



2021 - 2022
EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS DIRECTORY

District web site address – www.belchertownps.org

Central Office 14 Maple St.

Main Number/Superintendent	323-0423
Central Office FAX	323-0448
Business Office	323-0424
Business Office FAX	323-0481
Business Manager	323-0423x111
Administrative Assistant	323-0423x118
Dir. of Building & Grounds	323-0423x102
Building & Grounds FAX	323-0448
Student Support Services Dept.	323-0425
SSSD FAX	323-0427
Teaching & Learning	323-0423
Central Office Anon. Report Line	323-0460

Central Office Hours

General Assistance:	8:00 am-4:00 pm
School Business Assistance:	7:30 am-4:00 pm
Special Education Assistance:	7:00 am-3:00 pm

Cold Spring School 57 South Main St.

Main Number	323-0428
Office FAX	323-0493

(follow prompts on automated system)

Web site: <http://www.belchertownps.org/css>

Swift River Elementary School 57 State St.

Main Number	323-0471
Principal	323-0473
Asst. Principal	323-0476
Guidance	323-0475
Nurse Leader	323-0471
School Nurse	323-0474
Office FAX	323-0492
Absentee Call-In Line	323-0455

Web site: <http://www.belchertownps.org/swift>

Chestnut Hill Community School 59 State St.

Main Number	323-0437
FAX	323-0459

Automated system:

- 0-Operator
- 2-list of school events
- 3-Nurse
- 4-Guidance
- 5-Kitchen
- 6-Music/Band
- 7-Student Absentee Line

Web site: <http://www.belchertownps.org/chcs>

Jabish Brook Middle School 62 N. Washington St.

Main Number	323-0433
	323-0434
Office FAX	323-0450
Guidance FAX	323-0464

Automated system

- 0-Operator
- 1-Student Absentee Line
- 2-Guidance Mr. Morton
- 3-Guidance Ms. Parker
- 4-Nurse
- 5-Music/Band
- 6-Kitchen
- Teacher Voicemail – Dial Room #

Web site: <http://www.belchertownps.org/jabish>

Belchertown High School 142 Springfield Rd.

Main Numbers	323-9419
	323-9420 Office
	Press 0
Dial by Last Name	Press *
Absentee Call-In Line	Press 1
Library	Press 6
Cafeteria	Press 7
Dir. of Athletics	Press 8
Current Events	Press 9

Main Office Fax	323-9406
Guidance	323-9351
Guidance Fax	323-9353
School Nurse	323-9508
Library Fax	323-9356

Web site: <http://www.belchertownps.org/bhs>

School-Site Office Hours

CSS (Early Childhood Center)	7:30 am-4:00 pm
SRE (Elementary School)	7:30 am-4:00 pm
CHCS (Intermediate School)	7:30 am-4:00 pm
JBMS (Middle School)	7:00 am-3:30 pm
BHS (High School)	7:00 am-3:30 pm

Office of Information Technology 7 Berkshire Ave.

Main Number	213-0800/0801
Help Desk	helpdesk@belchertownps.org

IT Office Hours 7:00 am-4:00 pm

First Student Transportation

Main Numbers:	323-8316/323-8317
FAX:	323-8318

BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2021-2022 PARENT CALENDAR

2021

August 17.....BHS New Student Orientation
 August 20.....New Employee Orientation
 August 20.....JBMS Visiting Day
 August 23-24.....Full Day PD
 August 25.....First Day for Students
 August 25, 26, 27.....Kindergarten Screening
 August 30.....Kindergarten & Pre-K Visiting Day
 August 31 & Sept. 1.....Kindergarten Staggered First Day
 August 31.....Pre-K First Day
 September 2.....All Kindergarten Students Report
 September 6.....Labor Day: No School
 October 8.....Early Release: PD
 October 11.....Columbus Day: No school
 October 29.....Grs. 7-12 First Term Grades Close
 November 2.....Full Day PD: No school
 November 10.....Grs. 7-12 First Term Report Cards
 November 11.....Veteran's Day: No school
 November 19.....Grs. 1-6 First Term Grades Close
 November 24-26.....Thanksgiving Recess: No school
 November 30.....Kindergarten Grades Close
 December 3.....Grs. 1-6 First Term Report Cards
 December 7.....K. Progress Reports go Home
 December 23-January 3.....Winter Recess: No school



Open House Schedule:

CSS- September 30, 2021
 SRE- August 24, 2021
 CHCS- September 2, 2021
 JBMS- September 28, 2021
 BHS- September 30, 2021

2022

January 14th.....Early Release: PD
 January 17.....M.L. King Day: No school
 January 21.....Grs. 7-12 Second Term Grades Close
 January 28.....Preschool Progress Reports Go Home
 February 2.....Grs. 7-12 Second Term Report Cards
 February 21-25.....February Recess: No school
 March 11.....Grs. 1-6 Second Term Grades Close
 March 11.....Kindergarten Grades Close
 March 18.....Grs. 1-6 Second Term Report Cards
 March 18.....Early Release: PD
 March 18.....K. Progress Reports go Home
 April 8.....Grs. 7-12 Third Term Grades Close
 April 15.....Good Friday: No school
 April 18-22.....Spring Recess: No school
 April 27.....Grs. 7-12 Third Term Report Cards
 May 27.....Early Release: PD
 May 30.....Memorial Day: No School
 June 2.....BHS- Class of 2022 Graduation
 June 10.....Last Day (No Snow Days)
 June 17.....Last Day (5 Snow Days)
 Grs. 7-12 Fourth Term Grades Close last day of School

AUGUST						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

NOVEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

FEBRUARY						
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27	28					

MAY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

SEPTEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

MARCH						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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27	28	29	30	31		

JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

OCTOBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

APRIL						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Early Release: PD release times
 Gr. 7-12 dismissed at noon
 Gr. K-6 dismissed at 1 pm
 No afternoon Pre-K
 Lunch will be served

Approved by School Committee: 05/11/2021

PART I

MISSION STATEMENT

The Belchertown Public School Committee has established the school system's mission as follows:

In the pursuit of excellence and the development of life-long learners, it is the mission of the Belchertown Public Schools to challenge and engage all students in a respectful, positive learning environment that fosters personal, social and academic growth in order to achieve success in a global society.

VISION STATEMENT

Belchertown students, both individually and collaboratively, will be innovative thinkers, problem solvers and unique, creative contributors to their community and the world.

CORE VALUES

Respect	<i>Demonstrate regard for ideas, feelings, and traditions of others</i>
Responsibility	<i>Doing what is expected and required</i>
Relationship	<i>Establishing and maintaining personal connections</i>
Rigor	<i>Setting high expectations and striving for excellence</i>
Reflection	<i>Carefully considering ones thoughts and actions</i>
Resilience	<i>The ability to recover and be successful after challenging situations; including failure</i>

PART II

HOURS OF WORK

The hours of work vary by employee classification. Please consult your contract and principal or supervisor for more information specific to your particular position.

The hours of work for teachers are:

- Secondary teachers: 7:30 am – 2:30 pm
- Elementary Teachers: 8:30 am – 3:30 pm.

