of CHRI. Each individual involved
in the handling of CHRI is to familiarize himself/herself with these safeguards. In addition
to the above, each individual involved in the handling of CHRI will strictly adhere to the
policy on the storage, retention and destruction of CHRI.

Retention and Destruction of CHRI
Federal law prohibits the re-purposing or dissemination of CHRI beyond its initial
requested purpose. Once an individual’s CHRI is received, it will be securely retained in
internal agency documents for the following purposes only:

- Historical reference and/or comparison with future CHRI requests;
- Dispute of the accuracy of the record; and,
- Evidence for any subsequent proceedings based on information contained in the
  CHRI.

CHRI will be kept for the above purposes in a secure location in the office of the
Superintendent. When no longer needed, CHRI and any summary of CHRI data must be
destroyed by shredding paper copies and/or by deleting all electronic copies from the
electronic storage location, including any backup copies or files. The shredding of paper
copies of CHRI by an outside vendor must be supervised by an employee of the district.

CHRI Training
An informed review of a criminal record requires training. Accordingly, all personnel
authorized to receive and/or review CHRI at the district will review and become familiar
with the educational and relevant training materials regarding SAFIS and CHRI laws and
regulations made available by the appropriate agencies, including the DCJIS.

Determining Suitability
In determining an individual’s suitability, the following factors will be considered: these
factors may include, but not necessarily be limited to: the nature and gravity of the crime
and the underlying conduct, the time that has passed since the offense, conviction and/or completion of the sentence, nature of the position held or sought, age of the individual at the time of the offense, number of offenses, any relevant evidence of rehabilitation or lack thereof and any other factors deemed relevant by the district. A record of the suitability determination will be retained. The following information will be included in the determination:

The name and date of birth of the employee or applicant;
The date on which the school employer received the national criminal history check results; and,
The suitability determination (either “suitable” or “unsuitable”).

A copy of an individual’s suitability determination documentation must be provided to another school employer, or to the individual, upon request of the individual for whom the school employer conducted a suitability determination.

Relying on Previous Suitability Determination
The school employer may obtain and may rely on a favorable suitability determination from a prior employer, if the following criteria are met:

The suitability determination was made within the last seven years; and,
The individual has not resided outside of Massachusetts for any period longer than three years since the suitability determination was made; and either,
The individual has been employed continuously for one or more school employers or has gaps totaling no more than two years in his/her employment for school employers; or
If the individual works as a substitute employee, the individual is still deemed suitable for employment by the school employer who made a favorable suitability determination. Upon request of another school employer, the initial school employer shall provide documentation that the individual is still deemed suitable for employment by the initial school employer.

Adverse Decisions Based on CHRI
If inclined to make an adverse decision based on an individual’s CHRI, the district will take the following steps prior to making a final adverse determination:

Provide the individual with a copy of his/her CHRI used in making the adverse decision;
Provide the individual with a copy of this CHRI Policy;
Provide the individual the opportunity to complete or challenge the accuracy of his/her CHRI; and,
Provide the individual with information on the process for updating, changing, or correcting CHRI.

A final adverse decision based on an individual’s CHRI will not be made until the individual has been afforded a reasonable time depending on the particular circumstances not to exceed thirty (30) days to correct or complete the CHRI.
Secondary Dissemination of CHRI

If an individual’s CHRI is released to another authorized entity, a record of that dissemination must be made in the secondary dissemination log. The secondary dissemination log is subject to audit by the DCJIS and the FBI. The following information will be recorded in the log:

- Subject Name;
- Subject Date of Birth;
- Date and Time of the dissemination;
- Name of the individual to whom the information was provided;
- Name of the agency for which the requester works;
- Contact information for the requester; and
- The specific reason for the request.

Reporting to Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Pursuant to state law and regulation, if the district dismisses, declines to renew the employment of, obtains the resignation of, or declines to hire a licensed educator or an applicant for a Massachusetts educator license because of information discovered through a state or national criminal record check, the district shall report such decision or action to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education in writing within thirty (30) days of the employer action or educator resignation. The report shall be in a form requested by the Department and shall include the reason for the action or resignation as well as a copy of the criminal record checks results. The superintendent shall notify the employee or applicant that it has made a report pursuant to the regulations to the Commissioner.

Pursuant to state law and regulation, if the district discovers information from a state or national criminal record check about a licensed educator or an applicant for a Massachusetts educator license that implicates grounds for license action pursuant to regulations, the superintendent shall report to the Commissioner in writing within thirty (30) days of the discovery, regardless of whether the district retains or hires the educator as an employee. The report must include a copy of the criminal record check results. The school employer shall notify the employee or applicant that it has made a report pursuant to regulations to the Commissioner and shall also send a copy of the criminal record check results to the employee or applicant.

CORI Requirements

It shall be the policy of the district to obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) from the department of criminal justice information services of prospective employee(s) or volunteer(s) of the school department including any individual who regularly provides school related transportation to children, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, prior to hiring the employee(s) or to accepting any person as a volunteer. State law requires that school districts obtain CORI data for employees of taxicab companies that have contracted with the schools to provide transportation to pupils.

The Superintendent, Principal, or their certified designees shall periodically, but not less
than every three years, obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information from the department of criminal justice informational services on all employees, individuals who regularly provide school related transportation to children, including taxicab company employees, and volunteers who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, during their term of employment or volunteer service.

The Superintendent, Principal, or their certified designees may also have access to Criminal Offender Record Information for any subcontractor or laborer who performs work on school grounds, and who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, and shall notify them of this requirement and comply with the appropriate provisions of this policy.

Pursuant to a Department of Education regulation, “Direct and unmonitored contact with children’ means contact with students when no other employee, for whom the employer has made a suitability determination of the school or district, is present. “ Contact” refers to any contact with a student that provides the individual with opportunity for physical touch or personal communication. The school employer may determine when there is potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children by assessing the circumstances and specific factors including but not limited to, whether the individual will be working in proximity with students, the amount of time the individual will spend on school grounds, and whether the individual will be working independently or with others. An individual shall not be considered to have the potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children if he or she has only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact in commonly used areas of the school grounds.”

In accordance with state law, all current and prospective employees, volunteers, and persons regularly providing school related transportation to children of the school district shall sign an acknowledgement form authorizing receipt by the district of all available CORI data from the department of criminal justice information services. In the event that a current employee has a question concerning the signing of the acknowledgement form, he/she may meet with the Principal or Superintendent; however, failure to sign the CORI acknowledgement form may result in a referral to local counsel for appropriate action. Completed acknowledgement forms must be kept in secure files. The School Committee, Superintendent, Principals or their designees certified to obtain information under the policy, shall prohibit the dissemination of school information for any purpose other than to further the protection of school children.

CORI is not subject to the public records law and must be kept in a secure location, separate from personnel files and may be retained for not more than three years. CORI shall be shared with the individual to whom it pertains, pursuant to law, regulation and the following model policy, and in the event of an inaccurate report the individual should contact the department of criminal justice informational services.

Access to CORI material must be restricted to those individuals certified to receive such information. In the case of prospective employees or volunteers, CORI material should be obtained only where the Superintendent had determined that the applicant is qualified and may forthwith be recommended for employment or volunteer duties.
The hiring authority, subject to applicable law and the model policy, reserves the exclusive right concerning any employment decision.

The Superintendent shall ensure that on the application for employment and/or volunteer form there shall be a statement that as a condition of the employment or volunteer service the school district is required by law to obtain Criminal Offender Record Information for any employee, individual who regularly provides transportation, or volunteer who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. Current employees, persons regularly providing school related transportation, and volunteers shall also be informed in writing by the Superintendent prior to the periodic obtaining of their Criminal Offender Record Information.

The Superintendent shall amend employment applications to include questions concerning criminal records which the Massachusetts Commission against Discrimination has determined may be legally asked of prospective employees. Any employment application which seeks information concerning prior arrests or convictions of the applicant shall include the following statement: “An applicant for employment with a sealed record on file with the commission of probation may answer ‘no record’ with respect to an inquiry herein relative to prior arrests or criminal court appearances. In addition, any applicant for employment may answer ‘no record’ with respect to any inquiry relative to prior arrests, court appearances and adjudications in all cases of delinquency or as a child in need of service which did not result in a compliant transferred to the superior court for criminal prosecution.”

Records sealed pursuant to law shall not operate to disqualify a person in any examination, appointment or application for public service on behalf of the Commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof.

The Superintendent shall revise contracts with special education schools and other providers to require a signed statement that the provider has met all legal requirements of the state where it is located relative to criminal background checks for employees and others having direct and unmonitored contact with children.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L.6:167-178; 15D:7-8; 71:38R, 151B, 276:100A
P.L. 92-544; Title 28 U.S.C. § 534; Title 28 C.F.R. 20.33(b)
42 U.S.C. § 16962
603 CMR 51.00
803 CMR 2.00
803 CMR 3.05 (Chapter 149 of the Acts of 2004)

FBI Criminal Justice Information Services Security Policy
Procedure for correcting a criminal record
FAQ – Background Checks

SOURCE: MASC 2014
NOTE: The Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS) has adopted regulations requiring that it maintain a model CORI policy and that any written policy must meet the minimum standards as found in the model. Therefore, MASC recommends that school districts retain both the school district specific policy incorporated here and the DCJIS model policy attached as ADDA-R.

First Reading, June 10, 2014
Second Reading, September 17, 2014
Adopted by the ASRSD, September 17, 2014

DCJIS MODEL CORI POLICY

This policy is applicable to the criminal history screening of prospective and current employees, subcontractors, volunteers and interns, and professional licensing applicants.

Where Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and other criminal history checks may be part of a general background check for employment, volunteer work, licensing purposes, the following practices and procedures will be followed.

CONDUCTING CORI SCREENING
CORI checks will only be conducted as authorized by the DCJIS, state law, and regulation, and only after a CORI Acknowledgement Form has been completed.

If a new CORI check is to be made on a subject within a year of his/her signing of the CORI Acknowledgement Form, the subject shall be given seventy two (72) hours notice that a new CORI check will be conducted.

ACCESS TO CORI
All CORI obtained from the DCJIS is confidential, and access to the information must be limited to those individuals who have a "need to know". This may include, but not be limited to, hiring managers, staff submitting the CORI requests, and staff charged with processing job applications. The district must maintain and keep a current list of each individual authorized to have access to, or view, CORI. This list must be updated every six (6) months and is subject to inspection upon request by the DCJIS at any time.

CORI TRAINING
An informed review of a criminal record requires training. Accordingly. All district personnel authorized to review or access CORI will review, and will be thoroughly familiar with, the educational and relevant training materials regarding CORI laws and regulations made available by the DCJIS.

USE OF CRIMINAL HISTORY IN BACKGROUND SCREENING
CORI used for employment purposes shall only be accessed for applicants who are otherwise qualified for the position for which they have applied.

Unless otherwise provided by law, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, determinations of suitability based on background checks will be made
VERIFYING A SUBJECT'S IDENTITY
If a criminal record is received from the DCJIS, the information is to be closely compared with the information on the CORI Acknowledgement Form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant to ensure the record belongs to the applicant. If the information in the CORI record provided does not exactly match the identification information provided by the applicant, a determination is to be made by an individual authorized to make such determinations based on a comparison of the CORI record and documents provided by the applicant.

INQUIRING ABOUT CRIMINAL HISTORY
In connection with any decision regarding employment, volunteer opportunities, or professional licensing, the subject shall be provided with a copy of the criminal history record, whether obtained from the DCJIS or from any other source, prior to questioning the subject about his or her criminal history. The source(s) of the criminal history record is also to be disclosed to the subject.

DETERMINING SUITABILITY
If a determination is made, based on the verification of identity information as provided in this policy, that the criminal record belongs to the subject, and the subject does not dispute the record's accuracy, then the determination of suitability for the position or license will be made. Unless otherwise provided by law, factors considered in determining suitability may include, but not be limited to, the following:

a. Relevance of the record to the position sought;
b. The nature of the work to be performed;
c. Time since the conviction;
d. Age of the candidate at the time of the offense;
e. Seriousness and specific circumstances of the offense;
f. The number of offenses;
g. Whether the applicant has pending charges;
h. Any relevant evidence of rehabilitation or lack thereof; and
i. Any other relevant information, including information submitted by the candidate or requested by the organization.

The applicant is to be notified of the decision and the basis for it in a timely manner.

ADVERSE DECISIONS BASED ON CORI
If an authorized official is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of a criminal history background check, the applicant will be notified immediately. The subject
shall be provided with a copy of the organization's CORI policy and a copy of the criminal history. The source(s) of the criminal history will also be revealed. The subject will then be provided with an opportunity to dispute the accuracy of the CORI record. Subjects shall also be provided a copy of DCJIS' Information Concerning the Process for Correcting a Criminal Record.

SECONDARY DISSEMINATION LOGS
All CORI obtained from the DCJIS is confidential and can only be disseminated as authorized by law and regulation. A central secondary dissemination log shall be used to record any dissemination of Cori outside this organization, including dissemination at the request of the subject.

File: ADF

AYER SHIRLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT HEALTH & WELLNESS POLICY

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District is committed to the physical, emotional, and social health and well-being of our students. The District has the opportunity and the responsibility to foster support for students, staff and families in developing and maintaining lifelong habits for a healthy lifestyle. The District is fully aware of the impact that good nutritional and physical activity habits have on student performance. Numerous studies support the fact that students, who are committed to eating healthy and exercising regularly, feel well and are better prepared to learn. Community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies. The District will continue to work collaboratively within the regional community to establish a comprehensive school health and wellness action plan; communicate the plan clearly to students, staff and families; and define a process for periodic review and continuous improvement. This plan will address the whole child and will include the following: district nutrition education goals, district nutrition promotion goals, district physical activity goals, local/state/federal nutrition standards, and a district-wide schedule of school-based and extracurricular activities that promote health of body and mind.

The district recognizes that a person’s wellness and weight control are a uniquely personal profile.

Facts:
1. Children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive. (Healthier Students Are Better Learners: A Missing Link in Efforts to Close the Achievement Gap, Columbia University, 2010)
2. Good health fosters student attendance and education. (Baltimore Student Attendance Campaign, 2012)
3. Obesity rates have risen in children, adolescents and adults over the last two decades. (Mass in Motion: A Call to Action MDPH, 2008)
4. Heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are leading causes of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood. (National Vital Statistics Reports 2008)
5. Students who are physically active and do not engage in unhealthy dietary behaviors receive higher grades than their classmates who are physically inactive and engage in unhealthy dietary behaviors. *(National Youth Behavior Risk Survey 2009)*

**Policy Goals**

1. **Nutrition Education Goal:**
The primary goal of nutrition education in the Ayer Shirley Regional School District is to influence student’s eating behaviors.

**Actions:**

a. **Classroom teaching:**
The district follows the 1999 MA Comprehensive Health Curriculum Frameworks as standards for nutrition education goals. The new 2011 federal nutrition guidelines document entitled “Choose My Plate” has replaced the former Food Pyramid in health education.

b. **Education, marketing and promotions outside classroom links with school:**
School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marking to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above) (11).

School-based marketing of brands promotion predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages (12) is prohibited. The promotion of health foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat diary products is encouraged.

Examples of marketing techniques include the following:
- Logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment;
- Educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low-nutrition food products; in-school television, such as Channel One;
- Free samples or coupons;
- Food sales through fundraising activities.
- Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors (and are therefore allowable) include:
  - Vending machine covers promoting water;
  - Pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la care lines or vending machines;
  - Sales of fruit for fundraisers;
  - Coupons for discount gym membership

c. **Teacher training:**
The district, and individual schools within the district, will, as necessary, disseminate the wellness policies, train teachers and other staff in media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

d. **Parent Communication:**
The district/school will support parents’ efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district/school will offer healthy eating seminars for parents, send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. Schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The district/school will provide parents a list of foods that meet the district’s snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, the district/school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

2 of 11

File: ADF

The district/school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents’ efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

2. Physical Activity Goal:
The primary goal of physical activity in the Ayer Shirley Regional School District is to provide opportunities for every student to develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities, maintain physical fitness, regularly participate in physical activity, and understand the short- and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle.

A comprehensive physical activity program encompasses a variety of opportunities for students to be physically active including: physical education, recess, walk/bike-to-school programs, after-school physical activity programs, health education that includes physical activity as a main component, and physical activity breaks within the regular classroom.

Actions:
a. Physical Education (classroom format and instruction):
   All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care need, and in alternative educational settings, will receive physical education each school year. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
   Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting:
   For students to receive the nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e., at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class.
Toward that end:
- Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically active lifestyle and to reduce time spent sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- Classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate;
- Support more, not less physical activity, recess, and classroom movement. Eric Jensen, brain-based learning expert, claims that physical activity “raises the good chemicals for thinking, focus, learning and memory (noradrenaline, dopamine and cortisol). Students need 30-60 minutes per day to lower stress response, boost neurogenesis and boost learning.” (1)

b. Physical Education (high school graduation requirements):
   Physical Education (or equivalent option) 10 credits

c. Physical Education (staff training/certification):
   A MA DESE certified physical education teacher will teach all physical education classes.

d. Physical Education (teacher-to-student ratio):
   2012-2013 School Year
   Lura A. White Elementary School .087 FTE/410 students
   Page Hilltop School 1.0 FTE/548 students
   Ayer Shirley Regional Middle School 1.0 FTE/418 students
   Ayer Shirley Regional High School 1.0 FTE/302 students

e. Physical Education (standards/requirements-based; curriculum requirements):
   The district follows the 1999 MA Comprehensive Physical Education Curriculum Frameworks as standards for physical education goals.

f. Physical Activity outside of Physical Education:
   All elementary, middle, and high schools will offer extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. All high schools, and middle schools as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs. Schools will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

g. Recess to Promote Physical activity:
   All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment. Schools should discourage extended periods (i.e., periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active. Teachers and other school and community personnel will not use physical activity (e.g. running laps, push-ups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.
h. Walking or biking to school to promote physical activity:
The school district will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safe and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the district will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The school district will explore the availability of federal “safe routes to school” funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements.

3. Nutrition Standards Goal for All Foods Available on School Campus during the School Day:
The primary goal of school nutrition standards in the Ayer Shirley Regional School District is to increase nutritional options; decrease fat, sodium, added sugars and artificial ingredients; and moderate portion size. The district will ensure that reimbursable school meals meet the program requirements and nutrition standards set forth under the 7 CFR Part 210 and Part 220.

**Actions:**

a. **Nutritional value of foods and beverages:**
   A food item sold individually:
   - Will have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
   - Will have no more than 35% of its weight from added sugars; (8)
   - Will contain no more than 230 mg of sodium per serving for chips, cereals, crackers, french fries, baked goods, and other snack items;
   - Will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per serving for pastas, meats, and soups; and will contain no more than 600 mg of sodium for pizza, sandwiches, and main dishes. A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables (2) will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items could include, but are not limited to fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines) (9);

**Beverages Allowed:**
   Water or seltzer water (7) without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free milk and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy beverages (to be defined by USDA);

**Beverages Not Allowed:**
   Soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial
b. Portion Size:
Limit portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually to those listed below:

- One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky;
- One ounce for cookies;
- Two ounces for cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, muffins, doughnuts, bagels, and other bakery items;
- Four fluid ounces for frozen desserts, including, but not limited to, low-fat or fat-free ice cream;
- Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;
- Twelve fluid ounces for beverages, excluding water; and
- The portion size of a la carte entrees and side dishes, including potatoes, will not be greater than the size of comparable portions offered as part of school meals. Fruits and non-fried vegetables are exempt from portion-size limits.

c. A la carte, vending, student stores, or concession stands:
Foods and beverages sold individually (i.e. foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.)

Elementary Schools
The school food service program will approve and provide all food and beverage sales to students in elementary schools. Given young children’s limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools should be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables (2).

Middle and High Schools
In middle and high schools, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, student stores, or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards.

d. After-school programs, field trips, or school events:
Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day will meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually. Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children’s diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children’s nutrition needs, children’s ages, and other considerations.

e. Parties, celebrations, or meetings:
Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to nor more than one party per class per month. Each party should include no more than one food or beverage that does not meet nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above) . The district will disseminate
a list of healthy party ideas to parents and teachers.

f. Food rewards:
   Schools will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment. Foods or beverages that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), will not be used as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, (10). Pizza parties will be allowed on occasion, provided the pizza is in lieu of lunch and meets school nutrition standards.

g. Food-related fundraising:
   To support children’s health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities will not involve food or will use only foods that meet the above nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually. Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school district will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

h. Food or beverage contracts:
   Currently, the district does not have any food and beverage contracts with outside vendors.

4. School Meals Program Goal:
The primary goal of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District School Meals Program is to serve meals that meet USDA’s requirements, are reimbursable, as well as follow the principles of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Actions:
a. Developing goals that exceed minimum nutrition standards set by USDA:
   Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

b. Access to school nutrition programs:
   Schools will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals (5). Toward this end, schools may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; provide meals at no charge to all children, regardless of income; promote the availability of school meals to all students; and/or use nontraditional methods for serving school meals, such as “grab-and-go” or classroom breakfast.

To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:
   ● Schools will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program.
   ● Schools will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom, “grab-and-go” breakfast, or breakfast during morning break or recess.
   ● Schools that serve breakfast to students will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
Schools will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other menus.

c. Time and scheduling for meals:
Schools:
- Will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- Should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m;
- Should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- Will schedule lunch periods to follow recess periods (in elementary schools);
- Will provide students access to hand-washing or hand-sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (e.g., orthodontia or high tooth decay risk).

d. Surroundings for eating:
Meals served through the National School Lunch Breakfast Programs will:
- Be appealing and attractive to children;
- Be served in clean and pleasant settings;

5. Other School-Based Activities Goal: (Designed to Promote Student Wellness)
The primary goal of other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness in the Ayer Shirley Regional School District is to create a school environment that provides consistent wellness messages and is conducive to healthy eating and being physically active.

Actions:
a. Marketing of food and/or beverages:
School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above)(11).

School-based marketing of brands promotion predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages (12) is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged. Examples of marketing techniques include the following:
Logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment;

- Educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low-nutrition food products;
- In-school television, such as Channel One;
- Free samples or coupons;
- Food sales through fundraising activities.

Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors (and are therefore allowable) include:

- Vending machine covers promoting water;
- Pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines;
- Sales of fruit for fundraisers;
- Coupons for discount gym memberships.

b. Sustainable Food Program:

Currently, the district does not participate in a sustainable food practice such as a Farm to School Program. However, we are looking to participate in one in the future.

c. Access to facilities for physical activity after school hours:

School spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff, and community members before, during, and after the school day, on weekends, and during school vacations. These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

d. After-school programs:

After-school childcare and enrichment programs will provide and encourageverbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities-daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.

e. Coordinated School Health approach:

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- Includes enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;

- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- Links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services.

6. **Measurement and Evaluation Goal:**

The primary goal of measurement and evaluation is to ensure the successful implementation of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District Wellness Policy and to communicate results to the public.

**Actions:**

a. **Funding Support:** Current funding is offered in part by the district general fund and by state and federal aid.


c. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school’s compliance to the school district superintendent or designee.

School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will

**Report:** ADF

- School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will

**File:** ADF

- School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will

**Revision:**

To help with the initial development of the district’s wellness policies, each school in the district will conduct a baseline assessment of the school’s existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies (13). The results of those school-by-school assessments will be compiled at the district level to identify and priority needs. Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and

**File:** ADF
determine areas in need of improvement.

As part of that review, the school district will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The district, and individual schools within the district, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

Footnotes:
1. Top 10 Brain-based Teaching Strategies, Jensen Learning
2. To the extent possible, schools will offer at least two non-fried vegetable and two fruit options each day and will offer five different fruits and five different vegetables over the course of a week. Schools are encouraged to source fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practicable.
3. As recommended by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005.
4. A whole grain is one labeled as a “whole” grain product or with a whole grain listed as the primary grain ingredient in the ingredient statement. Examples include “whole” wheat flour, cracked wheat, brown rice, and oatmeal.
5. It is against the law to make others in the cafeteria aware of the eligibility status of children for free, reduced-price, or “paid” meals.
6. School nutrition staff development programs are available through the USDA, School Nutrition Association, and National Food Service Management Institute.
7. Surprisingly, seltzer water may not be sold during mealtimes in areas of the school where food is sold or eaten because it is considered a “Food of Minimal Nutritional Value” (Appendix B of 7 CFR Part 210).
8. If a food manufacturer fails to provide the added sugars content of a food item, use the percentage of weight from total sugars (in place of the percentage of weight from added sugars), and exempt fruits, vegetables, and dairy foods from this total sugars limit.
9. Schools that have vending machines are encouraged to include refrigerated snack vending machines, which can accommodate fruits, vegetables, yogurts, and other perishable items.
10. Unless this practice is allowed by a student’s individual education program (IEP).
11. Advertising of low-nutrition foods and beverages is permitted in supplementary classroom and library materials, such as newspapers, magazines, the Internet, and similar media, when such materials are used in a class lesson or activity, or as a research tool.
12. Schools should not permit general brand marketing for food brands under which more than half of the foods or beverages do not meet the nutritional standards for foods sold individually or the meals are not consistent with school meal nutrition standards.
13. Useful self-assessment and planning tools include the School Health Index from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Changing the Scene from the Team Nutrition Program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and Opportunity to Learn Standards for Elementary, Middle, and High School Physical Education from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education.

LEGAL REFS: Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010
M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 3
COMMITMENT TO ACCOMPLISHMENT

The School Committee accepts ultimate responsibility for all facets of school operations. Because it is accountable to residents of the District, the School Committee will maintain a program of accountability consisting of the following elements:

- Clear statements of expectations and purpose as these relate to operations, programs, departments, and positions.

- Provisions for the staff, resources, and support necessary to achieve stated expectations and purposes, subject to financial support by residents of the District.

- Evaluation of operations and instructional and staff development programs to determine how well expectations and purposes are being met.
• Specific performance objectives to enable individuals to direct their own efforts to the goals and objectives of the District.

• Evaluation of the efforts of employees in line with stated objectives, with the first purpose of evaluation being to help each individual make a maximum contribution to the goals of the District.

Every effort will be made by the School Committee, Superintendent, and staff to fulfill the responsibilities inherent in the concept of accountability.

SECTION B
BOARD GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

BA  SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS
BAA  EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES
BB  SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS
BBA  SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES
BBAA  SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY
BBBA  SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE
BBBC  SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION
SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee is responsible to the people for whose benefit the school system has been established. The Committee’s current decisions will influence the course of education in our schools for years to come. The Committee and each of its members must look to the future and to the needs of all people more than the average citizen finds necessary. This requires a comprehensive perspective and long-range planning in addition to attention to immediate problems.

The School Committee’s primary responsibility is to establish those purposes, programs,
and procedures that will best produce the educational achievement needed by our students. The Committee is charged with accomplishing this while also being responsible for wise management of resources available to the school system. The Committee must fulfill these responsibilities by functioning primarily as a legislative body to formulate and adopt policy, by selecting a Superintendent to implement policy, and by evaluating the results. It must carry out its functions openly, while seeking the comments of the public, students, and staff in its decision-making processes.

In accordance with these principles, long term planning will involve:

1. Periodically setting performance objectives for the School Committee itself and evaluating their accomplishment.

2. Setting objectives for performance for each position and function in the system.

3. Allowing the people responsible for carrying out objectives to have a role in setting them.

4. Establishing practical and simple goals.

5. Conducting a concrete and periodic review of performance against these goals.
EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will periodically establish realistic objectives related to Committee procedures and relationships. At the end of a specified length of time, the Committee will measure its performance against the stated objectives.

The following areas of School Committee operations and relationships are representative of those in which objectives may be set and progress appraised:

1. Communication with the public
2. School Committee - Superintendent relationships
3. School Committee member development and performance
4. Policy development
5. Educational leadership
6. Fiscal management
7. School Committee meetings
8. Performance of subcommittees of the School Committee
9. Inter agency and governmental relationships

When the Committee has completed its self-evaluation, the members will discuss the results in detail and formulate a new series of objectives. At the same time, the Committee will set an approximate date on which the next evaluation will be conducted.

Implied in the concept of evaluation is an assumption that individuals and committees are capable of improvement. The School Committee believes that its performance will be improved if evaluation is carried out systematically in accordance with good planning, conscientious follow-through, and careful assessment of results.
SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS

State law provides that:

Every town at its annual meeting shall in every year when the term of office of any incumbent expires, and except when other provision is made by law, choose by ballot from its registered voters the following town officers for the following terms of office:

Three members of the Regional School Committee for terms of three years.

The School Committee is the governing board of the town’s public school system. Although it functions as a duly elected committee of town government, the School Committee has, unlike other town boards, autonomous and absolute authority within limitations established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to carry out the educational policies of the state and guide the educational process.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 41:1 and 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the General Laws of Massachusetts Relating to School Committees
SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee has all the powers conferred upon it by state law and must perform those duties mandated by the state. These include the responsibility and right to determine policies and practices and to employ a staff to implement its directions for the proper education of the children of the community.

The Committee takes a broad view of its functions. It sees them as:

1. **Legislative or policy making:** The Committee is responsible for the development of policy as guides for administrative action and for employing a Superintendent who will implement its policies.

2. **Appraisal:** The Committee is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of its policies and their implementation.

3. **Provision of financial resources:** The Committee is responsible for adoption of a budget that will enable the school system to carry out the Committee’s policies.

4. **Public relations:** The Committee is responsible for providing adequate and direct means for keeping the local citizenry informed about the schools and for keeping itself and the school staff informed about the needs and wishes of the public.

5. **Educational planning and evaluation:** The Committee is responsible for establishing educational objectives that will guide the Committee and the staff goals and working together for the continuing improvement of the educational program.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the Massachusetts General Laws.
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY

Authority
Because all powers of the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee are derived from state laws and are granted in terms of action as a group, members of the School Committee have authority only when acting as a Committee legally in session.

The School Committee will not be bound in any way by any statement or action on the part of an individual member, including the chairman, except when such statement or action is a result of specific instructions of the Committee.

No member of the Committee, by virtue of his/her office, will exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or command the services of any school employee.

The School Committee will function as a body and all policy decisions and other matters, as required by law, will be settled by an official vote of the Committee sitting in formal session.

Duties
The duties and obligations of the individual Committee member may be enumerated as follows:

1. To become familiar with the General Laws of the Commonwealth relating to education and School Committee operations, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, policies and procedures of this School Committee and School Department.

2. To keep abreast of new laws and the latest trends in education.

3. To have a general knowledge of the goals, objectives, and programs of the District’s schools.

4. To work effectively with other Committee members without trying either to dominate the Committee or neglect his/her share of the work.

5. To respect the privileged communication that exists in executive sessions by maintaining strict confidentiality on matters discussed in these sessions, except that which becomes part of the public record, once it has been approved for release.

6. To vote and act in Committee impartially for the good of the students.

7. To accept the will of the majority vote in all cases, and to remember that s/he is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
8. To represent the Committee and the schools to the public in a way that promotes interest and support.

9. To refer questions and complaints to the proper school authorities.

10. To comply with the accepted code of ethics for School Committee members.
In order to serve on the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee, an individual must be a registered voter in the town of Ayer and Shirley from which s/he is elected or appointed and must take an oath of office as required by law.

Each new member will present to the Committee secretary official certification of having sworn the oath before an officer duly qualified to administer oaths prior to entering on his/her official duties as a member of the Committee. From the town clerk, newly qualified Committee members, by law, receive and sign a receipt for a copy of the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law governing the conduct of Committee meetings in general and executive sessions in particular.

Membership on a School Committee is not limited to age, race, color, disability, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 39:23B; 41:1; 41:107
M.G.L. 76:5 Amended 1993
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION

A current School Committee member who submits a resignation to the appropriate certifying authority terminates School Committee duties at the time of such resignation unless a later time is stated in the resignation.

Should a School Committee member move out of the town or District in which s/he holds office, that member shall be deemed to have vacated his/her office.

Established by law

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 41:2; 41:109
When a vacancy on the Regional School Committee occurs for any reason, the appropriate town’s Board of Selectmen and the remaining Committee members of that town share the responsibility for filling it.

As provided in the law, the School Committee will notify the Selectmen that a vacancy has been created within 30 days after it has occurred. After one week’s notice has been given by the Committee to the Selectmen, so that voters of the town may have the opportunity to state their candidacy, the two governing bodies will meet to fill the vacancy by roll call vote.

For election to fill a vacancy, a candidate must receive a majority of the votes of the officers entitled to vote. The person so elected will fill the seat on the Committee until the next town election, at which time a member will be elected to serve the remainder of the term, if any.

Established by law

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 41:11
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS
(Massachusetts Association of School Committees Code of Ethics)

Preamble
The acceptance of a code of ethics implies the understanding of the basic organization of School Committees under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The oath of office of a School Committee member binds the individual member to adherence to those state laws which apply to School Committees, since School Committees are agencies of the state.

This code of ethics delineates three areas of responsibility of School Committee members in addition to that implied above: (1) community responsibility; (2) responsibility to school administration; and (3) relationships to fellow Committee members.

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her community should:
1. Realize that his/her primary responsibility is to the children.
2. Recognize that his/her basic function is to be policy making and not administrative.
3. Remember that s/he is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
4. Be well informed concerning the duties of a Committee member on both a local and state level.
5. Remember that s/he represents the entire community at all times.
6. Accept the office as a Committee member as means of unselfish service with no intent to “play politics,” in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from his/her Committee activities.

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her school administration should:
1. Endeavor to establish sound, clearly-defined policies which will direct and support the administration.
2. Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration.
3. Give the chief administrator full responsibility for discharging his/her professional duties and hold him/her responsible for acceptable results.
4. Refer all complaints to the administrative staff for solution and only discuss them at Committee meetings if such solutions fail.

A School Committee in his/her relations with his/her fellow Committee members should:
1. Recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that s/he alone cannot bind the Committee outside of such meetings.
2. Realize that s/he should not make statements or promises of how s/he will vote on matters that will come before the Committee.
3. Uphold the intent of executive sessions and respect the privileged communications that exists in executive sessions.
4. Not withhold pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems, either from members of his/her own Committee or from members of other committees who may be seeking help or information on school problems.
5. Make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed.

SOURCE: Massachusetts Association of School Committees, 5/22/64
SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

For the purpose of organizing, the School Committee, at the Committee’s first regularly scheduled meeting held after the last of the annual elections in the member towns, will elect from its membership a chairman and a vice chairman to hold their respective offices for a term of one year or until a successor is elected. The Committee will have as a standard that the position of chairman will rotate annually between the member towns. The vice chairman will be drawn from those members in the other member town.

A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum. The election will proceed as follows:

1. Nominations for the office of chairman will be made from the floor. The chairman will be elected by a majority roll-call vote of the members present and voting. If no nominee receives a majority vote, the election will be declared null and void and nominations will be reopened.

2. The chairmanship of the Committee will be changed each year and no member shall be eligible to be elected chairman until s/he has served on the Committee at least two years.

3. Upon election, the new chairman will preside, calling for the election of a vice-chairman. The procedure used for election will be the same as that for electing the chairman.

4. The Committee will appoint a secretary who may or may not be a member of the Committee.

5. The Committee will also appoint a treasurer who will not be a member of the Committee.

Any vacancy among the officers occurring between organizational meetings will be filled by a member elected by the School Committee. The election will be conducted as described above.

Following election of officers at its organizational meeting, the School Committee may proceed into such regular or special business as scheduled on the agenda.
SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Duties of the Chairman

The chairman of the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee has the same powers as any other member of the Committee to vote upon all measures coming before it, to offer resolutions and to discuss questions. S/he will perform those duties that are consistent with his/her office and those required by law, state regulations, and this Committee. In carrying out these responsibilities, the chairman will:

1. Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Committee.
2. Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Committee’s agendas.
3. Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between Committee meetings.
4. Appoint subcommittees, subject to Committee approval.
5. Call special meetings of the Committee as found necessary.
6. Be public spokesman for the Committee at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.
7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Committee meetings.

As presiding officer at all meetings of the Committee, the chairman will:
1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time.
2. Announce the business to come before the Committee in its proper order.
3. Enforce the Committee’s policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of meetings.
4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference.
5. Explain what the effect of a motion would be if this is not clear to members.
6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Committee.
7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries.
8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof.

Duties of the Vice-Chairman

The vice-chairman of the Committee will act in the absence of the chairman as presiding officer of the Committee and will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to him/her.

Secretary

The secretary will keep or cause to be kept an accurate journal of all Committee meetings; will comply with state law and Committee policy regarding notification of meetings; and will render such reports as may be required by the state or the town.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:36
APPOINTED COMMITTEE OFFICIALS

The Superintendent shall be elected by the Committee as provided by law and shall serve as secretary and perform all the duties that are prescribed by law and such other duties, not inconsistent thereto, as a majority of the Committee may direct.
SCHOOL COMMITTEE-SUPERINTENDENT RELATIONSHIP

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will leave to the Superintendent all matters of decision and administration that come within his/her scope as the professional leader of the school system. While the Committee reserves to itself the ultimate decision of all matters concerning general policy or expenditures of funds, it will normally proceed in these areas after receiving recommendations from its Superintendent.

Further:

1. The Superintendent will have the privilege of asking guidance from the Committee with respect to matters of operation whenever appropriate. If it is necessary to make exceptions to an established policy, s/he will submit the matter to the Committee for advice and direction.

2. The Superintendent will assist the Committee in reaching sound judgments and establishing policies, and will place before the Committee all relevant facts, information, and reports necessary to keep the Committee adequately informed of situations or business at hand.
SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee may or may not establish special subcommittees at its annual organizational meeting. These subcommittees may be created for a specific purpose and to make recommendations for Committee action.

1. The subcommittee will be established through action of the Committee.

2. The subcommittee chairman and its members will be appointed by the Committee chairman, subject to approval by the Committee.

3. The subcommittee will be provided with a list of its functions and duties.

4. The subcommittee may make recommendations for Committee action, but it may not act for the School Committee.

5. The Committee Chairman and Superintendent will be ex-officio members of all special subcommittees.

6. A subcommittee will be dissolved by the Committee upon completion of its assignment, or it may be dissolved by a vote of the Committee at any time.
ADVISORY COMMITTEES TO THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The following general policies will govern the appointment and functioning of advisory committees to the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee other than the student advisory committee, which is governed by the terms of the Massachusetts General Laws.

1. Advisory committees may be created by the School Committee to serve as task forces for special purposes or to provide continuing consultation in a particular area of activity. However, there will be no standing overall advisory committee to the School Committee.

2. If an advisory committee is required by state or federal law, its composition and appointment will meet all the guidelines established for that particular type of committee.

3. The composition of task forces and any other advisory committees will be broadly representative and take into consideration the specific tasks assigned to the committee. Members of the professional staff may be appointed to the committee as members or consultants, as found desirable.

4. Appointments to such committees will be made by the Committee; appointment of staff members to such committees will be made by the Committee upon recommendation of the Superintendent.

5. Tenure of committee members will be one year only unless the member is reappointed.

6. Each committee will be clearly instructed as to:
   a. The length of time each member is being asked to serve.
   b. The assignment the School Committee wishes the committee to fulfill and the extent and limitations of its responsibilities.
   c. The resources the School Committee will provide.
   d. The approximate dates on which the School Committee wishes to receive major reports.
   e. School Committee policies governing citizens, committees and the relationship of these committees to the School Committee as whole, individual School Committee members, the Superintendent, and other members of the professional staff.
   f. Responsibilities for the release of information to the press.

7. Recommendations of committees will be based upon research and fact.

8. The School Committee possesses certain legal powers and prerogatives that cannot be delegated or surrendered to others. Therefore, all recommendations of an advisory committee must be submitted to the School Committee.

The Committee will have the sole power to dissolve any of its advisory committees and will reserve the right to exercise this power at any time during the life of any committee.
SCHOOL COUNCILS

The School Committee believes that the school is the key unit for educational improvement and change and that successful school improvement is best accomplished through a school-based decision-making process. By involving those directly affected by any action or decision of the school council in the process of determining that action or decision, it helps to strengthen the commitment to those decisions by those most affected by its implementation.

Under this policy, the principal shall have primary responsibility for the management of the school. Decisions which are made at the school level must be aligned with the budget, policies, curriculum, and long-range and short-range goals adopted by the School Committee. In addition, decisions must comply with any state and federal laws and regulations and with any negotiated agreements of the school district.

As enacted by the state legislature in the Education Reform Act of 1993, a school council shall be established in each school to advise the principal in specific areas of school operation. The principal, except as specifically defined in the law, shall have the responsibility for defining the composition of and forming the group pursuant to a representative process approved by the Superintendent and School Committee.

The following guidelines define the role of the school council:

The School Council shall meet regularly with the principal of the school and shall assist in:

1. Adoption of educational goals for the school that is consistent with state and local policies and standards.
2. Identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school.
3. Review of the school building budget.
4. Formulation of a school improvement plan that may be implemented only after review and approval by the Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:38Q, 71:59C
The principal, in conjunction with the school council, shall be responsible for preparing a written school improvement plan annually. This plan shall be written with the advice of the school council and submitted for approval to the Superintendent. The plan should be drafted with the following in mind:

1. The educational goals for the school consistent with the goals and standards, including student performance standards, as adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Education and by the School Committee.

2. An assessment of the needs of the school in light of the proposed educational goals.

3. The means to address student performance.

4. Professional development for the school’s professional staff.

5. The enhancement of parental involvement in the life of the school, safety, and discipline.

6. The development of means for meeting the diverse learning needs of every child.

7. Any further subjects as the principal, in consultation with the school council, shall consider appropriate, except that:

   (a) The council shall have no authority over matters that are subject to Chapter 150E, the collective bargaining law, and

   (b) The council may not expand the scope of its authority beyond that established in law and expressly granted by School Committee policy.
SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The written school improvement plan shall be submitted by the principal to the Superintendent for review and approval by October 1st of each year.

Because the implementation of the plan is dependent on Superintendent approval, it is important that the school council be aware of certain expectations of the School Committee regarding the school improvement plan. The school improvement plan should:

1. Focus on improvement of student learning.
2. Specify expected student outcomes and measurable/observable results.
3. Align with the mission of the Region and any goals and policies of the school district.
4. Be consistent with state and federal law, school district policy, established curriculum and negotiated agreements.
5. Clearly identify actions to be taken on how changes will be implemented.
6. Include a plan on how to solicit community support for the changes being developed.
7. Indicate anticipated costs and available funding sources.
8. Delineate the method of evaluating and reporting progress and results.

If the school improvement plan is not approved by the Superintendent, it shall be returned to the principal with specific comments as to the reason(s). The principal shall revise the plan in cooperation with the school council, and resubmit it for approval. If the Superintendent does not review the school improvement plan within 30 days of its receipt, the plan shall be deemed to have been approved. All approved and accepted recommendations will be taken under advisement by the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee.
CONDUCT OF SCHOOL COUNCIL BUSINESS

The principal shall, by law, serve as co-chair of the council. The second co-chair will be elected annually by the council members at its first meeting of the school year subsequent to the elections of new council members. The co-chairs will be responsible for the preparation of the agenda for the council meetings.

The school council shall meet at least once monthly during the school year. Meetings will be held outside of school hours. At its first meeting of the school year, the council will set its calendar of regular meetings for the year. Where circumstances warrant, the council may choose to call additional meetings.

Consensus shall be used by school councils as the primary method to resolve issues and to formulate recommendations. Votes by majority may be taken at the discretion of the principal and Robert’s Rules of Order shall prevail if there are questions of procedure.

All meetings of the school council shall conform to the Open Meeting Law, Section 23 A, B, and C, which stipulates that all meetings be open to the public, that meetings are posted at least 48 hours in advance, and that minutes of the meeting shall be maintained as required. The scope of the school council does not require, and therefore does not qualify for, executive session.

The Superintendent shall receive agendas and minutes of all school council meetings. The Superintendent shall provide copies of these materials to members of the School Committee for information.
SCHOOL ATTORNEY

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee may use the services provided by town counsel. The Committee and the Superintendent may seek his/her services to counsel and represent the school district at various times.

However, because the complexity of school department operations often requires specialized legal services, the Committee may also retain an attorney or law firm to provide additional legal services.

It will be the duty of the counsel for the School Committee to advise the School Committee and the Superintendent on the specific legal problems submitted to him/her. S/he will attend meetings upon request and will be sufficiently familiar with Committee policies, practices, and actions under these policies, and with requirements of school law to enable him/her to offer the necessary legal advice.

A decision to seek legal advice or assistance on behalf of the school district will be made by the Committee. The Superintendent may also take such action at the direction of the Committee.

Many types of legal assistance are routine and do not require specific Committee approval or prior notice. However, when the Superintendent concludes that unusual types or amounts of professional legal service may be required, s/he will advise the Committee and seek either initial or continuing authorization for such service.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:37E; 71:37F
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

1. The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will transact all business at official meetings of the Committee. These may be either regular or special meetings, defined as follows:

   a. **Regular meeting**: the usual official legal action meeting, held regularly.

   b. **Special meeting**: an official legal action meeting called between scheduled regular meetings to consider specific topics.

2. The School Committee shall conduct regular meetings at least once a month, in cases of emergency, or by majority vote of the Committee. More frequent meetings may be held. Normally, the School Committee will meet in a designated room alternating between the Page/Hilltop School and the Shirley Middle School Library at 7:00 p.m. However, on those rare occasions as conditions require the time and place of the meeting may be changed.

3. Every meeting of the School Committee, regular or special, will be open to the public unless an executive session is held in accordance with state law.

4. As required by law, a minimum of 48 hours advance notice will be given for any meeting of the School Committee, including all subcommittee meetings. The only exception permitted is in case of emergency, which the law defines as “a sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate action.”

5. Notification of the dates, times, and places of regular meetings will be accomplished by periodic publication of the schedule for the ensuing months. Notification of a change in a regular meeting time or place and notification of a special meeting will be filed with the town clerk at least 48 hours in advance, as required by law.

   A majority, or four, members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for purposes of taking action.

   The only action that may be taken in the absence of a quorum is to adjourn the meeting to another time in the expectation of a quorum.

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

All meetings of the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee are open to attendance by the public and media representatives. However, the Committee has the right to convene in a closed executive session when it meets the following procedural conditions imposed by state law:

1. The Committee will first convene in an open session for which due notice has been given.
2. The Chairperson (or, in his/her absence, the presiding member) will state the purpose for the executive session by stating all subjects that may be revealed without compromising the purpose for which the executive session was called.
3. A majority of the members must vote to enter the executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.
4. The chairman or presiding member will state before entering the executive session whether the Committee will reconvene in open session after the executive session.