In addition to these hours, all teachers are required to attend fifteen (15) Tuesday afternoon building-based meetings/professional development sessions per a Memorandum of Agreement with the Belchertown Teachers' Association. All secondary level meetings will take place from 2:30-4:00 pm and all elementary meetings will take place from 3:30 – 5:00 pm. Routine, non-emergency appointments should be scheduled at times other than these meetings. Please see the calendar on page 7 for the dates of the meetings for your school. Your principal will determine the location of these meetings. Locations of district-wide meetings for the purpose of working on tasks relative to the new Educator Evaluation System or other District initiatives will be announced in advance of those meetings.

EMPLOYEE ABSENCES

All employees are required to either call into Aesop or use the web-based software to document their absence as soon as they know they will be absent for any reason for a full day or any part of a day. This requirement is for all absences including sick time, personal time, vacation time, professional days, jury duty, etc. With the exception of sick time, these requests should be made a minimum of two days before the requested time off.

Other employees may be required to report absences to their supervisors in addition to or in place of making these phone calls (e.g., Senior Leadership Team members must notify the Superintendent directly via cell phone or email as soon as the absence is known). Custodians and food service workers will note special instructions below. If you are unsure if this procedure applies to you, please contact your supervisor.

If you are a **custodian**, in addition to calling Aesop as soon as you know that you will require a substitute for any reason, please call as follows:

- **First shift custodians** call Eric Lebeau at home: 413-204-1205, within one hour of shift on the day when you will be absent from work. Advance notice, as many days previous to your absence, would be appreciated.
- **Second shift custodians** call Eric Lebeau at work: 413-323-0423 x102, if not available dial x110 or x100, no later than one hour before the shift begins on the day when you will be absent from work. Advance notice, as many days previous to your absence, would be appreciated.
- **Weekend shift custodians** call Eric Lebeau at home at 413-204-1205, no later than one hour before the shift begins on the day when you will be absent from work. Advance notice, as many days previous to your absence would be appreciated.
- **School vacation days** call Eric Lebeau at work: 413-323-0423 x102, if not available, dial x110 or x100 on the day when you will be absent from work. Advance notice, as many days previous to your absence would be appreciated.

If you are a **food service employee**, in addition to calling Aesop as soon as you know that you will require a substitute for any reason, please call as follows:

- Call Kelly Slattery at home: 413-668-7968, but no later than 6:45 a.m. on the day when you will be absent from work. After 6:45 a.m. please call 323-0442. Advance notice, as many days previous to your absence, would be appreciated.

As stated above, allowable absences from work (personal days, floating holidays, vacation days, professional days, etc.) should be requested using the Aesop system. In some cases, Aesop documentation of absences is required to be on the desk of the Superintendent for final approval two business days before the date of the requested leave, with the exception of an emergency. Please note that approvals go through the following channels prior to the Superintendent's sign-off: (1) principal's and/or supervisor's approval and (2) a review by the Business Office to ensure that the time requested is available to the individual employee. If your employee unit requires this type of notice, please be sure to submit your request an additional few days before the deadline so it can meet your unit's contractual requirements. Thank you for your cooperation.

ATTENDANCE AT IN-SERVICE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Unless expressly excused or directed by their supervisor, or unless absent from work for a recognized and excusable reason, every Belchertown Public Schools employee is to attend and participate in scheduled in-service training and professional development programming that is held for staff during regular work hours.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS¹

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy IMDA)

Any student who is unable because of religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused. Absence from school will require that the parent(s)/guardian(s) use the same procedure outlined in the Attendance Policy and call the Absentee Call-in line for the school site. Absence from school for religious observance will be an excused absence with written notification.

Non-completion of school work or an examination for excused absences must be made up within five days.

Educators shall make reasonable accommodations for any student present in school and observing a religious holiday. Such accommodations shall include, but are not limited to, allowing the student to postpone the taking of a test or quiz, or the submission of any assignment until the second school day following the end of the religious holiday. A note from the parents) /guardian(s) is required in advance or on the holiday.

STAFF IDENTIFICATION

All Belchertown Public Schools employees must wear photo identification badges that must be in plain view at all times while on duty in our schools. Identification badges and lanyards or clips will be provided to employees at no expense. In some instances, photo IDs will be coded to allow for access into school buildings via our card access system.

In the event you should lose or have your ID stolen, **please notify your direct supervisor immediately**. For those whose cards provide access to the buildings, the cards can be deactivated immediately in order to ensure that someone does not gain unauthorized access to our buildings.

¹ For a list of religious holidays covered by this policy, please see: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/resources/holidays.html>

Identification cards will also be issued to regular contractors, as well as volunteers and visitors. In the event you see an adult in the building who is not wearing an ID, please either ask them to check in at the main office of the building or contact administration immediately so they can address the issue.

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS PERSONS, ACTIVITIES, OR OBJECTS

Any Belchertown Public Schools employee who observes a suspicious person or group of persons on or near school premises or a school-sponsored activity should immediately notify the employee's supervisor, and should provide as much specific information about what was observed as possible. A "suspicious person" is someone who either is known or is not known to the school employee, and whose mere physical presence at or near a school premises or school-sponsored activity, whose conduct or demeanor, or whose reputation or record gives rise to the employee's suspicion that the person observed may do harm to students, staff, the public, or school property. Activities by suspicious persons, or activities by any person or group of persons that raises an employee's suspicion because the activity appears likely to cause harm or injury to students, staff, the public, or school property should similarly be reported.

A Belchertown Public Schools Public School employee who finds a suspicious object in or near a school or school-sponsored activity should immediately notify their supervisor, and should provide as much specific information about what was observed as possible. A "suspicious object" is any box, carton, bag, other container, implement, or any other object that is out of place in the school or at the school-sponsored activity, and that might be associated with injury to staff, students, or the public, or with damage to school property.

PAYROLL SCHEDULES²

School employees are paid bi-weekly in accordance with the provisions in their contracts. The schedule for when paychecks will be issued can be found on our web site; using the link above to get to that schedule.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SUPPLEMENTARY PAY PLANS

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GCBC)

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 posted by the Committee. Appointments to these positions will be made by the Superintendent or designee 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, they will be so notified in writing prior to the expiration of the contract. Upon termination of the assignment, the supplementary pay will cease. (More information may be found in the Unit A contract.)

² <http://www.belchertownps.org/index.php/district-197/staff-portal/payroll-schedules>

PART III

OFFICE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY³

The Belchertown Public Schools' Office of Information Technology is based on the lower level of Tadgell School, behind the Belchertown Senior Center. The staff members of the OIT office are:

- Mr. Ben Admussen, Data Administrator
- Mr. Scott Karen, Director of Technology
- Mr. Neal Priestly, Network Support Specialist
- Ms. Kim Frisino-Hurst, Desktop Support Specialist

If you are in need of assistance with the use of technology for your productivity and instructional use, please contact the Help Desk. A link to the help desk can be found on our web site, as noted above. You can also email for support: helpdesk@belchertown.org or call 413-213-0800. The OIT office hours are: 7:00 am-4:00 pm.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION (ACCESS TO ELECTRONIC MEDIA)

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy IJND)

The Committee supports the right of students, employees, and community members to have reasonable access to various information formats and believes it is incumbent upon users to utilize this privilege in an appropriate and responsible manner.

Safety Procedures and Guidelines

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement appropriate procedures to provide guidance for access to electronic media. Guidelines shall address teacher supervision of student computer use, ethical use of electronic media (including, but not limited to, the Internet, e-mail, and other District technological resources), and issues of privacy versus administrative review of electronic files and communications. In addition, guidelines shall prohibit utilization of networks for prohibited or illegal activities, the intentional spreading of embedded messages, or the use of other programs with the potential of damaging or destroying programs or data.

Internet safety measures shall be implemented that effectively address the following:

- Controlling access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web;
- Safety and security of minors when they are using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct or electronic communications;
- Preventing unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors online;
- Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and
- Restricting minors' access to materials harmful to them.

The District shall provide reasonable public notice of, and at least one (1) public hearing or meeting to address and communicate its Internet safety measures.

Permission/Agreement Form

A written parental request shall be required prior to the student being granted independent access to electronic media involving District technological resources. The required permission/agreement form, which shall specify acceptable uses, rules of on-line behavior, access privileges, and penalties for policy/procedural violations, must be signed by the parent or legal guardian of minor students (those under 18 years of age) and also by the student. This document shall be kept on file as a legal, binding

³ <http://www.belchertown.org/help/logon.asp?URL=/help/Default.asp>

document. In order to modify or rescind the agreement, the student's parent/guardian (or the student who is at least 18 years old) must provide the Superintendent with a written request.

Employee Use

Employees shall use electronic mail only for purposes directly related to work-related activities.

Employees shall not use a code, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication unless they have been given authorization to do so. (Authorization is not required each time the electronic media is accessed in performance of one's duties.) Each employee is responsible for the security of their own password.

Community Use

On recommendation of the Superintendent or designee, the Committee shall determine when and which computer equipment, software, and information access systems will be available to the community. Upon request to the Principal or designee, community members may have access to the Internet and other electronic information sources and programs available through the District's technology system, provided they attend any required training and abide by the rules of usage established by the Superintendent or designee.

Disregard of Rules

Individuals who refuse to sign required acceptable use documents or who violate District rules governing the use of District technology shall be subject to loss or restriction of the privilege of using equipment, software, information access systems, or other computing and telecommunications technologies.

Responsibility for Damages

Individuals shall reimburse the Committee for repair or replacement of District property lost, stolen, damaged, or vandalized while under their care.

Responding to Concerns

School officials shall apply the same criterion of educational suitability used to review other educational resources when questions arise concerning access to specific databases or other electronic media.

Audit of Use

Users with network access shall not utilize District resources to establish electronic mail accounts through third-party providers or any other nonstandard electronic mail system.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish a process to determine whether the District's education technology is being used for purposes prohibited by law or for accessing sexually explicit materials. The process shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Utilizing technology that blocks or filters Internet access for both minors and adults to certain visual depictions that are obscene, child pornography, or, with respect to computers with Internet access by minors, harmful to minors;
2. Maintaining and securing a usage log; and
3. Monitoring online activities of minors.

Administrative Procedures for Implementation

1. Commercial use of the system/network is prohibited.
2. The District will provide training to users in the proper use of the system/network.
3. The District will provide each user with copies of the Acceptable Use Policy and Procedures.
4. Copyrighted software or data shall not be placed on the District system/network without permission from the holder of the copyright and the system administrator.
5. Access will be granted to employees with a signed access agreement and permission of their supervisor.
6. Access will be granted to students with a signed access agreement and permission of the building administrator or designee(s).
7. Account names will be recorded on access agreements and kept on file at the building level.
8. Initial passwords provided by the network administrator should be set to expire on login.
9. Passwords shall be changed every 15 days and all passwords shall be expired at the end of each school year.
10. Passwords are confidential. All passwords shall be protected by the user and not shared or displayed.
11. Students completing required course work will have first priority for after-hours use of equipment.
12. Principals or their designee will be responsible for disseminating and enforcing policies and procedures in the building(s) under their control.
13. Principals or their designee will ensure that all users complete and sign an agreement to abide by policies and procedures regarding use of the system/network. All such agreements are to be maintained at the building level.
14. Principals or their designee will ensure that training is provided to users on appropriate use of electronic resources.
15. Principals or their designee shall be authorized to monitor or examine all system activities, including electronic mail transmissions, as deemed appropriate to ensure proper use of electronic resources.
16. Principals or their designee shall be responsible for establishing appropriate retention and backup schedules.
17. Principals or their designee shall be responsible for establishing disk usage limitations, if needed.
18. Individual users shall, at all times, be responsible for the proper use of accounts issued in their name.
19. The system/network may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any activity prohibited by District policy.
20. System users shall not use another user's account.
21. System users should purge electronic information according to District retention guidelines.
22. System users may redistribute copyrighted material only with the written permission of the copyright holder or designee. Such permission must be specified in the document or in accordance with applicable copyright laws, District policy, and administrative procedures.
23. System administrators may upload/download public domain programs to the system/network. System administrators are responsible for determining if a program is in the public domain.
24. Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy equipment, materials, data, or programs is prohibited.
25. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance may be viewed as violations of District policy and/or as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.
26. Vandalism will result in the cancellation of system privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with hardware, software, and system restoration.

27. Forgery or attempted forgery is prohibited.
28. Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other users or to interfere with the ability of other users to send/receive electronic mail is prohibited.
29. Use appropriate language; swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs, and other inflammatory language is prohibited.
30. Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving messages is prohibited.
31. Transmitting or viewing obscene material is prohibited.
32. Revealing personal information (addresses, phone numbers, etc.) is prohibited.
33. The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the District's system/network.

A user who violates District policy or administrative procedures will be subject to suspension or termination of system/network privileges and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and/or prosecution.

Personal Technology Devices⁴

The Belchertown Public Schools recognize the proliferation of technological devices including, but not limited to: laptops, cell phones capable of transmitting and receiving data, tablet devices, music players, and e-readers. Students and their families who choose to bring these devices into school must agree to the following conditions:

- The student and parents/guardians take full responsibility for their technology device. The school is not responsible for the security of student-owned technology due to loss or theft.
- The technology must be in silent mode while on school grounds and while riding school buses unless permission is granted to do otherwise, or the student uses personal listening devices with permission.
- The technology may not be used to cheat on assignments or tests.
- The student accesses only files on the computer or internet sites which are relevant to the classroom curriculum or other related educational activities, such as reading during silent reading periods, unless allowed by an individual school site's policies.
- The student complies with teachers' request to shut down the computer or phone or close the screen.
- The student and parents/guardians acknowledge that the school's network filters will be applied to one's connection to the internet and will not attempt to bypass them.
- The student and parents/guardians understand that bringing on premises or infecting the network with a Virus, Trojan, or program designed to damage, alter, destroy, or provide access to unauthorized data or information is in violation of the AUP policy and will result in loss of the privilege to use the device and parents/guardians will be billed for repairs to the system.
- The student and parents/guardians realize that processing or accessing information on school property related to "hacking", altering, or bypassing network security policies is in violation of the AUP policy and will result in disciplinary actions.
- The school district has the right to collect and examine any device that is suspected of causing problems or was the source of an attack or virus infection.
- The student realizes that printing from personal technology devices will not be possible at school.