The law puts specific limitations on the purposes for which executive sessions may be convened. The Committee may enter executive sessions only to deliberate:

1. The reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than the professional competence, of a single individual.
2. The discipline or dismissal, including the hearing of charges against, a member of the Committee, a school department employee or student, or other individual.
3. Strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect. Collective bargaining may also be conducted.
4. The deployment of security personnel or devices.
5. Allegations of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints.
6. Transactions of real estate, if an open meeting might be detrimental to the negotiating position of the Committee or another party.
7. To comply with the provisions of any general or specific law of federal grant-in-aid requirements.
8. And to consider and interview applicants for employment (The only position that the School Committee would be involved in that might qualify would be for the position of Superintendent). This exemption only applies if it can be determined that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants.
9. To meet or confer with a mediator with respect to any litigation or public business.
10. To discuss trade secrets or confidential competitively-sensitive or other proprietary information conducted by governmental body as an energy supplier.

(In the first two cases listed, an open meeting will be held if the individual involved so requests.)
Accurate records of the proceedings conducted in executive session will be kept and may remain secret only so long as their publication would defeat the purpose of the session. The School Committee Chair and the Superintendent will review executive session minutes for possible declassification on, at least, a quarterly basis and, if necessary, will consult with legal counsel. The School Committee Chair will bring minutes recommended for declassification to the School Committee for a vote either as part of a consent agenda or for individual action. In either case, there shall be an announcement of the declassification of minutes.

When a specific set of executive session minutes, not yet declassified, is requested by a member of the public, the School Committee shall render a decision on declassification at its next meeting or within 30 days after the request, whichever occurs first.

All votes taken in executive session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions.

Established by law and Committee policy

SOURCE: MASC
LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 30A:21; 30A:22
CROSS REFS: BDE, Subcommittees of the School Committee
BE, School Committee Meetings
KEB, Public Complaints about School Personnel
AGENDA FORMAT

The Superintendent, conferring with the chairman of the School Committee, will arrange the order of items on meetings agendas so that the Committee can accomplish its business as expeditiously as possible. The particular order may vary from meeting to meeting in keeping with the business at hand.

The Committee will follow the order of business established by the agenda except as it votes to rearrange the order for the convenience of visitors, individuals appearing before the Committee, or to expedite Committee business.

Items of business may be suggested by any School Committee member, staff member, or citizen. The inclusion of such items, however, will be at the discretion of the chairman of the Committee. A staff member who wishes to have a topic scheduled on the agenda should submit the request, in writing, through the Superintendent.

The agenda will also provide for time when any citizen who wishes may speak briefly before the School Committee.

The Committee shall take action only on subjects which appear on the agenda. However, the Committee may waive this policy by a majority vote of the Committee when it deems such action necessary.

The agenda, together with supporting materials, will be distributed to School Committee members three days prior to the meeting to permit adequate time to prepare for the meeting.

Agendas will be posted and made available to the press.
Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised will govern the proceedings of the Committee, except when those rules are in conflict with the Committee’s approved policies and regulations.

In accordance with Robert’s Rules, the Committee may suspend parliamentary rules of order by a two-thirds vote.
VOTING METHOD

Except on procedural matters, all votes of the School Committee will be recorded in the minutes; if the vote is unanimous only that fact need be recorded. If the vote is not unanimous the names of the members will be recorded as voting aye or nay.

All actions will require a majority vote of all members present and voting except as state law, Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, or policies of this Committee require a larger majority. A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum.

A two-thirds vote will be required to suspend parliamentary rules of order.
MINUTES

The minutes of the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee meetings constitute the written record of Committee actions; they are legal evidence of what the action was. Therefore, the secretary of the School Committee will be responsible for reporting in the minutes all actions taken by the Committee.

Minutes will include:

1. A statement on the nature of the meeting (regular or special), the time, the place, and the approval of the last regular and each subsequent special meeting.

2. Names of the members present or absent, annotated as to arrival and departure times, if during the meeting.

3. A complete record of official actions taken by the Committee relative to the Superintendent’s recommendations, to communications, and to all business transacted. Resolutions and motions will be given in their exact wording along with a record of the results of the vote. Reports and documents relating to a formal motion may be omitted if they are referred to and identified by title and date.

4. Notation of formal adjournment.

Copies of the minutes will be sent to all Committee members at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting at which the minutes are to be approved.

The approved minutes will become permanent records of the Committee. Minutes of public meetings and minutes of executive sessions that have been declassified will be in the custody of the Superintendent who will make them available to interested citizens upon request.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 39:23B; 66:10
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All regular and special meetings of the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee shall be open to the public. Executive sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The School Committee desires citizens of the district to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of our local public schools. In addition, the Committee would like the opportunity to hear the wishes and ideas of the public.

In order that all citizens who wish to be heard before the Committee have a chance and to ensure the ability of the Committee to conduct the district’s business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. Individuals or group representatives will be invited to address the Committee at the appropriate time on the agenda. The length of the public participation segment shall be determined by the chairman.
2. Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material. The presiding chairman may permit extension of this time limit.
3. Topics for discussion must be limited to those items listed on the School Committee meeting agenda for that evening.
4. Improper conduct and remarks will not be allowed. Defamatory or abusive remarks are always out of order. If a speaker persists in improper conduct or remarks, the chairman may terminate that individual’s privilege of address.
5. All remarks will be addressed through the chairman of the meeting.
6. Speakers may offer such objective criticisms of the school operations and programs as concern them, but in public session the Committee will not hear personal complaints of school personnel nor against any member of the school community. Under most circumstances, administrative channels are the proper means for disposition of legitimate complaints involving staff members.
7. Written comments longer than three (3) minutes may be presented to the Committee before or after the meeting for the Committee members review and consideration at an appropriate time.
SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS

In conducting all public hearings required by law, and others as it deems advisable, the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will:

1. Give due and public notice in line with statutory requirements and seek to publicize the meeting in all local media.

2. Make available printed information on the topic of the hearing.

3. Give all persons an equal opportunity to be heard in accordance with the Committee’s policy.

The chairman of the Committee will preside at the hearing.

The public will be informed at the beginning of the hearing regarding the procedure that will be followed in regard to questions, remarks, rebuttals, and any time limitations or other rules that must be followed to give everyone an opportunity to be heard.

In conformance with customary hearing procedures, statements and supporting information will be presented first by the Committee, or by others for the Committee; to comment, citizens must be recognized by the chair, and all remarks must be addressed to the chair and be germane to the topic. To assure that all who wish get a chance to speak, the chair will recognize persons who have not commented previously during the hearing before recognizing persons who wish to remark a second time.
SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will develop policies and put them in writing so that they may serve as guides for the discretionary action of those to whom it delegates authority.

The formulation and adoption of these written policies will constitute the basic method by which the School Committee will exercise its leadership in providing for the successful and efficient functioning of the school system. Through the study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its policies, the School Committee will exercise its control over school operation.

The School Committee accepts the definition of policy set forth by the National School Boards Association:

Policies are principles adopted by a School Committee to chart a course of action. They tell what is wanted; they may include why and how much. Policies should be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be followed by the administration in meeting day-to-day problems, yet be specific enough to give clear guidance.

The policies of the School Committee are framed, and are meant to be interpreted, in terms of state law, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and other regulatory agencies of the various levels of government.
POLICY ADOPTION

Adoption of new policies or changing existing policies is solely the responsibility of the School Committee. Policies will be adopted and/or amended only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the School Committee when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting.

To permit time for study of all policies or amendments to policies and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to react, proposed policies or amendments will be presented as an agenda item to the Committee in the following sequence:

1. Information item -- distribution with agenda
2. Discussion item -- first reading of proposed policy or policies; response from Superintendent; report from any advisory committee assigned responsibility in the area; Committee discussion and directions for any redrafting
3. Action item -- discussion, adoption or rejection.

Adoption, amendment, revocation, or suspension of a policy shall require a majority vote of the entire Committee membership. Amendments to the policy at the action stage will not require repetition of the sequence, unless the Committee so directs.

The School Committee may dispense with the above sequence to meet emergency conditions. Policies will be effective upon the date set by the School Committee. This date will ensure that affected persons have an opportunity to become familiar with the requirements of the new policy prior to its implementation.
POLICY REVISION AND REVIEW

In an effort to keep its written policies up to date so that they can be used consistently as a basis for School Committee action and administrative decision, the Committee will review its policies on a regular basis.

The Committee will evaluate how the policies have been executed by the school staff and will weigh the results. It will rely on the school staff, students, and the communities or providing evidence of the effect of the policies it has adopted.

The Superintendent is given the continuing commission of calling to the Committee’s attention all policies that are out of date or for other reason appear to need revision.

The School Committee directs the Superintendent to periodically recall all policy and regulations manuals for administrative updating and Committee review.

A proposed policy, to be adopted, amended, revoked, or suspended must first be passed by a majority vote at one meeting.
SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF REGULATIONS

It is expected that the Superintendent and administrative staff will need to issue regulations implementing policies of the School Committee. Many of these will be routine from year to year; others will arise in special circumstances; some will be drawn up under specific directions from the Committee.

The Committee may review the regulations developed by the Superintendent for the school district whenever they appear inconsistent with policy, goals, or objectives of the District, but it will revise or veto such regulations only when, in the Committee’s judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the Committee.

The Committee will not officially approve regulations except as required by state law or in cases when strong community attitudes, or possible student or staff reaction, make it necessary or advisable for a regulation to have the Committee’s advance approval.

Before issuance, regulations will be properly titled and coded as appropriate to subject and in conformance with the codification system selected by the Committee. Those officially approved by the Committee will be so marked; all others appearing in the manual will be considered approved provided they are in accordance with the accompanying Committee policy.

Rules Pertaining to Staff and Student Conduct

Under Massachusetts law, the Superintendent is required to publish “rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students which have been adopted.” Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes shall be filed with the Department of Education for information purposes only. Standards of conduct will be included in staff and student handbooks. These handbooks will be reviewed and approved annually by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H
POLICY DISSEMINATION

The Superintendent is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies adopted by the Committee and the regulations needed to put them into effect.

Accessibility is to extend at least to all employees of the school system, to members of the Committee, and, insofar as conveniently possible, to all persons in the communities. A policy concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to those groups prior to the policy’s effective date.

All policy manuals distributed to anyone will remain the property of the Committee and will be considered as “on loan” to anyone, or any organization, in whose possession they might be at any time. They are subject to recall at any time deemed necessary for purposes of updating.

The School Committee’s Policy Manual will be considered a public record and will be available for inspection at the Superintendent’s office.
SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

The operation of any section or sections of School Committee policies not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a two-thirds vote of Committee members present at any regular or special meeting. Any action to suspend policy must be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting and will be so noted on the agenda for that meeting.
SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Superintendent.

**Staff Communications to the School Committee**
All communications or reports to the Committee or any of its subcommittees from principals, supervisors, teachers, or other staff members will be submitted through the Superintendent. This procedure does not deny the right of any employee to appeal to the Committee around administrative decisions on important matters, except those matters that are outside of the Committee’s legal authority, provided the Superintendent has been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Committee’s policy on complaints and grievances. Staff members are also reminded that Committee meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe first hand the Committee’s deliberations on problems of staff concern.

**School Committee Communications to Staff**
All official communications, policies, and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent. The Superintendent will develop appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the Committee’s problems, concerns and actions.

**Visits to Schools**
Individual School Committee members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will inform the Superintendent of such visits and make arrangements for visitations through the principals of the various schools. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as “inspections” or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Committee members will be carried on only under Committee authorization.
USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As elected public officials, School Committee members shall exercise caution when communicating between and among themselves via electronic messaging services including, but not limited to, electronic mail (e-mail), Internet web forums, and Internet chat rooms.

Under the Open Meeting Law, deliberation by a quorum of members constitutes a meeting. Deliberation is defined as movement toward a decision including, but not limited to, the sharing of an opinion regarding business over which the Committee has supervision, control, or jurisdiction. A quorum may be arrived at sequentially using electronic messaging without knowledge and intent by the author.

School Committee members should use electronic messaging between and among members only for housekeeping purposes such as requesting or communicating agenda items, meeting times, or meeting dates. Electronic messaging should not be used to discuss Committee matters that require public discussion under the Open Meeting Law.

Under the Public Records Law, electronic messages between public officials may be considered public records. Therefore, in order to ensure compliance, the School Committee chairperson, in consultation with the Superintendent of Schools, shall annually designate a member of the central office staff who shall be copied on all electronic correspondence between and among members of the School Committee. These copies shall be printed and retained in the central office in the same fashion as any other School Committee records. School Committee members who do not have a computer or access to these messages shall be provided copies on a timely basis.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L.4:7; 39:23A, 23B; 66:10
NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

In accordance with the requirements of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 36A as amended on December 24th, 2002, each new School Committee member elected to the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee is required to complete, within one year of their election or appointment, at least eight hours of orientation training. This orientation shall include, but is not limited to, a review of School Finance, the Open Meeting Law, Public Records Law, Conflict of Interest Law, Special Education Law, Collective Bargaining, School Leadership Standards and Evaluations, and the Roles and Responsibilities of School Committee Members.

The School Committee and Superintendent shall assist each new member to understand the functions, policies and procedures of the Committee as soon after election as possible. Each new member shall be given the following materials:

A. A copy of the School Committee Policy Manual
B. A copy of the Open Meeting Law
C. A copy of the Conflict of Interest Regulations
D. A copy of the district’s budget
E. Collective bargaining agreements and contracts
F. Student and staff handbooks

Each new member shall also receive any other materials the chair and/or the Superintendent determine to be necessary.

The chair and/or Superintendent shall also clarify policy:

A. Arranging visits to schools or administrative offices
B. Requesting information regarding school district operations from staff.
C. Responding to community requests/complaints concerning staff or programs
D. Handling confidential information

Whether appointed or elected, new members should be advised that they are also members of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc. and should be encouraged to utilize the services and resources MASC provides by attending meetings or workshops specifically designed for new Committee members. Their expenses at these meetings or workshops will be reimbursed in accordance with established School Committee policy.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:36A
SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, AND WORKSHOPS

To provide continuing in-service training and development for its members, the School Committee encourages the participation of all members at appropriate School Committee conferences, workshops and conventions. However, in order to control both the investment of time and funds necessary to implement this policy, the Committee establishes these principles and procedures for its guidance:

1. A calendar of School Committee conferences, conventions and workshops will be maintained by the Committee secretary. The Committee will periodically decide which meetings appear to be most promising in terms of producing direct and indirect benefits to the school system. At least annually, the Committee will identify those new ideas or procedures and/or cost benefits that can be ascribed to participation at such meetings.

2. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted for on an annual basis. When funds are limited, the Committee will designate which of its members would be the most appropriate to participate at a given meeting.

3. Reimbursement to Committee members for their travel expenses will accord with the travel expense policy for staff members.

4. When a conference, convention, or workshop is not attended by the full Committee, those who do participate will be requested to share information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 40:5
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES

The School Committee shall serve without compensation. No School Committee member in either town shall be eligible for to the position of teacher or Superintendent of Public Schools therein, or in any union school or superintendency union or district in which his/her town participates.

Upon submitting vouchers and supporting bills for expenses incurred in carrying out specific services previously authorized by the Committee, members may be reimbursed from school funds.

Reimbursable expenses may include the cost of attendance at conferences of School Committee associations and other professional meetings or visitations when such attendance and expense payment has had prior School Committee approval.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 40:5; 71:52
SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee, as an agent of the state, must operate within the bounds of state and federal laws affecting public education. If the Committee is to meet its responsibilities to the residents and students of this community, it must work for the passage of new laws designed to advance the cause of good schools and for the repeal or modification of existing laws that impede this cause. To this end:

1. The Committee will keep itself informed of pending legislation and actively communicate its concerns and make its position known to elected representatives at both the state and national level.

2. The Committee will work with its legislative representatives (both state and federal), with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, and other concerned groups. One of the major objectives of the Committee’s legislative program will be to seek full funding for all state and federally mandated programs.

3. The Committee will annually designate a person, who may or may not be a member of the Committee, to serve as its legislative representative. This person will be authorized to speak on the Committee’s behalf with respect to legislation being considered by the Massachusetts Legislature or the United States Congress or their respective committees. In all dealings with individual elected representatives, the Legislature or Congress, the Committee’s representative will be bound by the official positions taken by the School Committee.
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee may maintain memberships in the national, state and regional School Committee (Board) associations and take an active part in the activities of these groups.

It may also maintain institutional memberships in other educational organizations, which the executive officers and Committee find to be of benefit to members and personnel.

The materials and benefits of institutional memberships will be distributed and used to the best advantage of the Committee and the staff.
### SECTION C
**GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

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ADMINISTRATION GOALS

It is the intent of the School Committee that the district employs qualified personnel to administer the school system efficiently and to require the Superintendent to organize the administration in a manner that will make clear the functions of each position and the relationships among them.

The Superintendent will establish clear lines of communication, both vertically and horizontally, and will form any staff councils or committees needed to provide for efficient conduct of school business. In order to engage in this process in an orderly and effective fashion, each individual and group will be given particular, clear-cut responsibilities. Channels will be established so that the recommendations and decisions of each group can be heard and reviewed by the chief administrative officer concerned, and, where appropriate, by the Superintendent and School Committee.

The organization and administration of the schools will balance responsibility with commensurate authority, subject to the reserved legal powers of the School Committee. This means that a staff member, when assigned a responsibility or a position, will be given the authority to make the decisions necessary to perform the assigned tasks.

For the schools to operate effectively, each administrative officer will be responsible and accountable for making a plan of development for all staff assigned to his/her area of operation.
SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT

The Committee shall employ a Superintendent of Schools and fix his/her compensation. The Superintendent shall act in accordance with General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 59, and shall perform such other duties consistent with this section as the Committee may determine. S/he shall also prepare such reports as may be required by the State Department of Education and shall submit materials for the Committee’s annual report to the (Mayor) Selectmen in sufficient time for printing in the annual report.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L.71:59, 72:3
SUPERINTENDENT’ S CONTRACT

The Committee, upon the election of a candidate or upon reelection of the incumbent Superintendent, will enter into a written contract with the Superintendent, which will meet the requirements of law and will protect the rights of both the Committee and the Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L.71:41; 71:42
EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Through evaluation of the Superintendent, the School Committee will strive to accomplish the following:

1. Clarify for the Superintendent his/her role in the school district as seen by the School Committee.

2. Clarify for all Committee members the role of the Superintendent in light of his/her job description and the immediate priorities among his/her responsibilities as agreed upon by the Committee and the Superintendent.

3. Develop harmonious working relationships between the School Committee and Superintendent.

4. Provide administrative leadership of excellence for the school system.

The School Committee will periodically develop with the Superintendent a set of performance objectives based on the needs of the school district. The Superintendent’s performance will be reviewed in accordance with these specified goals. Additional objectives will be established at intervals agreed upon with the Superintendent.
LINE AND STAFF RELATIONS

The School Committee expects the Superintendent to establish clear understandings on the part of all personnel of the working relationships in the school district.

Personnel will be expected to refer matters to the appropriate administrator. The administrator will refer such matters to the next higher administrative authority when necessary.

It is expected that the established lines of authority will serve most purposes. But all personnel will have the right to appeal any decision made by an administrative officer through established grievance procedures.

Additionally, lines of authority do not restrict in any way the cooperative, sensible working together of all staff members at all levels in order to develop the best possible school programs and services. The established lines of authority represent direction of authority and responsibility; when the staff is working together, the lines represent avenues for a two-way flow of ideas to improve the program and operations of the school system.
The Superintendent may establish such permanent or temporary councils, cabinets, and committees as s/he deems necessary for assuring staff participation in decision making, for implementing policies and regulations and for the improvement of the educational program.

Functioning in an advisory capacity all councils, cabinets, and committees created by the Superintendent may make recommendations for submission to the Committee through the Superintendent. Such groups will exercise no inherent authority. Authority for establishing policy remains with the Committee and authority for implementing policy remains with the Superintendent.

The membership, composition, and responsibilities of administrative councils, cabinets, and committees will be defined by the Superintendent and may be changed at his/her discretion. However, the School Committee wishes to be kept informed of the establishment and dissolution of these groups as well as their membership and their purpose.

Expenses incurred by such groups for consultative services, materials, and any investigative travel will be paid by the school district, but only within budgetary allotments and when approved in advance by the Superintendent.
POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Superintendent has responsibility for carrying out, through regulations, the policies established by the School Committee.

The policies developed by the Committee and the regulations developed to implement policy are designed to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the school system. Consequently, it is expected that all school employees and students will carry them out.

Administrators and supervisors are responsible for informing staff members in their schools, departments, or divisions of existing policies and regulations and for seeing that they are implemented in the spirit intended.
DEVELOPMENT OF REGULATIONS

The Superintendent will be responsible for specifying required actions and designing the detailed arrangements under which the school district will be operated in accordance with School Committee policy. These detailed arrangements will be designed to implement policies, goals, and objectives of the Committee and will be one of the means by which the school district will be governed.

In the development of regulations, the Superintendent may involve at the planning stage those who would be affected by the regulations, including staff members, students, parents, and the public. S/he must weigh with care the counsel given by representatives of staff, student and community organizations. S/he will inform the Committee of such counsel in presenting pertinent reports of regulations and in presenting regulations for Committee approval.

As long as the Superintendent operates within the guidelines of policy adopted by the Committee, s/he may issue regulations without prior Committee approval unless Committee action is required by law, or the Committee has specifically asked that certain types of regulations be given Committee approval, or the Superintendent recommends Committee approval in light of strong community attitudes or probable staff reactions.
SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF REGULATIONS

It is expected that the Superintendent and administrative staff will need to issue regulations implementing policies of the School Committee. Many of these will be routine from year to year; others will arise in special circumstances; some will be drawn up under specific directions from the Committee.

The Committee may review the regulations developed by the Superintendent for the school district prior to their issuance, but it will revise or veto such regulations only when, in the Committee’s judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the Committee.

The Committee will not officially approve regulations except as required by state law or in cases when strong community attitudes, or possible student or staff reaction, make it necessary or advisable for a regulation to have the Committee’s advance approval.

Before issuance, regulations will be properly titled and coded as appropriate to subject and in conformance with the codification system selected by the Committee. Those officially approved by the Committee will be so marked; all others appearing in the manual will be considered approved provided they are in accordance with the accompanying Committee policy.

Rules Pertaining to Staff and Student Conduct

Under Massachusetts law, the Superintendent is required to publish “rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students which have been adopted.” (Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes shall be filed with the Department of Education for information purposes only.) Standards of conduct will be included in staff and student handbooks. These handbooks will be reviewed and approved annually by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H
It will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to see that the regulations developed to implement Committee policies and administer the school district are appropriately coded and included as regulations in the School Committee’s policy manual.

A regulation concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to the group(s) prior to the effective date of the regulation.
APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES

The law directs that in each school building containing the grades nine to twelve, the principal, in consultation with the school council, shall prepare and distribute to each student a handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to conduct of students. Handbooks shall also be available in grades K-8. The school councils shall review the handbook each spring to consider changes to take effect in September.

It is essential that the contents of all handbooks conform to School Committee policies. It is also important that all handbooks bearing the name of the region or one of its schools be of a quality that reflects credit on the school district. Therefore, the Committee expects handbooks requiring approval to be approved prior to publication by the Committee and/or the Superintendent.

Committee approval will be necessary for any handbooks that pertain to required standards of conduct for employees or students so that their contents may be accorded the status of Committee-approved policy or regulation. The Superintendent will use his/her judgment as to whether other specific handbooks need Committee approval; however, all handbooks published will be made available to the Committee for informational purposes.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H
APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

(a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, or a controlled substance may be subject to expulsion from school by the principal.

(b) Any student who assaults any employee of the school district may be subject to expulsion from school by the principal.

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either (a) or (b) above shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing, provided, however that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing the principal may decide to suspend rather than expel a student.

(d) Any student who has been expelled shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent.

(e) When a student is expelled under the provisions listed above and applies for admission to another school for acceptance, the Superintendent shall notify the Superintendent of the receiving school of the reasons for the pupil’s expulsion.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H
ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY ABSENCE

When action must be taken within the school system where the Committee has provided no guides for administrative action, the Superintendent will have the power to act. The Superintendent’s decisions, however, will be subject to review by the Committee.
The School Committee will require reports from the Superintendent concerning conditions of efficiency and needs of the schools.

School building administrators will be required to keep such records and make reports as the Superintendent may direct or require.

Upon receipt of the Superintendent’s reports, the Committee will take steps to appraise the effectiveness with which the schools are achieving the educational purposes of the school district.

Because statistical information often has a time value, each administrator will give careful consideration to all procedures related to reports, accounting, and general business matters that are required for the administration of the school program and will make accurate and prompt return on scheduled dates of all statistical and other information required.
SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

An annual report covering the varied activities of the school district and the administration’s recommendations for their improvement will be prepared by the Superintendent and presented to the School Committee. Upon Committee approval, the report will be made available to the public and used as one means for informing parents and citizens, the Commissioner of Education, and others of the programs and conditions of the region’s public schools.

Established by law and Committee policy

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 72:4
SECTION D
FISCAL MANAGEMENT

DA  FISCAL MANAGEMENT GOALS
DB  ANNUAL BUDGET
DBC  BUDGET SCHEDULES PLANNING AND ADOPTION
DBJ  BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY
DC  CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND CAPITAL BUDGET
DD  FUNDING PROPOSALS AND APPLICATIONS
DGA  AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES
DH  BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS
DI  FISCAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING
DIE  ANNUAL AUDITS
DJ  PURCHASING
DJE  PROCUREMENT
DK  PAYMENT PROCEDURES
DKC  EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS
DN  SCHOOL PROPERTY DISPOSAL
The quantity and quality of learning programs are directly dependent on the effective, efficient management of allocated funds. It follows that achievement of the school district’s purposes can best be achieved through excellent fiscal management.

As trustee of local, state, and federal funds allocated for use in public education, the Committee will fulfill its responsibility to see that these funds are used wisely for achievement of the purposes to which they are allocated.

Because of resource limitations, there is sometimes a temptation to operate so that fiscal concerns overshadow the educational program. Recognizing this, it is essential that the school district take specific action to make sure education remains central and that fiscal matters are ancillary and contribute to the education program. This concept will be incorporated into Committee operations and into all aspects of school district management and operation.

In the school system’s fiscal management, it is the Committee’s intent:

1. To engage in thorough advance planning, with staff and community involvement, in order to develop budgets and to guide expenditures so as to achieve the greatest educational returns and the greatest contributions to the educational program in relation to dollars available.

2. To establish levels of funding that will provide high quality education for the students.

3. To use the best available techniques for budget development and management.

4. To provide timely and appropriate information to all staff with fiscal management responsibilities.

5. To establish best financial practices for accounting, reporting, business, purchasing and delivery, payroll, payment of vendors and contractors, and all other areas of fiscal management.

6. To comply with all state and federal financial laws and regulations.
ANNUAL BUDGET

The annual budget is the financial expression of the educational program and goals of the school district, and it reflects the difficult choices that confront the District.

The budget requires on the part of the Committee, the staff, and the communities, orderly and cooperative effort to ensure sound fiscal practices for achieving the educational goals and objectives of the school district.

Public school budgeting is regulated and controlled by legislation, state regulations, and local school committee requirements. The operating budget for the school district will be prepared and presented in line with state policy and will be developed and refined in accordance with these same requirements.

The Superintendent will serve as budget officer but s/he may delegate portions of this responsibility to members of his/her staff as s/he deems appropriate. The three general areas of responsibility for the Superintendent as budget officer will be budget preparation, budget presentation, and budget administration.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:34; 71:37; 71:38N
BUDGET SCHEDULES PLANNING AND ADOPTION

The Superintendent will develop a schedule for the preparation of the school budget, taking into consideration state law and town charter and bylaw requirements, in cooperation with local committees. A public hearing will be held not less than seven days after the notice for the hearing has been published in a local newspaper.
BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY

In keeping with the need for periodic reconciliation of the school department’s budget, the Superintendent will recommend transfers to the School Committee, which may authorize these transfers by a vote of the Committee.
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN AND CAPITAL BUDGET

In order to properly plan and fund major facility, technology and other program improvements for the District, the Superintendent will prepare a five-year capital plan as part of the annual budget process. The plan will be presented to the Committee for review and approval.

Developing and funding a capital plan is the first step in meeting the District’s capital needs. A sufficient level of operating budget support for maintaining capital resources is required in order to extend the useful life of major investments.

The plan will include a five-year projection of capital needs and expenditures which details the estimated cost, description and anticipated funding sources. The impact on the operating budget of capital projects will be included in the plan.

The capital plan will also include an inventory of assets.

Funding for the first year of the five-year capital improvement plan will be included in the next year’s annual operating budget.

The capital plan will be funded by a combination of assessments to member towns, special purpose funds of the District, and grant funds from the federal and state governments.

The Superintendent will develop the capital plan based on information prepared and compiled by district staff and external resources as required. External resources include but are not limited to town officials, state and federal officials, finance professionals and legal counsel.

**Capital Plan Guidelines**

1. **Definition of a capital project**: a tangible asset or project (or related study) with an estimated useful life of five (5) years or more, and a cost of $5,000 or more. Examples:
   a. New buildings, or additions to existing buildings, including land acquisition costs and equipment needed to furnish the new building or addition for the first time;
   b. Major alterations, renovations, or improvements to existing buildings that extend the useful life of the existing buildings by at least ten (10) years;
   c. Major equipment acquisition, replacement or refurbishment, including but not limited to vehicles, furnishings, and information technology systems’ hardware and software;
   d. New construction or major improvements to the physical infrastructure, including sidewalks, sports facilities, and playing fields. Infrastructure improvements must extend the useful life of the infrastructure by at least ten (10) years;
   e. A feasibility study, engineering design services, or consultant services which are ancillary to a future capital improvement project.

2. **Guidelines for prioritizing capital projects** (not necessarily in priority order):
   a. Imminent threat to health and safety of students, employees, citizens, or property;
b. Compliance with changes in laws, statutes, and codes;

c. Maintenance and improvement of capital assets;
d. Requirement of state or federal law;
e. Improvement of the infrastructure;
f. Improvement/maintenance of productivity;
g. Newly identified need (for example, instructional, special needs adaptation, athletic fields, playground);
h. Priority assigned by Department;
i. Consistency assigned with and support of long-term planning objectives.

3. Capital Asset Inventory:
   a. In order to better coordinate the capital plan with existing assets, the plan will include an inventory of capital assets, including age and condition.
FUNDING PROPOSALS AND APPLICATIONS

The School Committee encourages the administration to seek and secure all possible sources of state, federal, and other special funds that will enhance the educational opportunities for the children in our schools.

The Superintendent will keep informed of all possible funds available to the school district under the various state and federal programs, and in what manner these funds can best be used in the school district.

The Superintendent will be responsible for seeking out and coordinating the development of proposals for all specially funded projects and for submitting the proposals to the Committee for approval.

The Superintendent is authorized to sign all reports for these projects and will be responsible for the proper expenditure of funds received for such projects.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 44:53A
P.L. 874 Impact Aid
Board of Education 603 CMR 32:00; 34:00
AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES

The School Committee, or a subcommittee of no less than three members, is required to approve payrolls and bill warrants, as required by Chapter 71 Section 16A. The Superintendent must approve payrolls and bill warrants. A record of subcommittee approvals must be presented to the full Committee at its next meeting.

The Director of Finance is authorized to review bills and payrolls as required by Chapter 41 Section 52 and Chapter 71 Section 16A.

The Treasurer and the Assistant Treasurer are authorized to pay bills as required by Chapter 41 Sections 35 and 109A and Chapter 71 Section 16A.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 41:35 and 41:109A
M.G.L. 41:52
M.G.L. 71:16A
BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS

Each employee who is assigned the responsibility of receiving and dispensing school funds, including the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer, will be bonded individually or covered by a blanket bond. The cost of the bond will be paid by the District.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 40:5; 41:35
FISCAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING

The Superintendent is responsible for receiving and properly accounting for all funds of the school district.

The accounting system used will conform with state requirements and to sound business practices, providing for the appropriate segregation of accounts, funds, and special revenue.

The School Committee will receive periodic financial statements from the Superintendent showing the financial condition of the school district. Such other financial statements as may be determined necessary by either the Committee or the administration will be presented.

LEGAL REFS:       Board of Education 603 CMR 10:00
                   M.G.L. 41:35
ANNUAL AUDITS

An audit of district finances shall be conducted annually in compliance with DESE regulations and state and federal law. In addition, the Committee may conduct a private audit of the school district’s accounts at its discretion.

The annual audit is considered a management function of the School Committee, and the report shall be presented at a public meeting. The Committee will consider recommendations made by the auditor for maintaining an efficient system for recording and safeguarding the school district’s assets.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. Ch. 71:16A
603 CMR 10.10
PURCHASING

The School Committee supports competitive procurement without prejudice in compliance with state procurement law and seeking maximum educational and operational value for every dollar expended.

The acquisition of materials, equipment and services will be managed by the Business Office with the Finance Director serving as Chief Procurement Officer. S/he will develop and administer the purchasing program in keeping with legal requirements and with the adopted school budget, under the oversight of the Superintendent.

School purchases will be made through the purchase order system. All purchase orders will be approved by the immediate building or program supervisor and the Chief Procurement Officer. Purchases in excess of $10,000 will also require the approval of the Superintendent.

Fiscal authority for the purchase of materials, equipment, supplies, and services is approved as part of the budget-making process.

The purchase of items and services funded in the budget requires no further Committee approval except, when by law or Committee policy, the purchases or services must be put to bid and awarded by the Committee.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 7:22A; 7:22B; 30B; 71:49A

CROSS REF: DJE - Procurement
PROCUREMENT

The District will follow the chapters of state law for the projects categories listed below:

- **Supplies and Services – Chapter 30B**
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $5,000</td>
<td>sound business practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000 to $24,999</td>
<td>three written or oral quotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000 and over</td>
<td>sealed bids or proposals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Purchase, Sale or Lease of Real Property – Chapter 30B**
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $25,000</td>
<td>three written or oral quotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000 and over</td>
<td>sealed bids or proposals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Building Projects - Ch. 149**
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over $10,000</td>
<td>sealed bids</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Public Works Projects - Chapter 30, Section 39M**
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over $10,000</td>
<td>sealed bids</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Building Design Services - Chapter 7, Section 38A 1/2**
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over $10,000</td>
<td>Qualifications Based Selection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All aspects of the procurement process which require School Committee review and approval will be submitted to the Committee for consideration.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 7:22A; 7:22B; 30B
PAYMENT PROCEDURES

All claims for payment from school district funds will be processed in accordance with state law and regulations under the supervision of the Superintendent. Payment will be authorized against invoices properly supported by approved purchase orders, with properly submitted vouchers, or in accordance with salaries and salary schedules approved by the School Committee.

The Committee will receive a list of bills and payrolls for payment from school district funds. The lists will be certified as correct and approved for payment by the School Committee and then forwarded for payment by the treasurer. Actual invoices, statements, and vouchers will be available for inspection by the School Committee.

The Superintendent will be responsible for assuring that budget allocations are observed and that total expenditures do not exceed the amount allocated in the budget for all items.

The school building administrators and directors will be responsible for observing budget allocations in their respective schools and departments.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L 41:41; 41:52 41:56
EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS

Personnel and school district officials who incur expenses in carrying out their authorized duties shall be reimbursed upon submission of a properly completed and approved voucher and any supporting receipts required by the Superintendent. When official travel by a personally owned vehicle is authorized, mileage payment will be made at the rate currently approved by the Superintendent or collective bargaining agreements, as applicable.

To the extent budgeted for such purposes in the school budget, approval of travel requests will be as follows:

1. Travel by School Committee members must have prior approval of the School Committee.

2. Each individual request will be judged on the basis of its benefit to the school district.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 40:5; 44:58
SCHOOL PROPERTY DISPOSAL

When the District has educational supplies, equipment, or furniture for which there is no further foreseeable use, a director, principal, or other administrator may request permission from the Superintendent to dispose of same following the provisions of Chapter 30 and the following guidelines:

Per Chapter 30B, surplus materials with a value of less than $5,000 shall be disposed of as follows:

1. An itemized list of materials to be discarded, excluding books, will be submitted to the Superintendent who will certify that these items are not needed by the District.

2. The Superintendent will authorize the disposal of the materials in the most practical way, taking into consideration staff time, cost and value of the material. Options include but are not limited to auction, donation, yard sale, recycling, and disposal as refuse.

3. Disposal of books worth less than $5,000 will be conducted under the direction of the principal with approval from the Superintendent in one of the following ways, taking into consideration staff time, cost and value of the material.
   A. By sale to a used book company.
   B. By public book sale to students, parents, and the communities.
   C. By donation or exchange for goods and services with an educational collaborative or other school system.
   D. By donation to non-profit private schools within the communities.
   E. By donation to other schools or charitable organizations.
   F. By disposal through waste removal if all other possible alternatives fail.

Per Chapter 30B, surplus materials with a value of $5,000 or more, including books, shall be disposed of through sealed bids, public auction or an established market for recyclable materials or book resellers, for example.

The list will be presented to the School Committee who will consider declaring the books, furniture or equipment surplus and grant permission for disposal. The Superintendent will recommend a disposal method, taking into consideration staff time, cost and value of the material.

Also, surplus supplies can be disposed of through trade-in as part of a bid process (no vote required) or by a charitable donation, by a two-thirds vote of the School Committee.
SECTION E
SUPPORT SERVICES

EB SAFETY PROGRAM
EBAB PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY
EBAB-A ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT POLICY
EBAB-R PEST MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES
EBB FIRST AID
EBBA THE USE OF AUTOMATED DEFIBRILLATORS
EBBA-E PROCEDURES FOR USE OF AUTOMATED DEFIBRILLATORS (AED) EXHIBIT
EBC EMERGENCY PLANS
EBCD EMERGENCY CLOSINGS
EBCD-R NO SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENT POLICY
EC BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT
ECA BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SECURITY
ECAC VANDALISM
EDC LOANING SCHOOL DEPARTMENT EQUIPMENT/PROPERTY
EDE REGIONAL SCHOOLS RECYCLING POLICY
EEA STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
EEAC SCHOOL BUS SCHEDULING AND ROUTING
EEAE SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM
EEAEC STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES
EEAEC-R STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES
EEAG STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES
EFC FREE AND REDUCED PRICE FOOD SERVICES
SAFETY PROGRAM

Accidents are undesirable, unplanned occurrences that can result in tragic consequences--bodily harm, loss of school time, property damage, legal action, and even fatality. The Regional School Committee will guard against such occurrences by taking every possible precaution to protect the safety of all students, employees, visitors and others present on school property or at school-sponsored events.

The Committee will comply with safety requirements established by governmental authorities and will insist that its staff adhere to recommended safety practices as these pertain, for example, to the school plan, special areas of instruction, student transportation, school sports and occupational safety.

The practice of safety will also be considered a facet of the instructional program of the schools. Instruction will be given in accident prevention as well as fire prevention, emergency procedures, and traffic, bicycle, and pedestrian safety.

The Superintendent will have overall responsibility for the safety program of the school district. It will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to see that appropriate staff members are kept informed of current state and local requirements relating to fire prevention, civil defense, sanitation, public health, and occupational safety.

Efforts directed toward the prevention of accidents will succeed only to the degree that all staff members recognize that preventing accidents is a daily operational responsibility.

The School Safety Protocols are designed to give school personnel step-by-step procedures on how to respond immediately to a crisis. Following the instructions in the order which they are listed will help staff prioritize notification of emergency personnel and to contain escalation and injury during the initial impact of the crisis.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:55C
Acts of 1985 c 614 Sec 1
Board of Education 603 CMR 36:00
PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Ayer Shirley Regional Schools are committed to providing a safe and properly maintained environment for all staff, students and visitors. To achieve this end, the School District will implement integrated pest management procedures for its buildings and grounds. The IPM will be on file with the state.

The integrated pest management procedures shall include implementation of appropriate prevention and control strategies, notification of certain pesticide and herbicide uses, record keeping, education and evaluation.

Integrated pest management procedures will determine when to control pests and what method of control to choose. Strategies for managing pest populations will be influenced by the pest species, location and whether and at what population level its presence poses a threat to people, property or the environment. The full range of action alternatives, including no action, will always be considered.
ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PUBLIC NOTICE
GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

In compliance with the United States Environmental Protection Agency’s Asbestos Hazardous Emergency Response Act (AHERA) and the 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CRF) Part 763 Subpart E – Asbestos Containing Materials in Schools, the Ayer Shirley Regional School District is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all students, employees, the public, contracted building service workers and any other building occupants. The Ayer Shirley Regional School District has therefore established a policy for managing in-place asbestos. Also, in compliance with AHERA, the district will contract with a licensed and approved inspector to perform three-year re-inspections of school buildings, along with the maintenance of updated Management Plan materials to be kept on file in the principal’s office of each district school as well as in the central office of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District, 115 Washington St., Ayer, MA 01432. Questions regarding the Asbestos Management Plan may be directed to the Superintendent of Schools.

The following communication will be included in the student handbooks annually:

In compliance with the U.S. Environmental Protections Agency (EPA) Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), inspections of the Ayer Shirley Regional Schools have been performed according to 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 763 Subpart E. All inspection finds and the Asbestos Management Plans will be placed on file and available at the Ayer Shirley Regional Schools’ Central Office.
PEST MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

OVERVIEW AND GOALS

The Ayer Shirley Regional Schools shall develop and implement an integrated pest management program. An integrated pest management program is a pest control approach that emphasizes using a balanced combination of tactics (cultural, mechanical, biological, chemical) to reduce pests to a tolerable level while using pesticides and herbicides as a last resort to minimize health, environmental and economic risks. Pesticides and herbicides will be used only as a last resort, based on a review of all other available options.

The integrated pest management program shall strive to:
1. Reduce any potential human health hazard.
2. Reduce loss or damage to school structures or property.
3. Minimize the risk of pests from spreading in the communities.
4. Enhance the quality of facility use for school and communities.
5. Minimize health, environmental and economic risks.

I. RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF PESTICIDES AND HERBICIDES
   a. When pesticides or herbicides are used, they must be classified as an EPA Category III or IV. Application of any pesticide or herbicide may be performed only by certified applicators.
   b. Application of pesticides and herbicides may only be accomplished during a school break or when the building will be clear of students for at least 48 hours.

II. NOTIFICATION OF PESTICIDE AND HERBICIDE USE
   a. When pesticides or herbicides are used outdoors, notice of their use will be provided to parent/guardians, staff and students and will also be posted in a common area.
   b. When pesticides and herbicides are used in a building, the site will provide a 48-hour pre-notification in the form of posting the product name, purpose, application date, time and method and the Material Safety Data Sheet on all entrance doors. A contact person will also be listed.
   c. In the event of an EPA registered pesticide or herbicide application in or around a building site during the school year or summer session, a notice (including the product name, purpose, contact person, and application date, time and method) will be sent home in writing with students in the affected building at least 5 days prior to application.

III. RECORD-KEEPING
   a. The district will keep a record of the amounts of pesticides and herbicides used and locations of treatments and will keep any Material Safety Data Sheets, product labels and manufacturer information on ingredients related to the application of the pesticides or herbicides.
   b. All records and correspondence of pesticides and herbicides used will be available for public review upon notice and during normal school hours.
IV. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES AND EDUCATION
   a. Designated staff (school nutrition, buildings and grounds, etc.) will participate in sanitation and pest exclusion procedures appropriate to their roles. For example: keeping doors closed, repairing cracks, removing food waste within 12 hours, keeping lids on garbage receptacles and keeping vegetation properly out.
   b. Ongoing education of all appropriate district staff will be a priority to ensure a safe and clean environment.

FIRST AID

The school attempts to provide a safe environment. If an accident or sudden illness occurs, school personnel will administer first aid and, if warranted, call the school physician.

First aid is defined as the immediate and temporary care given in case of an accident or sudden illness, which enables the child to be taken safely home or to a physician. It does not include diagnosis or treatment. Any care beyond first aid will not be given.

At each school, procedures will be developed for the proper handling of an injury to, or sudden illness of, a child or staff member. These will be made known to the staff and will incorporate the following requirements:

1. The school nurse or another trained person will be responsible for administering first aid.

2. When the nature of an illness or an injury appears in any way serious, every effort will be made to contact the parent and/or family physician immediately.

3. No young child who is ill or injured will be sent home alone, nor will any older child unless the illness or injury is minor. A young child who is ill or injured will not be taken home unless it is known that someone is there to receive him or her.

4. In extreme emergencies, the school nurse, school physician or principal may make arrangements for immediate hospitalization of injured or ill students, contacting parent or guardian in advance if at all possible.

5. The teacher or other staff member to whom a child is responsible at the time an accident occurs will make out a report on an official form providing details about the accident. This will be required for every accident for which first aid is given.

6. All accidents to students and staff members will be reported as soon as possible to the principal at the school site. If a serious accident occurs the principal will notify the Superintendent, and if the Superintendent deems appropriate, the Regional School Committee.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:55A; 71:56
CROSS REF: JLC, Student Health Services and Requirements
THE USE OF AUTOMATED DEFIBRILLATORS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee recognizes that cardiac emergencies may arise that justify the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). To this end, the district shall provide and maintain AED equipment for use by qualified personnel.

The School Committee shall designate the School District Physician to monitor the program and ensure that all designated responders are properly trained and that AEDs are properly maintained. The nurse leader and the school district physician shall develop a written collaborative agreement which contains all the provisions for administration and use of this equipment including training requirements, location of AED units, the maintenance and inspection of AEDs, the identification of local emergency response providers and assurances that 911 will be called immediately for emergency assistance.

Employees of the Ayer Shirley Regional Schools will be authorized to utilize an AED only after successfully completing initial and recurrent training courses approved by the American Heart Association for AEDs and CPR. Requirements for the frequency of recurrent training will be as specified by the issuing organization of the individual employee's certification. Acceptable certification will consist of completion of an American Heart Association "Heartsaver AED" course and CPR course.

The Ayer Shirley Regional Schools will provide American Heart Association "Heartsaver AED" training for employees deemed to require such training by the nurse leader. The cost for the training may be reimbursable to employee pending funding. Employee should submit request for funding prior to the training. Employees who are certified will be designated as authorized users after a review of their credentials and approval by the school nurse.

The school district physician will be advised of all uses of an AED by employees of the District as soon as practical after each use. The data from the AED will be reviewed by the school district physician, who will identify any areas related to that use that require remediation and will recommend a plan of corrective action if needed.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. C112, Section 12 offers liability protection to laypersons who are trained in the use of defibrillators.

First Reading, August 17, 2016
Second Reading, September 21, 2016
Adopted by ASRSD, September 21, 2016
1. The Regional School Committee shall designate the school district physician to serve as an Emergency Health Care Provider to monitor the program, ensure that all responders are properly trained and that AEDs are properly maintained.

2. Selection of employees to be trained, training requirements, location of the AED, identification of the local emergency response providers and a maintenance and inspection schedule of the use of the AED will be outlined in written form by the school nurse in collaboration with the school district physician according to generally agreed upon guidelines.

3. Each school’s nurse will maintain on file a specifications/technical information sheet for each AED model assigned to the school; maintain the AED daily log; and maintain current records verifying targeted responders training and certification levels. Targeted responders will complete and sign an annual verification form.

4. District employees will be authorized to utilize an AED upon successful completion of initial and recurrent training courses. Acceptable certification will consist of completion of an American Red Cross or American Heart Association “Heartsaver AED” course and CPR course. The cost for the training may be reimbursable to employee pending funding. Employee should submit request for funding prior to the training.

5. The Regional School District will provide American Heart Association “Heartsaver AED” training for employees deemed to require training by the nurse leader. Employees will be certified as designated users after a review of their credentials and approval by the nurse leader.

6. Each time the AED is utilized, 911 will be called for emergency assistance.

7. Each time the AED is utilized, the AED trained responder shall complete a medical event form (911 form) and complete the district’s accident report.

8. The school district physician and the Superintendent will be advised of all uses of an AED by employees of the district as soon as practical after each use. The data from the AED will be reviewed by the school district physician who will identify any areas related to that use that require remediation and will recommend a plan of corrective action if needed.

9. The school district recommends a minimum of 4 personnel trained in CPR and AED at each of the four schools.

First Reading, August 17, 2016
EMERGENCY PLANS

Advance planning for emergencies and disasters is essential to provide for the safety of students and staff; it also strengthens the morale of all concerned to know that preparedness plans exist and that students and staff have been trained in carrying out the plans.

The Superintendent will develop and maintain plans that meet the requirements of state law for preparedness in case of fire, civil emergencies, and natural disasters.

Building principals will meet all requirements for conducting fire drills to give students practice in moving with orderly dispatch to designated areas under emergency conditions, and the staff practice in carrying out their assigned responsibilities for building evacuation.

CROSS REF: EBCD, Weather Related Emergencies
EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

The Superintendent may close the schools or dismiss them early in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the health or safety of students and personnel. While it may be prudent, under certain circumstances, to excuse all students from attending school, to delay the opening hour or to dismiss students early, the Superintendent has the responsibility to see that as much of the administrative, supervisory and operational activity is continued as may be possible. Therefore, if conditions affect only a single school, only that school will be closed.

In making the decision to close schools, the Superintendent will consider many factors, including the following principal ones relating to the fundamental concern for the safety and health of the children:

1. Weather conditions, both existing and predicted.
2. Driving, traffic, and parking conditions affecting public and private transportation facilities.
3. Actual occurrence or imminent possibility of any emergency condition that would make the operation of schools difficult or dangerous.
4. Inability of teaching personnel to report for duty, which might result in inadequate supervision of students.

The Superintendent will weigh these factors and take action to close the schools only after consultation with public works and public safety authorities and with school officials from neighboring towns. Students, parents and staff will be informed early in each school year of the procedures that will be used to notify them in case of emergency closings. When schools are closed for emergency reasons, staff members will comply with School Committee policy in reporting for work.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:4; 71:4A
NO SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENT POLICY

1. When necessary due to extreme weather conditions or emergency, the no-school signal in the Town of Shirley will be 3 – 3 – 3 blasts.

2. The school district will provide T.V. and radio stations with school closings and/or delay information. Stations will be identified in the student handbook.

3. All school personnel to be notified for any school closings and/or delays utilizing established communication procedure at all times and in a timely manner.
BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee’s most important function is to provide for the education of children, and it recognizes that the education of children is dependent upon many factors, including a proper physical environment that is safe, clean, sanitary, and as comfortable and convenient as the facilities will permit or the use requires.

The supervision over the care and safekeeping of property used by the school district will be the general responsibility of the Superintendent. S/he will work with town departments, as necessary, to develop a comprehensive and well-defined plan for the proper maintenance, cleanliness, and safekeeping of all school buildings and grounds to ensure that each school is equally well maintained, equipped, and staffed.

The Superintendent will establish procedures and employ such means as may be necessary to provide accurate information in regard to the nature, condition, location, and value of all property used by the region; to safeguard the property against loss, damage, or undue depreciation; to recover and restore to usefulness any property that may be lost, stolen or damaged; and to do all things necessary to ensure the proper maintenance, cleanliness, and safekeeping of school property.

Within the separate schools, the building administrator will be responsible for proper care, maintenance, and cleanliness of buildings, equipment and grounds.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:68
BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SECURITY

Public school buildings and grounds are one of the greatest investments of the towns. It is deemed in the best interest of the school district and towns to protect the investment adequately.

Security should mean not only maintenance of a secure (locked) building, but protection from fire hazards and faulty equipment, and safe practices in the use of electrical, plumbing, and heating equipment. The Committee expects close cooperation with fire and law enforcement departments and with insurance company inspectors.

Access to school buildings and grounds outside of regular school hours will be limited to personnel whose work requires it. An adequate key control system will be established, which will limit access to buildings to authorized personnel and will safeguard against the chance of entrance to buildings by unauthorized persons.

Funds and valuable records will be kept in a safe place and under lock and key.

Protective devices designed to be used as safeguards against illegal entry and vandalism will be installed when appropriate to the individual situation. Employment of watchmen may be approved in situations where special risks are involved.
VANDALISM

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee recognizes that acts of vandalism committed against public and private property are costly and require positive action through educational programs. Consequently, the Committee will support various programs aimed at reducing the amount of vandalism.

Every citizen in each town, staff members, students, and members of the police departments are urged by the Regional School Committee to cooperate in reporting any incidents of vandalism to property under control of the school district, and the name(s) of the person or persons believed to be responsible. Each employee will report to the principal of the school every incident of vandalism known to him/her and, if known, the names of those responsible.

The Superintendent is authorized to sign a criminal complaint and to press the charges against perpetrators of vandalism against school property, and is further authorized to delegate, as s/he sees fit, authority to sign such complaints and to press charges.

Parents and students will be made aware of the legal implications involved. Reimbursement will be sought for all or part of any damages.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 266.98
LOANING SCHOOL DEPARTMENT EQUIPMENT/PROPERTY

(1) The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will allow staff members and community residents to borrow school equipment (removing same from school property) provided:
   a) The principal has given permission
   b) The principal and staff member or community resident complete the Loan Contract prior to borrowing.

(2) Any community group that desires to borrow school owned property must receive the approval of the Superintendent of Schools and sign the Equipment Loan Contract.

(3) Employees who borrow school owned equipment will be responsible for lost, stolen or damage associated with usage.

(4) It will be the joint responsibility of the Loaner and Borrower to confirm the loaned equipment to be in working order at the time of the loan.
REGIONAL SCHOOLS RECYCLING POLICY

In an effort to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills, increase the amount of materials recycled, cut back on costs of garbage removal, and function as a model of an institution working towards the betterment of the environment, the Ayer Shirley Regional School District is committed to the following actions.

1. We will support a group(s) of able-bodied students under faculty advisement to carry out the duties of the school’s recycling. This includes the planning and improvement of the program, as well as the execution of keeping recyclable materials separated from solid waste in the schools.

2. This group(s) will be in charge of keeping the school district informed and active in recycling efforts.

3. We will ensure that every trash can in the school and on school grounds has available recycling bin(s) near it, in order to recycle paper, plastics, and aluminum. Faculty and staff are responsible for reporting any necessary repairs or replacements of bins in classrooms.

4. We will put our best effort into purchasing environmentally friendly products and materials for school use when possible to do so.

5. The Food Service Vendor within each school will work to establish and improve their recycling efforts.
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The purpose of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District’s transportation services is to aid students in getting to and from school in an efficient, safe, and economical manner.

The Regional District will contract for transportation services. Contracts will be awarded on a competitive bid basis by the Committee. Bus contractors and taxi contractors, who will be held responsible for the safe operation of school buses, will comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including but not limited to:

1. Specifications for school bus design and equipment
2. Inspection of buses
3. Qualifications and examinations of bus drivers, including C.O.R.I. checks
4. Driving regulations
5. Small vehicle requirements, if applicable
6. Insurance coverage
7. Adherence to local regulations and directives as specified in bid contracts

The Superintendent, working with the bus contractor and other appropriate administrators, will be responsible for establishing bus schedules, routes, stops, and all other matters relative to the transportation program.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L 40:5; 71:7A, B and C; 71:37D; 71:48A; 71:68; 71:71A; 71B:4; 71B:5; 71B:8; 74:8A; 76:1; 76: l2Bi; 76:14
SCHOOL BUS SCHEDULING AND ROUTING

The Regional School Committee, prior to the opening of each school year, will cause to be established the school bus routes, stops, and time schedules.

Each year, usually in early August, the school district and the bus contractor, meet to develop routes for the upcoming school year. Using the best data available, at that time, with regard to enrollment, routes and pickup times are determined. Consideration is given to centralized locations, directness of route, access, maneuverability and safety issues.

Bus routes and pickup times are published on the Regional School District’s Website and in the local newspaper two weeks prior to the opening of school. Routes and times may be adjusted during the course of the school year to better serve the needs of our student population.
SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM

The safety and welfare of student riders will be the first consideration in all matters pertaining to transportation. Safety precautions will include the following:

1. Children will be instructed as to the proper procedure for boarding and exiting from a school bus and in proper and safe conduct while aboard.

2. Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted at least twice a year to acquaint student riders with procedures in emergency situations.

3. All vehicles used to transport children will be inspected periodically for conformance with state and federal safety requirements.

4. Classroom instruction on school bus safety will be provided.

5. Parents are encouraged to meet the bus driver (this is especially critical with younger students). Your contact and familiarity with the driver can often address concerns before they become a problem. Parents with concerns that involve a student should contact the school. Issues of safety, concerns with a driver or questions on transportation in general can be addressed by contacting the Superintendent for the Ayer Shirley Regional School District or his/her designee.

6. Parents of kindergarten youngsters are asked to meet their children at the bus stop each day. Parents should make themselves known to the driver. Drivers are asked to be certain that a parent is present at the bus stop before letting a kindergartner off the bus. At a more crowded stop this can sometimes present a difficulty in recognizing all parents.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 90:7b as amended by Ch. 246 Acts of 1986
M.G.L. 90:1 et seq.; 713:2; 713:7L
Highway Safety Program Standard No. 17
STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee and its staff share with students and parents, the responsibility for student safety during transportation to and from school. The authority for enforcing School Committee requirements of student conduct on buses will rest with the principal.

To ensure the safety of all students who ride in buses, it may occasionally be necessary to revoke the privilege of transportation from a student who abuses this privilege. Parents of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges in accordance with regulations approved by the Regional School Committee.
STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

Procedures for Drivers and Parents
1. In case of any misconduct on a bus, the incident will be reported on the proper form to the school principal. S/he will report the incident in writing to the parent concerned, with a copy to the Superintendent.
2. In case of a repetition by the same student, the principal will suspend the student’s transportation privileges with written notice to the parent to report at once with the child to the Superintendent’s office.
3. After a second offense and a conference with the Superintendent, if a third such incident occurs, bus privileges will be denied the student and the responsibility for transportation will then rest with the parent.

Loading and Unloading at Bus Stop
1. Riders must be on time. Bus drivers will not wait.
2. Riders will enter or leave the bus at regular stops only.
3. Orderly behavior and respect for private property will be required.
4. Instructions and directions of the driver must be followed by the riders when entering or leaving the bus.

Proper conduct is required aboard the bus at all times.

Required Conduct Aboard the Bus
1. Riders must remain in seats or in place when the bus is in motion.
2. Excessive noise is not permitted.
3. Profanity and obscene language are forbidden.
4. Smoking is prohibited.

The following disturbances are prohibited:
➢ Pushing or wrestling
➢ Annoying other passengers or disturbing their possessions
➢ Talking to the driver
➢ Throwing objects within the bus or out of windows
➢ Climbing over seats
➢ Opening or closing windows
➢ Leaning out of windows
➢ Littering the bus

Parents will be held responsible for any defacing or damaging of the bus.

Parents and students will be informed of these regulations at the beginning of each school year.
STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

School buses will be used for the transportation of students participating in co-curricular or extracurricular activities. However, when buses are not available, private vehicles may be permitted to transport students to or from school activities that fall within the academic day or extend the school day provided all of the following conditions are met:

1. The activity has the approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

2. The owner of the vehicle being used in transporting students must file evidence with the Superintendent of personnel liability insurance coverage on the vehicle in the amounts of $100,000 - $300,000 or more.

3. The parents of students to be transported in this manner will be fully informed as to this means of transportation and will sign a statement to this effect.
FREE AND REDUCED PRICE FOOD SERVICES

The school district will take part in the National School Lunch Program and other food programs that may become available to assure that all children in the schools receive proper nourishment.

LEGAL REFS: National School Lunch Act, as amended (42 USC 1751-1760)
M.G.L. 15:1G; 15:1L; 69:1C; 71:72
MEAL CHARGE POLICY

PURPOSE:
To establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the food service department and the district. The goals of this policy are:

- To establish a consistent district policy regarding charges and collections of charges.
- To treat all students with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts.
- To support positive situations with district staff, district business policies, students and parents-guardians/adult students to the maximum extent possible.
- To establish policies appropriate for age.
- To encourage the parent/guardian/and student to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY:
The Food Service Department: Responsible for notifying the student’s parent/guardian of low or outstanding balances. Responsible for maintaining charge records and notifying the school district of outstanding balances.
The School District: Responsible for supporting the Food Service Department in collection activities.
The Parent/Guardian: To meet the financial obligations of the food service charges.

REGULATIONS:
1) All students
   a) All students:
      Will be allowed to charge up to a maximum dollar equivalent of ten (10) meals which will be known as the “account cap”.
      1. These meals will include anything on the monthly menu.
      2. Email notification of low balances $5 or below will be sent home to parents/guardians weekly.
      3. Email notification of deficit balances will be sent to parents/guardians daily.
      4. When a child reaches the “account cap” they will only be offered a designated alternate menu consisting of a sunbutter sandwich or a cheese sandwich, fruit, vegetable and milk. Parents/guardians always have the option of sending child to school with a cold lunch.
      5. The designated menu alternate will be charged to the child’s account at the standard lunch rate and will be reported to the state as a reimbursable meal. Parents are responsible for payment for those meals.
   b) Middle and high school students:
1. When a student has a negative balance, no a la carte items will be sold to the child.

2) Returned Checks:
Checks returned for insufficient funds result in a fee that is charged by the bank to the district. The parent will be notified of the insufficient funds. The fee and the amount of the check will immediately be deducted from the student’s account. A payment must be received within (10) days of the date of notification.

3) Payments:
The Ayer Shirley Regional School District can accept payment for meals upon purchase in the form of:
   a. Cash or check at the register.
   b. Prepayment through myschoolbucks.com

4) All schools possess a computerized Point of Sale (POS) system that tracks all monies deposited and spent for each student and said record will be made available to the parent upon request.

5) Meals may be prepaid at any time. Prepayments are a convenience for families and can be made by check at the POS/cash register. Prepayments can also be made through My School Bucks by going to www.myschoolbucks.com. This gives the parents the capability of using their debit/credit card for lunches and a la carte purchases. There are numerous advantages to using My School Bucks, including updated account balances, e-mail notification of low balance accounts and a history of purchases made by the student.

Food Services Program End-Of-School Year Closeout
- All accounts must be settled by the end of the school year.
- Parents/Guardians will be sent a written request for payment in full. The payment requests will be mailed home.
- All charges not paid before the end of the school year, and all credits will be carried forward into the next school year. Seniors must pay all charges before receiving their cap and gown.
- All parents of seniors will receive a notice in May of funds remaining in their child’s account. Parents will receive a letter to elect to move the balance into a sibling’s lunch account or to elect a refund. All refund requests will be sent to the food services office and processed for payment.
- Formal collection activity by court or agency can be initiated on any account 60 days in arrears.

Blocks on Accounts
A parent may request in writing to the Food Service Director that a block be placed on their child’s account to prohibit the purchase of a la carte items or set a dollar cap. The school business manager may instruct the Food Services Director to place a block on a student’s account to prohibit the purchase of a la carte items due to non-payment of food service fees.
Refunds
- Withdrawn students – for any student who is withdrawn, a written or e-mailed request for a refund of any money remaining in their account must be submitted within 90 days of departure.
- Graduating Students – students who are graduating at the end of the year will be given a refund or funds will be transferred to a sibling's account at the parent’s request.
- Unclaimed funds – all funds must be requested within 90 days. Unclaimed funds will then become the property of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District.

Debt Forgiveness
Nothing in this policy precludes representatives of the district from pursuing and/or implementing compassionate debt forgiveness avenues for legitimate unforeseen circumstances which have contributed to the debt.

First Reading, May 25, 2017
Second Reading, June 6, 2017
Adopted by ASRSD, June 21, 2017
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The Regional School Committee believes that any educational program is influenced greatly by the environment in which it functions. The development of a quality educational program and school facilities that help to implement the program must go hand in hand.

Therefore, it is the Committee’s goal to provide the facilities needed for the number of students in the school district, and to provide the kind of facilities that will best support and accommodate the educational program.

In planning facilities, the Committee recognizes that capital outlay funds are limited, and that priorities must be established to make the best use of the school building dollar. The Committee’s first objective will be to develop a plan that eliminates overcrowding and minimizes the need for extended day programs and double sessions. Whenever possible, the cultural as well as educational needs of the communities will be considered in planning facility expansions.

Architects retained by the Committee are expected to plan for simplicity of design; sound economics, including low long-range maintenance costs, efficiency in energy needs, low insurance rates; high educational use; and flexibility.

LEGAL REF: 603 CMR 26:07
FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Facilities

(1) Every new school to be constructed and every addition to an existing school or program for modernization of an existing school shall be designed or planned so as to ensure that the educational opportunities to be offered within that school following its construction or expansion or reconstruction will be available equally to all students thereof without regard to the race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or limited English speaking ability of any such student.

(2) The goal of each school shall be to provide equal numbers of males and females with those facilities and conveniences within a school which are separated for reasons of privacy, e.g. showers, locker rooms, changing rooms, toilets and lavatories. Any school to be constructed shall make such provision and any plan for the expansion or modernization of an existing school shall include whatever provision is necessary in order to achieve compliance with 603 CMR 26.07.

LEGAL REF: 603 CMR 26:07
School Building Committee

The Regional School Committee creates a school building committee for specific building projects. These committees act as the administrative authority for the projects, subject to approval of various actions by the School Committee and towns.

The school building committee has the following responsibilities:

1. To study and make recommendations to the towns with respect to school building needs.

2. To review thoroughly with the Superintendent and the Regional School Committee the educational requirements in relation to school buildings.

3. To review previous studies and initiate needed studies with or without consultative assistance.

4. To employ the services of architects and cost estimators and such other professional assistance as it may deem necessary.

Staff Planning

Arrangements will be made by the Superintendent, working through principals, for the school staff to contribute in the planning of new school buildings. Teachers will be given the opportunity to submit suggestions for possible inclusion in the educational specifications.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:37C and D; 71:68; 71:70
Massachusetts Board of Education Regulations Governing the School Building Assistance Act
Chapter 645 of the Acts of 1948 as amended,
FY 79 Board of Education 603 CMR, 38:00 and 603 CMR 26:07
FY 79 Shirley Town Charter, Sec. 6-1
RETIREMENT OF FACILITIES

When a school building becomes inadequate by virtue of age, condition, size of site, lack of need, or other overriding limitations, and cannot reasonably and economically be brought up to the current educational standards, the building should be considered for a comprehensive closing study. The Superintendent will recommend to the Regional School Committee which facilities appear to justify further analysis.

The Committee may seek both professional advice and the advice of the community in making its recommendations as to the retirement of any school facility. This will permit the public, which originally acquired the property, to benefit from its recycling or retirement.

A closing study will include direct involvement by those neighborhoods considered in the study and will be concerned with all or some of the following factors:

1. Age and current physical condition of the facilities, its operating systems, and program facilities.
2. Adequacy of site, location, access, surrounding development, traffic patterns, and other environmental conditions.
3. Reassignment of children, including alternative plans according to committee policy.
4. Transportation factors, including numbers of children bussed, time, distance, and safety.
5. Alternative uses of the building.
6. Cost/Savings
   a. Personnel
   b. Plant Operation
   c. Transportation
   d. Capital Investment
   e. Alternative Use
7. Continuity of instructional and community programs.
NAMING NEW FACILITIES

Only the Regional School Committee will name school buildings, facilities, grounds, rooms within school buildings, or any other real property under the purview of the School Committee. Choosing a name is an important matter that deserves thoughtful attention. Personal prejudice or favoritism, political pressure, or temporary popularity should not be an influence in choosing a school name. The committee traditionally chooses names based on physical locations, or geographical areas, but may consider distinguished local, state, and national leaders who are deceased, three or more years, and whose names would lend dignity and stature to the school.

SOURCE: MASC

First Reading, January 3, 2017
Second Reading, January 18, 2017
Adopted by ASRSD, January 18, 2017
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PERSONNEL POLICIES GOALS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee’s specific personnel goals are:

1. To develop and implement those strategies and procedures for personnel recruitment, screening, and selection that will result in the employment and retention of individuals with the highest capabilities, strongest commitment to quality education and greatest probability of effectively implementing the District’s learning program.

2. To develop a general staff assignment strategy that will contribute to the learning program; and to use it as the primary basis for determining staff assignments.

3. To provide positive programs of staff development that contribute both to improvement of the learning program and to each staff member’s career development aspirations.

4. To provide for a genuine team approach to education.

5. To develop and use, for personnel evaluation, positive processes that contribute to the improvement of both staff capabilities and the learning program.

LEGAL REF: 603 CMR 26:08 paragraph 3,7,8,9
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District provides equal employment opportunity (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, or status as a covered veteran in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws. The Regional School District complies with applicable state and local laws governing non-discrimination in employment in every location in which the company has facilities. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfers, leave of absence, compensation, and training.

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District expressly prohibits any form of unlawful employee harassment based on race, color, gender identity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status. Improper interference with the ability of the Regional School District’s employees to perform their expected job duties is absolutely not tolerated.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF: BESE Regulations 603 CMR 26.00
CROSS REF: AC, Nondiscrimination

First Reading, September 19, 2012
Adopted by the ASRSD October 17, 2012
The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Superintendent.

**Staff Communications to the School Committee**
All communications or reports to the Committee or any of its subcommittees from principals, supervisors, teachers, or other staff members will be submitted through the Superintendent. This procedure does not deny the right of any employee to appeal to the Committee from administrative decisions on important matters, except those matters that are outside the Committee’s legal authority, provided that the Superintendent has been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Committee’s policy on complaints and grievances. Staff members are also reminded that Committee meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe first hand the Committee’s deliberations on problems of staff concern.

**School Committee Communications to Staff**
All official communications, policies, and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent. The Superintendent will develop appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the Committee’s problems, concerns and actions.

**Visits to Schools**
Individual School Committee members interested in visiting schools or classrooms will inform the Superintendent of such visits and make arrangements for visitations through the principals of the various schools. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as “inspections” or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Committee members will be carried on only under Committee authorization.
STAFF ETHICS / CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee expects members of its professional staff to be familiar with the code of ethics that applies to their profession and to adhere to it in their relationships with students, parents, coworkers, and officials of the school district.

No employee of the Committee will engage in or have a financial interest in, directly or indirectly, any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his/her duties and responsibilities in the school district. Nor will any staff member engage in any type of private business during school time or on school property.

Employees will not engage in work of any type where information concerning customer, client, or employer originates from any information available to them through school sources.

Moreover, as there should be no conflict of interest in the supervision and evaluation of employees, at no time may any administrator responsible for the supervision and/or evaluation of an employee be directly related to him/her.

In order to avoid the appearance of any possible conflict, it is the policy of the Regional School Committee that no employee is hired who is an immediate family member of any member of the Committee, or an immediate family member of any administrator in the school district. This provision will not affect anyone currently employed in the district that may be related to either a Committee member or an administrator but no promotions or hiring in the future will be exempt from this provision.

Discussions among teachers concerning association matters on Regional School District property will take place only while all of the teachers involved in such discussions are on break or other free non teaching time, and not in the presence of students.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:52; 268A:1 et seq.
STAFF CONDUCT

All staff members have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with and abide by the laws of the state as these affect their work, the policies of the Regional School Committee, and the regulations designed to implement them.

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

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

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

1. Faithfulness and promptness in attendance at work.
2. Support and enforcement of policies of the Committee and their implementing regulations and school rules in regard to students.
3. Diligence in submitting required reports promptly at the times specified.
4. Care and protection of school property.
5. Concern for and attention to their own and the school district’s legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, including the need to ensure that students are under supervision at all times.
6. Care and attention to interaction with students.
7. Confidential information not to be discussed or reviewed outside of professional obligation.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:37H; 264:11; 264:14
GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF

Gifts
The acceptance of gifts worth $50 or more by school personnel in a calendar year when the gift is given because of the position they hold, or because of some action the recipient could take or has taken in his or her public role, violates the conflict of interest law. Acceptance of gifts worth less than $50, while not prohibited by the conflict of interest law, may require a written public disclosure to be made.

In keeping with this policy, no employee of the school district will accept a gift worth $50 or more that is given because of the employee’s public position, or anything that the employee could do or has done in his or her public position. Gifts worth less than $50 may be accepted, but a written disclosure to the employee’s appointing authority must be made if the gift and the circumstances in which it was given could cause a reasonable person to think that the employee could be improperly influenced. The value of personal gifts accepted is aggregated over a calendar year (4 gifts of $20 value is the same as 1 gift of $80 if given in the same calendar year).

In general, homemade gifts without retail value are permissible because a reasonable person would not expect an employee would unduly show favor to the giver, so no disclosure is required. Such gifts could include homemade food items (cookies, candy, etc), handpicked flowers, and handmade gifts worth less than $10 (ten) dollars.

Class Gifts
There is a specific exception to the prohibition against accepting gifts worth $50 or more, when the teacher knows only that the gift is from the class, not from specific donors. A single class gift per calendar year valued up to $150 or several class gifts in a single year with a total value up to $150 from parents and students in a class may be accepted provided the gift is identified only as being from the class and the names of the givers and the amounts given are not identified to the recipient. The recipient may not accept an individual gift from someone who contributed to the class gift. It is the responsibility of the employee to confirm that the individual offering such gift did not contribute to the class gift.

Gifts for School Use
Gifts given to a teacher solely for classroom use or to purchase classroom supplies are not considered gifts to an individual employee and are not subject to the $50 limit. However, an employee who accepts such gifts must keep receipts documenting that money or gift cards were used for classroom supplies.

Solicitations
In spirit, the School Committee supports the many worthwhile charitable drives that take place in the community and is gratified when school employees give them their support. However, the solicitation of funds from staff members through the use of school personnel and school time is prohibited by the conflict of interest law. Therefore, no solicitations of
funds for charitable purposes should be made among staff members.

Staff members of course remain free to support charitable causes of their own selection.

SOURCE: MASC December 2012

Legal Refs: M.G.L. 268A:3; 268A:23; 930 CMR 5.00

CROSS REFS: KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools
              JP, Student Donations and Gifts
THE AYER SHIRLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will provide a drug-free workplace and certifies that it will:

1. Notify all employees in writing that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance, is prohibited in the district’s workplace, and specify the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibitions.

2. Establish a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace; the district’s policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace; and available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and the penalty that may be imposed on employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace.

3. Make it a requirement that each employee whose employment is funded by a federal grant be given a copy of the statement as required.

4. Notify the employee in the required statement that as a condition of employment under the grant, the employee will abide by the terms of the statement, and will notify the district of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction.

5. Notify the federal agency within ten days after receiving notice from an employee or otherwise receiving notice of such conviction.

6. Take one of the following actions within 30 days of receiving notice with respect to any employee who is so convicted; take appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination; or require such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state or local health law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.

7. Make a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of all the provisions of this policy.

LEGAL REFS: The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988
TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

Consistent with the provisions of Chapter 71(1993): Smoking, including vapor/E-cigarettes, and all forms of tobacco use, within school buildings, the school facilities or on school property or buses, by any individual, including school personnel, is prohibited.

Staff members who violate this policy will be referred to their immediate supervisor.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H

First Reading, January 3, 2017
Second Reading, January 18, 2017
Adopted by ASRSD, January 18, 2017
STAFF ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The following standards will apply to all adult users of the District's electronic information/communications systems:

ONLINE CONDUCT/SOCIAL MEDIA
Use of the Internet at the Ayer Shirley Regional School District is a privilege and inappropriate use of the Internet may lead to a loss of this privilege.

The Superintendent and the School Principals will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital work as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process.

The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

1. Improper fraternization with students using Facebook and/or similar Internet sites or social networks, or via cell phone, texting or telephone:
   a. Teachers may not list current students as “friends” on networking sites.
   b. All e-contacts with students should be through the district’s computer and telephone system, except in emergency situations.
   c. All contact and messages by coaches with team members shall be copied to the athletic director and the school principal.
   d. Messages sent by coaches to individual team members concerning medical or academic privacy matters will be copied to the parent, the athletic director and the school principal.
   e. Teachers will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers without prior approval of the District.
   f. Inappropriate contact via e-mail or phone is prohibited.
2. Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content.
3. Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol.
4. Examples of inappropriate behavior from other districts, as behavior to avoid.
5. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers and technology.
6. Outlining the possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.
7. Guidelines for Internet use by staff:
   a. Do not reveal any personal contact information relating to yourself or other students or staff members that consist of names, address, and/or telephone numbers.
   b. Staff is not to post private information as it relates to fellow students, district staff, or academics. Nor shall defamatory material concerning a person or group be sent or retrieved.
   c. Staff use of Internet is for academic purposes only or other uses as deemed appropriate by the Ayer Shirley Regional Technology Department.
   d. At all times appropriate Internet etiquette is to be adhered to. There is to be no use of profanity, vulgarities, or inappropriate language of any kind.
8. Staff is to abide by the restrictions placed on Internet access through the districts content filtering service. Users shall not attempt to circumvent the filtering service to access sites deemed inappropriate by the district.

9. The individual in whose name a system account is issued will be responsible at all times for its proper use.

10. Staff may not use another person’s system account without written permission from the appropriate administrator or Technology Department.

11. Staff may not distribute personal information about themselves or others by means of the district electronic communication system.

12. The system is not to be used for financial gain by means of personal or district property.

13. The system may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any other activities prohibited by District policy.

14. Staff may not redistribute copyrighted programs or data except with the written permission of the copyright holder of designee. Such permission must be specified in the document or must be obtained directly from the copyright holder in accordance with applicable copyright laws.

15. Staff is not to download open source, freeware and/or shareware programs to the network without prior consent from the technology department.

16. Staff may not purposefully access materials that are abusive, obscene, sexually oriented, threatening, harassing, damaging to another’s reputation, or illegal.

17. System users should be mindful that use of school-related electronic mail addresses might cause some recipients or other readers of that mail to assume they represent the District or school, whether or not that was the user’s intention.

18. Staff may not waste District resources related to the electronic communications system by sending system wide, non-district related emails.

19. System users may not gain unauthorized access to resources or information.

20. Attempts to read, delete, or modify the electronic mail of other system users or deliberate interference with the ability of other system users to send/receive electronic mail, or the use of another person’s user ID and/or password is prohibited.

VANDALISM PROHIBITED
1. Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy District equipment or data of another user of the District’s system or any of the agencies or other networks that are connected to Internet is prohibited.

2. Such prohibited activity includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creating of computer viruses and attempts to hack into secure data.

DEVELOPMENT OF WEB PAGES
The District will maintain a web site following these guidelines:
1. All pages posted to the District web site will be approved by the Technology Department before posting for public access.

2. All web pages posted to the District web pages become the property of the District.
3. Information identifying individual students will not be posted on the web site without written consent from the student and parent.

4. Staff who assemble and design a web page are expected to adhere to standards of decency and utilize content that is strictly for educational purposes.

The Superintendent or designees will periodically conduct Internet searches to see if teachers have posted inappropriate materials on-line. When inappropriate use of computers and websites are discovered, the School Principals and Superintendent will promptly bring that inappropriate use to the attention of the staff member and may consider and apply disciplinary action up and including termination.

**DISCLAIMER**
The District's system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The District does not make any guarantee on the stability of connections but will take every necessary precaution to maintain consistent network and Internet connectivity.

**SIGNATURE**
All staff users of technology will be required to complete a signature document to be kept on file in each school office.

CROSS REF: IJNDB, Student Acceptable Use of Technology
STAFF PERSONAL SECURITY, HEALTH, AND SAFETY

Through its overall safety program and various policies pertaining to school personnel, the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will seek to assure the safety of employees during their working hours and assist them in the maintenance of good health.

The Superintendent may require an employee to submit to a physical examination by a physician appointed by the school district whenever that employee’s health appears to be a hazard to children or others in the school district or when a doctor’s certificate is needed to verify need for sick leave.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:54; 71:55B; 71:55C
STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee recognizes that employees of the school district have the same fundamental civic responsibilities and privileges as other citizens. Among these, is campaigning for an elective public office, and holding an elective or appointive office.

In connection with campaigning, an employee will not: use school district facilities, equipment or supplies; discuss his/her campaign with school personnel or students during the working day; use any time during the working day for campaigning purposes. Under no circumstances will students be pressured into campaigning for any staff member.

No Committee shall by rule, regulation, or otherwise, restrict any teacher in, or dismiss him/her for, exercising his/her right of suffrage, signing nomination papers, petitioning the general court or appearing before its committees, to the extent that such rights, except voting, are not exercised on the school premises during school hours, or when their exercise would actually interfere with the performance of school duties.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:44
PERSONNEL RECORDS

Information about staff members is required for the daily administration of the school district, for implementing salary and other personnel policies, for budget and financial planning, for responding to appropriate inquiries about employees, and for meeting the Regional School Committee’s education reporting requirements. To meet these needs, the Superintendent will implement a comprehensive and efficient system of personnel records maintenance and control under the following guidelines:

1. A personnel folder for each present and former employee will be accurately maintained in the central administrative office. In addition to the application for employment and references, the folders will contain records and information relative to compensation, pay-roll deductions, evaluations, and any other pertinent information.

2. The Superintendent will be the official custodian for personnel files and will have overall responsibility for maintaining and preserving the confidentiality of the files within the provisions of the law.

3. Personnel records are considered confidential under the law and will not be open to public inspection. Access to personnel files will be limited to persons authorized by the Superintendent to use the files for the reasons cited above.

4. Each employee will have the right, upon written request, to review the contents of his/her own personnel file.

   1. Employees may make written objections to any information contained in the file. Any written objection must be signed by the staff member and will become part of the employee’s personnel file. Further, no negative comment will be placed in a staff member’s file unless it is signed by the person making the comment and the staff member is informed of the comment and afforded the opportunity to include his/her written response in the file.

   2. Lists of school district employees’ names and home addresses will be released only to governmental agencies as required for official reports or by the laws.

   3. HIPAA Medical Privacy

   The Ayer Shirley Regional School District is not a covered entity as defined by HIPAA; however, we do maintain health care and related plans that are subject to HIPAA requirements. Thus, the Regional School District has made a decision that HIPAA privacy and security provisions will apply to protected health information (PHI) maintained by the District.

   HIPAA regulations will be followed in administrative activities undertaken by assigned personnel when they involve PHI in any of the following circumstances: health information privacy, health information security and health information electronic transmission.

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The Regional School District will consider any breaches in the privacy and confidentiality of handling of PHI to be serious, and disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with our code of conduct.

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District has designated a HIPAA compliance officer (HCO), and questions regarding policy provisions should be addressed to the HCO. This policy is supplemented by new operating procedures issued by the HCO and will be effective immediately. District records that are governed by this policy will be maintained for a period of no less than six years, and when the maximum retention period has passed, the records will be subject to the District’s policy for completed record destruction.

LEGAL REFS: 

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Sec. 438, P.L. 90-247, Title IV, as amended
88 Stat. 571-574 (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and regulations
M.G.L. 4:7; 71:42C
Teachers’ Agreement

CONTRACT REF: All Agreements
STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

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

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

Channels established will provide for the following:

1. That teachers and other school employees may appeal a ruling of a principal or other administrator to the Superintendent.

2. That all school employees may appeal a ruling of the Superintendent to the Committee, except in those areas where the law has specifically assigned authority to the principal and/or the Superintendent and Committee action would be in conflict with that law.

3. That all hearings of complaints before the Superintendent or Committee be conducted in the presence of the administrator who made the ruling that is the subject of the grievance.

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

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 150E:5; 150E:8; 71:59, 71:59B

CONTRACT REFS: All Contract Agreements
PROFESSIONAL STAFF POSITIONS

All professional staff positions in the school district will be created initially by the Regional School Committee. It is the Committee’s intent to activate a sufficient number of positions to accomplish the school district’s goals and objectives and to provide for the equitable staffing of each school building. Although such positions may remain temporarily unfilled, only the Committee may abolish a position it has created.

Each time a new position is established by the Committee, the Superintendent will present for the Committee’s approval a job description for the position, which specifies the job holder’s qualifications and the job’s performance responsibilities. The Superintendent will maintain a comprehensive set of job descriptions for all positions.
PROFESSIONAL STAFF SALARY SCHEDULES

Teachers
The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will adopt a salary schedule for regular teaching personnel as part of the contract negotiated with the teachers’ bargaining unit. The schedule will be designed to recognize and reward training and experience and encourage additional study for professional advancement.

Principals
Salaries will be reviewed annually prior to July 1. The Regional School Committee, with the advice of the Superintendent, will establish levels of compensation for each position based on the circumstances, dynamics, and requirements of each position. Consideration may be given to individuals for exceptional performance as a basis for establishing merit increases for principals. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent to present evidence to the Committee to support recommendations for merit increases.

Administrators
Salaries will be reviewed annually prior to July 1. The Superintendent may, upon the request of the Committee, survey other school systems to determine salaries being paid for comparable positions in each system. The survey will include the effective date of the specified salary.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:40; 71:43

CONTRACT REF: Teachers’ Agreement
EMPLOYMENT OF PRINCIPALS

Principals shall be employed by the Ayer Shirley Regional School District under individual contracts of employment. Said contracts shall be submitted to the Regional School Committee for their approval of all terms concerning compensation/benefits, prior to the presentation of a contract of employment to the principal. The compensation/benefit levels, above referenced, may be exceeded only with the approval of the School Committee.

Contracts issued to principals will be up to three years in length, and may be reissued by the Superintendent at levels of compensation/benefits, determined by the Regional School Committee, provided that the Superintendent may employ a principal under the terms and conditions of the previous contract of employment.

As a condition of employment, each principal must maintain current licensure, adhere to the policies and goals of the Committee and the directives of the Superintendent, and annually must submit, with the school council, the educational goals and school improvement plan for the school building(s) under his/her direction.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:41
PROFESSIONAL STAFF SUPPLEMENTARY PAY PLANS

Certain assignments require extra responsibility or extra time over and above that required of other staff members who are on the same position on the basic salary schedule. When such supplemental assignments require extra time and responsibility beyond that regularly expected of teachers, they will be rewarded with extra compensation.

Assignments that are to be accorded extra compensation will be designated by the Committee. Appointments to these positions will be made by the Superintendent for district-wide positions or by the principal with the approval of the Superintendent for building based personnel. The amount of compensation for the position will be established by the Committee at the time the position is created.

A teacher who is offered and undertakes a supplementary pay assignment will receive a supplementary contract specifying the pay, duration and terms of the assignment. If a teacher will not be extended the assignment for the following school year but will remain on the teaching staff, s/he will be so notified in writing prior to the expiration of the contract. Upon termination of the assignment, the supplementary pay will cease.

LEGAL REF: Collective Bargaining Agreement
STAFF FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District shall comply with the mandatory provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. The Superintendent shall issue, and from time to time amend, regulations setting forth the rights and procedures granted by the Act, and shall ensure compliance with those regulations either personally or by delegation, or by some combination of personal oversight and delegation.

LEGAL REF: P.L. 103-3, "Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993."
PROFESSIONAL STAFF VACATIONS AND HOLIDAYS

Vacations

All administrators and other professional personnel employed on a 12-month basis will be entitled to annual vacation days.

Vacations for supervisory professional staff members who are employed on a 12-month basis and are members of a recognized bargaining unit will be established through negotiations. Vacations for supervisory personnel not in bargaining units will be established by the Committee and delineated in their individual contracts.

Holidays

Professional staff members will not be required to work on legal holidays. Paid holidays for the professional staff will be established when the Regional School Committee approves the calendar for the school year and will include all legal holidays.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 4:7; 136:12
PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECRUITING/POSTING OF VACANCIES

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent, with the assistance of the administrative staff, to determine the personnel needs of the school district and it is the responsibility of the principal, in consultation with the Superintendent to determine the personnel needs of the individual schools. Any recommendations for the creation or elimination of a position must be approved by the Regional School Committee.

The search for good teachers and other professional employees will extend to a wide variety of educational institutions and geographical areas. It will take into consideration the characteristics of the town and the need for a heterogeneous staff from various cultural backgrounds.

Recruitment procedures will not overlook the talents and potential of individuals already employed by the school district. Any current employee may apply for any position for which s/he has certification and meets other stated requirements.

Openings in the schools will be posted in sufficient time, before the position is filled, to permit current employees to submit applications.

CONTRACT REF: Collective Bargaining Agreements
PROFESSIONAL STAFF HIRING

Through its employment policies, the district will strive to attract, secure, and hold the highest qualified personnel for all professional positions. The selection process will be based upon an awareness of candidates who will devote themselves to the education and welfare of the children attending the schools.

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent, and of persons to whom s/he delegates this responsibility, to determine the personnel needs of the school district and to locate suitable candidates. No position may be created without the approval of the Regional School Committee and for which a job description has been approved. The District’s goal is to employ and retain personnel who are motivated, will strive always to do their best, and are committed to providing the best educational environment for the children.

It will be the duty of the Superintendent to see that persons considered for employment in the schools meet all certification requirements and the requirements of the Committee for the type of position for which the nomination is made.

The following guidelines will be used in the selection of personnel:

1. The Ayer Shirley Regional School District provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, gender identity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, or status as a covered veteran in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws. The Regional School District complies with applicable state and local laws governing non-discrimination in employment in every location in which the District has facilities. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

2. The quality of instruction is enhanced by a staff with a wide variation in background, educational preparation, and previous experience.

4. The administrator responsible for the hiring of a staff member is directed to establish a representative screening committee. The responsible administrator in the case of district-wide principal positions is the Superintendent. The responsible administrator for building based personnel is the principal, but the decision is subject to final approval by the Superintendent. The administrator has the final say in determining who will be hired but it is expected that the screening committee’s input will be a factor in the decision. For those positions where the hiring authority rests with the School Committee, a representative screening committee may be established by the School Committee or the School Committee may direct the Superintendent to Committee or the School Committee may direct the Superintendent to establish a screening committee to assist the Superintendent in making his/her recommendation to the School Committee.
Massachusetts Board of Education Requirements for Certification of Teachers, Principals, Supervisors, Directors, Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents in the Public Schools of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, revised 1994
BESE Regulations 603 CMR 7:00, 26.00 and 44:00

CROSS REF: GBA

NOTE: School Committees may determine the size and composition of the screening committee.
PART-TIME AND SUBSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL STAFF EMPLOYMENT

Part-Time Teachers

Teachers may be employed on a part-time basis. The salary of part-time teachers will bear the same ratio to the first step of the salary schedule that the teacher would earn if employed full-time as the hours worked bear to the hours the teacher would work if employed full-time (for example, a teacher employed for half the number of hours would receive half the salary of a full-time teacher).

Substitute Teachers

The school district will employ as substitute teachers, to the extent possible, persons who meet the requirements for teacher appointments and will assign teachers substitute-teaching positions on the basis of their areas of competence. When the supply of potential substitutes in a particular subject area is too limited to meet school district needs, there will be active recruitment for substitutes in those areas. All substitute teachers will be expected to provide educational services, rather than to assume merely a student-supervisory role. They will be provided with as much support as possible by building administrators and teachers.

The Regional School Committee will approve the daily rate of pay for substitute teachers, including extended-term substitutes. The latter will be granted such additional benefits as approved by the Committee.
PROFESSIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee recognizes the need and value of professional staff development programs and opportunities to increase the competencies and skills of personnel in areas that benefit the school district. Administrative and supervisory personnel are expected to participate periodically in in-service workshops, and instructional conferences of state and national educational organizations, seminars and graduate study programs to improve skills in personnel management, supervision and improvement of instruction, public relations, and other aspects of school management.

The Committee, to the extent possible, will allocate funds in support of personnel indicating an interest to support participation in professional activities directly and demonstrably related to the performance of assigned professional responsibilities, considering the needs and priorities of the school district as a whole.
PHILOSOPHY OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

All staff members will be encouraged in and provided with suitable opportunities for the development of increased competencies beyond those they may attain through the performance of their assigned duties and assistance from supervisors.

Opportunities for professional growth may be provided through such means as the following:

1. Planned in-service programs and workshops offered within the school district from time to time; these may include participation by outside consultants.

2. Membership on curriculum development committees drawing personnel from within and without the school district.

3. Released time for visits to other classrooms and schools and for attendance at conferences, workshops, and other professional meetings.

4. Leaves of absence for graduate study, research, and travel.

5. Partial payment of tuition for approved courses.

The Superintendent will have authority to approve or deny released time for conferences and visitations and reimbursements for expenses, provided such activities are within budget allocations for the purpose.
PROFESSIONAL TEACHER STATUS

Teachers and certain other professional employees who have served in the school district for three consecutive years shall be entitled to professional teacher status. The Superintendent, upon recommendation of the principal, may award such status to a teacher who has served in the principal’s school for not less than one year or a teacher who has obtained such status in any other public school district in the Commonwealth. The Superintendent will base his/her decisions on the results of evaluation procedures conducted according to Committee policy.