⁴While this policy specifically addresses personal technology devices used by students, these same standards will apply to staff members who choose to bring in personal technology devices to the work place.

Background

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law enacted by Congress to address concerns about access to offensive content over the Internet on school and library computers. CIPA imposes certain types of requirements on any school or library that receives funding for Internet access or internal connections from the E-rate program – a program that makes certain communications technology more affordable for eligible schools and libraries. In early 2001, the FCC issued rules implementing CIPA.

What CIPA Requires

- Schools and libraries subject to CIPA may not receive the discounts offered by the E-rate program unless they certify that they have an Internet safety policy that includes technology protection measures. The protection measures must block or filter Internet access to pictures that are: (a) obscene; (b) child pornography; or (c) harmful to minors (for computers that are accessed by minors). Before adopting this Internet safety policy, schools and libraries must provide reasonable notice and hold at least one public hearing or meeting to address the proposal.
- Schools subject to CIPA are required to adopt and enforce a policy to monitor online activities of minors.
- Schools and libraries subject to CIPA are required to adopt and implement an Internet safety policy addressing: (a) access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet; (b) the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms and other forms of direct electronic communications; (c) unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking," and other unlawful activities by minors online; (d) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and (e) measures restricting minors' access to materials harmful to them.
- Schools and libraries are required to certify that they have their safety policies and technology in place before receiving E-rate funding.

With regard to video content, there are ways to easily download and convert this content from computers that are not on our network and bring it into the classroom for use to support instruction. Contact the Office of Information Technology for more information.

EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS

The school district and the town share an email server, so all use of email is subject to the acceptance of the town's electronic communications policy. Before an email username and password are assigned, you will be required to complete a **separate form** acknowledging that you have read and will agree to comply with the policies contained therein.

All school district communications with staff, students, parents, and the public that are conducted using email must be done using your Belchertown email account. A Supreme Court decision in December, 2006 requires that we maintain an archive of all email correspondence for the purposes of conducting school business. Therefore, any email communications relating to school business cannot be done with personal email accounts. Thank you for your cooperation.

Please see the Town of Belchertown Electronic Communications Policy below for more information.

⁵ We recognize that social networking is a common means for communication and that there are many sites that have video content that is applicable for use in the classroom. However, CIPA requirements dictate that we block sites that provide the opportunity for students to access to objectionable content on district computers.

TOWN OF BELCHERTOWN ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

It is the policy of the Town of Belchertown ("the Town") to ensure effective communications among all individuals within the Town and with others outside the Town, in particular the Town's residents. It is important that all forms of communication, whether verbal, written or transmitted via the Town's electronic communications systems, promote a professional atmosphere.

1. **Town Communications.** No individual in the Town is to send or distribute any communication to "All Personnel" or "All Users" without the authorization of the Town. Within these guidelines, Department Heads may send or distribute communications regarding their Department's operations. Should an employee need to call any matter of interest related to the Town's operations to the attention of "All Users," the employee must receive authorization from their Department Head and/or the Director of Computing.
2. **Electronic Communications.** Electronic communications, as defined in this policy include, but are not limited to the Town's telephone system (including voice mail), facsimiles, electronic mail (including the Internet)⁶, cellular phones, copy machines, computer software and emergency notifications systems ("electronic communications"). Electronic communications are town-owned resources and are provided as communication tools. There can be no guarantee of privacy for electronic communications. The Town reserves the right to review, monitor and disclose all electronic records and communications. Further, the Town reserves the right to delete messages, voice mail and other communications on Town computers and other electronic communications.

Clients of the Town's Internet and e-mail service will be identified to the Internet community as Town of Belchertown employees (e.g. jdoe@belchertownps.org). For this reason, the Internet and e-mail service may only be used for Town business. Further, all electronic communications should be drafted with the same thought and care devoted to written and verbal communications. Individuals should not transmit any form of communication that they would not be comfortable writing in a letter or memorandum. Good judgment must be exercised when using electronic communications.

All individuals of the Town must adhere to the following, both while on the Town's premises and off-site, when using the Town's electronic communications:

- Use of electronic communications for personal purposes is prohibited.
- Use of electronic communications to express or solicit opinions or personal views is prohibited.
- The electronic communications systems shall not be used for personal gain or to conduct personal business, political activity, fundraising activity, or charitable activity unless sponsored by the Town, with the approval of the Town Administrator. The transmission of materials used for commercial promotion, product endorsement or political lobbying is strictly prohibited.
- Use of electronic communications, including the Internet, to send abusive, offensive or discriminatory messages is prohibited. Among those that are considered offensive are any messages that contain overt sexual language, sexual implications or innuendo or comments that offensively address someone's age, gender, race, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, national origin, or disability.

⁶ A username and associated password are required for access to the Town's Internet connection and e-mail service. Usernames/passwords are established upon the approval of management and in support of the Town's business requirements. The Town shall have the exclusive authority to determine who may be permitted access to its Internet service and e-mail service.

- Use of electronic communications, including the Internet, to send (upload) or receive (download) copyrighted materials, trade secrets, confidential information, or similar materials without prior authorization is prohibited.
 - Use of electronic communications, including the Internet, to solicit outside business ventures, to divulge confidential or privileged information, or for solicitation in connection with personal, political or religious causes is prohibited.
 - Use of electronic communications to enter contests or order merchandise for other than Town business is prohibited.
 - Individuals of the Town with access to the World Wide Web are responsible for the content of all text, audio or images that they place or send over the Internet and for ensuring that the Internet is used in an effective, ethical and lawful manner. The transmission or downloading of any sexually explicit materials including abusive, profane or offensive language or images is prohibited. All messages created, sent or retrieved over the Internet are the property of the Town and should be considered public information. The Town reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files as it deems necessary and appropriate.
 - Use of electronic communications, in particular cellular phones, to discuss town-confidential information must be done with caution so as to eliminate the possibility of a breach of confidentiality.
 - Use of electronic communications, in particular e-mail and the Internet, to evaluate or offer feedback regarding an individual's work performance is prohibited. Electronic communications may be used for administrative purposes (e.g. scheduling reviews).
 - Use of electronic communications, in particular e-mail and the Internet, to evaluate or offer feedback regarding a candidate's application for employment is prohibited. Electronic communications may be used for administrative purposes (e.g. scheduling interviews).
 - Use of another individual's password to access information is prohibited.
 - All incoming and outgoing electronic mail messages must be deleted on an ongoing basis. In addition to the cost associated with the storage of e-mail, there are the costs of searching through vast messages for key pieces of information.
 - Employees are cautioned not to open attachments to e-mails. Attachments may contain computer viruses or malicious programs that could harm the user's computer and could pose a threat to the Town's network. Employees that receive an attachment to an e-mail should obtain authorization from the Town's Computing Department before opening the attachment.
 - Employees who receive chain e-mails of any kind shall delete them immediately. These e-mails should not be forwarded. This applies to, but is not limited to, e-mails about get-rich-quick schemes, good luck schemes, and virus warnings.
3. **Enforcement of Policy.** Improper use of the Town's electronic communications system may result in the immediate revocation of access to the Town's Internet and e-mail service and disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Enforcement of this Policy shall be the responsibility of the Department Head, Director of Computing and/or the Board of Selectmen.

WEB SITE GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL

(Belchertown Public Schools Policies IJNDC-R; IJNDC)

Unlike the Internet itself, schools and the District can control the type of information placed on Web pages. Documents created for the Web and linked to District Web pages shall meet the criteria for use as public information or an instructional resource. The following considerations should be considered when determining the information to include on a school or District Web page: Copyright/trademark issues; applicability to the curriculum or communication goals of the school or District; privacy issues; and related School Committee policies. Links to other Web pages should be carefully selected based on the above issues.

Defined Purpose

A Web page must have a clearly defined purpose that is published on the Web page. Included in the purpose, the target audience must be specified and defined; however, all Web site users are reminded that their audience includes the worldwide community.

Content Standards

All subject matter on Web pages should relate to curriculum, instruction, school-authorized activities, general information supporting student safety, growth, and learning, or public information of interest to others. Therefore, neither staff nor students may publish on the District server personal pages or pages for individuals or organizations not directly affiliated with the District. Staff or student work may be published only as it relates to a class project, course, or other school-related activity. Parent groups, partnerships, and municipal or educational cooperatives are considered affiliates of the District. No confidential information is to be published on or linked to a Web page.

Quality Standards

All Web page work must be free of spelling and grammatical errors. Documents may not contain objectionable material or link directly to objectionable materials. Objectionable material is addressed in more detail in the School Committee policy for instructional material selection and reconsideration. Authors and publishers are reminded that a Web site is a virtual doorway to your school. A site and a school will be judged on its ease for the user, the design, and the content. It is strongly recommended that a school form a building committee of interested individuals including staff, administrators, parents, students, and community members for the development of the Web site. Thoughtful consideration should go into decisions regarding purpose, usefulness, and appearance of each item on the Web site. As much as possible, publishers are encouraged to include student pictures and work. As the District represents itself to the world through this medium, assurances should be provided that students are the focus of the Belchertown Public School District. Written student and parent consent must be secured for publication of student work.

Consistency Standards

Each existing school or department Web site shall have a link to the District Web site once the District Web site is online. For consistency, all school District Web sites must contain certain elements:

- At the bottom of each page there must be a link to the home page (to be defined by the school or District home page once online).
- At the bottom of the Web page, there must be an indication of the date of the last update to that page and the name or initials of the person(s) responsible for page update. It shall be that person's responsibility to keep the Web page current. Repeated failure to do so may result in revocation of approval. It is strongly recommended that a building set up a system of checks and balances for the Web site (for example: all incoming e-mail is blind copied to the Principal or department head).
- All Web sites must display the name and approved logo of the Belchertown Public School District.

- All Web pages must be given names that clearly identify them.
- Links to student e-mail accounts are not allowed.
- Student directory data is prohibited from publication, except for the first name and grade level of a student in relation to a photo or work.
- Web pages may not contain links to other Web pages not yet completed. If additional pages are anticipated, but not yet developed, the text that will provide such a link should be included. However, the actual link to said page(s) may not be made until the final page is actually in place.
- All Web sites must include: the author or publisher's name; the publisher or school's e-mail address; appropriate copyright citations.
- Authors must exhibit care when creating Web pages with extensive background, large graphics, applets, animation, and audio or video clips. Such files require extensive download time, are frustrating for some users, and slow down file servers.

ELECTRONIC CONTACT AND SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

(Belchertown Public Schools Policies IJNDD; IJNDD-R)

At the beginning of each school year, the Superintendent and the School Principals will remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world 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 improper conduct, contact, or fraternization with students using Facebook and similar internet sites or social networks, or via cell phone, texting or telephone, including:

- inappropriateness of "friending" current students on social networks. An exception to this would be students who are relatives.
- inappropriateness of posting or discussing items with sexual content.
- inappropriateness of posting or advocating the misuse of drugs and/or alcohol.
- the possibility of reprimand, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

If a staff member has any questions about the appropriate use of an electronic communication, they should seek authorization from the building administrator.

When inappropriate use of electronic contact is discovered, the School Principals and Superintendent, following due process, will promptly bring that inappropriate use to the attention of the staff member and may consider and apply disciplinary action up to and including termination.

1. Technology Acceptable Use Policy still in force

These administrative regulations are adopted in addition to, and not as a substitute for, the School District's Acceptable Use Policy, which governs use of the school district's technological resources.

2. General Concerns

The Belchertown Public Schools recognize 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" account, 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 their students.

In addition, any online communication using one's own personal resources, as opposed to school district resources, compromises the staff member's, as well as the school district's, 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 or staff member communicates outside of these resources, such information is not retained. The burden falls on the teacher or staff member to comply with public records laws when using personal email or social network accounts to communicate with students and/or parents and guardians.

3. Expectations of Staff

With these concerns in mind, the Belchertown Public Schools has instituted a Social Networking Policy (IJNDD) 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, faculty and staff should familiarize themselves with the features of any account they choose to use. For example, some social media sites require account holders to take specific steps to "privatize" the information they place online. You must educate yourself to these features of any social networking site you select. You will be responsible should any information you intended to be "private" becomes "public" due to your own ignorance 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. Therefore, all requests to use an educational social media site must have prior approval, as do any other web sites (see regulations IJNDC-R, Web Site Guidelines and Procedures for Approval).
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 social networking account, a staff member may not post confidential student information through any part of that account that would be accessible to other members associated with that account. If a staff member wishes to communicate privately with a student through such an account, the staff member should access those features that allow them to communicate with that student alone.

5. Staff members 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 social networking account to discuss school business with students and parents is discouraged. It should be noted that, just because a staff member uses their 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 staff members that information sent or received by them, even through personal email or social network accounts that are related to their capacity as a school employee are still subject to public records retention, exemption and disclosure requirements.
6. If a staff member conveys school related messages to students and parents on their private account, they 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 they would any other document concerning that student. The staff member should forward copies of any such emails or online communications to his or 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 their capacity as such is subject to retention, and perhaps disclosure under the public records law.
7. No matter what medium of communication a staff member selects, they should adhere to appropriate adult/student boundaries. You are a role model, not a student's friend, you are their responsible adult, and you should always conduct yourself in accordance with this understanding.
8. This policy is not intended to infringe upon a staff member'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 the 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, and 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. Staff members 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 or staff member within the district. 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 up to and including discharge. 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. A staff member 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 phone calls or emails outside of regular school hours may be reasonably necessary. For example, in connection with school sponsored events for which staff members serve as duly appointed advisors, 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 staff members will make reasonable use of their cell phones or smart phones to convey time sensitive information on scheduling issues and the like.

10. Staff members may not access their personal email accounts or private Facebook accounts using school district computer resources.
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 Facebook account or other 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 in accordance with all other policies and procedures relative to the use of technology as outlined in the School Committee policy manual.
13. References to "Facebook" are not included to limit application of their policy 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.