At the end of each of the first three years of a teacher’s employment, it will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to notify each employee promptly in writing of the decision on reappointment. Notification to a teacher not being reappointed must be made by June 15 or at an earlier date if required by a collective bargaining agreement.

Nothing in these provisions will be considered as restricting the Superintendent from changing teaching assignments or altering or abolishing supervisory assignments except that, by law, no teacher may be assigned to a position for which s/he is not legally qualified.

Established by law and Committee policy

PROFESSIONAL STAFF ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS

The basic consideration in the assignment of professional staff members will be the needs of the students and the instructional program.

Therefore, the assignment and transfer of professional staff members will be accomplished by the Superintendent on the basis of the employee’s qualifications, the needs of the school district, and the employees’ expressed desires.

Care will be exercised by the Superintendent to assure that all schools are staffed with effective teachers. Within an individual school, the building administrator will have the authority to assign classes and courses, provided this is done with full regard for the teacher’s area of certification and the policies delineated above.

CONTRACT REF: Teachers’ Agreement
PROFESSIONAL STAFF TIME SCHEDULES

Administrators

The nature of the duties and responsibilities of administrators and supervisors will require their hours of work to vary and extend as necessary to fulfill the requirements of their positions.

During the course of their contract year, all administrators will be expected to work during the hours and on the days that the Superintendent’s office is open unless special scheduling arrangements have been made with the Superintendent. On days schools are closed because of bad weather or other emergencies, all staff members except those who work only on teacher work days are required to report to work as soon as they are able to do so.

The working year for administrators will be established individually through their contracts.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:80
EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF

In order to assure a high quality of teacher and administrator performance and to advance the instructional programs of the schools, a continuous program for teacher and administrator evaluation will be established by the Regional School Committee. Regular reports will be made to the Superintendent concerning the outcomes of these evaluations.

The evaluation process will include:

1. The development and periodic review of techniques and procedures for making evaluations.
2. Interpretation of the information gained in the evaluative process in terms of the objectives of the instructional program.
3. The application of the information gained to the planning of staff development and in-service training activities, which are designed to improve instruction and increase teacher competence.

The evaluation process will include self-evaluation, supervisor initiated observations, and teacher-initiated observations.

The formal evaluations will be written and will be discussed by the supervisor and the person being evaluated. The discussions may either precede or follow the writing of the evaluation document. Copies of the written document will be signed by both parties and incorporated into the personnel files of the teacher or administrator. In addition, the individual and his/her department chairman (if applicable) will receive a signed copy. The signature should indicate that the evaluation has been read and discussed.

The written evaluation should be specific in terms of the person’s strengths and weaknesses. Those areas where improvement is needed should be clearly set forth and recommendations for improvement should be made. Subsequent evaluations should address themselves to any improvement or to any continuing difficulty that is observed.

The performance standards developed either by mutual agreement or as a result of arbitration will be incorporated in the collective bargaining agreement and may be used in decisions to dismiss, demote or remove a teacher or administrator pursuant to M.G.L. 71:42; 71:42A and 71:63.

CONTRACT REF: Teachers’ Agreement

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 69:1B; 71:38; 71:38Q; 150E; 152B and 603 CMR 35:00
RESIGNATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

Professional staff members may discontinue their service in the school district during the school year by submitting a written notice of intent to resign to the appropriate hiring authority and accepted by the Superintendent.

Such written notice of intent to resign will be given to the Superintendent. The staff member will be notified in writing of the Superintendent’s action on the resignation.

When a resignation is accepted by the Superintendent the employee may be expected to continue in service at his/her assigned duties for a period of 30 days after submission of the resignation.
RETIREMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

Annually in February, the Superintendent will inform the Regional School Committee of the professional staff members who have indicated their intentions to retire at the end of the next school year. No further School Committee action is necessary unless approval is needed for the payment of or participation in continued local benefits.

LEGAL REF: Age Discrimination in Employment Law, P.L. 95-256

CONTRACT REF: Teachers’ Contract
SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

The Superintendent will strive to assist personnel to perform their duties efficiently. However, the Superintendent may dismiss any employee in accordance with state law. Further, the Committee recognizes the constitutional rights of the District’s employees and assures them the protection of due process of law. To guarantee such rights, a system of constitutionally and legally sound procedures will be followed in each case of suspension or dismissal of an employee.

When the Superintendent or a principal determines that sufficient cause exists that a professional employee be suspended or dismissed from service in the school district, s/he will:

1. Be certain that each such case is supported by defensible records.

2. Determine if the individual is to be suspended immediately with the understanding that the suspension will be subject to restoration of salary and position if an appeal is decided in favor of the individual.

3. Follow the procedures for dismissal or suspension that are contained in applicable laws as well as those included in the current agreement with the teachers’ bargaining unit.

4. Provide the individual involved with a written statement that will:
   a. Indicate whether the action the Superintendent is taking is dismissal or suspension.
   b. State the reason for the suspension or dismissal.
   c. Guarantee that all procedures will be in accord with due process of law.
   d. Inform employees who have a right to request a hearing under appropriate laws that they may be represented at such a hearing by counsel of their choice.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:42; 71:42D; 71:43A; 71:43B
TUTORING FOR PAY

Definition: “Tutoring” means giving private instruction or help to an individual or group for which the teacher receives remuneration other than through the Regional School Committee.

Tutoring is not to be recommended for a student unless the appropriate teacher of the student involved is consulted and agrees that it will be of real help. If tutoring seems advisable, the principal may give the parents a list of persons who are willing to tutor. This list may include teachers, but not the student’s teacher of the subject in which s/he is to be tutored.

Tutoring for pay is not to be done in the school building.
SUPPORT STAFF POSITIONS

Education is a cooperative enterprise in which all employees of the school district must participate intelligently and effectively for the benefit of the children. This school district will employ support staff members in positions that function to support the education program.

All support staff positions will be established initially by the Regional School Committee. In each case, the Superintendent will submit for the Committee’s consideration and action a job description or job specifications for the position. Subsequent positions could be recommended by the Superintendent to the Regional School Committee.

Although positions may remain temporarily unfilled, or the number of persons holding the same type of position reduced in event of de-staffing requirements, only the Committee may abolish a position it has created.
SUPPORT STAFF CONTRACTS AND COMPENSATION PLANS

In establishing salaries and salary schedules for support staff personnel, the Regional School Committee will take into account the responsibilities of the position, the qualifications needed, past experience of the individual, and years of service in the school district.

Compensation plans will be reviewed annually for all categories of staff. Such review, where applicable, will be carried out in connection with negotiations with representatives of recognized bargaining units. The master agreements with these units will be considered appendices to this manual and will have the full force of School Committee policy.

The rates of pay for personnel not covered by collective bargaining agreements will be set by the Regional School Committee.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:38

CONTRACT REFS: All Contracts
SUPPORT STAFF SUPPLEMENTARY PAY PLANS

All support staff employees will be paid overtime wages for work performed in agreement with their contract.

In counting hours for the purpose of allowing overtime work and pay, supervisors will consider vacation time as “time worked.” Sick leave and holidays are not counted for the purpose of establishing eligibility for overtime.

Every effort must be made to minimize overtime by scheduling duties during the regular work day. All such work will be assigned on a fair and equitable basis.
SUPPORT STAFF FRINGE BENEFITS

Benefits in addition to basic salary are recognized by the Regional School Committee as an integral part of the total compensation plan for staff members. The benefits extended to regular full-time support staff members will be designed to promote their economic security and will include a comprehensive health insurance program.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:37B; 71:48B
SUPPORT STAFF AND FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

The school district shall comply with the mandatory provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. The Superintendent shall issue, and from time to time amend, regulations setting forth the rights and procedures granted by the Act and shall ensure compliance with those regulations either personally or by delegation, or by some combination of personal oversight and delegation.

LEGAL REFS: P.L. 103-3, “Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993”
SUPPORT STAFF RECRUITING/POSTING OF VACANCIES

The School Committee will establish, and budget for, support staff positions in the school district on the basis of need.

The recruitment and selection of candidates for such positions will be the responsibility of the principal (for building based positions) or the Superintendent (for district-wide positions). The Superintendent must approve all selections made by the principal. It is expected that the person responsible for recruitment and selection will confer with principals and other supervisory personnel, as appropriate, in making a selection.

All support staff vacancies will be made known to all support staff personnel.
SUPPORT STAFF HIRING

All candidates will be considered on the basis of their merits, qualifications, and the needs of the school district. In each instance, the Superintendent and others playing a role in the selection process will seek to employ the best qualified person for the job.

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District provides equal employment opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, or status as a covered veteran in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws. The Regional School District complies with applicable state and local laws governing non-discrimination in employment in every location in which the District has facilities. This policy applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including, but not limited to, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation, and training.

Vacancies in positions will be filled by the Superintendent and/or the principal in accordance with the law and with the applicable regulations. Vacancies filled by the principal require approval from the Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:55B; 71:59B; 264:14
CROSS REF: GBA
“AT WILL” EMPLOYMENT

As an employee of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District, you are considered an “at will” employee. Simply stated, “at will” employment means that you or the school district can terminate employment at anytime without any advance warning or notice.

This is a simple legal clarification of employment. Once a year you will receive a “reassurance” letter stating the above regarding employment.
SUPPORT STAFF ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS

The Superintendent will make district-wide assignments and transfers of support staff members for the efficient operation of the school district as necessary.

The preferences of employees will be taken into consideration in making assignments and transfers; however, the best interests of students and the school district must be given priority.

Within an individual school, the principal may assign support staff members to tasks appropriate to their positions and qualifications.

CONTRACT REFS: All Support Staff
SUPPORT STAFF TIME SCHEDULES

The work day and the work year for members of the support staff will be as set forth on the salary schedule.

Specific time schedules for support staff members will be set by the appropriate administrators in line with pertinent school opening and closing times, student schedules, and so on. Administrators will inform the Superintendent of the assigned schedules so that there may be continuity as needed throughout the school district.
EVALUATION OF SUPPORT STAFF

A program of continuous observation and evaluation will be developed to find the right employees to fill vacancies, determine assignments and equitable work loads, and established wage and salary policies that encourage employees to put forth their best efforts. The evaluation of employee achievements and the provision of a good atmosphere in which to work are some of the major duties of the Committee.

The evaluation will cover the major areas of the employee’s responsibilities and will include the following:

1. Specific work assignment
2. Interacts well with students
3. Interacts well with supervisors, teachers, fellow employees, parents, and community members
4. Job Performance

Each employee will be informed of the basis upon which s/he is to be evaluated in advance of evaluation.
SUPPORT STAFF PROMOTIONS

When support staff vacancies are to be filled, preference will be given to qualified applicants from within the school district, provided their qualifications (proven and potential ability, training, experience, and personal characteristics) are equal to those of other applicants. However, the best qualified person from among all who apply within and without the school district will be selected.

The performance of an employee promoted to a higher position will be reviewed during the probationary period in the new job. The employee will discuss the reviews with his/her supervisor or principal and will receive a copy of each. At the completion of the appraisal period, the employee will be notified of non-continued or continued employment.
RETIREMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

All full-time non-instructional personnel are required to participate in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Retirement System.

Periodically, the Superintendent will present to the Committee the names of support staff members who have indicated their intentions to retire.

LEGAL REFS: Age Discrimination in Employment Law, P.L. 95-256
SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

Support staff employees employed by the school district may be terminated by the principal of the building in which they serve with the approval of the Superintendent. However, employees may request the Superintendent to review the circumstances of their termination.

Support staff employees will generally be given notice of their dismissal two weeks prior to the effective date.

The Superintendent, or the principal, with the approval of the Superintendent, may also suspend employees from their assignments.
SECTION H
NEGOTIATIONS

H  NEGOTIATIONS

HA  NEGOTIATIONS GOALS

HB  NEGOTIATIONS LEGAL STATUS

HF  SCHOOL COMMITTEE NEGOTIATING AGENTS
NEGOTIATIONS

In compiling a policy manual, you need to make a decision at the start as to how you will handle the various statements in agreements with staff units that relate to the bargaining process and to employee compensation, benefits, and other conditions of work determined through the process.

It is recommended that:

1. You use references to pertinent portions of agreements as appropriate to the various categories in the classification system. Otherwise, use agreement excerpts verbatim as appropriate to the various categories.

2. Whichever method you choose, be consistent in the treatment of negotiated “policies” throughout your manual and give the same treatment to agreements with all staff units with which you negotiate.

Many examples of the use of contract references appear in the Personnel section of this reference manual.
NEGOTIATIONS GOALS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee recognizes that education is a public trust; it therefore is dedicated to providing the best possible educational opportunities for the young people of these communities. In negotiations, this objective may be best attained if there is a climate of mutual trust and understanding between the negotiating parties.

The Committee believes that the best interests of public education will be served by establishing procedures that provide an orderly method for the Regional School Committee and representatives of the staff to discuss matters of common concern.

It is further recognized that nothing in negotiations will compromise the Committee’s legal responsibilities nor will any employee’s statutory rights and privileges be impaired.
NEGOTIATIONS LEGAL STATUS

All negotiations between the Regional School Committee and recognized employee groups are conducted subject to Chapter 150E of the Massachusetts General Laws. The legal status of negotiations is defined in part by Section 2 of that chapter, as follows:

Employees shall have the right of self-organization and the right to form, join, or assist any employee organization for the purpose of bargaining collectively through representatives of their own choosing on questions of wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment, and to engage in lawful, concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection, free from interference, restraint, or coercion. An employee shall have the right to refrain from any or all of such activities, except to the extent of making such payment of service fees to an exclusive representative as provided in Section 12.

Basic to all employer/employee negotiations is the concept of “bargaining in good faith.” It is the legal responsibility of both the Regional School Committee and employee organizations to bargain in good faith as they conduct negotiations. However, such obligation does not compel either party to agree to a proposal or make a concession.

Established by law

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 150E:1 et seq.
SCHOOL COMMITTEE NEGOTIATING AGENTS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee is responsible for negotiations with recognized employee bargaining units. However, because of the expertise and time required for negotiations, the Committee may delegate the Superintendent or hire a negotiator to bargain in good faith with recognized bargaining units to help assure that mutually satisfactory agreements on wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment will be developed.

If the Regional School Committee appoints a negotiator, the Regional School Committee will set the fee or salary for his/her services established in accordance with the law at the time of appointment.

The duties of the negotiator will be as follows:

1. To negotiate in good faith with recognized bargaining units to arrive at a mutually satisfactory agreement on wages, hours, and working conditions of employees represented by the units.
   a. The negotiator may recommend members of the administration to serve on the negotiation team. They will not be members of any unit that negotiates with the Committee, and their participation in negotiations must be recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the Committee.
   b. S/he will direct accumulation of necessary data needed for negotiations, such as comparative information.
   c. S/he will follow guidelines set forth by the Committee as to acceptable agreements and will report on the progress of negotiations.
   d. S/he will make recommendations to the Committee as to acceptable agreements.

2. The negotiator will interpret the signed negotiated contracts to administrators and may be called upon to offer advice on various aspects of contract administration during the terms of the contracts with employee organizations.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37E
## SECTION I
### INSTRUCTION

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INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

The primary function of a school program is the instruction of students. All staff activities and efforts shall be directed toward providing a high quality, effective, and ever-improving instructional program.

There are primarily three functions involved in carrying out the instructional program:

➢ Operating Function
➢ Coordinating and Developing Function
➢ Evaluating Function

The operating function involves classroom instruction and building program management. The coordinating and developing function includes monitoring activities (curriculum development), in-service education, special services. The evaluation function involves data collection and synthesis and establishing future direction.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. Ch. 69, Sec. 27 (1993)
ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee seeks to educate students in the democratic tradition, to foster recognition of individual freedom and social responsibility, to inspire meaningful awareness of and respect for the Constitution.

Fairness in procedures will be observed both to safeguard the legitimate interests of the school district and to exhibit by appropriate example the basic objectives of a democratic society as set forth in the Constitution of the Commonwealth.

LEGAL REF: Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts M.G.L. Ch. 69, Sec. 27 (1993)
SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar for the ensuing year will be prepared by the Superintendent and submitted to the Regional School Committee for approval by spring of each year. The number of days or instructional hours scheduled for the school year will be determined in accordance with the following standards set by the Massachusetts Board of Education:

1. Elementary school will operate for a minimum of 180 days. Schools shall ensure that every elementary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 900 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in 603 CMR 27.02. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.

2. Secondary schools will operate for a minimum of 180 days. Schools shall ensure that every secondary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 990 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in 603 CMR 27.02. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.

For the information of staff, students, and parents, the calendar will set forth the days schools will be in session; holidays and vacation periods; in service days; and parent conferences.

Board of Education Regulations for School Year and School Day, effective 9/1/75
Board of Education, Student Learning Time Regulations
603 CMR 27.00, Adopted 12/20/94
SCHOOL DAY

The length of the school day at various levels, as well as the specific opening and closing times of the schools, will be recommended by the Superintendent and set by the Regional School Committee.

The Superintendent is authorized to make minor changes in opening and closing times to simplify transportation scheduling; however, major changes in schedules will be subject to Committee approval.

Parents and guardians will be informed of the opening and closing times set by the Committee. To help insure the safety of all children, parents will also be notified that students will not be admitted into the school building until 15 minutes prior to the start of the official day unless bus schedules require earlier admittance.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 15:1G; 71:1; 71:59
Board of Education Regulations for School Year and Day, effective 9/1/75
ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION

The District offers a diversified educational program compatible with the needs of the community and state standards.

The organizational plan is designed to facilitate the philosophy of educating every student, each to his/her fullest potential.

The structure will consist of three levels:

1. Elementary school [2]
2. Middle school
3. High school
CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Constant adaptation and development of the curriculum is necessary if the Ayer Shirley Regional School District is to meet the needs of the students in its schools. To be successful, curriculum development must be a collaborative enterprise involving staff and administrators utilizing their professional expertise, and gathering input from parents and member communities.

The Committee expects its faculty and administration to regularly evaluate the education program and to recommend modifications of practice and changes in curriculum content as well as the addition or deletion of courses to the instructional program.

LEGAL REFS:  M.G.L. 69:1E
603 CMR 26:05
SUPPORT SERVICES

To support the classroom activities and other instructional needs of the District, various educational services as listed shall be provided. The support services staff will work in cooperation with building staff and the administration of the District in (1) the coordination and the supervision of the curriculum implementation of the instructional program, and (2) support services programs.

Curricular Supervision and Coordination

Coordinating personnel for specific curricular areas shall be assigned by the administration. These coordinators shall assist in the organization, supervision, and coordination of subject material and activities in the schools.

Support Services

The Special Education Director shall be responsible for all programs both in district and home/hospital needed to support the educational, emotional, and behavioral needs of students determined to be eligible for specialized instruction through the process described in 603 CMR 28:04.

LEGAL REF: 603 CMR 28:04
CROSS REF: ACE, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap
The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will rely on its professional staff to design and implement instructional programs and courses of study that will forward the educational goals of the school district.

The Superintendent will have authority to approve new programs and courses of study after they have been thoroughly studied and found to support educational goals. The Regional School Committee itself will consider, and officially adopt, new programs and courses when they constitute an extensive alteration in instructional content or approach.

The Committee is to be informed of all new courses and substantive revisions in curriculum. It will receive reports on changes under consideration. Its acceptance of these reports, including a listing of the high school program of studies, will constitute its adoption of the curriculum for official purposes.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:1; 69:1E
BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

State law requires that schools:

“...shall give instruction and training in orthography, reading, writing, the English language and grammar, geography, arithmetic, drawing, music, the history and Constitution of the United States, the duties of citizenship, health education, physical education and good behavior...”

The law further states that:

“...American history and civics, including the Constitution of the United States, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, local history and government will be taught as required subjects in the public schools.”

Physical education is compulsory for all students, except that no student will be required to take part in physical education exercises if a physician certifies in writing that such exercises would be injurious to the student.

The Fundamental Skills
The business of the district is to equip all children with the understandings, skills, tools, and attitudes that will lay the basis for learning now and in the future. This means giving highest priority to developing capacity in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and mathematics.

The first claim of the communities’ resources will be made for the realization of these priorities. School dollars, school talent, school time, and whatever innovation in program is required must be concentrated on these top-ranking goals. No student should be bypassed or left out of the district’s efforts to teach the fundamental skills. Schooling for basic literacy must reach all students.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:1, 2, 3; 71:13
603 CMR 26:05
BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM EXHIBIT

Curricula

(1) The curricula of the school district shall present in fair perspective the culture, history, activities, and contributions of persons and groups of different races, nationalities, sexes, and colors.

(2) All school books, instructional and educational materials shall be reviewed for sex-role and minority group stereotyping. Appropriate activities, discussions and/or supplementary materials shall be used to counteract the stereotypes depicted in such materials.

(3) School books, instructional and educational materials purchased after the date of 603 CMR 26.00 shall in the aggregate, include characterizations and situations which depict individuals of both sexes and of minority groups in a broad variety of positive roles.

(4) Each school shall provide equal opportunity for physical education for all students. Goals, objectives and skill development standards, where used, shall not be designated to have an adverse impact on members of either sex.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:1, 2, 3; 71:13
603 CMR 26:05
PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will attempt to provide every student with an opportunity for wholesome and enriched educational experiences. It is the Committee's belief that the following basic aims and objectives of the physical education program will contribute to this goal:

1. To aid the development of the entire student so that a well trained mind may function properly in a healthy body.

2. To encourage student participation in vigorous physical activity while in school, and to teach the skills of those activities so that they will have a carry-over value for later activities in every day life.

3. To increase appreciation of physical fitness and its importance in regard to good health.

5. To impress upon students the importance of integrating one's mind, body and attitude in preparing to face the obligations of a complex society.

The time dedicated to physical education will be assessed per Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:1; 71:3
Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to Physical Education, adopted 4/25/78, effective 9/1/78
603 CMR 26:05
VOCENTINAL EDUCATION

The Regional School Committee recognizes that students in kindergarten through grade 12 should:

1. Be afforded the opportunity to be informed about the world of work.
2. Be aware of the many vocations available to them.
3. Develop a respect for the dignity of work.
4. Be allowed the opportunity to develop an understanding regarding the technical, consumer, occupational, recreational and cultural aspects of industry and technology; they should also be afforded the opportunity to develop skills related to such aspects through creative problem solving experiences.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:37K; 71:38A through 71:38F; 74:1 et seq.
Board of Education Chapter 74 Regulations, adopted 6/28/77, effective 9/1/77
HEALTH EDUCATION

Good health depends upon continuous life-long attention to scientific advances and the acquisition of new knowledge.

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee believes that the greatest opportunity for effective health education lies within the public schools because of their potential to reach children at the age when positive, lifelong health habits are best engendered and because the schools are equipped to provide qualified personnel to conduct health education programs.

The Regional Committee is committed to a sound, comprehensive health education program as an integral part of each student's general education.

The health education program will emphasize a contemporary approach to the presentation of health information, skills, and the knowledge necessary for students to understand and appreciate the functioning and proper care of the human body. Students also will be presented with information regarding complex social, physical and mental health problems, which they might encounter in society. In an effort to help students make intelligent choices on alternative behavior of serious personal consequence, health education will examine the potential health hazards of social, physical and mental problems existing in the larger school-community environment.

In order to promote a relevant, dynamic approach to the instruction of health education, the Committee will continue to stress the need for curricular, personnel, and financial commitments that are necessary to assure the high quality of the district’s health education program.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:1
PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION

In accordance with General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee has adopted this policy on the rights of parents and guardians of our students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

At the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students in our schools will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum we offer that primarily involve human sexual or human sexuality issues. The Superintendent of Schools will determine the administrator(s) responsible for sending the notice(s). Parents/guardians of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If planned curricula change during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Each such notice to parents/guardians will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy, and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

1. Exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexual issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.

2. Inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable. Parents/guardians may arrange with the principal to review the materials at the school and may also review them at other locations that may be determined by the Superintendent of Schools.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the principal concerning notice, access to instructional materials, or exemption for the student under this policy may send a written request to the Superintendent for review of the issue. The Superintendent or designee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within two weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with the Superintendent’s decision may send a written request to the Regional School Committee for review of the issue. The Committee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within four weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is still dissatisfied after this process may send a written request to the Commissioner of Education for review of the issue in the dispute.

REF: Department of Education April – 1997
HEALTH EDUCATION
(Exemption Procedure)

Exemption will be granted from a specific portion of health education curriculum on the
grounds that the material taught is contrary to the religious beliefs of the student or the
student's parent/guardian.

A request for exemption must be submitted in writing to the principal in advance of
instruction in that portion of the curriculum for which the exemption is requested. The
request must state the particular conflict involved.

The principal will confer with the teacher to determine the length of time a student
will be exempt. The teacher will develop an alternative activity for which the
student will receive credit.

The principal will inform the parent/guardian of disposition of the request within a
reasonable number of school days of receipt of the request.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:1
TEACHING ABOUT DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO

In accordance with state and federal law, the District shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally based drug, tobacco, and alcohol education and prevention programs in grades K-12.

The drug, tobacco, and alcohol education program shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of drug, tobacco, and alcohol use. It shall include special instruction as to the effects upon the human system; the emotional, psychological and social dangers of such use with emphasis on non-use by school age children and the illegal aspects of such use. The program also shall include information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use illicit drugs, tobacco, or alcohol.

The objectives of this program, as stated below, are rooted in the Regional School Committee's belief that prevention requires education, and that the most important aspect of the policies and guidelines of the District should be the education of each individual to the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

- To create an awareness of the total drug problem - prevention, education, treatment, rehabilitation, and law enforcement on the local, state, national and international levels.
- To relate the use of drugs and alcohol to physical, mental, social and emotional practices.
- To develop the student's ability to make intelligent choices based on facts and to develop the courage to stand by one's own convictions.
- To prevent, delay, and/or reduce alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among children and youth.
- To understand the personal, social and economic problems causing the misuse of drugs and alcohol.
- To increase students’ understanding of the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.
- To develop an interest in preventing illegal use of drugs in the community.

The policy, and any standards and rules enforcing the policy, shall be prescribed by the school committee in conjunction with the superintendent.

This policy shall be posted on the district’s website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:1

First Read, November 1, 2016
Adopted by ASRSD, November 1, 2016
SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS
(PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS)

The goals of this school district’s special education program are to allow each child to grow and achieve at his/her own level, to gain independence and self-reliance, and to participate in the mainstream of school society in the least restrictive environment.

The requirements of Chapter 71B and the Massachusetts General Laws (known as Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972) and state regulations will be followed in the identification of children with special needs, in referrals for their evaluation, in prescribing for them suitable programs and in assessing their educational progress. In keeping with state requirements, all children with special needs between the ages of three through twenty-one who have not attained a high school diploma or its equivalent will be eligible for special education.

The Regional School Committee believes that most children with special needs can be educated in the regular school program if they are given special instruction, accommodations and the support they need. These children should also be given the opportunity to participate in the school district’s non-academic and extracurricular activities.

The Committee recognizes that the needs of certain children are so great that programs, classes or schools may be necessary. When appropriate programs, services, or facilities are not available within the district’s schools, the Committee will provide these children with access to schools where such instruction and accommodations are available.

It is the desire of the Committee that the schools work closely with parents in designing and providing programs and services to children with special needs. Parents will be informed, and conferred with, whenever a child is referred for evaluation. In event of any disagreement concerning diagnosis, program plan, special placement, or evaluation, the parents will be accorded the right of due process.

The Committee will secure properly trained personnel to work with the children with special needs. Since the financial commitment necessary to meet the needs of all of these children is extensive, the Committee will make every effort to obtain financial assistance from all sources.

LEGAL REFS: The Individuals with Disabilities Ed. Act (PL 94-142 adopted 1/1/91)
Rehabilitation Act of 1973
M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
Board of Education Chapter 766 Regulations, adopted 10/74, as amended through 7/1/81
603 CMR 28:00 inclusive
Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In keeping with the intention of the state of Massachusetts to offer educational opportunities to all students which will enable them to lead fulfilling and productive lives, the District shall provide appropriate educational opportunities to all resident students in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes.

COMPENSATORY EDUCATION
(Title 1)

Title 1 funds shall be used to provide educational services that are in addition to the regular services provided for District students. By adoption of this policy, the Regional School Committee ensures comparability in the provision of curriculum materials and supplies.
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The District shall provide suitable research-based language instructional programs for all identified English language learners in grades kindergarten through 12 in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes and Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) regulations and guidance.

The District shall identify students whose dominant language may not be English through home language surveys that identify a primary home language is other than English (PHLOTE), observations, intake assessments, and recommendations of parents, teachers and other persons. Identified students shall be assessed annually to determine their level of proficiency in the English language.

The District shall certify to the Massachusetts DESE each year those students whose dominant language is not English, including specification of the number of non-English languages identified as dominant languages and the number and percent of students who speak each non-English language as their dominant language.

The District shall provide additional information as required by the Massachusetts DESE to comply with the No Child Left Behind Act.

HOME-BOUND INSTRUCTION

The Region may furnish home-bound instruction to those students who are unable to attend classes for at least four consecutive weeks due to a physical injury, medical situation, or a severe emotional problem. The instruction is designed to provide maintenance in the basic academic courses so that when a student returns to school s/he will not be at a disadvantage because of the illness or the hospitalization.

To qualify for the program, the student needs a written statement from a medical doctor requesting the home-bound instruction, stating the reasons why, and estimating the time the student will be out of school. This statement needs to be sent to the Director of Special Education and Student Services.

Home-bound instruction is offered in basic elementary subjects and in secondary subjects which do not require laboratories and special equipment, subject in all cases to the availability of qualified teachers. Whenever possible, licensed teachers are assigned to home-bound instruction by the Director of Special Education and Student Services with the approval of the Superintendent.
HOME EDUCATION

The Ayer Shirley Regional Schools recognizes the right of parents or guardians to educate their child(ren) at home. Therefore, the Regional School Committee establishes this home education policy.

Parent(s) or guardian(s) planning to undertake a home education program for their child(ren) between their sixth and sixteenth birthday shall inform the Superintendent by completing the Notice of Intent to Pursue a Program of Home Education form as approved by the Regional School Committee prior to commencing a home education program.

Home education programs shall be considered in an equitable, objective, and timely manner. Factors that may be considered by the Superintendent in deciding whether or not to approve a home education proposal are:

1. The academic background, life experiences and/or other qualities of those who will be instructing the child(ren), as they relate to the educational program. Home educators need not be certified teachers nor have any diplomas or degrees.

2. An overview of the educational program that is to include subjects and instructional materials. In order to meet the specific educational needs of their child(ren), the parent(s) or guardian(s) may adjust the material to achieve the goals of the educational program without further notification to the Superintendent’s office.

3. A statement concerning instructional hours that will be followed.

4. A mutually agreeable method of assessment which corresponds to the type of educational program being followed and may include one or more of the following:
   a. Daily logs, journals, progress reports, portfolios or dated work samples
   b. An independent report made by someone acceptable to both superintendent and parent(s) or guardian(s)
   c. Standardized test results
   d. Consultation with the Superintendent or appropriate school principal
   e. Any other method agreed to by both superintendent and home educator(s)

A student being educated in a home-based program within the district shall be informed of and have access to Regional school activities of either a curricular or extra-curricular nature. Arrangements for such participation are to be in accordance with the generally accepted scheduling procedures of the Region.

Whenever possible, if requested by the parent(s) or guardian(s), school personnel may provide materials such as sample curricula and/or textbooks.

Administrators are encouraged to give all due assistance to home education families in their efforts to provide appropriate information concerning their home education program. Parent(s) or guardian(s) are entitled to all due process rights with regard to
this policy and with regard to any procedures followed and actions taken. During any resolution process, the parent(s) or guardian(s) may continue, but not commence the education of their child(ren) at home.

Students who are home schooled are eligible to participate in MIAA sponsored - interscholastic athletics and school extra-curricular activities under all applicable rules and regulations.

Home school students do not participate in MCAS testing.

The Superintendent has the responsibility for the development of the procedures and forms necessary for the implementation of this policy.

LEGAL REFS: 
M.G.L. 76:1, Home School Law 
M.G.L. 69:1D; 76:1, Care and Protection of Charles
RELATIONS WITH HOME SCHOOLS

1. Requirements for approval of home instruction will include:
   a. The parent or legal guardian must request permission to hold home instruction on an annual basis.
   b. A home instruction application form will be provided to the parents or legal guardian. This form must be completed and returned to the Superintendent before approval may be granted.
   c. The Regional School Committee delegates the approval of home instruction to the Superintendent. Any approval or rejection of an application by the Superintendent is subject to review by the Committee.

2. Children in home instruction may, at the discretion of parents or guardian, attend the regional schools on a part-time basis. It may be an advantage for a home-taught child to attend specialized classes in school.

3. Parents or a legal guardian in charge of home instruction should make provision for regular testing or use of other indicators of student progress such as standardized achievement tests. As an alternative to home testing and at the request of those in charge of the home instruction, the school district will make provision for inclusion of home-taught children in the schools’ assessment framework which is usually administered in fall, winter and spring of each school year. The home instruction summary form must include either a summary of home testing results for each required subject for each child or the results of the assessment framework that is administered through the school district.

4. Auditing functions of the Regional School Committee for the home instruction will include:
   a. The Committee at any time may request a review by the Superintendent of the attendance rolls, records of test scores or other achievement indicators in each required subject for any child in home instruction.
   b. The Committee may request at any time that the Superintendent review the instructional materials and methods used by the person(s) responsible for the home instruction.
   c. The Superintendent will prepare for the Committee an annual summary of the children included in home instruction.

5. Within one week of the ending date of the home instruction, as indicated on the home instruction application form, the school district will mail the parents or legal guardian a home instruction summary form. The completed form should be returned to the school district within 30 days. This summary form must be
returned to the school district office before annual approval of home instruction can be made for any succeeding years.

6. The Superintendent will act in a responsible, cooperative manner to ensure that all children in the school district receive competent, adequate instruction. This concern includes children in home education. If the Committee determines that a home instruction situation is inadequate, a conference between the parents or legal guardian and the Superintendent will be scheduled to find mutually acceptable ways to correct any deficiency.

7. If deficiencies in a home education situation are not corrected or the proper annual application or summary is not completed by the parents or legal guardian, a referral to the appropriate agency will be made.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 76:1, Home School Law
M.G.L. 69:1D; 76:1, Care and Protection of Charles
SUMMER SCHOOL GRADES 9-12

Ayer Shirley Regional High School does not offer a regular summer school program. However, any student who fails a course for the year has the option of attending a regular summer school program of his/her choice at any area high school. Interested students should contact the guidance office for program information.

Grades obtained in summer school will count as follows toward the Ayer Shirley Regional High School grade:

- Full Year Course: 1/6
- Semester Course: 1/3
- Quarter Course: 1/2

For example: A summer school grade of “B” will count to replace one quarter or final exam grade for a semester course to obtain a new semester grade.
COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND FEES

State law says:

“The department, with the cooperation of any town applying therefore, may provide for such instruction in the use of English for persons eighteen years of age or over unable to speak, read or write the same, and in the fundamental principles of government and other subjects adapted to fit for American citizenship, as shall jointly be approved by the local School Committee and the department. Schools and classes established therefore may be held in public school buildings, in industrial establishments or in such other places as may be approved in like manner. Teachers and supervisors employed therein by a town shall be chosen and their compensation fixed by the School Committee, subject to the approval of the department.”

Statutory

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 69:9

“Upon application of twenty or more residents of any city or town who are eighteen years of age or over certifying that they desire to attend a class for instruction of the type described in section nine, the School Committee of such city or town shall establish and cause to be conducted such a class or classes for a period of not less than forty sessions; provided, that, in case the attendance of any such class falls below fifteen, such School Committee may discontinue such class.”

Fees for Community Education courses may be paid at the time of registration. If a class fails to form, such payments will be refunded in full.

Fees for courses must be paid in full no later than the second meeting of each course. Such payment (checks made payable to the Ayer Shirley Regional School District) is to be made to the director of Community Education. If the class continues, no refunds will be made.

Statutory

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 69:9A
INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The Regional School Committee believes that materials appropriate to the needs of the school program must be available to each student and teacher. These will be furnished by the Regional School Committee subject to budgetary constraints.

The task of selecting instructional materials for programs will be delegated to the professional staff of the school district. Because instructional programs and materials are of great importance, only those that meet the following criteria will be approved by the Committee:

1. They must present balanced views of international, national, and local issues and problems of the past, present and future.

2. They must provide materials that stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic and ethical values.

3. They must help students develop abilities in critical reading and thinking.

4. They must help develop and foster an appreciation of cultural diversity and development in the United States and throughout the world.

5. They must provide for all students an effective basic education that does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, physical disabilities or sexual orientation.

6. They must allow sufficient flexibility for meeting the special needs of individual students and groups of students.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:48; 71:49; 71:50
BESE regulations 603 CMR 26.00

CROSS REF: KEC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

First Reading for amendment, September 19, 2012
Adopted by the ASRSD, October 17, 2012
RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Material that is challenged usually belongs to one of the three basic categories: religion, ideology, or profanity/obscenity. Board policies regarding these areas shall be as follows:

Religion -- Factual, unbiased material on religions has a place in school libraries.

Ideologies -- Libraries should, with no thought toward swaying reader judgment, make available a balanced collection of primary and factual material, on the level of their students on various ideologies or philosophies which exert or have exerted a strong force, either favorably or unfavorably, in government, current events, politics, education and other phases of life.

Profanity/obscenity -- Materials shall be subjected to a test of literary merit and reality in context using the criteria established.

When a problem concerning instructional resources in a school arises, the disposition of the problem will be made in a reasonable period of time using District adopted procedures.

In accordance with the statement of philosophy, no questioned materials shall be removed from the schools pending a final decision. Pending the outcome of the request for reconsideration, however, access to questioned materials can be denied to the students of the parents making the complaint, if they so desire.

If the decision of the Regional School Committee is that the questioned instructional resource be retained, the District will not convene a review committee relative to the same complaint for a period of three years. If a substantially different point of view is advanced, it will be investigated. (The period of three years does not apply in this instance).

If an individual or a group undertakes action to keep material from the shelves by checking it out and failing to return it, or by taking turns in keeping it checked out so that it is not available for student use, the Superintendent shall request, in writing, the return of the material. If it is not returned within thirty (30) days, a bill for the current replacement cost of the item shall be rendered to the party holding the item.

After the Regional School Committee has adopted new materials or approved certain methods, that decision will not be reconsidered for a period of three years beginning with the end of the school year when the adoption is made.
TEXTBOOK SELECTION AND ADOPTION

Responsibility for the review and selection of textbooks to be purchased shall rest with the principal of each school. The principal is encouraged through the Regional School Committee to establish a review committee to assist in the process to determine the textbooks that best meet the curriculum guidelines of the District. The review committee should include teachers who will use the texts and other staff members as found desirable. Students and parents will be encouraged to serve.

Principles that apply generally to the selection of instructional materials and library materials shall apply to textbooks. Additionally, basic textbooks and textbook support materials shall be chosen:

- To advance the educational objectives of the school district and particular objectives of the course program;
- To contribute toward continuity, integration, and articulation of the curriculum; and
- To establish a general framework for the particular course or program.

Because the instructional purposes of textbooks, as stated above, are of such importance, particular care shall be taken in their selection as to content.

Although many points must be examined, the Committee directs the staff to be mindful of the following considerations:

- The needs of all learners must be provided for.
- Attention should be given to gender roles depicted in the materials.
- The textbook and textbook support materials should lead the student and teacher beyond the textbook into a wide variety of other materials and educational experiences.
- If the textbook deals with problems and issues of our times, it should present and encourage examination of varied points of view.
- Because textbooks are selected for several years’ use, special attention also shall be given their physical characteristics, durability, format and price.

LEGAL REFS: 71:48; 30B:7; 71:50
603 CMR 26:05
CROSS REF: KEC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials
SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee recognizes that knowledge is changing and expanding and that it may be necessary to use various types of supplementary materials in addition to the basic and fundamental textbooks.

For the purpose of this policy, supplementary materials shall be defined as any instructional materials other than textbooks including, but not limited to, books, electronic media, periodicals, newspapers, pictures, diagrams, maps, charts, slides, filmstrips, films, records, audiotapes, and suitable technological applications which relate directly to the adopted curriculum.

The Committee believes that teachers and administrators should have a large role in selection and recommendation of supplementary materials. Teachers are encouraged to use a wide range of learning aids, provided the expense incurred in purchasing these aids remains within the limits of the budget.

LEGAL REF: 603 CMR 26:05
LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee endorses the School Library Bill of Rights, as adopted by the American Library Association, which asserts that the responsibility of the school media center is to:

1. Provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the students served.

2. Provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.

3. Provide a background of information that will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.

4. Provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.

5. Provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.

6. Place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the media center.

Initial purchase suggestions for media center materials may come from all personnel, teachers, coordinators, and administrators. Students will also be encouraged to make suggestions. The librarian will recommend materials to be included in the school media center. Final approval and authority for distribution of funds will rest with the building principal, subject to the approval of the Superintendent.

Gifts of media center books will be accepted in keeping with the above policy on selection. Complaints about media center books will be handled in line with committee policy on complaints about instructional materials.
LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The continuous review of media center (library) materials is necessary as a means of maintaining a useful and active collection. As new materials are selected and added, some older materials are withdrawn. The responsibility for determining which materials shall be withdrawn shall rest with the professional staff.

Among the other reasons for withdrawing an item shall be the following:

- Curricular changes have rendered as superfluous materials (or multiple copies of materials) formerly used but no longer in demand.
- Materials contain information which is no longer accurate or current.
- Materials intended for recreational reading have become dated or unattractive and are no longer in demand. Some books which are deemed standards or classics shall be retained even though they rarely circulate.
- Materials have worn out, been damaged or physically deteriorated, and have lost utility, and/or appeal.
- Materials have been superseded by newer items which present the same information but in superior format.
- Donate or recycle materials no longer in demand.
LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER RESOURCES

Philosophy
One of the media center’s main functions is to support the school curriculum, providing materials in a variety of formats. In the information age, it is the primary objective of education to learn to identify, locate, organize, and present needed information in a clear, concise, and persuasive manner. As technologies change, students need to develop skills to manage information formats. The school media center program, as an integral part of the total curriculum, is the vehicle that provides opportunities for students to achieve these skills and foster a lifelong interest in both reading and knowledge. Each student should have access to an effective, integrated school media center program that reflects the curriculum and the needs of the school community and the world in general.

Criteria for selection
The following selection criteria will apply to all materials, including electronic, print, and non print resources:

1. Media center materials shall support and be consistent with the goals of the Massachusetts Frameworks, the school district, the aims and objectives of the individual schools and specific courses.
2. Media center materials shall meet standards of quality in factual content, artistic and literary value, and format.
3. Media center materials shall be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, ability level, and social development of the students for whom they were selected.
4. Media center materials shall meet the needs and interests of faculty.
5. Media center materials shall be current and up to date.
6. Media center materials shall be selected to help students gain an awareness of our diverse society.

Intellectual Freedom
The media center subscribes in principle to the statements expressed in the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association. The principles of intellectual freedom expressed in the Library Bill of Rights are inherent in the First Amendment of the Constitution.
SPECIAL INTEREST MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee understands that organizations, institutions, and individuals at times develop materials that are offered to schools free or inexpensively. As a general rule, sponsored materials present a particular point of view, and extreme care must be exercised in evaluating and using them. The responsibility for using sponsored materials rests with the certified staff member who recommends its use. In any questionable instance, the principal should be informed and shall decide whether its use is in the best interest of the students.

Sponsored materials must meet the same basic selection criteria as any other learning material, as well as the following special criteria:

- Any expression of a point of view should be clearly identified.
- Any advertising that appears on or with any material should be in good taste and unobtrusive.
- The source of all material should be clearly identifiable.

LEGAL REF: 603 CMR 26:05
AYER SHIRLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

The Internet has become an essential tool within the school district due to its effectiveness in offering a broad range of data that enables students to explore a wealth of information as it is related to their course of study. Due to the simple manner in which data can be exchanged on the Internet it is necessary for the District to have an Acceptable Use Policy for Internet and computer use.

This Acceptable Use Policy shall be made available in two forms; as part of the school handbooks issued to students and in the technology section of the District website.

Internet Use/Social Media
1. Use of the Internet at Ayer Shirley Regional School District is a privilege and inappropriate use of the Internet may lead to a loss of this privilege.
2. When using the Internet, students are expected to abide by the following guidelines;
   a. Do not reveal any personal contact information relating to yourself or other students or staff members that consists of names, addresses, and/or telephone numbers.
   b. Students are not to post private information as it relates to fellow students, district staff, or academics. Nor shall defamatory material concerning a person or group be sent or retrieved.
   c. Student use of the Internet is for academic purposes only or other uses as deemed appropriate by the Ayer Shirley Regional School District Technology Department.
   d. Illegal activity over the Internet is strictly forbidden.
   e. At all times appropriate Internet etiquette is to be adhered to. There is to be no use of profanity, vulgarities, or inappropriate language of any kind.
3. Students are to abide by the restrictions placed on Internet access through the District content filtering service. Users shall not attempt to circumvent the filtering service to access sites deemed inappropriate by the District.
4. Improper fraternization with staff/classmates using Facebook and/or similar Internet sites or social network, or via cell phone, texting or telephone.
5. Inappropriate contact via e-mail or phone is prohibited.
6. Inappropriate posting of items via computer or cell phone with sexual content is prohibited.
7. Inappropriate posting of items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol is prohibited.
8. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of District computers and technology tools.

Security
1. Students are to use only their designated computer user account and only access the network folder associated with their name. Students are not to share their passwords with other students.
2. Any attempt to gain unauthorized access to internal network resources either from inside or outside the District is forbidden.
3. The District computer network is not to be used as a means to gain unauthorized
access to resources or computer systems outside of our internal network.

4. All users are not to make attempts to disrupt the functionality of the District network. This includes any malicious attempt to alter or destroy hardware or data not contained within his/her personal folder, downloading or creation of computer viruses and/or malicious software.

**General Computer Use**
1. Downloading, uploading or distribution of any files, software, or other material that is not related to an educational project is prohibited.
2. Students are to use the computers, and software provided, for academic purposes and in the manner instructed by staff.
3. It is prohibited to save data to the network that is not related to academic courses.
4. Students are not to use their personal computers on the school network unless they receive approval from the Technology Department.
5. Any inadvertent access to inappropriate websites or information belonging to another user is to be immediately reported to staff.
6. Students are to abide by software licensing restrictions/laws.
7. Students will not bring food or drinks near computers, nor damage or use components inappropriately.