PART IV

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GBA)

The School Committee subscribes to the fullest extent to the principle of the dignity of all people and of their labors and will take action to ensure that any individual within the District who is responsible for hiring and/or personnel supervision understands that applicants are employed, assigned, and promoted without regard to their race, creed, color, age, sex, gender identity, national origin, disability or sexual orientation. Every available opportunity will be taken in order to assure that each applicant for a position is selected on the basis of qualifications, merit and ability.

NONDISCRIMINATION

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy AC)

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 community is affirmed by the following statements that the School Committee intends 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 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 or disability. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, their complaint should be registered with the Title IX compliance officer.

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy ACA)

The School Committee, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, declares that the school system does not and will not discriminate on the basis of sex in the educational programs and activities of the public schools. This policy will extend not only to students with regard to educational opportunities, but also to employees with regard to employment opportunities.

The School Committee will continue to ensure fair and equitable educational and employment opportunities, without regard to sex, to all of its students and employees.

The Committee will designate an individual to act as the school system's Title IX compliance officer. All students and employees will be notified of the name and office address and telephone number of the compliance officer.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

I. ADMINISTRATION:

A. ADA Coordinator

Title II of the Federal Americans with Disabilities requires each public entity with fifty or more employees to designate an ADA coordinator. Inquiries, requests, or complaints concerning ADA rights which relate directly to the Belchertown school District's ADA Coordinator:

Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Belchertown Public Schools
P.O. Box 841, 14 Maple Street
Belchertown, MA 01007
Tel: (413) 323-0423
FAX: (413) 323-0448

B. Public Notice of ADA Compliance

The Belchertown Public School does not discriminate on the basis of disability. Program applicants, participants, members of the public, employees, job applicants and others are entitled to participate in and benefit from all agency programs, activities, and services without regard to disability. This material is posted in the Central Office, on our job applications, and listed on any job postings internal and public job postings. Upon request, this policy can be provided in an alternate format. Inquiries, requests, and complaints related to the Belchertown School District should be directed to Belchertown School District's ADA Coordinator (see above).

C. ADA Grievance Procedure

Title II of the Federal Americans with Disabilities Act requires each public entity with fifty or more employees to adopt an ADA Grievance Procedure. The procedure to be used for equitable resolution of grievances or complaints regarding ADA rights filed with the Belchertown School District is the Town's policy on ADA Grievances, which was originally approved on May 15, 1995 by the Belchertown School Committee. This updated version was approved on by the Belchertown School Committee.

The Belchertown School Committee has adopted an internal grievance procedure providing for prompt and equitable resolutions of complaints alleging any action prohibited by the U.S. Department of Justice regulations implementing Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Title II states, in part, that "no otherwise qualified disabled individual shall, solely by reason of such disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in programs or activities sponsored by a public entity.

Complaints should be addressed to The Belchertown School District's ADA Coordinator:

Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Belchertown Public Schools
P.O. Box 841, 14 Maple Street
Belchertown, MA 01007
Tel: (413) 323-0423
FAX: (413) 323-0448

Belchertown School District's ADA Grievance Procedure is as follows:

1. A complaint should be filed in writing via an "ADA Complaint Form", containing the name and address of the person filing it, and briefly describe the alleged violation of the regulations.
2. The complaint should be filed within 30 days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation.
3. An investigation, as may be appropriate, shall follow a filing of complaint. The ADA Coordinator shall conduct the investigation. These rules contemplate informal but thorough investigations, affording all interested persons and their representatives, if any, an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to a complaint.
4. A written determination as to the validity of the complaint and a description for a resolution, if any, shall be issued by the ADA Coordinator.
5. The ADA Coordinator shall maintain the files and records of the Belchertown Public Schools relating to complaints filed.
6. The complainant can request a reconsideration of the case in instances where they are dissatisfied with the resolution. The request for reconsideration should be made within 30 days to the Superintendent of Schools.
7. The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint filed hereunder shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of an ADA complaint with the responsible federal department or agency. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.

The National Institute on disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) have funded a network of regional Disability and Business Technical Assistance Centers. These centers provide information, training, technical assistance and materials to businesses and agencies covered by the ADA and to people with disabilities who have rights under the ADA. Belchertown belongs to:

Region 1 New England DBTAC
374 Congress Street
Suite 301
Boston, MA 02210
(617) 695-1225 voice/TDD (617) 482-8099 FX

These rules shall be constructed to protect the substantive rights of interested persons to meet appropriate due process standards and to assure that the Belchertown School District complies with the ADA and implementing regulations.

II. EMPLOYMENT:

Title II of the Federal Americans with Disability Act's prohibition against discrimination applies to all public entity's activities, including employment, regardless of the size of the public entity. It is the

policy of the Belchertown School District that no otherwise qualified individual be excluded from employment at the School District solely by reason of their disability.

A. Reasonable Accommodation Policy

It is the policy of the Belchertown School District that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of their disability, be excluded from employment at Belchertown School District. Employment review and hiring will be based on the employee/prospective employee's ability to perform what Belchertown School District determines to be the essential functions of a job.

Further, it is the policy of the Belchertown School District that reasonable accommodations will be made for an otherwise qualified applicant or employee with a disability, unless the Belchertown School District can demonstrate that the accommodations impose an undue financial or administrative hardship on the operation of its programs. Notice of the availability of reasonable accommodations for job applicants will be included in postings and advertisements and will be made available upon request to applicants with disabilities during the pre-employment process if necessary to provide equal opportunity to secure employment with the Belchertown School District.

All prospective employees will be informed at the initial interview that the Belchertown School District does not discriminate on the basis of disability and that requests for reasonable accommodations needed for the performance of essential job functions or for the enjoyment of other benefits of employment should be made by prospective employees following receipt of a conditional offer of employment.

Persons with disabilities employed by the Belchertown School District may request reasonable accommodations from their immediate supervisor or from the ADA coordinator.

Requests for reasonable accommodations should be made verbally and in writing describing the nature and purpose of the requested accommodation. Assistance will be made available upon request to any individuals who need assistance in identifying or documenting the reasonable accommodations needed. Requests for accommodation can be made at any time when they become necessary. Unless there is an unusual circumstance, decisions regarding reasonable accommodation requests will be made within ten business days of the submission of the requests by the Belchertown School District. In addition, the effectiveness of the accommodations and the need for continued modification will be assessed during the first month that the accommodations have been implemented.

The final decision concerning any requested accommodation that may represent an undue financial or administrative hardship will be made by the ADA Coordinator. Applicants or employees have the right to appeal the denial of any accommodation request using the ADA Grievance Procedure. In the case of a denial based on undue hardship by the ADA Coordinator the employee or applicant may appeal in writing to the Superintendent.

B. Employment Training Assurance

It is the policy of the Belchertown Public School that staff training and development activities provided by agency personnel and volunteers include information about ADA employment requirements. Our staff training and orientation manual includes a full explanation of our ADA policies, procedures, and practices regarding employment.

These materials include information on reasonable accommodations, grievance procedures and essential vs. nonessential job functions. All employees will receive a complete training on the ADA and the organization's ADA policies and procedure by the end of their orientation period. This will include their rights and responsibilities as employees of the organization.

III. NON-DISCRIMINATORY OPERATIONS:

A. Equal Opportunity Policy

No qualified person with a disability shall be denied the benefits of, be excluded from participation in, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of Belchertown Public School's programs or activities.

When providing its services, programs, and activities, the Belchertown Public School will not:

1. Deny a qualified individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in, or benefit from a benefit, service, or activity.
2. Deny a qualified individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in, or benefit from, any aid, benefit, or service that is not equal to afforded to others.
3. Otherwise limit a qualified individual with a disability the enjoyment of any right, privilege, advantage, or opportunity enjoyed by other qualified individuals receiving the aid, benefit, or service.

B. Reasonable Modification Policy

The Belchertown School System will make reasonable modifications to policies and procedures necessary to accommodate the needs of a person with a disability whenever an otherwise qualified person with a disability requests such modification, unless it can be demonstrated that such an accommodation would impose an undue burden or fundamental alteration to the program.

The Belchertown Public School will comply with all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations relative to the use of assistive equipment and trained assistance animals. In addition, no arbitrary restrictions or limitations will be placed on the type of assistive equipment or trained assistance animals that consumers may bring with them to Belchertown School District facilities.

Final decisions regarding requests for reasonable modifications will be made by the ADA Coordinator or the Superintendent upon appeal, in a timely fashion (i.e. within ten working days). Individuals seeking to contest a denial of a request for reasonable modification will be given the grievance procedure in the format appropriate to their needs.

C. Eligibility Requirements Assurance

The Belchertown Public School System has no eligibility requirements.

D. Assurance Regarding Surcharges

It is the policy of the Belchertown School District that surcharges will not be charged to persons with disabilities, their family members or organizations representing them for the provisions of reasonable accommodations, reasonable modifications to policies and procedures, auxiliary aids, and services, or any other costs related to the participation of a person with a disability.

E. Integrated Services Assurance

It is the policy of the Belchertown School System that all of our services, programs, and activities are provided in the most integrated settings possible to allow for full participation by all.

Service will be provided to any person with a disability in a manner or at a location no different from that available to other service recipients unless the potential for removal of architectural barriers or the use of assistive devices and equipment have been found to be inadequate or inappropriate to the needs of the individual. In all cases, the affected individual will be fully involved in the consideration and decision-making processes.

F. Significant Assistant Assurance

It is the policy of the Belchertown Public School District that programs sites are regularly assessed to ensure nondiscrimination against people with disabilities. All new contracts and programs are assessed prior to approval to ensure they do not discriminate against people with disabilities.

G. Accessible Transportation Policy

It is the policy of the Belchertown Public School System that transportation services provided are accessible to participants in our programs regardless of disability. Special Student transportation is coordinated by the Pupil Personnel Department, with Van Pool (413-599-1616) doing the transporting at this time.

Individuals in need of accessible transportation should make their request in writing to the ADA Coordinator. Requests must be made at least five days in advance. As with all our transportation services, all request are subject to the availability of space. When a request cannot be met, notice will be given as soon as possible and at least one day before the requested date of the trip.

In addition we are prepared for special events to utilize the services of the following transportation providers with accessible vehicles.

H. Community Referral Assurance

Whenever the Belchertown Public School System provides a referral to another program or service, it is our policy to determine whether primary referral agencies (those commonly used) are accessible to persons with disabilities and aware of the obligations of the ADA. When making referrals the Belchertown School District provides clients with disabilities information regarding community programs that, to the best of our knowledge, are accessible and /or in compliance with ADA, and which are not, a list of accessible community referrals is available through the ADA Coordinator on request.

I. Training Assurance Regarding Non-Discriminatory Program Operation

The Belchertown Public School provides orientation training to all new employees and to all staff has regarding ADA requirements, including statements that programs and employee activities must be conducted in a manner that is not discriminatory towards any person with a disability. As a result of this requirement of MDPH contracted providers, the Belchertown School District employees are familiar with the policies and procedures related to non-discriminatory operations and the same school district has on file, with its ADA Coordinator, an ADA reference manual in the event of any question or inquires.

IV. EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION:

A. Effective Communications Policy

It is the policy of the Belchertown Public Schools that auxiliary aides and services will be provided when necessary to ensure effective communications with persons whose disabilities effect communication. Persons with communications disabilities will be given the opportunity to request the aide or service that they prefer and the requested aide or service will be given primary

consideration by the Belchertown Public Schools and will be provided unless doing so would impose an undue burden or a fully effective alternative is available.

The Superintendent will determine an undue burden upon appeal. Requests should be made at least ten business days prior to the date of the needed service, in order to facilitate arranging service.

B. TTY/TDD Assurance

The Belchertown School System uses the TDD phone located in the municipal building in Belchertown. The TDD phone is (413-323-0420). The Municipality uses one central number for TDD calls. The number can be found in the telephone directory under Council on Aging.

C. Alternative Format Policy

It is the policy of the Belchertown Public School to make all documents, publications, and materials used in agency programs available to persons with disabilities who need them in alternate formats. Procedures have been established for the provision of alternative formats including large print, audiotape, Braille, computer diskettes. Braille materials are purchased through the Mass Association for the Blind. (800-682-9200). The Belchertown School District can prepare large print and short audiotapes.

The person making the request should identify the materials desired and specify their preferred alternate format to the ADA Coordinator either in person, by phone, or in writing at least ten days in advance of the event or activity for which the material is needed.

The materials will be provided in the requested format at no charge.

If, after primary consideration has been given to the preferred format, the request cannot be met, an alternative effective format will be offered. If a request cannot be met, the person making the request will be informed as soon as possible but at least 2 days in advance of the event or activity.

D. Interpreter Services Policy

It is the policy of the Belchertown School System that sign language interpreters will be provided upon request to any person needing interpreter services in order to participate in any meeting, program, or activity of the agency. Requests should be made ten days in advance of the scheduled event or meeting. Requests should be made either in person, over the phone, or in writing to the ADA coordinator. The ADA Coordinator or other responsible employee will contact the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (413-788-6427) to schedule the interpreter service. In addition the school district will maintain a list of names and phone numbers of freelance sign language interpreters working in the region.

If an interpreter service cannot be obtained, the ADA Coordinator or other member of the staff will offer the option of an alternative effective form of communication or the opportunity to postpone the meeting until such a time as an interpreter can be scheduled.

It is the agency's policy to ensure funds are available for interpreting services by including a line item for interpreter services in each operating budget.

E. Assistive Listening Device Assurance

It is the policy of the Belchertown Public School that assistive listening devices will be provided upon request to persons needing such devices to participate in programs, services and activities

of the agency. Assistive listening devices will be rented through ADA Care Educational Institute (ADC) (508-752-7313).

The procedure for requesting an assistive listening device is for the person needing the device (or their representative) to identify their need for a device in person, by telephone, or in writing to the ADA Coordinator or other Program Director at least ten business days before the scheduled event or activity that will take place. The ADA Coordinator or other responsible member of the staff will contact ADC within 2 days of receipt of the request and arrange for rental and timely delivery of the device by mail. The Superintendent is responsible for determining undue burden.

F. TV Captioning Assurance

The Belchertown Public School does not use a television for its services.

G. Video Assurance

It is the policy of the Belchertown School System to provide captioned versions of videotapes when such captioning is available in order to ensure that presentations are accessible to all individuals with disabilities.