Failure to abide by the Acceptable Use Policy is grounds for disciplinary action as deemed necessary by the Ayer Shirley Regional School District. The District understands the continuous expansion of the Internet and the risks inherent to this. Therefore, we will do our best to prevent student access to inappropriate material and also provide an environment to educate students and their families on responsibility and safely utilizing computers and browsing the Internet.

CROSS REF:       GBEG, Staff Acceptable Use of Technology
                 IJNDD, Policy on Facebook & Social Networking Websites
                 JICFB, Bullying Prevention

**Signatures**
I understand and will abide by the above Agreement. I further understand that any violation of the regulations above is unethical and may constitute a criminal offense. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken, and/or referral for legal action.

__________________________________________
Student’s Full Printed Name

__________________________________________
Student’s Signature

__________________________________________
Parent’s Signature
SOCIAL NETWORKING OF THE AYER SHIRLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Internet AUP still in force
This policy is adopted in addition to, and not as a substitute for the School District’s Internet Acceptable Use Policy, which governs use of the School District’s technological resources.

1. General Concerns
The Ayer Shirley Regional School District recognizes the proliferation and, in some instances, usefulness, of online conversation between teachers and students and/or their parents or guardians. However, due to the nature of social networking sites, there exists a risk, without care and planning, that the lines between one’s professional life and personal life will be blurred. Our staff should always be mindful of how they present themselves to the world, online and otherwise. Should an educator “friend” a student on Facebook, subscribe to a student’s “twitter” accounts, regularly engage in email “chat” with a student, exchange text messages with students or engage in other electronic communication, the School District is concerned, and the educator should be concerned, that such activities may undermine the educator’s authority to maintain discipline, encourage inappropriate behaviors and compromise the educator’s ability to remain truly objective with his/her students.

In addition, any online communication using one’s own personal resources, as opposed to school district resources, compromises the teacher’s, as well as the School Districts, ability to retain public records in accordance with the requirements of the Commonwealth’s public records laws. The law requires public employees who send, receive or maintain records in their capacity as public employees, to retain, disclose and dispose of such records in compliance with strict provisions of the public records law. This law applies whether or not the record is in the form of a paper document or an electronic communication. When staff members communicate through school-based resources, such as staff email or school-sponsored web pages, such records are retained and archived through the school’s information technology department. If, however, a teacher communicates outside of these resources, such information is not retained. The burden falls on the teacher to comply with public records laws when using personal email or social network accounts to communicate with students and/or parents and guardians.

2. Expectations of Staff
With these concerns in mind, the Ayer Shirley Regional School District has instituted this “Social Networking Policy,” and announces its expectations for staff members’ use of social networks such as Facebook, Linked-In, Twitter, personal email accounts, text message features of cell phones, use of blogs, and other electronic or technologically based communication systems.

1. Before endeavoring to establish any social networking account, teachers should familiarize themselves with the features of any account they choose to use. For example, Facebook requires account holders to take specific steps to “privatize” the
information they place online. You must educate yourself to these features of Facebook or any other social networking site you select. You will be responsible should any information you intended to be “private” becomes “public” due to your lack of awareness of the features of the social network you have decided to use or your failure to properly use such features.

2. You must also know that any information you share privately with a recipient could be re-distributed by such recipient, without your knowledge or consent. The same principles you apply to in person communication should be applied to online conversation: use discretion, and do not place your trust in individuals who have not proven themselves trustworthy. In essence, nothing you post online is ever truly “private”.

3. The School District expects you to keep the line between your professional life and your personal life clearly drawn at all times. There is no reason why this cannot be done, even in light of the proliferation of social networking sites. All that is required is some forethought before using social networking for both your professional and personal life to be sure that these lines never become blurred. For example, if the District does not maintain a web portal for staff to communicate outside of school hours as necessary with students and families, and an educator wishes to establish a Facebook or personal email account through which he/she will communicate with students, he/she should establish a Facebook identify and email identity that is separate from his/her “personal” Facebook identify or personal email account. He/she should only use his/her educational Facebook account or educational email account to communicate with students and/or parents and guardians on matters directly related to education. The “friends” associated with such educational Facebook account should only be members of the educational community, such as administrators, teachers, students, and parents of such students. It is strongly recommended that teachers will reject friend requests from individuals who do not fit into any of these categories.

4. At all times, and in the use of any form of communications, staff members will always adhere to student privacy rights and the rights of employees to have their personnel and medical information kept confidential. Information that is protected by law from disclosure to third parties will not be communicated online in a way that unreasonably exposes such information to retrieval by those third parties. For example, through an educational Facebook account, a teacher may not post confidential student information on the “wall,” the “information” section, or through any part of that Facebook account that would be accessible to other of the Teacher’s Facebook “friends” associated with that account. If a teacher wishes to communicate privately with a student through the educational Facebook account, such communication shall be conveyed only through the private email/message feature of Facebook, so that only the student may view the message and respond to it.

5. Teachers are encouraged to communicate with students and parents on educational matters only, and only through school-based resources, such as school-provided email or web portal accounts. Use of one’s personal email account or personal social networking account to discuss school business with students is discouraged. It
should be noted that just because a teacher uses his/her personal email as opposed to a school email account, this does not shield such email from the provisions of the public records law or from discovery in litigation. It only prevents the archiving of such messages through the School District’s automatic email archiving system. We again remind teachers that information sent or received by them, even through personal email or personal social network accounts, and are related to their capacity as a school employee, are still subject to public records retention, exemption and disclosure requirements.”

6. If a teacher conveys school related messages to students and parents on his/her private account, he/she should save such email or any communication conveyed through a social networking site, or print and save a paper copy of such email or other online communication, and file it, and regard its privacy, as he/she would any other document concerning that student. The teacher should forward copies of any such emails or online communications to his/her school based email account so that it can be properly retained and archived in compliance with the requirements of the public records law. Any document created or received by a public employee in his/her capacity as such is subject to retention and perhaps disclosure under the public records law.

7. No matter what medium of communication a teacher selects, he/she should adhere to appropriate teacher/student boundaries. You are a role model, not a student’s friend, you are his/her teacher, and you should always conduct yourself in accordance with this understanding.

8. This policy is not intended to infringe upon a teacher’s right to speak publicly on matters of public concern, or to communicate with fellow members of their union on workplace issues, so long as such communication adheres to appropriate time, place and manner restrictions and does not interfere with performance of your job duties. However, when you speak via social networking sites or tools on matters concerning your work, you are speaking as an employee and not as a citizen; restrictions may be placed upon your freedom to express yourself. Those restrictions are intended to preserve student confidentiality, maintain your status as an educator who should command and receive the respect of students, be able to maintain order and discipline in your classroom, and remain objective with respect to your students.

9. Teachers are discouraged from using home telephones, personal cell phones, personal email accounts and personal Facebook accounts to communicate with students. Your communications with students, even if you do not use school resources for such communications, are within the jurisdiction of the School District to monitor as they arise out of your position as an educator. Any conduct, whether online or not, that reflects poorly upon the School District or consists of inappropriate behavior on the part of a staff member, may expose an employee to discipline. Even if you are not using a school telephone, computer, classroom or the like to engage in contact with a student that such contact is not outside of the School District’s authority to take appropriate disciplinary action. If your behavior is inappropriate, undermines your authority to instruct or maintain control and
discipline with students, compromises your objectivity, or harms students, the School District reserves the right to impose discipline for such behavior up to and including discharge. A teacher may also face individual liability for inappropriate online communications with students and/or parents and guardians, as well as exposing the District to vicarious liability in certain instances.

At the same time, the District recognizes that, in limited cases, use of cell phone text messages or cell phones calls or emails outside of regular school hours may be reasonably necessary. For example, in connection with school sponsored events for which teachers serve as duly appointed advisers, they may need to convey messages in a timely manner to students and may not have access to school-based email accounts, school provided telephones or school-based web pages. In such limited circumstances, the District anticipates that teachers will make reasonable use of cell phones or smart phones to convey time sensitive information on scheduling issues and the like.

10. Teachers may not access their personal email accounts or private Facebook accounts using School District computer resources during student contact hours.

11. If you are communicating as an employee of the District in your online communications, you must be aware that readers will assume you “speak for the School District.” Therefore, all of your online communications, when you are actually acting on behalf of the District, or creating the appearance that you are doing so, must be professional at all times and reflect positively on the School District.

12. In the use of your personal Facebook account or other personal social networking site, you may not, without express permission from the Superintendent of Schools, use the school’s logo, likeness or any school photographs or other property that belongs to the school.

13. References to “Facebook” are not included to limit application of their polity to use of that program. All online, electronic or computerized means of communication are subject to this policy. Given the rapid pace of technological change it is not possible to identify all proprietary or commonly named or identified means of such communications.
FIELD TRIPS

Field trips can bring the schools and the communities closer together, which can result in real life experiences that enrich the curriculum for students and also bring about better public relations. The Regional School Committee encourages field trips as an integral part of the instructional programs in the schools.

The Superintendent will establish regulations to assure that:

1. All students have parental permission for trips.
2. All trips are properly supervised.
3. All safety precautions are observed.
4. All trips contribute substantially to the educational program.

All out-of-state or extended (overnight) trips and excursions, except those required for student participation in tournament competition or contests, must have advance approval of the Regional School Committee. Fundraising activities for such trips will be subject to approval by the appropriate Administrator.

CROSS REF: JJH Student Travel
COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/ SPEAKERS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee believes human resources are those individuals or groups who are invited into the schools to present supplementary information and ideas to the classroom course of study. These experiences afford students the opportunity to benefit from community viewpoints. Care should be taken in selecting these speakers so that they are individuals who respect diversity in thinking and varying views and who are not attempting to inappropriately influence points of view.

All participants will be subject to C.O.R.I. approval.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L.71:38R, 151B, 276, §.100A, St.2002, c.385
803 CMR 3.05 (Chapter 149 of the Acts of 2004)
SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

It is the policy of the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee to encourage volunteer efforts in the schools. Parents/guardians, business representatives, senior citizens, and other community volunteers are recognized as important sources of support and expertise to enhance the instructional program and vital communication links with the communities. The volunteer program will be coordinated in cooperation with building administrators.

All volunteers will be subject to C.O.R.I. approval.
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The philosophy of the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee concerning academic achievement, as well as children's social growth and development, is based on the premise that children have diverse capabilities and individual patterns of growth and learning.

Therefore, the Regional Committee feels it is important that teachers have as much and as accurate knowledge of each student as possible in order to assess his/her needs and growth, and make instructional plans for him/her. A sharing of information among parent, teacher, and student is essential.
REPORT CARDS

General:
Report cards shall be issued four times during the school year at the end of each quarter as listed on the annual calendar.

The grading system varies between the secondary and elementary schools. Specific grading criteria are to be outlined in the student handbook.

High School/Middle School Level:
Midway between marking quarters, mid-quarter reports for each student in each subject are to be sent home to parents. These reports are to be reviewed and signed by the parent or guardian and then returned to the respective teacher.

Parental conferences with teachers are encouraged at any time.

Year End Report Cards will be mailed to parents as soon as possible after the close of school.

Elementary Level:
Interim progress reports will be sent home to the parents of students who are having academic difficulties at any time deemed advisable by the staff.

Besides the biannual- parent-teacher conferences scheduled for fall and spring, a parent may request to meet with a teacher at any time. Coordination should be made with the school office prior to the parent visiting the school.
STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee recognizes the school's obligation to give periodic reports of a student's progress and grades. The Regional School Committee further recognizes that these reports are a vital form of communication between the schools and parents. The Committee also believes that all progress reports must be based upon full information, accurately and honestly reported with the proper maintenance of confidentiality.

A report depicting the student's progress will be issued periodically following an evaluation by the appropriate teacher, teachers, or other professional personnel.

In addition to the periodic reports, parents will be notified when a student's performance requires special notification.

Grading and promotion will be based on improvement, achievement, capability of the student, and the professional judgment of the teacher and principal.

Major changes in the reporting system shall be preceded by a cooperative study and evaluation by teachers, principals, parents, and the central office administrator, who will submit the proposal to the Committee for consideration and approval.
The term "homework" refers to an assignment to be prepared during a period of supervised study in class or outside of class.

The purposes of homework are to improve the learning processes, to aid in the mastery of skills, and to create and stimulate interest on the part of the student.

Homework is a learning activity which should increase in complexity with the maturity of the student. With increased maturity, learning should become an independent activity. This should be established through consistent assignments which encourage students to investigate for themselves and to work independently as well as with others.

Homework assignments should be consistent in terms of the amount given each day and the time required for each assignment so that a pattern of meaningful homework can be established by the teacher and/or the student.

The information for any homework assignment should be clear and specific so that the student can complete the assignment.

Homework assignments should take into consideration individual differences of students such as health, ability, conditions at home, and educational resources at home. Homework should not require the use of reference materials not readily available in most homes, school media centers, or the public library, and should require the use of those materials only when the student has had instruction in the use of them.

There are many other learning activities in the life of a student besides homework. Such things as participating in school activities, pursuing cultural interests, participating in family living, and exploring personal interests should be considered by teachers when planning consistent assignments. Homework is not to be used as a form of punishment under any circumstances.
PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

In evaluating student achievement, each teacher will make use of all available information, including results of teacher-made tests and other measures of skill and content mastery, standardized test results, and teacher observation of student performance. The principal will direct and aid teachers in their evaluations and review grade assignments in order to ensure uniformity of evaluation standards.

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved. Exceptions will only be made after prior notification and explanation to each student's parents/guardians, but the final decision will rest with the building principal.
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In moving toward adopting the Mass Core program of study as recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, to better prepare all students for college and career, Ayer Shirley Regional High School will require completion of the indicated credits in each of the listed disciplines below. The graduating class of 2013 and beyond must meet these academic requirements.

The following table lists the credit requirements that must be earned prior to the beginning of the school year for a student to be promoted to the next grade level.

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<th>GRADE</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
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<td>9 to 10</td>
<td>30 credits</td>
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<td>10 to 11</td>
<td>65 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>11 to 12</td>
<td>105 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>GRADUATION</td>
<td>135 credits</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Subjects required for graduation are as follows:

- English (or equivalent Humanities) 20 credits
- Social Studies (or equivalent Humanities) 20 credits
- Math 20 credits
- Science 20 credits
- Health 2.5 credits
- Physical Education (or equivalent option) 10 credits
- Computer (or equivalent option) 5 credits
- Fine Arts 5 credits

Students transferring to Ayer Shirley Regional High School who have successfully met the standards of the prior school will be assumed to have met our requirements. It will be necessary for these students to meet our requirements from the date of entry.

Community Service Requirement - Community Service encourages students to become valuable resources to their communities through active participation in service programs. All students will fulfill thirty (30) hours of community service as a graduation requirement. Students must fulfill a minimum of 10 hours for each of their freshman, sophomore, and junior years. This requirement will be prorated for students entering after their sophomore year: junior Year — 20 hours, senior Year — 15 hours. All documentation must be turned in the last Monday in April of the students’ graduating year.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2016, the Community Service Requirement will be increased to 50 hours. The prorated requirement will increase in the junior year by 35 hours and in the senior year, to 25 hours.
EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee considers comprehensive and objective evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum to be of primary importance. The Superintendent will provide for the translation of the stated instructional goals into objectives and for appraisal of their implementation in order to:

1. Determine educational needs and provide information for planning.
2. Indicate instructional strengths and weaknesses.
3. Check on the suitability of programs in terms of the member communities’ requirements.
4. Show the relationship between achievement and the district’s stated goals.
5. Provide data for public information.

Elements of this evaluation process may include:

1. Testing programs such as nationally standardized general achievement tests, nationally standardized tests in specific subject areas, and tests administered by other agencies.
2. Study of school achievement records.
3. Study of students' high school and drop-out records.
4. Use of outside services, participation in regional research studies, contracted evaluation services; evaluation services at cost to the school district must be approved in advance by the Regional School Committee.
5. Teacher and parent evaluation of student behavior.
6. State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) specialists and services.
7. Evaluation by the regional accrediting association.
8. Evaluation by other agencies.

An evaluation of the curriculum and its effectiveness will be made periodically and reported to the Regional School Committee by the Superintendent.
DISTRICT PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS

A district program of testing for assessment/evaluation shall be responsible for scheduling, disseminating, and collecting tests and for reporting and interpreting all group test results.

Measurements of educational achievement shall be prepared so that data is consistent for comparison purposes within the school district from year to year and with other school districts to the extent required by rules of the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).
TEACHING ACTIVITIES/PRESENTATIONS

It is the desire of the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee that the best available strategies for bringing about learning be utilized in the District’s schools. The instructional staff shall be expected to keep informed of current research, promising instructional strategies and practices developed in schools throughout the nation and to apply those which have potential for improving the learning program in the District’s schools.

An educational climate shall be established which shall be conducive to rational thought, inquiry, and respect for the dignity of the individual. This educational climate will assist students in learning how to think rather than what to think and shall provide students the opportunity to identify, express, and defend their opinions without penalty or fear of reprisal or ridicule.

Nothing in this policy shall limit a parent/guardian’s right to file a complaint to challenge the use of a teaching activity or presentation.
TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

An important goal of the region is to help prepare students for intelligent and conscientious participation as citizens in our democratic society. One step toward meeting this goal is to introduce students to reasoned and dispassionate approaches to the analysis of contemporary social and political issues. To insure that these issues can be examined in an atmosphere as free from emotion and prejudice as the times permit, the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee establishes the following guidelines for discussion of controversial issues in the schools.

Teacher-Planned Classroom Discussions

1. Controversial issues selected by teachers for classroom discussion must relate directly to the objectives and content of courses approved by the Regional School Committee for inclusion in the curriculum.

2. The teacher’s right to introduce controversial issues in classroom presentations does not include the right of advocacy. Teachers must refrain from using their positions to express partisan points of view.

3. The approach to discussion of these issues in the classroom must be objective and scholarly with minimum emphasis on opinion and maximum emphasis on intelligent analysis.

4. Teachers must ensure that the reasoned arguments of all sides of an issue are given equal presentation and emphasis in classroom discussions.

5. Teachers may invite visitors from outside the schools to give presentations on controversial issues when the visitors offer qualifications and resources not available in the schools. All visitors are to be guided by the standards of language usage that prevail in the classrooms and by the standards of scholarly inquiry set forth above. Whenever possible, teachers who invite visitors to present one side of an issue will also invite visitors to present the other side(s).

6. In all cases teachers must obtain from the appropriate principal permission to invite visitors for classroom presentations. Permission must be requested at least 48 hours before the scheduled time of presentation.

Student-Initiated Forums on Controversial Issues

Student groups may request permission to conduct forums on controversial issues in the schools. The principal may grant such requests under the following conditions:

1. Preparation for presentation of a forum will not cause any student or teacher to miss class and will not cause the cancellation of any class.
2. Adequate advance planning must be conducted for each forum. A request to hold a forum must be received by the principal at least three weeks before the scheduled date of presentation. For each request the principal will appoint, after consultation with the requesting student group, an adult advisory group consisting of at least two parents and two faculty members.

3. The standards for approach to discussion, style of presentation, and use of visitors as defined above will apply to student-initiated forums.

Requests from Groups or Individuals outside the Schools
No permission will be granted non-school groups or individuals to make presentations on controversial issues in the schools during school hours. Requests for after-school or evening use will be processed in accordance with the Regional Committee's policy on community use of school facilities.

No permission will be granted outsiders for distribution of literature on controversial issues to students in general or to class groups.

A principal may grant an outside group or individual permission to post one notice of a public meeting for discussion of issues if the language of that notice conforms to the standards that prevail in the community. The principal will determine the appropriate bulletin board for such notices.
SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

The United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Massachusetts and related court rulings clearly establish the concept of "church and state separation" and the "preclusion of sectarian instruction in public schools."

In order to help staff members abide by the spirit and letter of the law, and to avoid compromising any student's religious or conscientious beliefs or freedoms, the following guidelines have been established:

The observance of religious holidays is not the responsibility of the Regional School District.

While it is recognized that many activities are initiated with the approach of major holidays in order to capitalize on the readiness and interest that is generated at these times, it should be understood that such occasions frequently have religious underpinnings. Care should be taken to relate only to secular aspects of these holidays.

Music programs given at times close to religious holidays should not use religious aspect of these holidays as the underlying motive or theme. Although religious music is appropriate in the schools to the extent that it is sung or presented for musical rather than religious content, its use should not violate the secular nature of the school. Pageants, plays, recitals, and other literary or dramatic activities should not be used to convey religious messages. While the holidays represent a valid source of ideas for meaningful school art experiences, teachers should avoid assigning or encouraging art work that promotes religious aspects of such holidays. If, however, individual students choose to use a religious personage, event, or symbol as the vehicle for an artistic expression, they should be allowed to take this action.

The above statements should not be interpreted to preclude the factual and objective teaching about religions, religious holidays, and religious differences. Such instruction will be permitted in the schools since insights in this area can enhance the mutual understanding needed by all the people in a pluralistic society.

LEGAL REF: 603 CMR 26:05
ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

No animal shall be brought to school without prior permission of the building principal.

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District is committed to providing a high quality educational program to all students in a safe and healthy environment.

School principals, in consultation with the Health Services Providers in each building, shall utilize the Department of Public Health publication “Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds” and review student health records to determine which animals may be allowed in the school building. The decision of the principal shall be final.

Educational Program
Use of animals to achieve specific curriculum objectives may be allowed by the building principal provided student health and safety is not jeopardized and the individual requesting that the animal be brought to school is responsible for adhering to the “Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds” and any other conditions established by the principal to protect the health and well-being of students.

Student Health
The health and well-being of students is the District’s highest priority. Animals may cause an allergic reaction or otherwise impair the health of students. No animals may be brought to school or kept in the school, classroom, office or common area that may negatively impact the health of any student who must utilize that area. Animals that cause an allergic reaction or impair the health of students shall be removed from the school immediately so that no student shall have his/her health impaired and each student shall have full access to available educational opportunities.

Animals Prohibited from School
Rabies is a growing problem and any fur-bearing animal is susceptible to this very serious fatal disease. Infected animals can transmit this disease to students and staff. Based on the Massachusetts Department of Health and Education recommendations the following animals are prohibited from schools within the Ayer Shirley Regional School District.

Wild Animals and Domestic Stray Animals – Because of the high incidence of rabies in bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes and other wild carnivores, these animals should not be permitted in school buildings under any circumstances (including dead animals).
Fur-Bearing Animals (pet dogs*, cats, wolf-hybrids, ferrets, etc.) – These animals may pose a risk for transmitting rabies, as well as parasites, fleas, other diseases and injuries.
Bats – Bats pose a high risk for transmitting rabies. Bat houses should not be installed on school grounds and bats should not be brought into the school building.
Poisonous Animals – Spiders, venomous insects and poisonous snakes, reptiles and lizards are prohibited for safety reasons.

*Exception: Guide, Hearing and Other Service Dogs or Law Enforcement Dogs – These animals may be allowed in school or on school grounds with proof of current rabies vaccination.

Exceptions may be made with the prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

Service Animals (Guide or Assistance Dogs)

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee does not permit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including those who require the assistance of a service animal. The District will comply with Massachusetts law concerning the rights of persons with guide or assistance dogs and with federal law and will permit such animals on school premises and on school transportation.

For purposes of this policy, a “service animal includes any dog that has been individually trained to do the work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability”. The regulations further state that “a public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with the disability”.

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that individuals with disabilities cannot perform themselves. Service animals are not pets. There are several kinds of service animals that assist individuals with disabilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, animals that:

- Assist individuals who are blind or have severe sight impairments as “seeing eye dogs” or “guide dogs;”
- Alert individuals with hearing impairments to sounds;
- Pull wheelchairs or carry and pick-up items for individuals with mobility impairments; and,
- Assist individuals with mobility impairments with balance.

The District shall not assume or take custody or control of, or responsibility for, any service animal or the care or feeding thereof. The owner or person having custody and control of the dog shall be liable for any damage to persons, premises, property, or facilities caused by the service animal, including, but not limited to, clean up, stain removal, etc.

If, in the opinion of the school principal or authorized designee, any service animal is not in the control of its handler, or if it is not housebroken, the service animal is not in the control of its handler, or if it is not housebroken, the service animal may be excluded from the school or program. The service animal can also be excluded if it presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school. The parent or guardian of the student having custody and control of the dog will be required to remove the service animal from District premises immediately.
If any student or staff member assigned to the classroom in which a service animal is permitted, suffers an allergic reaction to the animal, the person having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by the building principal or designee and an alternative plan will be developed with appropriate District staff. Such plan could include the reassignment of the person having custody and control of the animal to a different classroom assignment. This will also apply if an individual on school transportation suffers an allergic reaction. In this case, an alternate plan will be developed in coordination with appropriate school, District, and transportation staff including the involvement of the parents/guardians of the students.

When a student will be accompanied by a service animal at school or in other District facilities on a regular basis, such staff member or such student’s parent or guardian, as well as the animal’s owner and any other person who will have custody and control of the animal will be required to sign a document stating that they have read and understood the foregoing.

The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee shall be responsible for developing procedures to accommodate a student’s use of an assistance dog in District facilities and on school transportation vehicles.

LEGAL REFS: Title II of Americans with Disabilities Act
28 CFR, Part 35
29 CRR, 35.136(i)
SECTION J
STUDENTS

JA       STUDENT POLICIES GOALS
JA-E     STUDENT POLICIES GOALS EXHIBIT
JB       EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
JBA      STUDENT-TO- STUDENT HARASSMENT
JEB      ENTRANCE AGE
JF       SCHOOL ADMISSIONS
JF-E-1   SCHOOL ADMISSIONS EXHIBIT
JF-E-2   SCHOOL ADMISSIONS EXHIBIT
JFABC    ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS FROM CHARTER SCHOOLS
JFABD    HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES
JFBB     SCHOOL CHOICE
JH       STUDENT ABSENCES
JHD      EXCLUSION AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
JI       STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
JIB      STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING
JIC      STUDENT DISCIPLINE
JICA     STUDENT DRESS CODE
JICC     STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES
JICC-R   STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES
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STUDENT POLICIES GOALS

The student is the focal point of all operations of a school district. This top priority is shared with no one.

Consequently, the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee can expect to spend much of its time in study, deliberation, and policy formulation on matters directly related to students.

The Regional Committee and staff will work together to establish an environment conducive to the very best learning achievements for each student through meeting the following goals regarding students:

1. To individualize the learning program in order to provide appropriately for each student according to his/her specific background, capabilities, learning styles, interests, and aspirations.

2. To protect and observe the legal rights of students.

3. To enhance the self-image of each student by helping him/her feel respected and worthy through a learning environment that provides positive encouragement through frequent success.

4. To provide an environment of reality in which students can learn personal and civic responsibility for their actions through meaningful experiences as school citizens.

5. To deal with students in matters of discipline in a just and constructive manner.

6. To provide in every way possible for the safety, health, and welfare of
students.

7. To promote faithful attendance, community service, and good habits of mind.

LEGAL REF: 603 CMR 26:00
STUDENT POLICIES GOALS EXHIBIT

Active Efforts

(1) The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee shall establish policies, promote regulations and procedures, and implement monitoring and evaluation practices that support and promote affirmative action and stimulate necessary changes to ensure that all obstacles to equal access to school programs for all persons are removed, regardless of race, sex, color, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion or limited English-speaking ability, no matter how subtle or unintended. Such policies shall include a requirement for an annual evaluation of all aspects of the K through 12 school program to insure that all students regardless of race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or limited English speaking ability are given an opportunity to develop skills, competence, and experience, and to receive appropriate guidance so that they may be able to participate in all programs offered by the school including athletics and other extracurricular activities. Special attention shall be given to schools and programs in which students of either sex or of racial or national origin groups present in the communities are markedly underrepresented.

(2) The Regional School Committee shall make active efforts to insure that equal access to all school sponsored programs or activities be provided within the system to all students regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or limited English speaking ability.

(3) It shall be the responsibility of the Committee and the Superintendent to provide necessary information and in-service training for all school personnel in order to:
   a. Advance means of achieving educational goals in a manner free from discrimination on account of race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or limited English speaking ability.
   b. Enhance consciousness of the kinds of discriminatory and prejudicial practices and behavior, which may occur in the public schools.

(4) The Superintendent, as an agent of the Regional School Committee, shall promote and direct effective procedures for the full implementation of 603 CMR 26.00, and shall make recommendations to the Committee for the necessary policies, program changes, and budget resource allocations needed to achieve adherence to 603 CMR 26.00.

(5) At the beginning of the school year, the Superintendent of the school district shall be responsible for sending to the parents of all school age children, in their primary language, a notice of the existence of S. 1971 c.622 and its implications. Such notice shall include the information that all courses of study, extracurricular activities and services offered by the district are available without regard to race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or limited English speaking ability. This notice may be included with other communications sent to parents by the school district. Upon request, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) shall provide a translation in requested languages to assist Superintendents in complying with this section. The Superintendent shall
inform the communities of the existence of the law and of its implications through newspaper releases or radio or television announcements.

(6) The Superintendent shall ensure that all students are annually informed in a manner certain to reach them of the existence of St. 1971, c.622 and its implications. Students shall be informed that all courses of study, extracurricular activities, services, and facilities offered by the district are available without regard to race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or limited English speaking ability.

(7) The Superintendent of each school district shall make certain that employers who recruit new employees in and through the schools of that district, do not discriminate on account of race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or limited English speaking ability in their hiring and recruitment practices within the schools. Before any employer is allowed to recruit at or through any school, they shall be required to sign a statement that they do not discriminate in hiring or employment practices on account of race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation or national origin.

(8) Since adults serve as role models for students, school authorities shall utilize adults in a variety of jobs, and as members of policy-making committees, to the extent consistent with their contractual obligations, without regard to race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or limited English speaking ability.

(9) Adults serving on athletic regulatory boards shall fairly represent the interests of both male and female students.

(10) Any contributions to a school for activities and monetary awards within or sponsored by the school or for scholarships administered by the school made after the effective date of 603 CMR 26:00 by any person, group or organization shall be free from any restrictions based upon race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or limited English speaking ability.

(11) The opportunity to receive guidance and counseling in a student’s primary language should be made available to students from homes where English is not the primary language spoken.

LEGAL REF: 603 CMR 26:00
EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

In recognition of the diversified characteristics and needs of our students and with the keen desire to be responsive to them, the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will make every effort to protect the dignity of the students as individuals. It also will offer careful consideration and sympathetic understanding of their personal feelings, particularly with reference to their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, physical and intellectual differences, or limited English speaking ability.

To accomplish this, the Regional Committee and its staff will make every effort to comply with the letter and the spirit of the Massachusetts equal educational opportunities law, which prohibits discrimination in public school admissions and programs. The law reads as follows:

No child shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and course of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or limited English speaking ability.

This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, and extracurricular and athletic activities.

All implementing provisions issued by the Board of Education in compliance with this law will be followed.

LEGAL REFS:
Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972
Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)
BESE regulations 603 CMR 26.00
BESE regulations 603 CMR 28.00

CROSS REF: AC, Nondiscrimination

First Reading for amendment, September 19, 2012
STUDENT-TO-STUDENT HARASSMENT

Harassment of students by other students will not be tolerated in the Ayer Shirley Regional Schools. This policy is in effect while students are on school grounds, school district property or property within the jurisdiction of the school district, school buses, or attending or engaging in school activities.

Harassment prohibited by the district includes, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis of race, sex, gender identity, color, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, disability or limited English speaking ability. Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Harassment means conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass distress, agitate, disturb or trouble students when:

▪ Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student’s education or of a student’s participation in school programs or activities;
▪ Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student, or;
▪ Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student’s performance or creating an intimidating or hostile learning environment.

Harassment as described above may include, but is not limited to:

▪ Verbal, physical or written harassment or abuse;
▪ Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
▪ Implied or explicit threats concerning one’s grades, achievements, or other school matters;
▪ Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student.

The District will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment. The principal of each building will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging harassment.

Retaliation against a student because a student has filed a harassment complaint, or assisted, or participated, in a harassment investigation or proceeding is also prohibited. A student who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion.

The Superintendent will develop administrative guidelines and procedures for the implementation of this policy.

CROSS REFS:  "Words that Hurt", American School Board Journal, September 1999 National Education Policy Network, NSBA
JICFB - Bullying
Bully Prevention and Intervention Plan V3.0 (DESE Submission)

LEGAL REFS:  M.G.L. 151B:3A
Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended
BESE 603 CMR 26.00

First Reading for amendment, September 19, 2012
Adopted by the ASRSD, October 17, 2012
ENTRANCE AGE

The policy for admission to Ayer Shirley Regional kindergarten has been developed so that all children will be successful in their first year of school. For the purpose of this policy, the school year is defined as beginning July 1st and ending the following June 30th in accordance with the Department of Education regulations.

The purpose of this policy is to define the entry age for Ayer and Shirley residents.

For admission to Kindergarten, a child must be five years of age by August 31 of the year in which they are intended to be enrolled.

Each child must attend school beginning in September of the calendar year in which he or she attains the age of six. The school committee may establish its own minimum permissible age for school attendance, provided that such age is not older than the mandatory minimum age established by 603 CMR 8.00.

Other Grades: Admission shall involve a consideration of the prior grade level of the child, his/her chronological age, and the readiness skills assessment of the child to do the work of the grade level to which s/he is being admitted.

LEGAL REF: 603 CMR 8.00: M.G.L. c. 69,1B
M.G.L. c. 76, 1

First Reading, November 1, 2016
Second Reading, December 21, 2016
Adopted by ASRSD, December 21, 2016
First Reading, May 25, 2017
Adopted by ASRSD, June 6, 2017
SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

All children of school age who reside in the towns of Ayer and Shirley will be entitled to attend the Regional schools as per the Regional Agreement, as will certain children who do not reside in the town but who are admitted under Regional School Committee policies relating to nonresident students or by specific action of the Regional School Committee.

Advance registration for prospective kindergarten students will take place before April. Every student seeking admission to school for the first time must present an original birth certificate or equivalent proof of age acceptable to the principal and proof of vaccination and immunizations as required by the state and the Regional School Committee. Proof of residency and/or legal guardianship may also be required by the school administration.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 15:1G; 76:1; 76:5; 76:15; 76:15A
603 CMR 26:01; 26:02; 26:03

CROSS REFS: JFBB, School Choice
JLCA, Physical Examination of Students
JLCB, Inoculations of Students
SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Purpose and Construction of 603 CMR 26.00
(1) 603 CMR 26.00 is promulgated to insure the right of access to the public schools of the Commonwealth and the equal enjoyment of the opportunities, advantages, privileges and courses of study at such schools without regard to race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or limited English speaking ability.

603 CMR 26.00 shall be liberally construed for these purposes.

(2) The obligation to comply with 603 CMR 26.00 is not obviated or alleviated by any local law or rule or regulation of any organization, club, athletic or other league or association which would limit the eligibility or participation of any student on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin or limited English speaking ability.

School Admissions
(1) All public schools in the Commonwealth shall admit students without regard to race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin or limited English speaking ability. This includes, but is not limited to regional vocational-technical schools, elementary, secondary, trade, and selective academic high schools.

(2) No school shall discourage in any express or implied manner, applicants for admission because of race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin or limited English speaking ability. Written materials used by a school to recruit students shall not contain references suggesting the predominant sex of the students presently enrolled or the anticipated sex of the students to be recruited. Pictorial representation, in the agreed, in such material shall depict students of both sexes and of minority groups. Reference to only one sex in the name of schools, programs or activities shall not be retained.

(3) The national citizenship of any applicant shall not be a criterion for admission to any public school nor shall national citizenship be a factor in the assignment or availability of courses of study or extracurricular activities.

(4) Any standards used as part of the admissions process to any public school, including but not limited to testing, the use of recommendations, and interviewing (as referred to in 603 CMR 26.02 (1)) shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin. Limited English-speaking ability (as defined by M.G.L.c.71A) shall not be used as a deterrent to or limitation on admissions.

(5) If admission to any school, including but not limited to selective academic high schools, regional vocational-technical schools and trade schools, is dependent upon the participation or completion of courses or programs which were previously limited to students of one sex or if close scrutiny reveals that access mechanisms or other administrative arrangements have limited the opportunities of any racial, ethnic or religious group of students to participate in such programs, then such
(6) Nothing in 603 CMR 26.00 shall be construed as to control the interpretation of or interfere with the implementation of St. 1965, c. 641, as amended by St, 1974, c. 636, providing for the elimination of racial imbalance in public schools, all rules and regulations promulgated in respect thereto and all court and administrative decisions construing or relating thereto.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 15:1G; 76:1; 76:5; 76:15; 76:15A
603 CMR 26:01; 26:02; 26:03
SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Admission to Course of Study

(1) Each and every course of study offered by a public school shall be open and available to students regardless of race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or limited English speaking ability. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit the use of prerequisite requirements that have been demonstrated to be essential to success in a given program. However, if participation in a course or program is dependent upon completion of a prerequisite which was previously limited to students of one sex, or if close scrutiny reveals that access mechanisms or other administrative arrangements have limited the opportunities of any class of students to participate in such prerequisites, then all members of the previously excluded group shall be given the opportunity to acquire the prerequisites or be allowed to enter the program without such prerequisites. If it cannot be shown that a prerequisite is essential for success in a given program, the prerequisite shall be abolished.

(2) The determination of what courses or units of study are to be required of any student shall also be made without regard to the race, color, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or limited English speaking ability of that student.

(3) The scheduling of students into courses or units of study shall not be done on the basis of sex, color, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or limited English speaking ability.

(4) Each student, regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation or limited English-speaking ability, shall have equal rights of access to courses of study and other opportunities available through the school system of the city or town in which s/he resides, along with appropriate ESL instruction and programs or other curriculum offerings of a supportive nature such as appropriate remedial programs.

(5) Nothing in 603 CMR 26.03 shall be construed to prevent particular segments of a program of instruction from being offered separately to each sex when necessary in order to respect personal privacy.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 15:1G; 76:1; 76:5; 76:15; 76:15A 603 CMR 26:01; 26:02; 26:03
ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS FROM CHARTER SCHOOLS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District will enroll and place students who have left Commonwealth charter schools by adhering to the same policies and procedures in place for any other student enrolling in the School District including, but not limited to, examination of the course of study and level of academic attainment of the student when determining the student’s appropriate grade placement or eligibility for high school graduation.

To the same extent provided for other students enrolling in the School District, students who enroll in the School District from a Commonwealth charter school shall be subject to the graduation requirements of the School District, may have certain graduation requirements waived, and may make-up certain graduation requirements.

LEGAL REF: Chapter 12, Section 11 of the Acts of 2010
HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES

To the extent practical and as required by law, the District will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Being abandoned in hospitals;
5. Awaiting foster care placement;
6. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
8. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

The Superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the District’s 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. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living, or other schools. Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families resident in the District.

If there is 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 of the District’s decision and their appeal rights in writing. The District’s liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state rule. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.

Once the enrollment decision is made, the school shall immediately enroll the student, pursuant to District policies. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be admitted under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or...
immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student’s previous school shall be requested from the previous school pursuant to District policies. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state’s address confidentiality program when necessary.

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, or a homeless student is living in another district but will attend his/her school of origin in this District, the districts will coordinate the transportation services necessary for the student, or will divide the costs equally.

The District’s liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools, family shelters and soup kitchens. The District’s liaison will also review and recommend amendments to District policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

LEGAL REFS: Title I, Part C
No Child Left Behind Act, 2002
SCHOOL CHOICE

It is the policy of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District to admit non-resident students under the terms and conditions of the Inter-district School Choice Law (M.G.L. 76:12B) and under the following local conditions:

1. That by May 1 of every school year, the administration will recommend to the School Committee whether or not to participate in school choice.

2. That by June 1 of every school year, if consideration is being given to withdraw from the provisions of the choice law, a public meeting will be held to review this decision.

3. That the selection of non-resident students for admission when the number of requests exceeds the number of available spaces be in the form of a random drawing. There will be two drawings for this purpose. The first will take place during the last week of the current school year but no later than July 1st. The second will be conducted during the week immediately preceding the opening of the next school year and will be based on the possibility of unexpected additional openings.

4. Any student who is accepted for admission under the provisions of this policy is entitled to remain in the District until graduation from high school except if there is a lack of funding of the program.

5. Any sibling of a student already enrolled in the Ayer Shirley Regional Schools shall receive priority for admission, as space allows.

6. Any child of an Ayer Shirley Regional Schools employee shall receive priority for admission, as space allows.

7. The Regional School Committee affirms its position that it shall not discriminate in the admission of any child on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, age, sexual orientation, ancestry, athletic performance, physical handicap, special needs, academic performance or proficiency in the English language.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:6; 71:6A; 76:6; 76:12; 76:12B
BESE Regulations 603 CMR 26.00
STUDENT ABSENCES

MGL Title XII, Chapter 76, Section I states that students may be excused for necessary absences not exceeding seven (7) days in a six month period or fourteen (14) half days.

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee does recognize that parents of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

A student's absence will be excused, with proper documentation within 72 hours for the following reasons:

- Bereavement or serious illness in family
- Illness
- Professional health appointment
- School related field trips
- College visits (juniors and seniors only) – up to three per year in coordination with the School Counseling Office
- Observance of major religious holidays
- Legal/court appointments
- Registry of Motor Vehicles appointments; with prior approval from the administration

A child may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the school principal.

A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of his character. Parents can help their children by refusing to allow them to miss school needlessly.

Accordingly, parents will provide a written explanation for the absence and tardiness of a child. This will be required in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible.

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justifiable.
When returning to school after an absence, the student must submit documentation to the administrative office to excuse the absence.

Absences not outlined above are considered unexcused.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 76:1; 76:16; 76:20

First Reading, May 25, 2017
Adopted by ASRSD, June 6, 2017

File: JHD

EXCLUSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Denial of Admission

Denial of admission means the withholding of the privilege of enrolling in a school of the District.

The following shall be the grounds for denial of admission to school or diversion to an appropriate alternative program:

- Graduation from the twelfth grade of any school or receipt of any document evidencing completion of the equivalent of a secondary curriculum;
- Failure to meet the requirements of age by a student who has reached the age of six years at a time after the beginning of the school year, as fixed by the Regional School Committee as provided in Massachusetts General Laws;
- Having been expelled during the same school year from this District or any district in the Commonwealth;
- Not being a resident of the District and the District has opted not to participate in the School Choice Law;
- Failure to comply with the provisions of the Massachusetts School Entry Immunization Law.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:37H; 76:12; 76:12A; 76:12B
603 CMR 26:00
STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee has the responsibility to afford students the rights that are theirs by virtue of guarantees offered under the federal and state constitutions and statutes. In connection with rights, there are responsibilities that must be assumed by students.

Among these rights and responsibilities are the following:

1. Civil rights, including the rights to equal educational opportunity and freedom from discrimination; the responsibility not to discriminate against others.
2. The right to attend free public schools; the responsibility to attend school regularly and to observe school rules essential for permitting others to learn at school.
3. The right to due process of law with respect to suspension, expulsion, and decisions the student believes injure his/her rights.
4. The right to free inquiry and expression; responsibility to observe reasonable rules regarding these rights.
5. The right to privacy, which includes privacy with respect to the student's school records.

It is the Regional School Committee's belief that as part of the educational process students should be made aware of their legal rights, and of the legal authority of the Regional School Committee to make and delegate authority to its staff to make rules regarding the orderly operation of the District.

Students have the right to know the standards of behavior that are expected of them, and the consequences of misbehavior.

The rights and responsibilities of students, including standards of conduct, will be made available to students and their parents through handbooks distributed annually.

Copies of handbooks will be made available in the main office of each school.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:82 through 71:86
STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

As appropriate to the age of students, class or school organizations and school government organizations, such as student councils, may be formed to offer practice in self-government and to serve as channels for the expression of students’ ideas and opinions.

The Ayer Shirley Regional Committee will take into consideration student opinions in establishing policies that directly affect student programs, activities, privileges and other areas of student sensitivity.

The chair of the Student Advisory Committee shall be an ex-officio nonvoting member of the Committee without the right to attend executive sessions unless such right is expressly granted by the Regional School Committee.

The general student body will be welcomed at Regional School Committee meetings and will be granted privileges of speaking in line with the privileges extended to the general public.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:38M
CROSS REF: BDF, Advisory Committees to the Regional School Committee
STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The School Committee believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Each Principal shall include prohibited actions in the student handbook or other publication to be made available to students and parents.

Principals and staff shall not use academic punishment of any form as a consequence to inappropriate behaviors/actions by students.

The Principal may, as a disciplinary measure, remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the remainder of this policy, law, or regulation.

The Superintendent shall provide each Principal with a copy of the regulations promulgated by DESE and shall have each Principal sign a document acknowledging receipt thereof, which shall be placed in their personnel file.

**Suspension**

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed 1, a Principal shall consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

**Notice of Suspension:**

Except for emergency removal or an in-school suspension of less than 10 days, a Principal must provide the student and the parent oral and written notice, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing before imposing suspension as a consequence for misconduct. The Principal shall provide both oral and written notice to student and parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English. The notice shall include the rights enumerated in law and regulation. To conduct a hearing without a parent present, the Principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent.

**Emergency Removal**

A Principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and,

1 Except for offenses referenced in the note at the end of this policy.
in the Principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

The Principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal including a description of the danger presented by the student.

The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal shall: Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters required in the notice as referenced in the applicable regulation; Provide written notice to the student and parent as required above; Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with applicable regulations, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Principal, student, and parent; Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of applicable law and regulation.

A Principal shall also ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation prior to removal.

**In School Suspension - not more than 10 days consecutively or cumulatively**

The Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

The Principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the Principal follows the process set forth in regulation and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by law and regulation.

**Principal's Hearing - Short Term Suspension of up to 10 days**

The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, the Principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information.

The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the Principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in law and regulation.

The Principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
The Principal shall, based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The Principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as required by law and regulation. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

**Principal's Hearing - Long Term Suspension of more than 10 days but less than 90 days (consecutive or cumulative)**

The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights: In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; The right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the Principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

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

The Principal shall, based on the evidence, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as required by law and regulation, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The Principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Principal and the parent.
If the Principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal; Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as required by law and regulation; Inform the student of the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee, but only if the Principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information: The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the Principal's determination on appeal.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension before the suspension takes effect.

**Superintendent's Hearing**

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Principal shall have the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent.

The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent within the time period noted above (see Principal's hearing - Suspension of more than 10 days). If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The Superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Superintendent shall grant the extension.

The Superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the Principal's hearing for long-term suspension.
The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of law and regulation. If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Principal's decision. The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

**Expulsion**

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently as allowed by law for possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

**Academic Progress**

Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The Principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

The Principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under the law.

The Principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed
For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student’s enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

**Reporting**

The school district shall collect and annually report data to the DESE regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals, access to education services, and such other information as may be required by the DESE.

The Principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status in accordance with law and regulation.

**SOURCE:** MASC December 2014

**LEGAL REF:** M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:37H½; 71:37H3/4; 76:17; 603 CMR 53.00

**NOTE:** The DESE regulations on student discipline and this policy, consistent with law, set forth the minimum procedural requirements applicable to the suspension of a student for a disciplinary offense other than: possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student’s continued presence in the school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, S. 37H or 37H½. The Principal, pursuant to the previously referenced statute may remove a student who has committed any of the disciplinary offenses above referenced from school for more than 90 days in a school year. Except that the removal from school for such offenses is subject to the provision of continuing educational services needed to make academic progress and, the requirement that all school districts regardless of the type of offense shall report school discipline data and analysis to DESE. Also, the prohibited actions above referenced are subject to the provision that allows the Commissioner to investigate each school that has a significant number of students suspended and expelled for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year and to make recommendations thereon.
STUDENT DRESS CODE

The responsibility for the dress and appearance of the students will rest with individual students and parents.

They have the right to determine how the student will dress providing that attire is not destructive to school property, complies with requirements for health and safety, and does not cause disorder or disruption. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements.

This does not mean that student, faculty, or parent groups may not recommend appropriate dress for school or special occasions. It means that students will not be prevented from attending school or a school function, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as their dress and appearance meet the requirements set forth above.
STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee and its staff share with students and parents the responsibility for student safety during transportation to and from school. The authority for enforcing Regional School Committee requirements of student conduct on buses will rest with the principal.

To ensure the safety of all students who ride in buses, it may occasionally be necessary to revoke the privilege of transportation from a student who abuses this privilege. Parents of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges in accordance with regulations approved by the Regional School Committee.
STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

Procedures for Drivers and Parents

1. In case of any misconduct on a bus, the incident will be reported on the proper form to the school principal. S/he will report the incident in writing to the parent concerned, with a copy to the Superintendent.

2. In case of a repetition by the same student, the principal will suspend the student’s transportation privileges with written notice to the parent to report at once with the child to the Superintendent’s office.

3. After a second offense and a conference with the Superintendent, if a third such incident occurs, bus privileges will be denied the student and the responsibility for transportation will then rest with the parent.

Loading and Unloading at Bus Stop

1. Riders must be on time. Bus drivers will not wait.

2. Riders will enter or leave the bus at regular stops only.

3. Orderly behavior and respect for private property will be required.

4. Instructions and directions of the driver must be followed by the riders when entering or leaving the bus.

Proper conduct is required aboard the bus at all times.

Parents will be held responsible for any defacing or damaging of the bus.

Parents and students will be informed of these regulations at the beginning of each school year.
STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Within the school setting, students enjoy the constitutional right of freedom of expression, including the right to express their views in student publications, provided such expression does not cause, or threaten to cause by reasonable forecast by school officials, any disruption or disorder in the school. Additionally, such constitutional right of freedom of expression does not include expression which is obscene, defamatory, or advocates violence or illegality where such advocacy is imminently likely to incite the commission of such acts to the detriment of school security, or which can reasonably be forecast to cause substantial disruption or material interference with school activities.

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will at least annually review their support of student publications, and encourage student publications not only because they offer an educational activity through which students gain experience in reporting, writing, editing, and understanding responsible journalism, but also because they provide an opportunity for students to express their views subject to the limitations as contained in this policy.

Student publications will be encouraged to comply with the rules for responsible journalism. Students shall affix their names to all articles or editorials written by or contributed to by them. The Superintendent will establish guidelines that are in keeping with this policy and provide for review of student publications prior to their distribution, to address matters that are not protected forms of expression.

Each student publication shall contain the following: "Pursuant to state law, no expression made by students in the exercise of such rights shall be deemed to be an expression of school policy and no school officials shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for any expression made or published by the students."

Distribution of Literature
The time, place and manner of distribution of literature will be reasonably regulated by the principal.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:82
GANG ACTIVITY/SECRET SOCIETIES

The goal of the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee is to keep District schools and students free from the threats or harmful influence of any gang. For purposes of this policy, gang is defined as any group, secret society, organization or association that advocates drug use, violence, ethnic intimidation, or disruptive or illegal behavior. The principal or his/her designee shall maintain supervision of school premises to deter intimidation of students and confrontations between members of different gangs.

The Superintendent shall establish open lines of communication with local law enforcement agencies so as to share information and provide mutual support in this effort within appropriate legal guidelines.

The Superintendent shall provide in-service training to help staff members identify gangs and gang symbols, recognize early manifestations of disruptive activities, and respond appropriately. Staff members shall be informed about conflict management techniques and alerted to intervention measures and community resources that may help students.

Symbols
The Regional School Committee finds that gang symbols are inherently disruptive to the educational process, and therefore prohibits the presence of any insignia, apparel, jewelry, accessory, notebook or other school supply, or manner of grooming which by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute denotes membership in gangs. The Committee further prohibits any demonstration of gang membership through the use of hand gestures, graffiti, or printed materials. This policy shall be applied by the principal or his/her designee as the need for it arises at individual school sites. A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

Prevention Education
The Regional School Committee realizes that students may become involved in gangs without understanding the consequences of such membership. Early intervention is a key component of efforts to break the cycle of such memberships. Therefore, gang violence prevention information shall be made available in the elementary, middle, and high schools as appropriate.

SECRET SOCIETIES
Fraternities, sororities and/or secret societies shall not receive District or building recognition in any manner.

A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.
PROHIBITION OF HAZING

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 536 of the Acts of 1985, the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee hereby deems that no student, employee or school organization under the control of the Regional School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing a student while on or off school property, or at a school sponsored event regardless of the location. No organization that uses the facilities or grounds under the control of the Regional School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing any person while on school property.

Any student who observes what appears to them to be the activity of hazing another student or person should report such information to the principal including the time, date, location, names of identifiable participants and the types of behavior exhibited. Students and employees of the District are obligated by law to report incidents of hazing to the police department.

Any student who is present at a hazing has the obligation to report such an incident. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the school against that student and could involve suspension from school for up to three days.

Any student who participates in the hazing of another student or other person may, upon the approval of the Superintendent of Schools, be suspended from school for up to ten (10) school days.

Any student determined by the principal to be the organizer of a hazing activity may be recommended for expulsion from school but will receive no less disciplinary action than that of a participant.

In all cases relating to hazing, students will receive procedural due process.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 269:17, 18, 19
CROSS REF: JICFB
CH. 269, S.17. CRIME OF HAZING; DEFINITION; PENALTY
Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to be contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

CH. 269, S.18. DUTY TO REPORT HAZING
Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

CH. 269, S.19. HAZING STATUTES TO BE PROVIDED; STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY REQUIRED
Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledge or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgment stating that such group, organization or individual has received a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each secondary school and each public or private school or college shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education, certifying that such institution has complied with the provisions of this section and also certifying that said school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the organizers and participants of hazing. The Board of Regents and, in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such a report.
BULLYING PREVENTION

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying.

“Bullying” is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target’s property;
- places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself, or of damage to his/her property;
- creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

“Cyber-bullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a:

- wire
- radio
- electromagnetic
- photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents and families are expected.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying or cyber-bullying.
Bullying is prohibited:
- on school grounds;
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- at school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- at functions or programs whether on or off school grounds
- at school bus stops;
- on school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the Ayer Shirley Regional School District.

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the Ayer Shirley Regional School District if the act or acts in question:
- create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

**Prevention and Intervention Plan**
The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representative, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

The principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his/her school.

**Reporting**
Students who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying.

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

A member of a school staff immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member
Investigation Procedures
The principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The school principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber-bullying Report Form which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

Support staff shall assess an alleged target’s needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.

Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

If the school principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred s/he shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the principal shall consult with the school’s resource officer and the Superintendent to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

The investigation shall be completed within fourteen school days from the date of the report. The parents or guardians shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken. At a minimum the principal or his/her designee shall contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis.

Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and a file shall be maintained by the principal or designee. A monthly report shall be provided to the Superintendent.

Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school’s obligations under the law.

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

Target Assistance
The Ayer Shirley Regional School District shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as necessary.

**Training and Assessment**
Annual training shall be provided for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all K to 12 students.

**Publication and Notice**
Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms.

Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the Ayer Shirley Regional School District’s website.

**REFS:** Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

**LEGAL REFS:** Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
Board of Education 603 CMR 26:00
M.G.L. 71:37O
M.G.L. 265:43, 43A
M.G.L. 268:13B
M.G.L. 269:14A

**CROSS REFS:** AC, Nondiscrimination
ACAB, Sexual Harassment
JBA, Student – Student Harassment
JICFA, Prohibition of Hazing
JK, Student Discipline Regulations
TOBACCO USE BY STUDENTS

Effective June 8, 1993, smoking, chewing, or other use of tobacco products by staff, students, and members of the public shall be banned from all District buildings. All forms of tobacco use, including vapor/E-cigarettes, shall be prohibited on all District property. In addition, tobacco use by students is banned at all school-sponsored events, even though this use does not take place on school grounds.

Procedures
The following consequences escalate for one school year. Infractions shall not carry over from one school year to the next. Each student shall receive a fresh start with each new school year.

First offense--will result in detention, work detail, smoking cessation class, or other measures as deemed appropriate by the building administrator. Implementation of these consequences will be based on specific circumstances and individual students in compliance with each school's established procedures.

Second offense--will result in a one-day suspension.

Third offense--will result in a three-day suspension or one-day suspension with completion of a designated smoking cessation program.

Fourth offense--will result in a five-day suspension or a two-day suspension with completion of a designated smoking cessation program.

Fifth offense--will result in a recommendation for expulsion for insubordination.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L 71:37H

First Reading, November 1, 2016
Adopted by ASRSD, November 1, 2016
ALCOHOL/DRUG USE BY STUDENTS

In view of the fact that the use of alcohol and/or drugs can endanger the health and safety of the user, and recognizing the deleterious effect the use of drugs or alcoholic beverages can have on the maintenance of general order and discipline, the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee prohibits the use of, serving of, or consumption of any alcoholic beverage or drugs, such as marijuana, steroids or any controlled substance, on school property or at any school function. A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away drugs or any beverage containing alcohol.

Additionally, any student, regardless of age, who has been drinking alcoholic beverages or using a controlled substance prior to attendance at, or participation in, a school-sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and subject to disciplinary and legal action.

This policy shall be posted on the district’s website and notice shall be provided parents of this policy in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

LEGAL REF:  M.G.L. 272:40A
CROSS REF:  IHAMA, Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco
GBEC, Drug Free Workplace Policy

First Reading, November 1, 2016
Adopted by ASRSD, November 1, 2016
DRUGS - WEAPONS - ASSAULT

Under the Education Reform Act of 1993, the following will occur in the area of student discipline procedures:

1. Any student who is found on school premises, on school-owned or leased property, or at school sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter ninety-four C, including but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, heroin, may be subject to expulsion from school or school district by the principal. Realistic facsimiles of firearms will also be considered a dangerous weapon.

2. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher’s aide, or other educational staff on school premises or school related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion by the school principal.

3. Any student who is charged with violation of either of the above two paragraphs shall be notified in writing of an opportunity of a hearing. The student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, the principal may, at his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph 1 or 2 (above).

4. Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Superintendent. The subject manner of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

5. When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section and applies for admission to another school for acceptance, the Superintendent of the sending school shall notify the Superintendent of the receiving school of reasons for the pupil’s expulsion.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 37H
Students who are pregnant shall be entitled, during and after pregnancy, to receive all services and to participate in all programs and activities for which they are eligible unless expressly prohibited by a physician. Should a physician deem it inadvisable for a pregnant student to attend school for an extended period of time, all services granted to home bound students under Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee policies shall be made available.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:84
INTERROGATIONS AND SEARCHES

A. Student lockers and desks are the property of the school, and such locations may be searched at any time, either with or without cause.

B. School officials maintain the right to search a student and/or a student’s personal property and to seize items in a student’s possession under the following guidelines:

1. There is a reasonable cause to believe that the student is violating either a school rule or a law, or if the items are illegal or in violation of school rules, or if the items constitute a hazard to the health and safety of the students and others.

2. In addition to a search by hand, a hand held metal detector may be used if the administration has a reasonable suspicion that a student may be carrying a concealed weapon.

3. Examples of items subject to this regulation include, but are not limited to, drugs, weapons, (real or facsimile), pornography, stolen goods, fireworks, explosives, and/or alcohol.

C. Interrogations by Police

The schools have legal custody of students during the school day and during hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to make an effort to protect each student’s rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials. Therefore:

When law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the school principal or his/her designee will be present. An effort will be made to contact the student’s parent or guardian so that the responsible individual may be notified of the situation, unless the accusation being investigated involves abusive behavior by the parent/guardian.

If custody and/or arrest are involved, the principal will request that all procedural safeguards, as prescribed by law, be observed by the law enforcement officials. It should be understood that Massachusetts case law has held that children under age 14 cannot waive their Miranda rights without the presence of a parent/guardian.
STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee recognizes that there may be conditions in the school district that are in need of improvement and that students should have some means by which their concerns may be effectively expressed, considered, and dealt with fairly. Such means, if well conceived and understood in advance, can do much to maintain harmonious relationships among the schools and the students and community.

The traditional "open door" policy in the Regional School District will be continued. Students--and their parents and/or guardians--who believe that the students have received unfair treatment in the form of disciplinary action will have the right to appeal. Any applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws or federal law will be followed by school officials in conducting hearings and reviews of student grievances. In general, appeals procedures will begin with the authority imposing the penalty (for example, principal or teacher) and may ultimately be referred to the Superintendent and on to the Regional School Committee, which possesses the ultimate authority for discipline in the school district.

Every attempt will be made to seek a satisfactory solution to any legitimate grievance in a friendly and informal manner. In order to keep such discussions within a practical size, no more that six student representatives will be permitted to participate with the principal, staff members, or Regional School Committee members who may be involved.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 76:17
CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee believes that student activities are a vital part of the total educational program and should be used as a means for developing wholesome attitudes and good human relations and knowledge and skills. Therefore, the schools will provide a broad and balanced program of activities geared to the various ages, interests, and needs of students.

The following will serve as guides in the organization of student activities:

1. The Region will observe a complementary relationship to homes and communities, planning activities with due regard for the widespread and rich facilities already available to students.

2. The assistance of parents in planning activity programs will be encouraged.

3. The goal for each student will be a balanced program of appropriate academic studies and activities to be determined by the school, the parents, and the student. This should be a shared responsibility.

4. Guidance will be offered to encourage participation of all students in appropriate activities and to prevent over-emphasis on extracurricular activities at the cost of academic performance.

5. All activities will be supervised; all clubs and groups will have a faculty advisor.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:47
603 CMR 26:06
CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES EXHIBIT

(1) Advantages and privileges of public schools include all extracurricular activities made available, sponsored or supervised by any public school. No school shall sponsor or participate in the organization of outside extracurricular activities conducted at such schools which restrict students’ participation on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation or national origin. 603 CMR 26.06(1) does not prohibit School Committees from allowing use of school premises by independent groups with restrictive membership.

(2) No student shall be denied the opportunity in any implied or explicit manner to participate in an extracurricular activity because of the race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, or limited English speaking ability of the student except as provided in 603 CMR 26.06(7).

(3) Each school district shall provide a fair distribution of athletic expenditures. Each school within such district shall provide equal opportunity for male and female students to participate in intramural and interscholastic sports. Factors considered in determining equal opportunity shall include budgetary allocations, the proportion of male and female students in the student body, the number and nature of activities offered, levels of competition, equipment (including rate of replacement), supplies, awards, uniforms, facilities, scheduling of games and practice times, travel opportunities and allowances, opportunities to receive equitable coaching and instruction at each level of competition and the availability of services such as medical and insurance coverage, publicity, clerical and administrative staff, scouting services and audio-visual aids.

(4) In developing its athletic program, a school shall be required to demonstrate good faith by taking into account determined student interest.

(5) A school may establish separate teams for males and females for interscholastic and intramural compensation in a particular sport, provided that the requirements of 603 CMR 26.06(8) are satisfied.

(6) Teams comprised primarily or solely of persons of one sex shall be granted equal instruction, training, coaching, access to available facilities, equipment and opportunities to practice and complete as teams engaged in a similar activity comprised primarily or solely of persons of the opposite sex.

(7) Participation in extracurricular activities shall be actively encouraged by each school for both boys and girls and for racial and ethnic minorities. When offering extracurricular programs, schools shall take into consideration the ethnic traditions of the student body. Criteria not related to skill levels which act to exclude members of one sex or any racial, religious, or ethnic group represented in the school from participation in specific athletic or other extracurricular activities cannot be permitted.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:47
603 CMR 26.06
STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Student Organizations
Student organizations in the District shall be encouraged when they meet the criteria of contributing to student self-esteem and performance and should operate within the framework of state statutes, Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee policies, and administrative procedures.

Each building principal shall develop general guidelines for the establishment and operation of student organizations within the particular school. Among other provisions, such guidelines shall require the approval of the principal prior to the formation of any club or organization in the school and the assignment of at least one faculty or designated adult advisor to each approved student organization. Within such guidelines will be provisions for a periodic review of all student organizations.

The formation of any student organization that may engage in activities of a controversial nature shall require approval by the Regional School Committee.

All student organizations shall be required to open membership to all interested and/or eligible students. Disruptive groups, secret societies, and/or gangs shall not receive recognition in any manner under this policy (see also Policy JICF).

All forms of hazing in initiations shall be prohibited in a student organization. No initiation shall be held for a student organization which will bring criticism to the school district or be degrading to the student.

The faculty or designated adult advisor must attend every meeting of the student organization whether conducted on school premises or at another location.

Student Organizations - High Schools
In addition to the above requirements, all clubs or organizations at the high school level will relate to the subject matter covered by the curriculum. The principal is responsible for determining that the purpose of a student organization is related to the curriculum. The principal is authorized to deny requests by unauthorized student organizations desiring to meet or form in a particular school. The principal shall inform the group of the reasons for the denial. The students and/or group may submit a written request to the appropriate district administrator for review of the principal's decision.

LEGAL REF: 603 CMR 26.06
STUDENT FUNDRAISING

Students are not permitted to go door to door for the purpose of fund raising for the Ayer Shirley Regional Schools. All in-school fund raising activities must be approved by the principal with notification to the Superintendent.

Exceptions to this policy will be:

1. Sale of tickets to scheduled athletic events and school dramatic and musical performances.
2. Sale of advertising space in school publications.
3. A fund-raising activity approved by the Superintendent.
4. Proposals to raise funds for charitable purposes or for benefit of the district or communities (for example: American Field Service activities, United Nations, or scholarship funds) provided such proposals have been individually approved by the building principal and Superintendent.

CROSS REFS: JP, Student Gifts and Solicitations
KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools
STUDENT ACTIVITY ACCOUNTS

Student funds may be raised to finance the activities of authorized student organizations. Student activity funds are considered a part of the total fiscal operation of the District and are subject to policies established by the Regional School Committee and the Superintendent. The funds shall be managed in accordance with sound business practices, which include accepted budgetary and accounting practices.

In compliance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 47, the Regional School Committee:

1. Authorizes the principals to accept money for recognized student activity organizations, which currently exist, or as from time to time may be revised.

2. Authorizes the District Treasurer to establish and maintain a Student Activity Agency Account(s) which is to be audited as part of the District’s annual audit. The interest that is earned on such accounts shall be maintained in the Agency Account and distributed annually among the Student Activity Checking Accounts as directed by the regulations established by Regional School Committee policy.

3. Authorize Student Activity Checking Accounts for use by the principals with specific maximum balances established for each school by Committee policy.

4. Direct principals to provide the District Treasurer with a bond in an amount agreeable to the District Treasurer.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:47
CONTESTS FOR STUDENTS

The schools may cooperate with community organizations and agencies desiring to sponsor activities in the District when they keep with the purposes and educational aims of the school. Such activities must be integrated into the school program without disruption or loss of instructional time for students and without imposing an unreasonable added workload on school staffs. Involvement in contests shall be approved by the appropriate administrator.
STUDENT TRAVEL

All overnight, out of state, and out of country student trips must have prior approval of the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee. Initial approval by the Regional School Committee is required before engaging students in fundraising activities. The Committee will also consider the educational value of the trip in relation to the cost prior to granting initial approval. Overnight and out of state trips should offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips should be appropriate for the grade level.

Final approval will not be granted until all preparations for the trip have been completed including, but not limited to, all logistical details involving transportation, accommodation arrangements and fundraising efforts. The Regional School Committee requires that final approval be sought no less than 30 days prior to the scheduled trip dates.

The Regional School Committee will only review for approval school-sanctioned trips. The Committee will not review or approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.

CROSS REFS: IJOA, Field Trips

LEGAL REFS: Chapter 346 of the Acts of 2002 (et al) approved on October 9, 2002 M.G.L. 69:1B; 71:37N
STUDENT TRAVEL REGULATIONS

1. **Transportation**
   
   The use of vans or private automobiles for trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel is prohibited. Late night or overnight trips will use commercial motor coaches.

   Trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel will include a pre-trip check of companies, drivers, and vehicles. CORI checks will be conducted in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, section 38R.

   The Superintendent or designee will ensure that the selected carrier is licensed for passenger transportation by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The district will not contract with any carrier that has a safety rating of “conditional” or “unsatisfactory”. FMCSA ratings are available at http://www.safersys.org/.

   The contract with the carrier will prohibit the use of subcontractors unless sufficient notice is given to the district that allows verification of the subcontractor's qualifications.

2. **Trip Scheduling**

   Overnight, out of state, and out of country accommodations should be made in advance with student safety and security in mind. Whenever possible, trip schedulers should avoid planning student travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m., due to the increased risk of vehicular accidents during this time period.

   Whenever possible, overnight trips should be scheduled on weekends or during school vacations to minimize lost classroom time. Non-academic field trips are considered “optional school programs” and do not count toward meeting structured learning time requirements. (Refer to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) publication Student Learning Time Regulations Guide)

   Trip itineraries must leave enough time for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense.

   Trip scheduling should take into account the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic, stragglers, and other unanticipated factors.

   If substantially all members of a class are participating in a trip, the school should provide appropriate substitute activities for any students not participating.

3. **Fundraising**

   The amount of time to be devoted to fundraising should be reasonable and commensurate with students’ obligations for homework, after-school activities, and jobs.
Group fundraising activities are preferred. Students should not be assigned individual fundraising targets.

If students are charged individual fees for participation, every effort should be made to provide scholarships where needed.

**Additional Resources**

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) [http://www.fmcsa.gov](http://www.fmcsa.gov)


Department of Defense’s approved list of motor carriers [http://www.mtmc.army.mil/content/504/approvedlist.pdf](http://www.mtmc.army.mil/content/504/approvedlist.pdf)

**CROSS REFS:** IJOA, Field Trips, JJH Student Travel

**LEGAL REFS:** Chapter 346 of the Acts of 2002 (et al) approved on October 9, 2002
M.G.L. 69:1B; 71:37N; 71:38R
603 CMR 27.00
INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee believes that students benefit from the experiences in self-discipline and team effort made possible through participation in interschool sports.

Participation in interscholastic athletics is subject to approval by the Regional School Committee and in accordance with regulations and recommendations of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

At the high school level, interscholastic athletic competition includes a variety of sports. Student are allowed to participate in individual sports on the basis of their abilities and desire. Additionally, intramural athletic activities may be offered as an outgrowth of class instruction in physical education.

The Committee is aware that team participation in athletic contests by members of the student body requires that away games be scheduled. It also recognizes that there is a need to regulate certain aspects of student participation in such contests. Therefore, the Superintendent will establish regulations to ensure the safety and well being of students and staff members who participate in these activities.

Athletic User Fee Guidelines:
High School and Middle School athletes are required to pay an athletic user fee, establish a payment plan, or secure a waiver. The fees will be collected through the athletic department at the start of each sport season. The Athletic Director will establish the collection dates for each sport. Collection dates will be near the beginning of each sports season (fall, winter, and spring). Athletic fees and family maximums will be published on the website and in the high school and K-8 student handbooks.

Failure to pay, establish a payment plan, or secure a waiver by the collection date will preclude the athlete from participating in any team practices, tryouts, games, or meetings. If arranging a payment plan, the first payment must be received before the first scheduled contest.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:47; 71:54A
603 CMR 26.06
CROSS REFS: AC, Nondiscrimination (and sub-codes)
JB Equal Educational Opportunities

First Reading, November 1, 2016
Second Reading, December 21, 2016
# Sports-Related Head Injury Policy

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**Required Policy Components:**  File: JJIF-R

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POLICY ON HEAD INJURIES AND CONCUSSIONS IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District seeks to prevent concussion and provide a safe return to activity for all students after injury, particularly after a head injury. In order to effectively and consistently manage these injuries, the Athletic Department abides by the following procedures that have been developed to aid in ensuring that concussed athletes are identified, treated and referred appropriately, receive appropriate follow-up medical care during the school day, including academic assistance, and are fully recovered prior to returning to athletic activity.

The policy and accompanying documents (procedures, protocols, and forms) will be reviewed and revised as needed— at least every two years.

First Reading as new, February 15, 2012
Adopted by the ASRSD, February 29, 2012
SECTION 1: PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Regulation:
105 CMR 201.006 (A)(1): Designation, by the superintendent or head master, principal or school leader, of the person responsible for the implementation of these policies and protocols, either the Athletic Director or other school personnel with administrative authority;

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District has designated its Athletic Director and middle school/high school building principals to oversee the implementation of policies and protocols governing the prevention and management of sports-related head injuries. In addition, the AD will be responsible for:

1. Supporting and enforcing the protocols, documentation, required training and reporting
2. Assuring that all documentation is in place
3. Participating in reviewing, updating and implementing policy every two years (with support from Central Office)
4. Including updates in annual training materials and student handbooks.

SECTION 2: ANNUAL TRAINING REQUIREMENT

Regulation:
105 CMR 201.006(A)(2): Annual training of persons specified in 105 CMR 201.007 in the prevention and recognition of sports-related head injury, and associated health risks including second impact syndrome, utilizing Department-approved training materials or program, and documentation of each person’s completion of such training

❖ The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires annual safety training on prevention, identification and management of a sports-related injury including head trauma and second impact syndrome for designated school personnel as well as parents or legal guardians of children who participate in any extracurricular athletic activity. This annual safety training shall be required for ASRSD coaches, certified athletic trainers, trainers, volunteers, school nurses, school and team physicians, athletic directors, directors responsible for a school marching band whether employed by a school or school district or serving as a volunteer, parent or legal guardian of a child who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity and student who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity.
SECTION 3: DOCUMENTATION OF PHYSICAL EXAM

Regulations:
105 CMR 201.006(A)(3): Documentation of physical examination prior to a student’s participation in extracurricular athletic activities on an annual basis, consistent with 105 CMR 200.100(B)(3) and information for students participating in multiple sports seasons that documentation of one physical examination each year is sufficient;

Every student in ASRSD must be separately and carefully examined by a duly licensed physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant, prior to a student's participation in competitive athletics, on an annual basis. The completed and signed copy of the medical clearance form should be mailed, faxed or hand delivered to either the school nurse or athletic office. No student athlete will be allowed to participate in athletic activities until all forms, including annual physical examinations, are signed and submitted.

- Frequency of Exam: As a matter of school policy, ASRSD accepts physical examinations completed within 13 months to allow for insurance coverage that would be not be possible if examinations are within a 12 month period. This medical examination should be completed by a physician, nurse practitioner, etc. and should authorize the student athlete who participates in multiple sports seasons during the following 13 months that the student is medically cleared to do so.
- Where Forms Kept: The current annual medical examination form should be submitted to the school nurse. It should also be kept in the student’s medical record. The school nurse and/or athletic director should ensure that all student athletes that are participating in extracurricular school sports have been medically cleared annually.
- A student athlete at ASRSD cannot participate in an extracurricular sports activity if she/he has not had a physical examination within the last 13 months.

SECTION 4: PRE-PARTICIPATION HEAD INJURY REPORTING FORMS, SUBMISSION AND REVIEW

Regulations:
105 CMR 201.006(A)(4): Procedure for the school to obtain and ensure review, prior to each sports season, of current information regarding and athlete’s history of head injuries and concussion using either the Department Pre-participation Health Injury/Concussion Reporting Form For Extracurricular Activities, or school based equivalent.

- The Massachusetts concussion law requires athletes and his or her parents to inform their coaches about prior head injuries at the beginning of each sports season. This reporting is done via the Ayer Shirley Regional School District
**Consent and Release/Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form for Extracurricular Activities** and should be completed by the student’s parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and the student. High school athletes must submit this form to the Ayer Shirley Regional High School’s Athletic Director, *prior to the start of each season a student plans to participate in an extracurricular athletic activity*. Middle school athletes must submit this form to the Ayer Shirley Regional Middle School’s Assistant Athletic Director, *prior to the start of each season a student plans to participate in an extracurricular athletic activity*.

- This form provides a comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history. This form is designed to ensure that particular attention is paid to identifying athletes with a history of brain or spinal injuries. For example, it asks such questions as:
  - Has student ever experienced a traumatic head injury (a blow to the head)? (If yes, when?)
  - Has student ever received medical attention for a head injury? (If yes, when?)
  - Was student diagnosed with a concussion? (If yes, when?)
  - Durations of symptoms for most recent concussion.

**Until the Ayer Shirley Regional School District Consent and Release/Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form for Extracurricular Activities** is completed and signed by the parent/guardian and student and returned to the school prior to the start of every sports season, the student cannot participate in the extracurricular sports activity.

- **History of Multiple Concussions on Pre-participation Form:**
  The decision to allow a player who reported a history of multiple concussions on her/his pre-participation form should be made only after consultation with the student’s physician or primary care provider; the sports medicine or concussion specialist, if involved; the neuropsychologist, if involved, and the appropriate school athletic staff and the parent. Current evidence indicates that youth who have suffered one or more concussions are more likely to suffer a subsequent one. Options may include switching positions, limiting contact in practices, or changing sports altogether to minimize the risk of re-injury. The focus of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District will always be on protecting the health and safety of the student and avoiding long-term consequences that can occur from repeated concussions.

- **Collection/Distribution of Pre-participation Forms:**
  The Ayer Shirley Regional School District has the pre-participation forms available electronically at the School’s website under the Athletic Department folder at [www.asrsd.org](http://www.asrsd.org). Hard copies of these forms are also available at the Athletic Department and School Nursing office.
The parent/student can fax, mail, or hand deliver the completed and signed pre-participation form into the Ayer Shirley Regional School District, attention Athletic Department, which will forward a copy to the school nurse. In addition, during the months of July and August, coordination between the athletic and school nursing departments is particularly important when the school nurse is on vacation. The pre-participation forms should be submitted to the coaches or athletic directors who will then follow-up with the school nurse when s/he returns to work in August.

**SECTION 5: MEDICAL/NURSING REVIEW OF PRE-PARTICIPATION FORMS**

*Regulation:*
105 CMR 201.006 (A) (5): Procedure for medical or nursing review of all Pre-participation Forms indicating a history of head injury

At the start of each sports season, the Athletic Director will review all pre-participation forms and forward to the school nurse a copy of those forms indicating a history of head injury. The school nurse will be responsible for:

- reviewing or having the school physician review completed pre-participation forms
- addressing any questions raised by the Athletic Director
- communicating with the coach (or athletic director) regarding the student’s concussion history and discussing concerns
- following up with parents and students as needed prior to the student’s participation in extracurricular athletic activities.

**SECTION 6: MEDICAL/NURSING REVIEW OF REPORTS OF HEAD INJURY DURING THE SEASON**

*Regulation:*
105CMR 201.006(A)(6): Procedure for the school to obtain and ensure timely medical or nursing review of a Department Report of a head Injury During Sports Season Form, or school-based equivalent, in the event of a head injury or suspected concussion that takes place during the extracurricular activity season.

The following procedures will be followed when an athlete receives a head injury:

- Athlete is removed from the contest or practice.
- The certified athletic trainer conducts a *Standardized Assessment of Concussion* and completes the *Ayer Shirley Regional School District Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form*.
- If certified athletic trainer is not available, the coach completes the *Ayer Shirley Regional School District Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form*. 

Coaches will report all head injuries to the nurse as soon as possible for medical assessment and management and coordination of home instructions and follow-up care. The coach or athletic director will notify the school nurse of the student’s injury, before the end of the next school day, so that the school nurse can initiate appropriate follow-up in school immediately upon the athlete’s return to school. **(Note that the coach will be responsible for communicating the student’s injury with parents/guardian the day of the injury.)**

The certified athletic trainer/coach will give a copy of the *Ayer Shirley Regional School District Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form* to the Athletic Director.

Coach will communicate to Athletic Director by the end of the next school day that a Head Injury form was completed and that student was removed from play.

Athletic Director will notify school nurse and/or school physician (if appropriate) before the end of the next school day. The nurse will review the *Ayer Shirley Regional School District Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form*.

School nurse will contact the athlete’s teachers and school counselor.

Blank Copies of the *Ayer Shirley Regional School District Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form* are kept in the school nurse’s office and athletic director’s office. These forms are also available on line at the school’s athletic department webpage at www.asrsd.org.

Parents are made aware of their responsibility for completing the form in the event of a head injury occurring outside of extracurricular athletic activity through written materials at the start of the sports season. Completed forms will be submitted to the athletic director, coach or school nurse.

Collaboration and sharing of this information is crucial to management and coordination of student’s care after a head injury. The Ayer Shirley Regional School District requires that the completed *Ayer Shirley Regional School District Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form* is submitted to the athletic director, and requires that a copy is forwarded to the school nurse, who is responsible for reviewing the form.

The school nurse will forward this form to the physician if medically indicated. The school nurse will maintain documentation of the Head Injury Assessments in the student's health record.

**SECTION 7: PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING HEAD INJURIES TO SCHOOL NURSE AND/OR CERTIFIED ATHLETIC TRAINER**

Regulation:

105 CMR 201.006(A)(7): Procedure for reporting head injuries or suspected concussions sustained during
extracurricular athletic activities to the school nurse and certified athletic trainer, if on staff.

❖ Same as Section 6 above

SECTION 8: REMOVING ATHLETES FROM PLAY AND MEDICAL EVALUATION

Regulation:
105 CMR 201.006(A)(8): Procedure for identifying a head injury or suspected concussion, removing an athlete from practice or competition and referring for medical evaluation.

❖ If a student athlete receives a blow to the head and any signs or symptoms are present - or if the student is suspected of having a head injury - the coach or athletic trainer must remove the student from play/practice and the student will not return to play/practice that day.

❖ The coach/athletic director will:
Call 911 immediately, if athlete requires urgent medical care.

❖ If athlete does not require urgent medical care, the coach will contact the parents/guardian immediately to notify parent of extent of injury and recommend parents/guardian to immediately contact primary care physician.

❖ Students must follow their primary care physician’s written orders concerning return to school and physical activity (which includes physical activity in Physical Education class, outdoor recess, sports practice and/or games).

SECTION 9: MEDICAL CLEARANCE FOR RETURN TO PLAY

Regulation:
105 CMR 201.006(A) (9) The protocol for medical clearance for return to play after a concussion that at a minimum complies with 105 CMR.201.011.
105 CMR 201.011: Each student who is removed from practice or competition for a head injury or suspected concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, shall obtain and present to the Athletic Director, unless another person is specified in school policy or procedure, a Department Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form (Medical Clearance and Authorization Form), or school-based equivalent, prior to resuming the extracurricular athletic activity. This form must be completed by a physician or one of the individuals as authorized by 105 CMR 201.011(A). The ultimate return to play decision is a medical decision that may involve a multidisciplinary approach, including consultation with parents, the school nurse and teachers as appropriate.

(A) Only the following individuals may authorize a student to return to play:
(1) A duly licensed physician;
(2) A duly licensed certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician;
(3) A duly licensed nurse practitioner in consultation with a licensed physician; or
(4) A duly licensed neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student’s recovery.
All students at Ayer Shirley Regional High School and Ayer Shirley Regional Middle School must be cleared to return to play/practice by a licensed medical professional (physician, NP in consultation with a physician, CAT in consultation with a physician or neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student’s recovery) after the graduated return to play has been completed. (See details about graduated return to play below under Section 10). It is recommended that this medical professional have familiarity with concussion diagnosis and management in order to determine how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for the student to return to normal activities including physical activity and school (concentration and learning activities).

Sports activities include physical education class as well as physically active recess, sports practices, and games:

- The student should be completely symptom free at rest and with physical (sprints, non-contact aerobic activity) and cognitive exertion (school work).
- Return to play should occur gradually (see below).
- Students should be monitored for symptoms and cognitive function during each stage of exertion.
- Students should only progress to the next level of exertion if they are asymptomatic at the current level.

❖ Medical clearance will be provided using the **Ayer Shirley Regional School District Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form**. Copies of this form will be available in the school nurse’s office and in the athletic director’s office. This form is also available on the Athletic Department webpage of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District website [www.asrsd.org](http://www.asrsd.org).

❖ It is recommended that the student take this form to the medical professional at the time of exam as other forms will not be accepted.

❖ These forms must be provided to the coach or athletic trainer and will be shared with the school nurse for review with a copy kept in the student’s medical record.

❖ In a situation in which a student has been medically cleared but school staff has observed continuing symptoms, the school will make the final decision regarding a student’s return to play. If this situation arises, the Ayer Shirley Regional School District staff must communicate to the physician or health care provider who provided the clearance regarding the symptoms that school staff have observed recurrence of symptoms and recommend reevaluation by the health care provider. It is possible that the health care provider was not aware of the student’s symptoms when the provider gave the clearance.

❖ **If the athlete still has symptoms, the athlete should NOT return to play.**
SECTION 10: DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POST–CONCUSSION GRADUATED RENTRY PLANS

Regulation:
105 CMR 201.006: Procedure for the development and implementation of post-concussion graduated reentry plans to school and academic activities, if indicated, by persons specified in CMR 201.010€ (1).
105 CMR 201.010€ Each student who is removed from practice or competition and subsequently diagnosed with a concussion shall have a written graduated reentry plan for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.

(1) The plan shall be developed by the student’s teachers, the student’s guidance counselor, school nurse, certified athletic trainer if on staff, neuropsychologist if available or involved, parent, members of the building-based student support and assistance team or individualized education program team as appropriate and in consultation with the student’s primary care provider or the physician who made the diagnosis or who is managing the student’s recovery.

(2) The written plan shall include instructions for students, parents and school personnel, addressing but not be limited to: (a) Physical and cognitive rest as appropriate; (b) Graduated return to extracurricular athletic activities and classroom studies as appropriate, including accommodations or modifications as needed; (c) Estimated time intervals for resumption of activities; (d) Frequency of assessments, as appropriate, by the school nurse, school physician, team physician, certified athletic trainer if on staff, or neuropsychologist if available until full return to classroom activities and extracurricular athletic activities are authorized; and € A plan for communication and coordination between and among school personnel and between the school, the parent, and the student’s primary care provider or the physician who made the diagnosis or who is managing the student’s recovery.

(3) The student must be completely symptom free and medically cleared as defined in 105 CMR 201.011 in order to begin graduated reentry to extracurricular athletic activities.

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District requires that all students returning to school and athletics after a concussion have a written plan for reentry to academics as well as a written plan for reentry to sports. Recovery from a concussion requires rest, both physical and cognitive, in order for the brain to heal. This means that during the recovery period, it is as important for a concussed student to refrain from studying, working on a computer or playing video games, as it is for the student to refrain from participating in athletics. School staff, such as teachers, school nurses, counselors, administrators, speech-language pathologists, coaches and others should work together to develop and implement this plan in coordination with the student, their parents/guardian and the primary care provider.

❖ The written graduated reentry plans will be co-developed by the school nurse, the lead teacher/guidance counselor, and the athletic director.

❖ The written graduated reentry plans will be signed by the student, their parent/guardian, the school nurse, the lead teacher/guidance counselor, athletic director and coach so that all parties are in agreement as to the plan for reentry to academics and to sports.

❖ A graduated reentry plan, to either academics or sports, should not begin until a student is symptom free at rest.
A student should be symptom free at each stage of the plan before graduating to the next phase.

Frequent or periodic assessments by the school personnel including the nurse, athletic director/coach, school physician or team physician as appropriate may be necessary until full return to classroom activities and extracurricular athletic activities are authorized by medical staff.

A copy of the reentry plans will be kept in the student’s medical record in the school health office and a copy will be kept in the athletic director’s office.

Graduated return to academic plans are based on the stages of recovery framework that takes a student from rest, to gradual return to full participation in academic activities.

**Stages of Recovery:**

The stages of recovery are a framework designed through a collaborative effort by local health care professionals. The purpose of this framework is to create common language that will help guide students, families, school personnel and health professionals through the recuperation process. Placement in stages is based on assessment of the student’s medical condition by a licensed medical professional and accompanied by written orders.

**Red Stage** (Usually 2 – 4 days, but could last weeks)
1) Rest
2) Students typically do not attend school

**Orange Stage**
1) Rest
2) Attend school half to full days
3) Avoid school bus and heavy backpacks
4) Work with designated educational personnel regarding school accommodations
5) No tests in school
6) No sports, band, chorus, physical education or outdoor recess

**Yellow Stage**
1) Attend school full-time if possible
2) Students and families work with teachers regarding homework deadlines (complete as much as possible)
3) See school nurse for pain management and/or rest if needed
4) Limit one quiz/test per day (untimed testing is recommended)
5) Work in 15 minute blocks
6) No sports
7) Licensed medical professional will make decisions regarding band, chorus, physical education and out-door recess (elementary7 level) based on medical assessment

**Green Stage**
1) Attend school full time
2) Resume normal activities
3) Resume sports once school work is back on track, student is symptom-free, and has been cleared by a licensed professional

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Key Ideas</th>
<th>Expected Duration</th>
<th>Teacher’s Actions</th>
<th>Student’s Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| RED   | Complete rest | Medical clearance | ● School counselor or nurse contacts teachers  
● School counselor or nurse explains medical assessments used and possible timing of movement from stage to stage  
● School counselor or nurse communicates with the family | ● Out of school  
● Strict limits on computer, TV, texting, and cell phone |
| ORANGE| Recovering cellular health. Significant deficits in processing and concentration | Medical clearance | Goal: Student should have minimum necessary work load when they transition to yellow phase:  
1. **Excused**: Not to be made up  
2. **Accountable**: Responsible for content, not process. May be notes or work shared by a classmate, or may be covered by a broader assignment, such as a review sheet.  
3. **Responsible**: Must be completed by student, likely for a grade, when they transition to yellow stage.  
   ● Identify a classmate who is willing to share work (academic partner)  
   ● Communicate with student’s family. Parents and student must understand the three categories  
   ● No assessments or homework during this time period  
   ● Provide access to nurse | ● In school part time  
● When present, observing, not participating  
● Communicate with teacher about progress and problems  
● Get copies of work from academic partner  
● Be patient with slow recovery, but get as much possible out of time spent in class |
## ASRSD Post-Concussion Graduated Return to Academics Schedule

**File:** JJIF-R

| Gradual increase of time and energy as resuming normal workload | Medical clearance | 
|---|---|---|
| **YELLOW** | • Support student in making up most important school work with deadlines agreed-upon in writing  
• Continue to keep lists of the three categories of assignments until all make-up work is completed  
• Allow untimed tests  
• Provide reader/transcriber for tests  
• Decrease work load if symptoms appear  
• Limit to one assessment per day  
• Arrange meeting between school and parent/student | • In school full time  
• Clear communication with teacher on what needs to be done, when, and how to prioritize  
• Communication with parents and teacher on pace or recovery and make-up work |

| Complete resumption of normal activities | Medical clearance | 
|---|---|---|
| **GREEN** | • Monitor completion of make-up work  
• Communicate with family when student is caught up and working at same pace as classmates  
• Inform school counselor when term grades have been updated  
• Recognize that returning students often do better in the morning, as well as the fact they may be able to perform some tasks better than others. | • Resume all normal activities |
ASRSD Post-Concussion Graduated Return to Play Schedule

Graduated return to play athletic plans will begin only after a student has returned to full participation in academics, is completely symptom free at rest, and has the approval of a medical professional. If all 3 criteria have been met, then the student athlete may begin a graduated Return to Play Schedule.

The Graduated Return to Play Schedule is as follows:
The athlete will be given five physical post-concussion tests administered by a coach. The next test will be administered only when the previous test is passed with no symptoms.

Test 1: (to increase heart rate): Low levels of physical activity. This includes walking, light jogging, light stationary biking and light weight lifting (low weight, moderate reps, no bench, no squats).

Test 2: (to increase heart rate with movement): Moderate levels of physical activity with body/head movement. This includes moderate jogging, moderate intensity on the stationary cycle, moderate intensity weight lifting (reduce time and reduces weight for the athlete’s typical routine).

Test 3: Heavy non-contact physical activity. This includes sprinting/running, high intensity stationary cycling, completing the regular weight lifting routine, non-contact sport specific drills (agility with 3 planes of movement).

Test 4: Sports specific practice
Test 5: Full contact in a controlled drill or practice.

SECTION 11: PROVIDING INFORMATION, FORMS AND MATERIALS TO PARENTS AND ATHLETES

11a) ANNUAL TRAINING REQUIREMENT:

❖ Parents/guardians and students who plan to participate in any athletic program at Ayer Shirley Regional High School or Ayer Shirley Regional Middle School must participate in a mandatory preseason meeting where they will receive MDPH approved written training materials.

❖ In addition, parents and athletes have the option to take a free on-line course. Two free on-line courses are available and contain all the information required by the law. The first is available through the National Federation of High School Coaches. You will need to click the “order here” button and complete a brief information form to register. At the end of the course, you will receive a completion receipt which should be provided to the
coach or athletic director as documentation. The entire course, including registration, can be completed in less than 30 minutes.


The second on-line course is available through the Centers Disease Control at: www.cdc.gov/Concussion

❖ The parent and athlete trainings available for the Ayer Shirley Regional School District are MDPH Approved Training On-line courses listed below. They are available free of charge, and last only about 30 minutes.

❖ **Option 1- Heads Up** is offered by Center for Disease Control
  Heads Up Concussion in Youth Sports On-Line Training Program
  http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html

❖ **Option 2- Concussion in Sports What you Need to Know** is offered by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS).
  Concussion in Sports – What you Need to Know

❖ **Option 3- Review written copy of Concussion Training Materials Packet**
  ● A Parent’s Guide to Concussion in Sports
    (National Federation of State High School Association)
    OR
  ● CDC Fact Sheet Heads Up!

❖ All training materials are available at the ASRSD athletic department webpage at (www.asrsd.org). Hard copies are available in the athletic department office, and the school nurses office.

❖ ASRSD’s athletic director is responsible for ensuring that the training requirements for staff, parents, volunteers, coaches and students are met, recorded, and records are maintained.

❖ The written verification of completion of the annual training (either the certificate of completion from the on-line courses or a signed verification that written materials have been read and understood) will be kept on file by the following responsible parties:
  o Superintendent’s Office-all school nurses and the School Physician Consultant, all members of the physical education staff, Director of Marching Band
  o Athletic Director- all members of the athletic staff, volunteers at any extra-curricular athletic activity, and parents or legal guardians of children who participate in any extracurricular athletic activity and student athletes.

❖ While not required by MDPH, ASRSD also offers this training to teachers, school counselors, and other school personnel.
This training effort shall be in collaboration with ASRSD secondary principals and central office administration team. Documentation of such training will be provided to the superintendent’s office for maintenance in a central file.

In addition, it is required that MIAA Tournament Game officials complete one of the online training programs approved by the Department of Public Health.

When it comes to concussions, everyone should be aware of the potential dangers and remember that a concussion is a brain injury. Whenever anyone has a doubt about a student athlete with a brain injury SIT THEM OUT and have them see the appropriate healthcare professional!

11b) PROCEDURE FOR THE SCHOOL TO NOTIFY PARENTS WHEN AN ATHLETE HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM PLAY FOR A HEAD INJURY OR SUSPECTED CONCUSSION:

- The athletic trainer, coach, school nurse and/or volunteers (EMS, sports physicians) should promptly inform the athlete’s parents or guardians about
- the possible concussion during the day of the injury via telephone and/or email and give them the fact sheet on concussions. The coach completes the Ayer Shirley Regional School District Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form and returns it to the school. Inform the parents that the student will have to be medically cleared by a medical professional before returning to play and the Post-Sports-Related Head Injury Clearance and Authorization Form will need to be completed and returned to the school before the student can resume play.

This protocol is the same for all home and away athletic events.

11c) PROTOCOL FOR PARENTS/STUDENTS TO OBTAIN MEDICAL CLEARANCE FOR RETURN TO PLAY AND ACADEMICS AFTER A DIAGNOSED CONCUSSION: (see also # 8 above)

In the Ayer Shirley Regional School District, parents and students are oriented about the protocol on obtaining medical clearance for return to play after a diagnosed concussion. The Athletic Department has a page on sports related head injury/concussion on the district website that also details these protocols. Finally, parents and students can always call the high school athletic department office at 978-772-8600 x 1333 or the school nurse’s office at 978-772-8600 x 1326 (HS) or x1207 (MS) to get further clarification or ask questions. No student will be allowed to return to play athletic activities until the medical clearance form is signed by authorized medical professional, submitted and reviewed by the school nurse.

11d) PARENT’S RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMPLETION OF THE
The Ayer Shirley Regional School District will orient parents about the requirement to submit the *Ayer Shirley Regional School District Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form*, signed by both student and parent, which provides a comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history.

It is the parent’s responsibility to tell all the student’s coaches and the school nurse if the student has ever had a concussion via the *Ayer Shirley Regional School District Consent and Release/Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form for Extracurricular Activities*. In addition, student handbooks under the section for “Sports Concussion” include our policies regarding sports concussion including the requirement to complete the pre-participation form by student and parent at the start of every sports season. These forms should be submitted to the athletic department office which copies and reviews them and then forwards them to the School Nurse Office for review.

At the beginning of every sports season, no student will be allowed to participate in athletic activities until the pre-participation form is signed, submitted by parent and student and reviewed by designated staff annually.

11e) PARENT’S RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMPLETION OF THE REPORT OF A HEAD INJURY FORM, OR SCHOOL-BASED EQUIVALENT

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District will orient students about the requirement to submit the *Ayer Shirley Regional School District Consent and Release/Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form for Extracurricular Activities* signed by both student and parent, which provides a comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history.

In addition, student handbooks under the section for “Sports Concussion” include our policies regarding sports concussion including the requirement to complete the *Ayer Shirley Regional School District Consent and Release/Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form for Extracurricular Activities* by student and parent at the start of every sports season. These forms should be submitted to the athletic department office which copies and reviews them and then forwards them to the School Nurse Office for review.

At the beginning of every sports season, no student will be allowed to participate in athletic activities until all required forms including the *Ayer Shirley Regional School District Consent and Release/Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form for Extracurricular Activities* has been signed, submitted by parent and reviewed by school nursing and athletic department staff.
SECTION 12: INCLUSION OF SPORTS-RELATED HEAD INJURY POLICY IN THE STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

Regulation:
105 CMR 201.006(A) (12): Inclusion in the student and parent handbooks of information regarding the sports-related head injury policy and how to obtain the policy.

❖ State Concussion Law Requirements: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services requires that all high schools subject to the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) rules adhere to the following law:

Student athletes and their parents, coaches, athletic directors, school nurses, and physicians must learn about the consequences of head injuries and concussions through training programs and written materials. The law requires that athletes and their parents inform their coaches about prior head injuries at the beginning of the season. If a student athlete becomes unconscious, or is suspected of having a concussion, during a game or practice, the law now mandates taking the student out of play or practice, and requires written certification from a licensed medical professional for “return to play.”

❖ At the beginning of every sports season, no student will be allowed to participate in athletic activities until all required forms including the Ayer Shirley Regional School District Consent and Release/Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form for Extracurricular Activities has been signed, submitted by parent and reviewed by school nursing and athletic department staff.

❖ Parents and student-athletes who plan to participate in any sports program at Ayer Shirley Regional High School or Ayer Shirley Regional Middle School MUST also take one free online course about concussions, per school year. Two free online courses have been made available and contain all the information required by the law. The first online course option is offered through the National Federation of High School Coaches. You will need to click the “order here” button and complete a brief information form to register. At the end of the course, you will receive a completion receipt, a copy of which should be submitted to the school. The entire course, including registration, can be completed in less than 30 minutes:

The second online course option is offered through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at: http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html

A third option, review of written materials, will be provided for parents/guardians and student athletes without Internet access.

❖ If a student athlete becomes unconscious, or is suspected of having a concussion, during a game or practice, the parent must submit to the school nurse the Ayer Shirley Regional School District Post Sports Related – Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form signed by a medical professional as well as a signed Post-Concussion Graduated Return to Play Schedule Form.
SECTION 13: COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY

Because of limited English skills, some parents may be unable to communicate with school personnel and may feel isolated from the school community. The Ayer Shirley Regional School District makes every attempt to communicate effectively with Parents with limited English proficiency. All sports-injury related materials including the on-line training classes, the CDC fact sheets on concussions and the required forms are available on the Athletic Department website at www.asrsd.org. The Ayer Shirley Regional School District, which serves a diverse population, has a website with a translator so that website materials can be translated into many languages. The Ayer Shirley Regional School District will translate other materials as requested. In the event a student receives a concussion or is suspected of having a concussion The Ayer Shirley Regional School District Athletic Director’s office should notify the parent in the appropriate language. Interpreters are available by contacting the Principal’s office.

SECTION 14: OUTREACH TO PARENTS FOR FORM AND TRAINING COMPLETION

Student Athletes in the Ayer Shirley Regional School District will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular sports until both the parent and student have completed and returned the signed Ayer Shirley Regional School District Consent and Release/Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form for Extracurricular Activities before the start of every sports season. In the event the school has not received the Ayer Shirley Regional School District Consent and Release/Pre-participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting Form for Extracurricular Activities or other required forms, including documentation of an annual physical examination and documentation that both the student athlete and their parent/guardian have completed the required annual training, the Ayer Shirley Regional School District will make three attempts to contact parent using the schools typical communication methods to parents (email, snail mail, telephone, etc.). The student athlete will not be allowed to play or practice until the appropriate required signed and completed forms are returned to the Athletic Department.
SECTION 15: SHARING CONCUSSION-RELATED HEALTH INFORMATION

Regulation:
105 CMR 201.006(A) (15): Procedure for sharing information concerning and athlete’s history of head injury and concussion, recuperation, reentry plan, and authorization to return to play and academic activities on a need to know basis consistent with requirements of 105 CMR 201.000 and applicable federal and state law including but not limited to the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, 603 CMR 23.00, and the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Regulations, 34 CFR Part 99

Informal collaboration occurs on a temporary, as-needed basis for information exchange, as when the school nurse informs (while adhering to protocols for confidentiality) the physical education teacher that a particular student may not participate in athletic activities because of a recent injury. There may be circumstances in which there is a need to share information in the student health record with authorized school personnel — either to enhance the educational progress of the student or protect his/her safety or well-being. For example, staff may need to be alerted to signs or symptoms of a medical problem on a need to know basis and offered a course of action. This type of disclosure should be made only to those authorized school personnel who work directly with the student in an instructive (academic or athletic), administrative, or diagnostic capacity. Finally, authorized school personnel should be instructed not to re-disclose the information.

If there is any question about the sensitivity of the information, the school nurse should seek the permission of the parent/guardian and student, if appropriate, prior to disclosure to authorized school personnel. Ultimately, however, federal regulations permit information in the student health record to be seen by authorized school personnel on a need to know basis, and the basis for such sharing seems even more compelling when necessary to protect the well-being or safety of the student.

There may be times when a school nurse has the legal obligation to disclose health or related information to protect a student’s health or safety. Public policy requires the protection of a patient’s right to privacy by medical professionals, unless there is an immediate threat or serious harm to the student or others.

SECTION 16 A & B: REQUIREMENTS THAT COACHES, ATHLETIC TRAINERS, TRAINERS AND VOLUNTEERS A) TEACH STRATEGIES THAT MINIMIZE SPORTS-RELATED HEAD INJURY AND B) PROHIBIT

1 Massachusetts Department of Public Health Comprehensive School Health Manual, 2007, p. 2-7
2
3 18 of 19
**DANGEROUS PLAY**

**Regulation:**
105 CMR 201.006(A)(16) Instructions to coaches, certified athletic trainers, trainers and volunteers a) to teach form, techniques, and skills and promote protective equipment use to minimize sports-related head injury; and b) to prohibit athletes from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique

105 CMR 201.012(C)(6): The Athletic Director shall be responsible for "Ensuring that athletes are prohibited from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that endangers the health or safety of an athlete, including using a helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon..."

105 CMR 201.013(A)(6) & (7): Coaches shall be responsible for (6) Teaching techniques aimed at minimizing sports-related head injury; (7) Discouraging and prohibiting athletes from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that endangers the health or safety of an athlete, including using a helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon...

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**Teaching Form & Techniques:**

Coaches of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District are expected to be current with best practices in their sport that reduce the likelihood of head injury. In addition, coaches are prohibited from teaching or promoting dangerous practices such as using a helmet as a weapon. It is expected that all coaches and athletic department staff teach techniques that minimize sports injury and/or concussion such as proper fitting, certified (especially helmets) equipment and protective equipment.

**Prohibiting Athletes from Dangerous Technique**

Athletic Directors and coaches of Ayer Shirley Regional School District should enforce rules prohibiting dangerous moves (e.g., “spearing” or “horse collaring”, clothes-lining or helmet to helmet contact in football, or free-falling flips or swan dives from any type of toss, partner stunt or pyramid in cheerleading). In addition, coaches must ensure that student athletes learn proper checking/tackling techniques that are safe and minimize the risk of head injury. Athletic department staff should encourage students to follow the rules of play and to practice good sportsmanship at all times.

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**SECTION 17: PENALTIES**

**Regulation:**
105 CMR 201.006(A)(17): Penalties, including but not limited to personnel sanctions and forfeiture of games, for failure to comply with provisions of the school district’s school policy

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District takes the safety of student athletes seriously. All members of the school staff are expected to follow these policies and protocols to support the health and safety of student athletes. The underlying philosophy of these policies is “when in doubt, sit them out”. Failure to comply with the letter or spirit of these policies could result in progressive discipline for staff and/or forfeiture of games. If students or parents have concerns that the policies are being violated, they should contact the Superintendent and also place their complaint in writing with a request for resolution.
STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Discipline is the dual responsibility of the home and school.

The Massachusetts General Laws require the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee to adopt written policies, rules and regulations not inconsistent with law, which may relate to study, discipline, conduct, safety and welfare of all students, or any classification thereof, enrolled in the public schools of the District.

The implementation of the general rules of conduct is the responsibility of the principal and the professional staff of the building. In order to do this, each school staff in the District shall develop specific rules not inconsistent with the law or in conflict with Regional School Committee policy. These building rules shall be an extension of the District policies by being more specific as they relate to the individual schools.

The purpose of disciplinary action is to restore acceptable behavior. When disciplinary action is necessary, it shall be administered with fairness and shall relate to the individual needs and the individual circumstances.

Students violating any of the policies on student conduct and control will be subject to disciplinary action. The degree, frequency, and circumstances surrounding each incident shall determine the method used in enforcing these policies. Most of the situations which require disciplinary action can be resolved within the confines of the classroom or as they occur by reasonable but firm reprimand, and/or by teacher conferences with the student and/or parents or guardians.

If a situation should arise in which there is no applicable written policy, the staff member shall be expected to exercise reasonable and professional judgment.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:37H and 37L; 76:16 and 17
Chapter 380 of the Acts of 1993
Chapter 766 Regulations, S. 338.0
CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

State law provides that:

The power of the School Committee or of any teacher or other employee or agent of the Committee to maintain discipline on school property shall not include the right to inflict corporal punishment upon any student.

Established by law

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37G
PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District. Further, students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Such restraint shall be used only in emergency situations as a last resort and with extreme caution after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate.

When an emergency situation arises, and physical restraint is the only option deemed appropriate to prevent a student from injuring himself or herself, another student or school community member, a teacher or employee or agent of the school district may use such reasonable force needed to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603 CMR 46.02.

The use of mechanical restraint, medical restraint, and seclusion is prohibited.

Physical restraint, including prone restraint where permitted under 603 CMR 46.03. shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to themselves and/or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions are deemed inappropriate.

The Superintendent will develop procedures identifying:

- Appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention;
- Methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide including crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors among groups of students or individuals;
- Descriptions and explanations of alternatives to physical restraint as well as the school’s method of physical restraint for use in emergency situations;
- Descriptions of the school’s training and procedures to comply with reporting requirements including, but not limited to making reasonable efforts to orally notify a parent of the use of restraint within 24 hours of its imposition;
- Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints;
- Methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;
- A statement prohibiting: medication restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint unless permitted by 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), seclusion, and the use of physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00;
- A process for obtaining Principal approval for a time out exceeding 30 minutes.

Each building principal will identify staff members to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These staff members will participate in an in-depth training program in the use of physical restraint.

In addition, each staff member will be trained regarding the district’s physical restraint policy and accompanying procedures. The Principal will arrange training to occur in the first month of each school year, or for staff hired after the beginning of the school year, within a month of their employment.

Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of punishment, or as a response to destruction of
property, disruption of school order, a student’s refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to the student or others.

Physical restraint is prohibited when it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting.

The use of “time out” procedures during which a staff member remains accessible to the student shall not be considered “seclusion restraint.”

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

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37G; 603 CMR 46:00

 Adopted by the ASRSD, December 16, 2015
PHYSICAL RESTRAINT REGULATIONS

In accordance with state and federal law, nothing in the regulations precludes school personnel from implementing physical restraint contained in an agreed-upon Behavioral Intervention Plan. A Behavioral Intervention Plan is the result of a Functional Behavior Assessment and may be found in an Individual Educational Program, Section 504/Accommodational Plan or on its own. A Behavioral Intervention Plan requires informed written consent by the student’s parent/legal guardian.

Definitions:
1. **Physical restraint** may be defined as “the use of bodily force to limit a student’s freedom of movement.”
2. **Extended restraint** may be defined as a physical restraint, which lasts for more than twenty (20) minutes.
3. **Physical escort** may be defined as “touching or holding a student without the use of force for the purpose of directing the student.” Physical escort is not physical restraint.
4. **Types of restraints** can include, but are not limited to, the use of a mechanical device to restrict movement of the entire body or portions thereof; placing a student in seclusion without access to school staff; or the administration of medication. The use of seclusion restraint is prohibited in the Ayer Shirley Regional Schools. The use of “time-outs” where a staff member is present or accessible by the student does not constitute seclusion restraint. The type of physical restraint used is dependent upon the special training of staff members in specific kinds of such restraints. Chemical restraint may not be used without the explicit authorization of a physician and a signed release from the parent/guardian approving its use.

Staff Training:
All administrators, faculty and other program staff will receive annual training regarding this policy. Training will include the use of interventions to de-escalate problem behavior in order to avoid the use of restraints; the types of restraints and related safety issues for each; employing physical restraint in accordance with known medical or psychological limitations and/or behavioral intervention plans for individual students; and the staff member(s) who have received in-depth training with whom they may consult as needed.

Additional in-depth training for designated staff members will include:
1. Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint; de-escalation of problem behaviors; relationship building; and the use of alternatives to restraint;
2. Description and identification of dangerous behaviors by a student which may indicate the need for physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations to determine whether restraint is warranted;
3. Simulated experiences in administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effects upon on the person restrained, including the monitoring of physical signs of distress, and obtaining medical assistance;

4. Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and the investigation of injuries and complaints; and

5. Demonstrations by participants showing that they are proficient in administering physical restraint.

Faculty and staff will review any behavior plans pertaining to special techniques to be used with identified students.

When Physical Restraint is Used:

1. Physical restraint may be used when non-physical interventions have been attempted without success or when it is apparent that they would not be effective. It may only be used when a student’s behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to self and/or others or when otherwise outlined in a Behavioral Intervention Plan.

2. Physical restraint is limited to the use of such reasonable force as may be necessary to protect a student or other person from assault or imminent, serious physical harm.

3. Unless specifically indicated in an agreed-upon Behavioral Intervention Plan, physical restraint may not be used as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats which do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm. Physical restraint may never be used as a means of punishment.

4. A school staff member who uses physical restraint on a student must use the safest method available which is most appropriate to the situation at hand, and the method for which that staff member has been trained. Staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations and/or behavior intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint upon an individual student.

5. No physical restraint may be used which prevents a student from speaking or breathing, and must be used in such a way as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If at any time during the restraint, the student demonstrates significant physical distress, the restraint shall be removed immediately.

6. A physical restraint must be discontinued as soon as possible when it has been determined that a student no longer poses a risk of harm to self or others.

7. Following the use of a physical restraint, the building principal or a designated program staff member will meet with the student to address the behavior which prompted the restraint, and will also review the incident with the staff members who were involved and determine whether follow-up is needed for students who may have witnessed the incident.

8. Physical restraint regulations do not prohibit any individual from reporting a crime committed by a student to local law enforcement or other state agencies. Law enforcement officers, school security staff, or judicial authorities are not prohibited by this regulation from the exercise of their responsibilities, which may include the physical detainment of a student or other person alleged to have committed a crime.
or who poses a security risk. In addition, an individual who is a mandated reporter under M.G.L., Chapter 119, Section 51A is not prohibited by this policy from complying with their responsibility to report neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency.

Reporting Requirements:
1. A staff member who administers a restraint shall verbally inform the building principal or his/her designee as soon as practical that day and by written report no later than the next school day.
2. The building principal or his/her designee shall verbally inform the student’s parent/guardian of the use of physical restraint as soon as practical and by written report no later than three (3) school days following such use.
3. The report must include:
   a. The names and job titles of staff who administered the restraint and the persons who observed it;
   b. The date and time the restraint was used, the time it began and ended, and the name of the administrator who was verbally informed;
   c. A description of the activity of the restrained student and other students and staff in the vicinity immediately preceding the use of the restraint; the behavior which prompted it; the efforts made to de-escalate; alternatives which were attempted first; and the justification resorting to physical restraint;
   d. A description of the restraint used and the reasons why, the student’s behavior and reactions during the restraint; how it ended, and documentation of injury, if any, to the student or staff and any medical care provided;
   e. For extended restraints, a description of the alternatives which were attempted first; the outcome of those efforts; and the justification for administering an extended restraint;
   f. Information regarding any further action(s) taken by school staff, including any disciplinary actions taken toward the student;
   g. Information regarding opportunities for the student’s parent/guardian to discuss the restraint and related matters with the building principal or his/her designee, as well as their right to file a grievance.

The building principal or his/her designee shall maintain an ongoing record of all reported instances of the use of physical restraint, which shall be made available to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). A copy of the ongoing record of all reported instances shall be forwarded to the Director of Special Education and Student Services by January 31st and June 30th of each school year.

When a restraint has resulted in a serious injury to the student or program staff member involved, or when an extended restraint has been administered, a written report must be submitted to the DESE within five (5) school days of the date of the restraint. School building administration must, at this time, also provide the DESE with a copy of the ongoing record of restraints for the thirty (30) day period preceding the date of the restraint.
reported restraint. The DESE will notify the District of any required actions if warranted, within thirty (30) calendar days of the receipt of the report.

Copies of all correspondence to the DESE shall be forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools and Director of Special Education and Student Services.

Nothing contained herein shall relieve staff reporting requirements when a personal injury occurs within the scope of employment.

Individual Waiver of Reporting Requirements:
A school district may seek a parent/guardian’s consent to waive the reporting requirements for restraints, which do not result in injury, or extended restraint. Such a waiver should only be sought for students who present behaviors, which may require the frequent use of restraints. The parent/guardian must provide informed, written consent to the waiver, which shall specify the reporting requirements, which are being waived. The informed, written consent will be kept in the student’s file, along with specific information regarding when and how the parent/guardian will be informed of the administration of restraints on their child.

Student with Disabilities:
Restraints which are administered to students pursuant to their Individualized Education Programs, Section 504 Accommodation Plans, or other plans developed in accordance with state and federal law, and which has been agreed upon by both the school and the parent/guardian, shall be deemed to meet the requirements of 603 CMR 46.00. The limitations on chemical, mechanical, and seclusion restraints as specified above continue to apply to students with disabilities, as do the above reporting requirements.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE:
The Ayer Shirley Regional School District has established an internal procedure in order to provide for prompt and equitable resolutions of complaints regarding the administration of physical restraints.

Definitions:
A “grievance” is a complaint made pursuant to, and arising out of, the Ayer Shirley Regional District’s obligations to comply with state regulations regarding the use of physical restraints.

An “aggrieved Party” is a person or person making the complaint.

Purpose:
The purpose of this grievance procedure is to secure prompt and equitable solutions to grievances, which may, from time to time, arise pursuant to 603 CMR 46.00.

General:
No aggrieved party will be subject to coercion, intimidation, interference or discrimination for registering a complaint or for assisting in the investigation of an alleged complaint within the context of this grievance procedure.

All documents, communications, and records dealing with the filing of a grievance will be kept confidential to the full extent provided by law.
Forms for filing grievances will be provided upon request by building principals or the Director of Special Education and Student Services, Ayer Shirley Regional Schools, 141 Washington Street, Ayer, MA 01432.

Procedure:
1. The aggrieved party should complete the grievance form and return it to the building principal or his/her designee at the school building in which the alleged grievance occurred. The complaint should be filed within fifteen (15) days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation. Assistance will be provided, upon request, to enable an individual to complete the grievance form and pursue the grievance process.

2. Within ten (10) school days after receiving the grievance, the building principal or his/her designee shall meet with the aggrieved party in an effort to resolve the grievance. This investigation into the complaint is contemplated to be thorough, but informal, in nature. All interested persons and their representatives, if any, shall be afforded an opportunity to be heard and to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. If the grievance is not resolved, it will be forwarded to the Director of Special Education and Student Services.

3. Within thirty (30) school days of receipt of an unresolved grievance, the Director of Special Education and Student Services will conduct a hearing to determine what, if any, action shall be taken in response to the grievance. The hearing shall be held at a time and place mutually convenient to all parties. The hearing procedure will follow appropriate due process procedures, including:
   a. The opportunity for the aggrieved party to present the grievance in any suitable manner;
   b. The right of the aggrieved party to be represented by counsel or an advocate at the aggrieved party’s expense;
   c. The right of the aggrieved party to a prompt decision.

Parents/legal guardians should provide advance notice to the Director of Special Education and Student Services that they will be represented by counsel or an advocate at the grievance hearing. Failure to provide such notice will likely result in a postponement of the hearing.

4. A written determination of the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, shall be issued by the Director of Special Education and Student Services and forwarded to the complainant no later than fifteen (15) working days after the hearing. The determination of the validity of the complaint and the description of the resolution will be provided in an alternate format, upon request, if needed for effective communication.

5. The complainant can request a reconsideration of the case in instances where he or she is dissatisfied with the resolution. The request for reconsideration should be made within fifteen (15) working days following receipt of the written determination to the Superintendent of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District.

6. The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution for the complaint filed hereunder shall not be impaired by the person’s pursuit of other remedies such as
the filing of an ADA, Section 504 or other complaint with the responsible federal department or agency. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.

7. These rules shall be construed to protect the substantive rights of the interested persons to meet appropriate due process standards and to assure that the Ayer Shirley Regional District complies with 603 CMR 46.00.

8. Copies of all resolutions and findings made under this procedure shall be filed with the Superintendent’s Office of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District.

LEGAL REF: 603 CMR 46:00

STUDENT SUSPENSION, EXCLUSION, EXPULSION AND RE-ADMITTANCE

A. SUSPENSION

1. The suspension of any student shall be used as a disciplinary measure only in the case of a serious offense upon the part of the pupil, or when, in the opinion of the principal or assistant principal, a continuum of offenses makes it necessary to use this kind of action.

2. In suspension cases, the applicable procedure as noted below shall be used:
   a. No suspension shall be imposed unless the student involved is personally advised of the specific nature of the offense and is provided an opportunity to present his/her view of the incident.
   b. If there is, in the opinion of the principal or assistant principal, a discrepancy in the accounts of what constituted the incident or if suspension is for an offense which might lead to court action, or consideration of exclusion or expulsion, or is otherwise one of an unusually serious nature, the parent should be advised immediately of the student’s right to a formal hearing at the school level.
   c. At such hearing, the student shall have the right to be present; may, if s/he chooses, be represented by counsel; and may present evidence on his/her own behalf.
   d. At the conclusion of such formal hearing, the student and the parent shall be advised of the student’s right of appeal to the Office of the Superintendent of Schools.

3. Before sending a student out of the school building, the parent or guardian shall be notified by telephone that this is being done, or if the parent or guardian cannot be reached by telephone, the student shall be kept in the school office until dismissal.

4. If a suspended student is disrupting the school process, in a situation where the parent or guardian cannot be reached by telephone, the police should be called to escort this student out of the building and to his/her home.

5. In all suspension cases, a letter shall be sent by the principal or assistant principal to the parent or guardian within 24 hours of the suspension. This letter shall make it clear to the parent or guardian that the pupil will not be reinstated until a satisfactory parent-school conference has been held. Furthermore, a copy of this letter of notification will be sent to the Superintendent. Where necessary such letters shall be translated into the native language of the parent. It is anticipated that the guidance department will exercise a supportive role in any conference involved in the suspension process.
6. A student shall have the opportunity to make up assignments and tests missed during a period of suspension. The initiative in making such arrangements rests with the student.

B. EXCLUSION
1. The principal may initiate exclusion proceedings which shall be defined as excluding a student from regular classroom instruction and related school activities for a period exceeding ten (10) but not to exceed one hundred seventy-nine (179) school days, when the student has acted in such a manner that his/her removal is necessary to protect the physical safety of others or in order to prevent substantial interference with the right of others to pursue an education and/or because of a violation listed in subsection (2).

2. Exclusion may be imposed for the following violations:
   a. Possession of a weapon, other than a firearm, or any object which can be construed as a weapon;
   b. Assault/attack on a teacher or staff member which does not involve the use of a weapon, and which does not result in serious bodily injury;
   c. Assault/attack on a fellow student which does not involve the use of a weapon;
   d. Damaging personal property of school staff;
   e. Arson, bomb threat, false alarm;
   f. Extortion;
   g. Possession of, use of, fireworks, firecrackers;
   h. Continued and repeated serious disruptive behavior;
   i. Hazing (as defined in the Student Handbook);
   j. The sale or distribution of alcohol or other drugs; and
   k. The possession of alcohol or controlled substances.

3. If the principal recommends exclusion s/he shall explain his/her intentions to the student, and shall within twenty-four (24) hours of the alleged act(s) upon which the recommendation is based, or within twenty-four (24) hours of the time s/he learns of such alleged act(s), mail a notice thereof to the student and to his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) with a copy to the Superintendent. Such notice shall contain:
   a. A statement that the principal is recommending exclusion of the student;
   b. The length of time for which exclusion is recommended;
   c. A description of the school regulation(s) allegedly violated by the student;
   d. A statement of the facts as known to the principal leading to the recommendation for exclusion;
   e. The time and place of a hearing to be held (not sooner than seven (7) calendar days from the date notice is postmarked); and
   f. Information as to the student's right to due process, to wit; the right to have a hearing, to have an attorney represent him/her at the hearing; to present witnesses, to cross-examine adverse witnesses; and to have a tape recording of the hearing provided by the Region at no cost to the student.

4. The hearing shall conform to these guidelines:
   a. The principal shall conduct the hearing.
   b. The student shall have the right to be present during the presentation of evidence. If witnesses against the student testify at the hearing, the student, his/her attorney, or his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be allowed to question
such witnesses. The student, his/her attorney, his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be allowed to submit evidence in his/her own defense including presentation of witnesses, and/or documentary evidence. No evidence not presented at the hearing will be considered, unless the student consents to such consideration during the course of the hearing.

c. The hearing shall be private.
d. A tape recording shall be made and a written summary record shall be completed.

5. In order for the principal to impose exclusion, then s/he must find that:
   a. The student committed one or more of the violations listed in Section B(2);
   and/or
   b. The continued presence of the student in school would endanger the physical safety of others or cause substantial interference with the right of others to pursue an education.

6. Within seven (7) calendar days of the hearing, the principal shall determine, based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing, whether the student committed a violation warranting exclusion or is otherwise subject to exclusion. If the principal determines that a violation, as set forth in B(2) above has occurred, or that the continued presence of the student in school would endanger the physical safety of others or cause substantial interference with the right of others to pursue an education, s/he may exclude the student.

7. The principal shall fully record his/her findings of fact along with the decision, which in the event of exclusion, shall include the length and terms of any exclusion imposed. Within seven (7) calendar days of the hearing, one copy of the findings and decision shall be mailed by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the student, one copy to his/her parent(s) or guardian(s), one copy to his/her attorney, if any, and one copy to the Superintendent.

8. If the principal excludes the student, the student shall have the right, within seven (7) calendar days of notification by the principal, to request a second hearing before the Superintendent.

9. If the principal finds that no violation has occurred or there is insufficient evidence of such, and the continued presence of the student in school would not endanger the physical safety of others or cause substantial interference with the right of others to pursue an education, then the student shall immediately be reinstated. In such cases all records and documentation regarding the disciplinary proceedings shall be immediately destroyed. No information regarding the hearing shall be placed in the student’s permanent record or file or communicated to any person, except as provided herein.

10. At any time during this process, the principal may exercise the option of an emergency evaluation as provided for in the regulations for the implementation of M.G.L. CH. 71B.

11. The principal may recommend reassignment of a student to another school upon completion of his/her term of exclusion if s/he believes that such reassignment will assist the student in successfully completing his/her education free of further discipline problems.

12. Exclusion may be for the remainder of the school year. At the discretion of the principal, exclusion may also be carried into the next school year up to the 45th school day. The principal may establish special conditions for re-admission at the
conclusion of a period of exclusion. Following any instance of exclusion and prior to the student’s re-admission to school, the student and parent or guardian will meet with the principal and other appropriate staff. During this meeting, the participants will discuss his/her ability to return to school and plans to monitor the student’s subsequent behavior.

14. Grade and/or subject area placement upon re-admission will be to the grade and/or subject areas in which the student was placed at the time of the exclusion, unless otherwise approved by the principal.

C. EXPULSION

1. Expulsion is a permanent removal of a student from the school and the school district.

2. Except as otherwise provided for in M.G.L., Chapter 71, Section 37H or 37H1/2, no student shall be expelled from school except by majority vote of 3 of 6

the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee upon the recommendation of the Superintendent and after a formal hearing pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 71, Section 17. Said hearing shall conform to these guidelines:

a. The student shall have the right to be present during the presentation of evidence. If witnesses against the student testify at the hearing, the student, his/her attorney, or his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be allowed to question such witnesses. The student, his/her attorney, his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be allowed to submit evidence in his/her own defense including presentation of witnesses, and/or documentary evidence. No evidence not presented at the hearing will be considered, unless the student consents to such consideration during the course of the hearing.

3. See Section D – Re-admission below

4. No action by the School Committee is required in the event that a student is expelled by a principal pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 71, Section 37H and/or 37H1/2.

b. The hearing shall be private.

c. A tape recording shall be made, and a written summary record shall be completed.

D. RE-ADMISSION AFTER EXPULSION

1. While expulsion is ordinarily expected to be permanent due to the seriousness of the underlying offenses, a student who has been expelled, may apply for readmission to the Ayer Shirley Regional Schools at the beginning of the school year following the school year in which s/he was expelled and/or the beginning of any school year thereafter.

2. Application for re-admission shall be made to the principal of the building from which the student was expelled hereafter the “receiving principal”. Said application shall be in writing, on a form promulgated by the Ayer Shirley Regional School District, and must have been received, along with all supporting materials no later than the August 1st preceding the September in which re-admission is sought. A copy of said application, together with all supporting materials will be provided by
the receiving principal to the Superintendent of Schools and all other principals upon receipt.

3. A student, once expelled, has no right to re-admission. The receiving principal shall conduct a hearing on each application for re-admission before a hearing panel composed of all persons employed as principals in the Ayer Shirley Regional School District. The hearing panel, by majority vote, may request additional supporting materials, tests and/or evaluations which they deem to the issue of re-admission. Failure to provide such materials, and/or to co-operate in any requests or evaluations shall be grounds for disapproval. In addition to the foregoing, the hearing panel may obtain information concerning the student from such other sources a majority deems appropriate, provided that all such information is presented at the hearing. Copies of any written materials obtained from sources other than the student shall be mailed or given to the student within five calendar days of their receipt by the Ayer Shirley Regional School District.

4. The application for re-admission shall be approved or disapproved no later than the August 15th following its submission, unless said date is extended to accommodate testing and/or evaluation. The hearing panel shall readmit a student only if a majority of said panel can determine from the information in their possession that the offense which gave rise to the expulsion is unlikely to reoccur, and that it is unlikely that the student will endanger the physical safety of others or cause substantial interference with the right of others to pursue an education if the student is allowed to return to school. Said determination shall be made only by a majority vote of those principals present and voting, which majority must include the principal of the building to which the student will be assigned. If the hearing panel elects to readmit the student, they shall set forth in writing the basis for their determination that the offense which gave rise to the expulsion is unlikely to reoccur, and that it is unlikely that the student will endanger the physical safety of others or cause substantial interference with the rights of others to pursue an education if the student is allowed to return to school. The receiving principal shall mail notice of the decision to the student by certified mail, return receipt requested.

5. In the event of a disapproval, the student may appeal to the Superintendent by submitting a written appeal along with his/her original application and supporting materials within seven calendar days after the date on which notice of such disapproval was mailed. In the event re-admission is approved, any principal who participates in the hearing may likewise appeal to the Superintendent.

6. The Superintendent is not required to meet with the student and/or to provide any type of a hearing. However, the Superintendent may elect to conduct a hearing if s/he feels that it will help the decision making process. The Superintendent may request additional supporting materials, tests and/or evaluations which s/he deems relevant to the issue of re-admission. Failure to provide such materials, and/or to co-operate in any requests or evaluations, shall be grounds for disapproval. In addition to the foregoing, the Superintendent may obtain information concerning the student from such other sources s/he deems appropriate, except that information obtained orally shall only be obtained through a hearing as here in before set forth. Copies of any written materials obtained by the Superintendent from sources other than the student shall be mailed or given to the student within
five (5) calendar days of their receipt by the Superintendent.

7. The Superintendent shall determine whether an application for re-admission is approved or disapproved no later than the August 31st following its submission, unless said date is extended to accommodate testing and/or evaluation as here in before set forth. The Superintendent shall readmit a student only if s/he can determine from the information in his/her possession that the offense which gave rise to the expulsion is unlikely to re-occur, and that it is unlikely that the student will endanger the physical safety of others or cause substantial interference with the right of others to pursue an education if the student is allowed to return to school. If the Superintendent elects to readmit the student, s/he shall set forth in writing the basis for his/her determination that the offense which gave rise to the expulsion is unlikely to re-occur, and that it is unlikely that the student will endanger the physical safety of others or cause substantial interference with the right of others to pursue an education if the student is allowed to return to school. The Superintendent shall mail notice of his/her decision to the student by certified mail, return receipt requested.

8. A student applying for re-admission is required to submit the following along with his/her application:
   a. Three (3) letters of recommendation from persons who are not relatives;
   b. Fully executed releases on forms provided by the Ayer Shirley Regional School District which will allow unrestricted access to all of the students psychological, psychiatric, medical, criminal, probation, parole, hospital, and/or educational records and all back up materials maintained by the record keepers; and
   c. Evidence of psychological and/or psychiatric counseling or a statement from a psychologist or psychiatrist that the student requires no such counseling.

9. A student applying for re-admission is encouraged to submit the following along with his/her application:
   a. A description of the steps taken by the student to continue the educational process during the period of expulsion.
   b. Evidence of involvement in community organizations, scouts, and church sponsored activities during the period of expulsion; and
   c. Any other evidence which the student feels will demonstrate his/her fitness to return as a student to the Ayer Shirley Regional School District and/or assist the principal in determining that the offense which gave rise to the expulsion is unlikely to re-occur, and that it is unlikely that the student will endanger the physical safety of others or cause substantial interference with the right of others to pursue an education if the student is allowed to return to school.

10. Grade and/or subject area placement upon re-admission will be to the grade and/or subject areas in which the student was placed at the time of the expulsion, unless otherwise approved by the principal.

11. Re-admission may be made on a trial basis for a period of time not to exceed six (6) months. The principal may reinstate the expulsion at any time during the trial period on the basis of facts which would in the ordinary course warrant an exclusion as set forth above. The procedures for exclusion will govern any such expulsion. If the student is expelled again, no application for re-admission will be entertained from that student at any future time. As a condition of re-admission on a trial basis, the student and his/her parents shall agree in writing to accept possible reinstatement of the expulsion on the terms set forth above.

12. Any hearing convened by a principal or the Superintendent for the purposes of
readmission shall conform to these guidelines:
a. The student shall have the right to be present during the gathering of information. The student, his/her attorney, or his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be allowed to question any persons providing information at the hearing. The student, his/her attorney, his/her parent(s) or guardian(s) shall be allowed to submit information in support of readmission, including presentation of witnesses, and/or documentary information in addition to that previously provided.
b. The hearing shall be private.
c. A tape recording shall be made, and a written summary recording shall be completed.

1 In cases subject to the provisions of c.71 s.37H and/or 37H ½, the appeals process set forth therein shall govern.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:84, 71:85, 76:16; 76:17

STUDENT WELFARE

Supervision of Students
School personnel assigned supervision is expected to act as reasonably prudent adults in providing for the safety of the students in their charge.

In keeping with this expected prudence, no teacher or other staff member will leave his/her assigned group unsupervised except when an arrangement has been made to take care of an emergency.

During school hours or while engaging in school-sponsored activities, students will be released only into the custody of parents or other persons authorized in writing by a parent or guardian.

Reporting to Authorities - Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect
Any school official or employee shall report any suspected child abuse or neglect as required by M.G.L. Ch. 119, Section 51A.

In accordance with the law, the District shall establish the necessary regulations and procedures to comply with the intent of the Act consistent with the District's responsibility to the students, parents, District personnel, and the communities.

Student Safety
Instruction in courses in technology education, science, art, physical education and health will include and emphasize accident prevention.

Safety instruction will precede the use of materials and equipment by students in applicable units of work, and instructors will teach and enforce all safety rules set up for the particular courses. These include the wearing of protective eye devices in appropriate activities.

Safety on the Playground and Playing Field
The District shall provide safe play areas. Precautionary measures, which the District requires, shall include:
- A periodic inspection of the schools’ playgrounds and playing fields by the principal of
the school and others as may be deemed appropriate;
- Instruction of students in the proper use of equipment;
- Supervision of both organized and unorganized activity.

Fire Drills and Reporting
The District shall cooperate with appropriate fire departments in the conduct of fire drills. The principal of any public or private school, containing any of grades 1 to 12, shall immediately report any incident of unauthorized ignition of any fire within the school buildings or on school grounds, to the local fire department. Within 24 hours, the principal shall submit a written report of the incident to the head of the fire department on a form furnished by the Department of Fire Services. The principal must file this report whether or not the fire department responded.

LEGAL REFS: MGL 71:37L; 148:2A

STUDENT INSURANCE PROGRAM

A non-compulsory accident insurance plan totally administered by an insurance company may be made available to students. The District does not assume any responsibility regarding service, claims, or other matters relating to the insurance program.

All students participating in competitive athletics shall be required to be covered by a medical insurance plan.
STUDENT ALLERGY POLICY

The District recognizes the increasing prevalence of student allergies and the life-threatening nature of the allergies for many students. The administration shall develop and implement procedures to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to students, to educate all members of the school communities, and to plan for the individual needs of students with life-threatening allergies. Further, these procedures will aim to assist students in assuming more individual responsibility for their health and safety as they grow older, and to ensure full participation in school activities.
STUDENT ALLERGY PROCEDURES

The procedures for dealing with student allergies will be reviewed annually and modified as appropriate and will include the following:
A. **Education and training:** The District will provide annual education and training to all appropriate personnel on management of student allergies. The training will address prevention efforts, information about common allergens, and recognition of signs of an allergic reaction, emergency response plan, and Epi-pen administration where appropriate.
B. **Individualized planning and accommodations:** An Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) or Emergency Health Care Plan that addresses the management of anaphylaxis will be developed for each student with a medically diagnosed life-threatening allergy.
C. **Classroom management procedures:** Appropriate accommodations will be made in the classroom, including designation of the classroom as "allergen-free" as necessary. The use of allergen-free foods will be used for celebrations.
D. **Common use areas:** The procedures will address foods used in common areas and cleaning of those areas, including use of those areas by groups other than students.
E. **Kitchen and cafeteria procedures:** The food service staff must make reasonable efforts to ensure that all food items offered to a student with life-threatening allergies are free of foods suspected of causing the allergic reaction.
F. **Transportation procedures:** School buses and vans must have a working means of two-way communication and a plan to check the communication system periodically. Bus and van drivers must have an emergency response plan. The eating and sharing of food will be prohibited on transportation routes unless medically indicated for a student.
G. **Field trip procedures:** Planning for field trips will include plans to implement a student's IHCP, and identification of the communication system (cell phone, walkie-talkie etc). A trained staff member designated by the school nurse will attend field trips which include a student with a life-threatening allergy in the event that the parent doesn't attend.
H. **Emergency response procedures:** All staff members supervising students with life-threatening allergies must have a means of communication to call for assistance. The school nurse or another school staff member trained to administer epinephrine in accordance with 105 CMR 210 must be available in each school facility during the school day.
I. **Procedures for handling epinephrine:** Each school must maintain a current supply of epinephrine by auto-injector (Epi-pens) and must comply with all Department of Public Health regulations for administration, storage, and record-keeping concerning epinephrine. The school nurse shall register with the Department of Public Health and shall train other school personnel to administer epinephrine in accordance with 105 CMR 210. All staff members will be informed of the location of the Epi-pens.

REF: Massachusetts Department of Education, Managing Life-Threatening Food Allergies in Schools, Fall 2002
STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS

Activities may include identification of student health needs, health screening tests (including eye and hearing screening tests), communicable disease prevention and control, promotion of the correction of remediable health defects, emergency care of the ill and injured, health counseling, health and safety education, and the maintenance of a healthful school environment.

The District recognizes that parents have the primary responsibility for the health of their students. The school will cooperate with appropriate professional organizations associated with maintaining individual and community health and safety.

The District shall provide the services of a medical consultant who shall render medical and administrative consultative services for personnel responsible for school health athletics.

Procedures for Emergency at School

School personnel shall give only emergency care to students who become ill or injured on school property, buses, or while under school supervision.

Each year parents shall supply information indicating where the student is to be taken in case of an emergency; the name, address, and phone number of a neighbor to be contacted in case the parent/guardian is not available; and any allergies or diseases the student might have.

The District shall maintain a Medical Emergency Response Plan, as required by law, and an Emergency Procedures Handbook, which shall be utilized by District personnel for handling emergencies. Emergency procedures shall include the following:

Provision for care beyond First Aid, which would enable care by the family or its physician or the local Emergency Medical Services agencies. In instances when the EMS is required, every effort shall be made to provide the unit with the student’s Emergency Card which lists any allergies or diseases the student might have;

Information relative to not permitting the administration of any form of medicine or drugs to students without written approval of parents. Requests made by parents for such administration of medication shall be reviewed and approved by the principal or designee;

Provisions for reporting all accidents, cases of injury, or illness to the principal. Provisions shall be made (in all cases of injury or illness involving possible legal or public relations implications) for reporting such to the appropriate executive director of education immediately;

Prompt reporting by teachers to the principal or designee any accident or serious illness
and such reports will be filled with the Business Office.

**Student Illness or Injury**

In case of illness or injury, the parent or guardian will be contacted and asked to call for the student or provide the transportation.

Transportation of an ill or injured student is not normally to be provided by the school. If the parent cannot provide transportation and the student is ill or injured, an ambulance may be called. Expense incurred as a result of emergency ambulance use will not be borne by the District.

Transportation of a student by school personnel will be done only in an emergency and by the individual so designated by the school administrator.

**SOURCE:** MASC

**LEGAL REF:** M.G.L. 71:53; 54; 54A; 54B; 55; 55A; 55B; 56; 57; 69:8A;

**CROSS REF:** EBB, First Aid
EBC, Emergency Plans
JLCD, Medication Administration Policy

First Reading for amendment, September 19, 2012
Adopted by the ASRSD, October 17, 2012
PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS OF STUDENTS

Every student will have yearly growth, vision and hearing screenings and postural screening in grades 5-9. The results of the screenings will be kept in the student health record.

Every student must have a general physical examination within six months before entrance or during the first year after entrance into the Regional School District. Documentation of this must be provided to the school nurse, and kept in the student health record.

Before entering kindergarten, 4th, 7th, and 10th grade all students must provide documentation of a current physical examination to the school nurse. The physical examination record will be kept in student health record.

Every candidate for a school interscholastic sports team must have a current physical examination form, indicating that s/he is fit for sports, on file in the nurse's office prior to tryouts or the start of the season.

The school nurse will consult with the school physician should there be any question of the health and well being of the school population. If a student is found to have an illness or injury in need of medical evaluation, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:54; 71:57

REF: Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Comprehensive School Health Manual, 1995
IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

No child shall be admitted to school, except upon presentation of a health care provider's certificate attesting to immunizations as specified by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The documentation will be kept in the student health record.

The only exceptions to these requirements are:

- Presentation of a written statement from a health care provider that immunization would endanger the health of the child

- Presentation of a written statement from the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) stating that vaccination or immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the student or parent(s)/guardian(s).

- Students that are homeless, and do not have complete immunization records as established by the federal McKinney-Vent Homeless Assistance Act.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 76:15

REF: Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Comprehensive School Health Manual, 1995
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The District is required to provide educational services to all school age children who reside within its boundaries. By law, however, admission to school may be denied to any child diagnosed as having a disease whereby attendance could be harmful to the welfare of other students and staff, subject to the District's responsibilities to handicapped children under the law.

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee recognizes that communicable diseases which may afflict students range from common childhood diseases, acute and short-term in nature, to chronic, life-threatening diseases such as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

Management of common communicable diseases shall be in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Health guidelines. A student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease may be temporarily excluded from school attendance. The District reserves the right to require a physician's statement authorizing the student's return to school.

The educational placement of a student who is medically diagnosed as having a life-threatening communicable disease shall be determined on an individual basis in accordance with this policy and accompanying administrative procedures. Decisions about the proper educational placement shall be based on the student's behavior, neurological development, and physical condition; the expected type of interaction with others in school setting; and the susceptibility to other diseases and the likelihood of presenting risks to others. A regular review of the placement decision shall be conducted to assess changes in the student's physical condition, or based on new information or research that may warrant a change in a student's placement.

In the event a student with a life-threatening communicable disease qualifies for services as a child with disabilities under state and federal law, the procedures for determining the appropriate educational placement in the least restrictive environment shall be used in lieu of the procedures designated above.

Neither this policy nor the placement of a student in any particular program shall preclude the administration from taking any temporary actions including removal of a student from the classroom as deemed necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the student, staff, and others.

In all proceedings related to this policy, the District shall respect the student's right to privacy. Only those persons with a direct need to know shall be informed of the specific nature of the student's condition. The determination of those who need to know shall be made by the Superintendent.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:55
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES REGULATIONS

Management of common communicable diseases shall be in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Public Health guidelines. A student, who is diagnosed with, or exposed to, a disease, as defined by law, that may be harmful to the health and welfare of other students and staff, may be excluded from school attendance. A student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease may be temporarily excluded from school attendance. Ayer Shirley Regional School District reserves the right to require a health care provider's statement authorizing the student's return to school.

The educational placement of a student diagnosed with a communicable disease, will be determined on an individual basis in accordance with this policy and administrative procedures. Those involved in the placement determination will include but not be limited to, administration, professional staff, and school nurse. A regular review of the placement determination will be done to maintain an appropriate educational placement for the student.

As a public health measure, any student who exhibits the following, regardless of whether s/he harbors a known blood-borne infection, should be excluded from school until these conditions are resolved:

- Any weeping or bleeding lesion that cannot be covered or controlled with medication.
- Inappropriate behavior that increases the likelihood of transmission.
- Evidence of infection, and are too ill to be in school.

The District may request written authorization for school attendance from the student's health care provider once the condition is resolved.

In all proceedings related to this policy, the District shall respect the student's right to privacy. Only those persons with a direct need to know shall be informed of the specific nature of the student's condition. The determination of those who need to know shall be made by the Superintendent.

Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Comprehensive School Health Manual, 1995
FERPA
HIPAA
AIDS (ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME) RESOLUTION

Whereas, there is a great deal of concern in the communities about the history, symptoms, and transmissibility of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and AIDS Related Complex (ARC); and

Whereas, misinformation or lack of knowledge regarding the scope of the disease could result in improper decisions about children's attendance at school; and

Whereas, a comprehensive policy on AIDS and ARC has been developed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, which has been adopted by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) as policy; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Massachusetts Medical Society strongly recommends at this time that school systems in the Commonwealth appropriately implement an official policy governing school attendance by children and teachers with Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and AIDS Related Complex (ARC) using the guidelines currently developed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

NOTE: This resolution was adopted by the Massachusetts Medical Society in September 1986.

CROSS REF: JLCCA-E
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE FOR STUDENTS WITH HIV/AIDS EXHIBIT

Students with HIV/AIDS infection who are receiving medical follow-up pose no risk of transmitting HIV through casual contact in a school setting, and have the fundamental right to attend classes and participate in school programs and activities.

Those students unable to attend school shall have appropriate alternative education.

The diagnosis of HIV infection and AIDS is confidential and students and parent(s)/guardian(s) are not obligated to disclose it. The privacy of students with HIV infection or AIDS is protected by Massachusetts General Law protecting against unwarranted invasion of privacy, and prohibits health care providers and facilities from disclosing HIV test results without specific informed written consent of the person tested. School personnel are bound to protect confidentiality by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

A student or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) may wish to disclose the diagnosis of HIV infection or AIDS, though there is no obligation to do so. Notification should be by a process that would maximally assist patient confidentiality. This should be by direct person-to-person contact with the school nurse. If disclosure to other personnel who are directly involved with the student is necessary, specific, informed, written consent is required. This must specify what information is to be shared, the time frame for which it applies, and the names of the individuals to be informed.

The school nurse should keep the release of information consent form and any other HIV/AIDS-related information in a locked file separate from the school health record. It should list who has written permission to view it.

Standard (universal) precautions will be followed for care of all blood and body fluid spills in the schools. In-service training and/or information regarding standard precautions will be provided to all Ayer Shirley Regional School employees every three years. All new employees will be provided information during orientation or from their immediate supervisors.

In-service education of appropriate school personnel, such as school nurses and the school physician, should ensure that proper and current information about HIV/AIDS is available.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 214:1B: 111:70F; 112:12F; 129A: 135A
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) Privacy Rule, 45 CFR 164

REF: Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Comprehensive School Health Manual, 1995
AIDS/HIV Infection Policies for Early Childhood and School Settings, May 1993
MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY

A. Medication Administration by the School Nurse

All medication administration shall be performed in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MADPH) guidelines 105 CMR 210.00. The school nurse shall supervise the school medication administration program, including documentation, storage, and information dissemination to families.

Any prescription medication to be administered must have: 1) a signed Medication Order from a provider, 2) a container with a pharmacy label that matches the medication order, and 3) signed parent or guardian permission to administer the medication. Medication orders must be renewed at the beginning of each school year and whenever there is a change in prescription.

The school physician, in consultation with the school nurses, will provide yearly standing orders for certain medications to be administered based on nursing assessment and with written permission from a parent or guardian.

Per MA DPH CMR 105 210.008, a parent, guardian or parent/guardian-designated responsible adult shall deliver all prescription medications to be administered by school personnel or to be taken by self-medicating students to the school nurse or other responsible person designated by the school nurse. In extenuating circumstances, as determined by the school nurse, the prescription medication may be delivered by other persons; provided, however, that the nurse is notified in advance by the parent or guardian of the arrangement and the exact quantity of prescription medication being delivered to the school. Parent/Guardian is required to pick-up medication at the end of the school year.

B. Medication Self-Administration

The school nurse may permit self-administration of prescription medication by a student provided that the following requirements are met: 1) the school nurse evaluates the student’s health status and abilities and deems self-administration safe and appropriate; 2) the student, school nurse and parent/guardian enter into an agreement which specifies the conditions under which prescription medication may be self-administered; 3) the student has signed authorization from a provider and parent or guardian to carry and self-administer certain medications. Medications that may be carried by a student for self-administration include bronchodilators, epinephrine auto-injectors, cystic fibrosis digestive enzymes, insulin and glucose tabs.

For field trip purposes when a nurse is not available, a student may be trained to self-administer medication per the DPH training guidelines.

C. Naloxone (Narcan) Administration
The school district may, in conjunction with the School Physician and School Nurse Leader, stock nasal naloxone and trained medical personnel and first responders may administer it to a person suspected of an opioid overdose with respiratory depression or unresponsiveness.

D. Delegation of Epinephrine and Field Trip Medication to Unlicensed Personnel

Delegation of emergency epinephrine administration and field trip medication administration to unlicensed personnel may occur following: 1) training of the delegate by the school nurse in medication administration using content and competency testing developed and approved by the MADPH in consultation with the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing, and 2) signed permission from a parent or guardian for the trained delegate to administer specified medication. Delegation of the above will follow proper application to the MA DPH for delegation authority.

Massachusetts Dept. of Public Health Regulations: 105 CMR 210.000, 210.006; 210.007; 210.008; 244 CMR 3.00 THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:54B

As of March 14, 2016, Massachusetts Opioid Legislation also provides a “Good Samaritan” provision that protects staff and others when administering nasal naloxone. Ref.: M.G.L CHAPTER 94C, Section 34A-Massachusetts.
STUDENT SERVICES - GUIDANCE

The Ayer Shirley Regional School District encourages parents and students to utilize the full services of the guidance department. The guidance counselor and staff are available to assist students in their academic, vocational and emotional growth. The counselor is available by appointment before, during and after school, and is immediately available in crisis situations.

The guidance department in the Regional Schools provides academic, vocational, social, and personal counseling for all students by:

- assessing and understanding their abilities, aptitudes, educational and vocational needs
- increasing their understanding of educational and occupational opportunities and requirements
- helping them make the best possible use of these opportunities through the formulation and achievement of realistic goals
- helping students maintain normal personal social relations
- providing information useful to administrators, staff members and parents in planning and evaluating the school’s total program.

The guidance department also works with students and their families on a variety of individual and social issues. Often problems that are evidenced in society and the community are also evidenced in school. Problems with interpersonal relationships, family, addictions and other personal matters can be discussed with a member of the guidance department in a positive and confidential manner.

The goal of the counseling program is to work with students to develop the confidence and skills to deal with issues, make appropriate choices and seek out people and agencies that may help them to deal with difficulties.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:38A through 71:38F; 71:46G
603 CMR 26.04
REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The Massachusetts Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting statute, Chapter 119, Section 51A states that any school employee, “who, in his/her professional capacity shall have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years is suffering serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon him/her including sexual abuse, or from neglect, including malnutrition, shall notify the person in charge of such institution, school or faculty, whereupon such person in charge shall then become responsible to make the report in the manner required by this Section. Any such person so required to make such oral and written reports who fails to do so shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.”

To comply with the law, it is the policy of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District that any teacher or other mandated school employee who has reasonable cause to believe that a child’s physical or mental health or welfare may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect shall report to the in-house child abuse team which shall be set up in each individual school. This in-house child abuse team shall include the principal, the school nurse, counselor, other staff members whose membership might be helpful, and the person reporting the incident.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 119:51A
STUDENT DISMISSAL

1. All early dismissals will be by written parental/guardian authority only unless the student is 18 or older. Such dismissal notes will be approved before school begins on the day of the dismissal.

2. Parents and or guardians must report to the school office to dismiss a child.

3. No teacher will grant permission for a student to leave the school grounds during the school day. Such permission must be granted by the principal or assistant principal (where applicable).

4. Any student who rides a bus to school must have parental permission to walk home.
   A blanket permission can suffice.

5. Students will be released only to a parent or their designee unless prior arrangements have been made between parent and administration.
OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT OF STUDENTS

Work permits are issued through the high school guidance office. Any student who is employed must have a work permit regardless of the length of time of employment or place of employment. It is the student’s own responsibility to secure this permit before beginning work.

Revised Labor Laws stipulate that children 14 to 16 years of age who wish to obtain an employment permit must first obtain a Promise of Employment Form at the high school office. This form must be completed by the employer and must have the signature of a physician. The form will then be returned to the high school office with proof of age to obtain an employment permit. These permits are issued through the guidance office.

The student should:

1. Generally be 16 years old
2. Produce a valid birth certificate
3. Have verification of employment
4. Inform the guidance office of employment

Some under age employment will be considered.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. c. 149 §§ 86-89
STUDENT GIFTS AND SOLICITATIONS

Students will be discouraged from giving gifts to classroom teachers and other school personnel. There will be no formal exchange of gifts between students in the classroom.

Solicitation of funds for charitable purposes from students of the school district will be made only as approved by the Superintendent with notification to the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee.

Any organization desiring to distribute flyers or other materials to students in connection with fund drives may do so only with the approval of the Superintendent.


CROSS REFS: GBEBC, Staff Gifts and Solicitations
JJF, Student Fund-Raising Activities
KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools
KHB, Advertising in the Schools

First Reading, May 25, 2017
Adopted by ASRSD, June 6, 2017
The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee recognizes the need for student fees and class dues in order to fund certain school activities. It also recognizes that some students may not be able to pay these fees or dues. No student will be denied access into any program because of the inability to pay these supplementary charges.

A school may exact a fee, dues, fine, or charges only upon approval by the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee. All fees, dues, fines, and charges will be paid through the principal's office and will be non-refundable. Fee and dues structures shall be reviewed by the Committee on an annual basis and be established for the coming year prior to July 1.

**Hardship Waivers:** Upon application to the Principal of the middle school or high school, students approved, or eligible to be approved to receive free or reduced price meals under current federal laws and regulations may be eligible to pay a reduced fee only or be excused from payment of the fee. Persons seeking a hardship waiver, but denied waiver of the fee may appeal to the Superintendent of Schools within ten business days of the denial. The Superintendent's decision will be final and there shall be no further right of appeal.

All fees and dues must be paid before **October 1** of each school year and are non-refundable. All hardship waivers must be submitted to the building principal, in writing, prior to **October 1** of each school year.

**Student Activity/Club Fee:** This is a one time annual $50.00 fee for all sanctioned school clubs and activities. This fee will assist in subsidizing co-curricular and extracurricular activities. This fee will be allocated to the Student Activities Revolving account and be disbursed between all clubs. All club advisors must submit a list of their club’s participants to the main office prior to September 30 of each year so that invoices can be mailed to students. Any additions to a club’s list of students must be submitted to the main office by the club’s advisor within a week. This fee will be collected by the Principal.

**Student Athletic Fee:** This is an annual $200.00 fee for high school student athletes and $100 fee for middle school student athletes per year, and includes multiple sports. There is a $500.00 family cap. This fee will be allocated to the Athletic Revolving account and be monitored and collected under the direction of the Athletic Director.

**Class Dues:** This is an annual $15.00 fee that all student members of each class are required to pay on an annual basis. This fee will be used to defray the cost of senior activities and will be directly deposited into each classes’ revolving account. Students who apply for and are granted hardship waivers will be allowed to participate in class fundraisers in order to contribute their fee each year. Students who do not pay this fee or
participate in fundraising will not benefit from the reduced costs/discounts of senior activities. This fee will be collected by the Principal.

**Student Parking Fee:** This is an annual $100.00 fee allowing any student with a valid driver’s license and registration to park their vehicle on school grounds during the school day. This is privilege and may be revoked as a result of disciplinary action, and is non-refundable. All students parking on campus must obtain and complete a parking application from the main office. Once approved, and payment received, students will be issued a parking permit and assigned space. Transfer/sharing of permits and spaces is not allowed. Students enrolling in the Ayer Shirley Regional Schools for the first time after the beginning of the second semester of the school year may be allowed to pay 50% of the fee, but in no case will the fee be otherwise pro-rated or reduced unless approved by waiver as noted above. The ASRSD is not responsible for damage to or theft from student vehicles. This fee will be allocated to the Athletic Revolving account.

**Student Technology Fee:** This is a one time fee of $25 for each student who is issued a Chromebook or other comparable device as designated by the district technology department for use during the school year in a 1:1 technology model. Students and parents will sign the 1:1 technology use contract and submit the fee prior to receiving the device from the technology department. The collected fees will be used to maintain the technology devices during the normal course of use. In cases where the district believes that a device was purposefully abused or otherwise intentionally not maintained securely, the district reserves the right to charge the student and his/her family a fee for the replacement of the device.

First Reading, June 6, 2017

Adopted by ASRSD, June 21, 2017 1st Read
STUDENT RECORDS

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school district to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student’s parents or legal guardian and/or the student in accordance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information.

The Superintendent will provide for the proper administration of student records in keeping with state and federal requirements, and shall obtain a copy of the state student records regulations (603 CMR 23.00). The temporary record of each student enrolled on or after June 2002 will be destroyed no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the Regional School District. Written notice to the eligible student and his/her parent of the approximate date of destruction of the temporary record and their right to receive the information in whole or in part, shall be made at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal. The student’s transcript may only be destroyed sixty (60) years following his/her graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school district.

Notwithstanding Section 444(a)(5)(B) of the General Education Provisions Act, any local educational agency receiving assistance under NCLB shall provide, on a request made by military recruiters or an institution of higher education, access to secondary school students’ names, addresses, and telephone listings. A secondary school student or the parent of the student may request that the student’s name, address, and telephone listing not be released without prior written parental consent.

The Committee wishes to make clear that all individual student records of the school district are confidential. This extends to giving out individual addresses and telephone numbers.

LEGAL REFS:

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974,
P.L. 93-380, Amended
P.L. 103-382, 1994
M.G.L. 66:10 71:34A, B, D, E, H
Board of Education Student Record Regulations adopted 2/10/77, June 1995 as amended June 2002.
603 CMR: Dept. Of Education 23.00 through 23:12 also
STUDENT RECORDS

603 CMR 23.00 is promulgated by the Board of Education pursuant to its powers under M.G.L.c.71, s.34D which directs that “the board of education shall adopt regulations relative to the maintenance of student records by the public elementary and secondary schools of the Commonwealth,” and under M.G.L.c.71, s.34F which directs that “the board of education shall adopt regulations relative to the retention, duplication and storage of records under the control of school committees, and except as otherwise required by law may authorize the periodic destruction of any such records at reasonable times.” 603 CMR 23.00 was originally promulgated on February 10, 1975, and was reviewed and amended in June 1995. 603 CMR is in conformity with federal and state statutes regarding maintenance of and access to student records, and is to be construed harmoniously with such statutes.

Application of Rights

603 CMR 23.00 is promulgated to insure parents’ and students’ rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of students’ records and to assist local school systems in adhering to the law. 603 CMR 23.00 should be liberally construed for these purposes.

(1) These rights shall be the rights of the student upon reaching 14 years of age or upon entering the ninth grade, whichever comes first. If a student is under the age of 14 and has not yet entered the ninth grade, these rights shall belong to the student’s parent.

(2) If a student is from 14 through 17 years or has entered the ninth grade, both the student and his/her parent, or either one acting alone, shall exercise these rights.

(3) If a student is 18 years of age or older, s/he alone shall exercise these rights, subject to the following. The parent may continue to exercise the rights until expressly limited by such student. Such student may limit the rights and provisions of 603 CMR 23.00 which extend to his/her parent, except the right to inspect the student record, by making such request in writing to the school principal or Superintendent of Schools who shall honor such request and retain a copy of it in the student record. Pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, s.34E, the parent of a student may inspect the student record regardless of the student’s age.
(4) Notwithstanding 603 CMR 23.01(1) and 23.01(2), nothing shall be construed to mean that a school committee cannot extend the provisions of 603 CMR 23.00 to students under the age of 14 or to students who have not yet entered the ninth grade.

**STUDENT RECORDS REGULATIONS**

**Definition of Terms**

The various terms as used in 603 CMR 23.00 are defined below:

**Access:** shall mean inspection or copying of a student record, in whole or in part.

**Authorized school personnel:** shall consist of three groups:

(1) School administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the Committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching, counseling and/or diagnostic capacity. Any such personnel who are not employed directly by the Committee shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties.

(2) Administrative office staff and clerical personnel, including operators of data processing equipment or equipment that produces microfilm/microfiche, who are either employed by the Committee or are employed under a Committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record. Such personnel shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties.

(3) The evaluation team that evaluates a student.

**Eligible student:** shall mean any student who is 14 years of age or older or who has entered 9\textsuperscript{th} grade, unless the Regional School Committee acting pursuant to 603 CMR 23.01(4) extends the rights and provisions of 603 CMR 23.00 to students under the age of 14 or to students who have not yet entered 9\textsuperscript{th} grade.

**Evaluation Team:** shall mean the team, which evaluates school-age children pursuant to M.G.L.c.71B (St. 1972, c.766) and 603 CMR 28.00.

**Parent:** shall mean a student’s father or mother, or guardian, or person or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the child in place of or in conjunction with the father, mother, or guardian. Any parent who by court order does not have physical custody of the student, is considered a non custodial parent for purposes of M.G.L. c. 71, s.34H and 603 CMR 23.00. This includes parents who by court order do not reside with or supervise the student, even for short periods of time.
Release: shall mean the oral or written disclosure, in whole or in part, of information in a student record.

School-age child with special needs: shall have the same definition as that given in M.G.L. c. 71B (St. 1972, c.766) and 603 CMR 28.00.

School Committee: shall include a school committee, a board of trustees of a charter school, a board of trustees of a vocational-technical school, a board of directors of an educational collaborative and the governing body of an M.G.L. c.71B (Chapter 766) approved private school.

Student: shall mean any person enrolled or formerly enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school or any person age three or older about whom a school committee maintains information. The term as used in 603 CMR 23.00 shall not include a person about whom a school committee maintains information relative only to the person’s employment by the Committee.

The student record: shall consist of the transcript and the temporary record, including all information, recording and computer tapes, microfilm, microfiche, or any other materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics concerning a student that is organized on the basis of the student’s name or in a way that such student may be individually identified, and that is kept by the public schools of the Commonwealth. The terms as used in 603 CMR 23.00 shall mean all such information and materials regardless of where they are located, except for the information and materials specifically exempted by 603 CMR 23.04.

The temporary record: shall consist of all the information in the student record which is not contained in the transcript. This information clearly shall be of importance to the educational process. Such information may include standardized test results, class rank (when applicable), extracurricular activities, and evaluations by teachers, counselors, and other school staff.

Third party: shall mean any person or private or public agency, authority, or organization other than the eligible student, his/her parent, or authorized school personnel.

Log of Access: A log shall be kept as part of each student’s record. If parts of the student record are separately located, a separate log shall be kept with each part. The log shall indicate all persons who have obtained access to the student record, stating: the name, position and signature of the person releasing the information; the name, position and, if a third party, the affiliation if any, of the person who is to receive the information; the date of access; the parts of the record to which access was obtained; and the purpose of such access. Unless student record information is to be deleted or released, this log requirement shall not apply to:
(a) Authorized school personnel under 603 CMR 23.02(9)(a) who inspect the student record;

(b) Administrative office staff and clerical personnel under 603 CMR 23.02(9)(b), who add information to or obtain access to the student record; and

(c) School nurses who inspect the student health record.

Access of Third Parties: Except for the provisions of 603 CMR 23.07(4)(a) through 23.07(4)(h), no third party shall have access to information in or from a student record without the specific, informed written consent of the eligible student or the parent. When granting consent, the eligible student or parent shall have the right to designate which parts of the student record shall be released to the third party. A copy of such consent shall be retained by the eligible student or parent and a duplicate placed in the temporary record. Except for the information described in 603 CMR 23.07(4)(a), personally identifiable information from a student record shall only be released to a third party on the condition that he/she will not permit any other third party to have access to such information without the written consent of the eligible student or parent.

(a) A school may release the following directory information: a student’s name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans without the consent of the eligible student or parent; provided that the school gives public notice of the types of information it may release under 603 CMR 23.07 and allows eligible students and parents a reasonable time after such notice to request that this information not be released without the prior consent of the eligible student or parent. Such notice may be included in the routine information letter required under 603 CMR 23.10.

Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents: As required by M.G.L. c.71, s.34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

(a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless:
    1. The parent has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the student or to the custodial parent, or
    2. The parent has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation, or
    3. The parent’s access to the student or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record.

(b) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the principal annually. The initial request must include the following:
1. A certified copy of the court order or judgment relative to the custody of
the student that either indicates that the requesting parent is eligible to
receive access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a), or a certified copy of
a court order specifically ordering that the student records be made
available to the non-custodial parent, and
2. An affidavit from the non-custodial parent that said court order or
judgment remain in effect and that there is no temporary or permanent
order restricting access to the custodial parent or any child in the
custodial parent’s custody.

(c) The non-custodial parent must submit a written request for access each year
stating that said parent continues to be entitled to unsupervised visitation with
the student and is eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a).

(d) Upon receipt of the request (initial and annual) the school must immediately
notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the
primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial
parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the
principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to
obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a).

(e) The school must delete the address and telephone number of the student and
custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In
addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to
enroll the student in another school.

(f) Upon receipt of a court order which prohibits the distribution of information
pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, s.34H, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent
that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial
parent.

At least once during every school year, the school shall publish and distribute to students
and their parents in their primary language a routine information letter informing them of
the following:

(a) The standardized testing programs and research studies to be conducted during
the year and other routine information to be collected or solicited from the
student during the year.

(b) The general provisions of 603 CMR 23.00 regarding parent and student rights,
and that copies of 603 CMR 23.00 are available to them from the school.

LEGAL REFS:    Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974,
P.L. 93-380, Amended
P.L. 103-382, 1994
M.G.L. 66:10 71:34 A, B, D, E, H

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Student Photographs

Individual schools may arrange, in cooperation with the school’s parent organization, student council, designated student committee, or a staff committee, to take individual student and/or class group pictures.

Individual and/or class group pictures may be taken at the school facility and during the regular school day hours. The pictures shall be made available for purchase by students and/or parents on a voluntary basis. The building principal or his/her designee shall have final authority in authorizing the picture-taking program and will be responsible for overseeing the process.

Students may be required to have an individual picture taken for the cumulative file or identification purposes; however, no student shall be pressured or required to purchase photographs.

The purpose of the policy is to:

Enhance the safety of students through visual identification in an emergency situation.

Facilitate the social, educational, and administrative activities conducted in the school.

Provide a service to parents and students.

Allow the profits gained from the picture-taking program to be used by the sponsoring group and authorized by the building principal.
SECTION K
COMMUNITY RELATIONS

KA  SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS
KBA  SCHOOL/PARENT RELATIONS GOALS
KBBA  NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS’ RIGHTS
KBE  RELATIONS WITH PARENT ORGANIZATIONS
KCB  COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING
KCD  PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS
KDB  PUBLICS RIGHT TO KNOW
KDD  NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES
KE  PUBLIC COMPLAINTS
KEB  PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL
KEB-R  PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL REGULATIONS
KEC  PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM OR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
KF  COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES
KF-R  USE OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES
SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee believes that the public schools belong to the people who created them by consent and support them by taxation, and the support of the people must be based on their understanding of and their participation in the aims and efforts of the schools. Therefore, the Committee declares its intent:

1. To keep local citizens regularly and thoroughly informed through all available channels of communication on the policies, programs, problems, and planning of the school district, and to carry out this policy through its own efforts, those of the Superintendent, and such information officers as may be appointed.

2. To solicit the studied counsel of the people through advisory committees selected from the communities and appointed to consider problems that vitally affect the future of our children.
SCHOOL/PARENT RELATIONS GOALS

It is the general goal of the District to foster relationships with parents, which encourage cooperation between the home and school in establishing and achieving common educational goals for students.

While parents are individually responsible for their children, the District provides direct services of education and indirect services of childcare for students during the time when they are within the supervision of school personnel. Consistent with these shared responsibilities and as appropriate to the maturity of the student, members of the school staff will consult with parents regarding student progress and achievement, methods to enhance student development, and matters of correction.

Additionally, parental involvement in the schools is encouraged through regular communication with the school principal and staff, the parent/teacher organizations, the school volunteer program, and other opportunities for participation in school activities and District programs.

To foster relationships with parents that encourage the home and school to work together to establish and achieve common educational goals for students, the Superintendent and the professional staff will:

1. Consult with and encourage parents to share in school planning and in setting objectives and evaluating programs.
2. Help parents understand the educative process and their role in promoting it.
3. Provide for parent understanding of school operations.
4. Provide opportunities for parents to be informed of their child’s development and the criteria for its measurement.

CROSS REF: KBE Relations with Parent Organizations
NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS’ RIGHTS

As required by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, § 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Department of Education Regulations. The school district will follow the law and the regulations developed by the Massachusetts DESE to standardize the process by which public schools provide student records to parents who do not have physical custody of their children ("non-custodial parents").

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

(a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless the school or district has been given documentation that:
   1. The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
   2. The parent has been denied visitation, or
   3. The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
   4. There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

(b) The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a).

(c) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal.

(d) Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07 (5)(a).

(e) The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.

(f) Upon receipt of a court order which prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. 71, § 34H, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:34D; 71:34H
RELATIONS WITH PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

To foster relationships with parents that encourage the home and school to work together to establish and achieve common educational goals for students, the Superintendent and the professional staff will:

1. Consult with and encourage parents to share in school planning and in setting objectives and evaluating programs.

2. Help parents understand the educational process and their role in promoting it.

3. Provide for parent understanding of school operations.

4. Provide opportunities for parents to be informed of their child's development and the criteria for its measurement.

To accomplish the above and to enhance communications between parents and school officials, the Committee encourages the maintenance of formal parent organizations at each school building. For this purpose the Committee will officially recognize a parent organization at each building. These procedures will be observed:

1. Organizations will be officially recognized upon request by the building principal who will file a copy of the organizational papers with the Superintendent.

1. A vote, open to all parents of children enrolled, will designate the organization to be recognized if more than one organization makes the request.

CROSS REF: KBA School/Parent Relations Goals
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee endorses the concept that community participation in the affairs of the schools is essential if the school district and communities are to maintain mutual confidence and respect and work together to improve the quality of education for students. It therefore intends to exert every effort to identify the desires of the communities and to be responsive, through its actions, to those desires.

All citizens will be encouraged to express ideas, concerns, and/or questions about the schools to district administration, to any appointed advisory bodies, and to the Committee.

Residents who are specially qualified because of interest, training, experience, or personal characteristics, will be encouraged to assume an active role in school affairs. From time to time, these people may be invited by the Committee to act as advisers, either individually or in groups.

The Committee and the staff will give substantial weight to the advice they receive from individuals and community groups interested in the schools, particularly from those individuals and groups they have invited to advise them regarding specific problems, but will use their best judgment in arriving at decisions.

CROSS REF: BDF, Advisory Committees to the Regional School Committee
PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS

The Superintendent will have authority to accept gifts and offers of equipment for the schools in the name of the Committee when the gift is of educational value.

Gifts that would involve changes in school plants or sites will be subject to Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee approval.

Gifts will automatically become the property of the school district. Any gift of cash, whether or not intended by the donor for a specific purpose, will be handled as a separate account and expended at the discretion of the Regional School Committee, as provided by law.

The Superintendent will bring donations to the Committee for their formal approval. The Committee directs the Superintendent to assure that an appropriate expression of thanks is given all donors.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37A

First Reading, November 1, 2016
Second Reading, December 21, 2016
Adopted by ASRSD, December 21, 2016
PUBLICS RIGHT TO KNOW

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee is a public servant, and its meetings and records will be a matter of public information except as such meetings and records pertain to individual personnel and other classified matters.

The Regional School Committee supports the right of the people to know about the programs and services of their district and will make every effort to disseminate information. All requests for information will be acted on fairly, completely and expeditiously.

The official minutes of the Committee, its written policies and regulations, and its financial records will be open for inspection at the office of the Superintendent by any citizen desiring to examine them during hours when the office is open. No records pertaining to individual students or staff members will be released for inspection by the public or any unauthorized persons by the Superintendent or other persons responsible for the custody of confidential files. The exception to this will be information about an individual employee (or student) that has been authorized in writing for release by the employee (or student, or student's parent).

Each building administrator is authorized to use all means available to keep parents and others in the particular school's community informed about the school's program and activities.

It is the intention of the Regional School Committee to post meeting agendas, minutes and other related district documents in a timely manner.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 4:7; 66:10; 39:23B

CROSS REFS: BEDG, Minutes
             GBJ, Personnel Records
             JRA, Student Records
NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES

Every effort will be made to assist the press and other communications media to obtain complete and adequate coverage of the programs, problems, planning, and activities of the school district.

All representatives of the media will be given equal access to information about the schools. General releases of interest to the communities will be made available to all the media simultaneously. There will be no exclusive releases except as media representatives request information on particular programs, plans or problems.

In order that school district publicity is given wide coverage and is coordinated into a common effort and purpose, the following procedures will be followed in giving official information to the news media:

1. The Ayer Shirley School Committee chairman will be the official spokesman for the Committee, except as this duty is delegated to the Superintendent.

2. News releases that are of a system-wide or a sensitive nature or pertain to established Committee policy are the responsibility of the Superintendent.

3. News releases that are of concern to only one school, or to an organization of one school, are the responsibility of the principal of that particular school.

While it is impossible to know how news releases will be treated by the press, every possible effort should be made to obtain coverage of school activities that will create and maintain a dignified and professionally responsible image for the school district.
PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Although no member of the community will be denied the right to have their complaints heard and investigated, they will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution. Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

The Committee believes that complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints will be as follows:

Level 1 Teacher (if unresolved, move to Level 2)
Level 2 School Building Administrator & Teacher (if unresolved, move to Level 3)
Level 3 Superintendent, Teacher and Administrator

Matters referred to the Superintendent must be in writing informing of the issue in question and steps previously taken.

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee expects the professional staff to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complainant.
PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Complaints about school personnel will be investigated fully and fairly. However, before any such complaint is investigated, the complainant must submit his/her complaint in writing. Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

Whenever a complaint is made directly to the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee as a whole or to a Regional School Committee member as an individual, it will be referred to the school administration for study and possible solution.

The Superintendent will develop, for approval by the Committee, procedures that assure prompt and fair attention to complaints against school personnel. The procedures will require that an employee who is the object of a complaint be informed promptly and be afforded the opportunity to present the facts as s/he sees them.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 76:5

CROSS REF: BEC, Executive Sessions
PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL REGULATIONS

The following procedures are established to ensure that a citizen's complaint is given respectful attention and that the integrity of the educational program is upheld. "Complaint" in this regulation will be restricted in meaning to that criticism of particular school employees by a citizen of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District which includes or implies a demand for action by school authorities. Other comments and suggestions will be referred informally to affected personnel.

1. If a complaint comes first to the person against whom it is directed, s/he will listen courteously and may try to resolve the difficulty by explaining the background and educational purpose involved. If the complaint remains unsatisfied, the employee will refer him/her to the building principal or other immediate supervisor to have his/her views considered further. Whether the complaint terminates with the individual staff member involved or seems likely to go further, the staff member will immediately inform his/her supervisor of the complaint.

2. If a complaint comes first to the principal or other supervisor of the person criticized, s/he should listen courteously or acknowledge a letter promptly and politely, but should make no commitments, admissions of guilt, or threats. If the complaint involves a particular employee, the supervisor should suggest a conference between the complainant and the person criticized and should inform that person immediately of the complaint.

If the complainant has already met with the person criticized and remains unsatisfied, the supervisor should invite the complainant to file his/her complaint in writing and offer to send him/her the appropriate form regarding a school employee's behavior, character or qualifications.

3. If a complaint comes first to any other school employee, that employee will refer the complainant to the person criticized or his/her immediate supervisor and immediately inform both.

4. No further action on the complaint should be taken unless the complainant submits the complaint in writing.

5. When a written complaint form is received, the principal or other supervisor will schedule a conference with himself/herself, the complainant, the person criticized, and if advisable, the department chairman or other personnel that either the supervisor or the person criticized feels could contribute resolution of the problem.

6. If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the conference above, s/he should then be referred to the Superintendent, who may handle the complaint personally or refer it to other personnel, as s/he may see fit.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 76:5
PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM OR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee, though it is ultimately responsible for all curriculum and instructional materials (including library books), recognizes the need and right of students to free access to many different types of books and materials. It also recognizes the right of the professional staff to select books and other materials supportive of the school district’s educational philosophy and goals.

Criticism of a book or other materials used in the schools may be expected from time to time. In such instances:

1. If a parent requests that his/her own child not read a given book, the teacher and/or school administrator should resolve the situation, perhaps by arranging for use of alternative material meeting essentially the same instructional purpose. This does not apply, however, to basic program texts and materials that the Regional School Committee has adopted.

2. The Committee will not permit any individual or group to exercise censorship over instructional materials and library collections, but recognizes that at times a reevaluation of certain material may be desirable. Should an individual or group ask to have any book or other material withdrawn from school use,

   a. The person who objects to the book or other material will be asked to sign a complaint on a standard form on which s/he will document his/her criticism.

   b. During the investigation of the complaint, the challenged material will remain in circulation.

   c. Following receipt of the formal complaint, the Superintendent will provide for a reevaluation of the material in question, s/he will arrange for the appointment of a review committee from among the faculty to consider the complaint.

   d. The Superintendent will review the complaint and the review committee’s reevaluation and will render a decision in the matter. Should the decision be unsatisfactory to the complainant, s/he may appeal it to the Regional School Committee.

In summary, the Ayer Shirley Regional Committee assumes final responsibility for all books and instructional materials it makes available to students; it holds its professional staff accountable for their proper selection. It recognizes rights of individual parents with respect to controversial materials used by their own children; it will provide for the reevaluation of materials in library collections upon formal request. On the other hand, students' right to learn and the freedom of teachers to teach will be respected.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 76:5
COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

The providing of quality functional school buildings and facilities is positive proof of the communities’ interest and dedication to all aspects of a well rounded educational program for all of the citizens. Since the Ayer Shirley Regional Schools are designed and operated to serve this important beginning phase of the total educational structure, first consideration must necessarily be given to the needs of the school age children. In accordance with this fundamental principle, regular school and related functions rate the highest priority in the extended use of the buildings and facilities. The Regional School Committee has determined two classifications of users with school related organizations (Class 1) usually not being charged for the use of school facilities. Other users will pay pre-determined fees for the use of school facilities.

Approval for public use shall be consistent with recognized needs and values for their intended use, in compliance with the Town of Ayer and the Town of Shirley lease agreements, and in conformity with state laws. In this connection, Section 71 of Chapter 71 of Massachusetts General Laws reads in pertinent part as follows:

“For the purpose of promoting the usefulness of public school property the School Committee of any town may conduct such educational and recreational activities in or upon school property under its control, and, subject to such regulations as it may establish, and consistently and without interference with the use of the premises for school purpose, shall allow the use thereof by individuals and associations for such educational, recreational, social, civic, philanthropic, and like purposes as it deems for the interest of the community. The affiliation of any such association with a religious organization shall not disqualify such association from being allowed such a use for such a purpose. “The use of such property as a place of assemblage for citizens to hear candidates for public office shall be considered a civic purpose within the meaning of this section. A School Committee shall award concessions for food at any field under its control only to the highest responsible bidder.”

Programs and activities having as their goal, cultural, educational, charitable, philanthropic, civic, and recreational values of non-commercial or non-personal nature are encouraged and will be given careful consideration by the school district when requests for school facilities are made.
PUBLIC SOLICITATIONS IN THE SCHOOLS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will place limits on commercial activities and fund-raising activities in the schools for the following reasons:

1. The school district should provide students, parents, and employees some measure of protection from commercial and charitable fund-raising organizations.

2. The school district should not give the public the impression of generally endorsing or sanctioning commercial and fund-raising activities.

3. Commercial and fund-raising activities may disrupt school routine and may cause loss of instructional time.

Following these guiding statements, the Superintendent and principals may permit commercial or fund-raising activities related to the objectives of the schools with the following exceptions:

1. No direct solicitation of students or employees may take place without permission of the Superintendent and with notification to the Regional School Committee.

2. No general or class distribution of commercial or fund-raising literature may take place without the Superintendent's permission and with notification to the Regional School Committee.

3. The Regional School Committee will work to establish strong community partnerships with local groups in an effort to increase revenue. These efforts will be consistent with state and federal regulations.

For the purposes of this policy, local PTA and PTO groups and groups representing school district employees will be considered "school groups" and will be governed by Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee policy solicitations.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 44:53A
CROSS REFS: GBEBC, Staff Gifts and Solicitations
JJE, Student Fund-Raising Activities
JP, Student Gifts and Solicitations
VISITORS TO THE SCHOOLS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee encourages parents and guests to visit classrooms to observe and learn about the instructional programs taking place in our schools. Such visits can prove most beneficial in promotion of greater school-home cooperation and community understanding of how we carry out the school district's mission and goals.

Visits by parents to several classrooms in a given grade for the purposes of comparing teaching styles to provide a basis for a request for student assignment to a particular teacher are strongly discouraged because the school district's policy of assigning a student to a particular class is the sole responsibility of the building principal in consultation with the staff of that school.

The following guidelines to classroom and school visits should be followed:

1. Parental requests for classroom visitations will be welcomed as long as the educational process is not disrupted. To this end we request that such requests be made at least forty-eight hours in advance to allow for proper arrangements to be made.

2. The building principal has the authority to determine the number, times, and dates of observations by visitors. This will be done in consultation with staff members so as to give adequate notice to the staff members of the impending visits.

3. For security purposes it is requested that all visitors report to the principal's office upon entering and leaving the building and sign a guest log showing arrival and departure times. Teachers are encouraged to ask visitors if they have registered in the principal's office.

4. Under ordinary circumstances classroom observations will be strongly discouraged during the first three weeks of school in September and during the month of June.

5. Any student who wishes to have a guest in school MUST ask permission of one of the administrative staff 24 HOURS in advance of the proposed visit. If permission is granted, the guest is expected to follow the standards of behavior expected of all students. Upon arrival the guest must register in the office. Any guest who fails to comply with student regulations will be asked to
leave the school building and grounds immediately.
RELATIONS WITH BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee recognizes that the endeavors and objectives of booster organizations and similar groups can be a valuable means of stimulating interest in and endorsement of the aims and achievements of Regional School District.

Generally, actions initiated by boosters provide the atmosphere and climate to foster and encourage community-school relationships.

Booster-proposed plans, projects, or activities must be evaluated and promoted in light of their stated contribution to the academic as well as the athletic and fine arts programs of the schools. Care must be taken to avoid compromising or diluting the responsibilities and authorities of the Regional School Committee.
RELATIONS WITH SENIOR CITIZENS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee shall make available a Golden Ayer Shirley Pass to any member of the communities who are 65 or older. The pass shall entitle the resident to attend free of charge any and all district-sponsored events except graduation.

For reserved seat events, the bearer shall be required to obtain a ticket before the event on a first-come first-served basis. A qualified person may obtain the pass in person with proper identification at the Superintendent’s office.
RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES

Cooperation with law enforcement agencies is essential for the protection of students, for maintaining a safe environment in the district schools, and for safeguarding all school property.

Relationships between the schools and officials of law enforcement agencies in investigative matters concerning pupils will take into consideration the respective roles of the schools and law enforcement agencies in assisting and protecting the interests of the community, and ensuring the rights of all concerned.

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee also recognizes the potential enrichment that law enforcement agencies can make in the educational program.

Efforts should be made to develop and maintain a healthy attitude toward law enforcement agencies and personnel to promote better understanding and communication.
RELATIONS WITH PLANNING AUTHORITIES

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will participate in local and state planning functions that could directly affect district schools and their immediate environment.

The Superintendent or designee will keep the Regional School Committee informed of planning matters bearing directly on the operation of district schools or school-sponsored programs, and will undertake action on behalf of the Committee to influence matters in the best interests of the students, the schools and the district.
RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee and its administrative officers welcome all who seek to serve the residents of the community and will participate with them in the planning and execution of such projects as will be mutually beneficial for students.

It is Committee policy that administration inform elected and appointed officials of the local and county government of the desire to work cooperatively for improved services.
SECTION L
EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS

LA       EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS GOALS
LB       RELATIONS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS
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EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS GOALS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee appreciates the place and importance of an educational system in its greater environment, which includes other organizations and institutions dedicated to education. It believes that much is gained through cooperative endeavors with other agencies.

In order to make a maximum contribution to education, within the school system and to other educational agencies, the Committee establishes these broad goals:

1. To encourage liaison with other educational agencies.

2. To supply educational services to and/or share with other educational agencies.
RELATIONS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee will cooperate with other schools and with local, state, and regional agencies and organizations to:

1. Seek solutions of educational problems of common concern.
2. Offer support services of high quality to our children.
3. Equalize educational opportunities for all children.
4. Acquire federal and state grants.
5. Promote local school system involvement in state and federal decision-making.

This cooperation may extend to research, providing transportation for children to special schools and hospitals, coordination of curriculum, exchange of information and data, construction of facilities that may be efficiently used on a cooperative basis, and the coordination of school calendars and activities.

Before joining any cooperative programs, education collaborative, or participating in any joint educational services with other school systems, the Regional School Committee wants to be sure that in all instances the best interests of our school children will be served. In carrying out this policy the Superintendent will include in reports to the Committee an evaluation of the desirability and feasibility of cooperation with other schools and agencies on matters of mutual interest.

Private Schools

In accordance with state law, the Regional School Committee will approve a private school when it is satisfied that the instructional program of the school equals that of the town's public schools in thoroughness, efficiency, and progress made.

The Committee recognizes that many worthwhile contributions are made to this community by parochial and other private schools. Therefore, it will cooperate with these schools in matters of mutual benefit when law does not expressly prohibit this cooperation.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 40:4E; 71:48; 71:71D; 71B:4; 74:4 through 74:7A; 76:1
STUDENT TEACHING AND INTERNSHIPS

The Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee encourages the administration to cooperate with teacher-training institutions in the placement of student teachers in the school system. All initial arrangements with the colleges and universities will be subject to Committee approval.

The Committee authorizes the administration to honor the reasonable rules and training guidelines of the sending institution.

In all arrangements made with colleges and universities, the school district will be given the privilege of interviewing and accepting or rejecting individual candidates for student teaching and internships.

The school administration will devise procedures for evaluating the performance of student teachers that meet requirements of the sending institution and fit with the Regional School Committee's policies.