H. Training Assurance

It is the policy of the Belchertown School District that staff training and other staff development activities provided by agency personnel and volunteers including training on the use of TTY, operator relay service and other equipment necessary to assure effective communication. School personnel also receive training in procedures/policies on receiving and handling requests for auxiliary aids/services and for ensuring that primary consideration is given to the type of service or format preferred. Training on effective communication is given on an as needed basis.

V. PROGRAM AND FACILITY ACCESSIBILITY:

The only location, which does not meet code, is the Central Office. A plan is in place to correct this deficiency.

Swift River Elementary, Chestnut Hill and the High School fully comply. Other deficiencies are being identified and a plan is in place to address them.

Emergency evacuation procedures for people with disabilities are explained to students by teachers or instructional paraprofessionals. Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom.

PART V

PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECRUITING/POSTING OF VACANCIES

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GCE)

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent, with the assistance of the administrative staff, to determine the personnel needs of the school system and it is the responsibility of the Principal, in consultation with the Superintendent, to determine the personnel needs of the individual schools. In addition, school councils may review personnel requirements as a means of evaluating the needs of a school. Any recommendations for the creation or elimination of a position must be directed to the Superintendent and approved by the 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 system. Any current employee may apply for any position for which they have licensure 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.

EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF⁷

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GCO)

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 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 or electronic document will be signed by both parties and incorporated into the personnel files of the teacher or administrator. In addition, the individual and his 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

⁷ Please note that the Belchertown Public Schools use SchoolSpring as the means to advertise and accept applications.

be made. Subsequent evaluations should address themselves to any improvement or to any continuing difficulty that is observed.

EDUCATOR EVALUATION SYSTEM

The Belchertown Public Schools have adopted the Educator Evaluation System as required by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. A joint labor-management committee negotiated a new framework for this system and a memorandum of agreement with that language has been agreed to by both the Belchertown Teachers Association and the School Committee. At the beginning of each school year, the Superintendent will provide an overview of the evaluation system to all teachers and an electronic version will be made available to new educators who are hired after that point in time. This new system is very comprehensive and requires the setting of goals for student learning and professional practice for teachers, as well as 2-4 additional district and/or school improvement goals for administrators. For more information, see the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary web site area on Educator Evaluation, <http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/>.

PROFESSIONAL TEACHER STATUS

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GCI)

Teachers and certain other professional employees who have served in the School District for three consecutive years may be granted 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.

A teacher who attains professional teacher status will have continuous employment in the service of the school system. A teacher with professional teacher status whose position is abolished by the School Committee may be continued in the employ of the school system in another position for which they are legally qualified.

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 they are not legally qualified.

PART VI

STAFF CONDUCT

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GBEB)

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 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 system but also sets forth a model worthy of emulation by students and other members of the community.

Respect for the Public

Each employee of the Belchertown Public Schools is a public employee, which means that their benefits and compensation are provided by the citizens of the community through the school system and the Town of Belchertown by other sources of public funding. Moreover, each person working for the Belchertown Public Schools is employed solely in order to enable the school system to pursue the mission of the Belchertown Public Schools. Therefore, each employee shall act at all times in a manner that shows due respect for the public. Each employee shall act at all times in a manner that enables members of the public, including parents, guardians, and interested citizens, to receive pertinent information which they are entitled to, as well as necessary assistance in dealing with the various offices and departments of the Belchertown Public Schools.

Respect for Fellow Employees

As required by School Committee Policy, each employee of the Belchertown Public Schools shall act at all times in a manner that shows respect for the dignity and personal worth of each fellow employee.

Respect for Students

Each person working for the Belchertown Public Schools is employed solely in order to enable the school system to pursue the mission set forth in. That mission centers on the effective provision of educational services to students. Every person employed by the Belchertown Public Schools is a role model for the district's students. Therefore, every school system employee is to show proper respect to students as individuals and as impressionable children or young people in all of their interactions with students.

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 system's legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, including the need to ensure that students are under supervision at all times.

All staff members will be expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern. Failure to do so will result in progressive disciplinary action up to and including separation from Belchertown Public Schools.

SUPERVISION

The need to ensure that students are safe at all times cannot be over-stressed. **A teacher must never leave a class unsupervised.** If you must leave your class, have another teacher supervise your class. Depending on the age level of the students in your school, your principal may have other guidelines for you to follow. Please consult them about more specifics in regard to student supervision and safety.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

(Source: The Department of Children and Families)

Definitions

The following definitions may be found under the Department of Children and Families Regulations (110 CMR, section 2.00):

Abuse: the non-accidental commission of any act by a caretaker upon a child under age 18 which causes, or creates a substantial risk of, physical or emotional injury; or constitutes a sexual offense under the laws of the Commonwealth; or any sexual contact between a caretaker and a child under the care of that individual. This definition is not dependent upon location (i.e., abuse can occur while the child is in an out-of-home or in-home setting).

Shaken Baby Syndrome: infants, babies or small children who suffer injuries or death from severe shaking, jerking, pushing or pulling may have been victims of Shaken Baby Syndrome. The act of shaking a baby is considered physical abuse, as spinal, head and neck injuries often result from violently shaking young children.

Neglect: Failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence or inability to take those actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, emotional stability and growth, or other essential care; provided, however, that such inability is not due solely to inadequate economic resources or solely to the existence of a handicapping condition. This definition is not dependent upon location (i.e., neglect can occur while the child is in an out-of-home setting).

Emotional Injury: an impairment to or disorder of the intellectual or psychological capacity of a child as evidenced by observable and substantial reduction in the child's ability to function within a normal range of performance and behavior.

Physical Injury: Death; or fracture of a bone, subdural hematoma, burns, impairment of any organ, and any other such nontrivial injury; or soft tissue swelling or skin bruising, depending upon such factors as the child's age, circumstances under which the injury occurred and the number and location of bruises; or addiction to a drug or drugs at birth; or failure to thrive.

Institutional Abuse or Neglect: Abuse or neglect which occurs in any facility for children, including, but not limited to, group homes, residential or public or private schools, hospitals, detention and treatment facilities, family foster care homes, group day care centers and family day care homes.

Mandated Reporters

Massachusetts law defines the following professionals as mandated reporters in an educational setting:

- Public or private school teachers, educational administrators, guidance or family counselors;
- Early education, preschool, child care or after school program staff, including any person paid to care for, or work with, a child in any public or private facility, home or program funded or licensed by the Commonwealth, which provides child care or residential services.
- School attendance officers, allied mental health and licensed human services professionals, and clinical social workers.

Please check with your principal or supervisor regarding the procedures used in your school to make such reports to the Department of Children and Families.

STAFF ETHICS / CONFLICT OF INTEREST
(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GBEA)

The 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 system.

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 duties and responsibilities in the school system. 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.

In order to avoid the appearance of any possible conflict, it is the policy of the School Committee that when an immediate family member, as defined in the Conflict of Interest statute, of a School Committee member or district administrator is to be hired into or promoted within the School District, the Superintendent shall file public notice with the School Committee and the Town or District Clerk at least two weeks prior to executing the hiring in accordance with the law.

STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES
(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GBI)

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

In connection with campaigning, an employee will not: use school system facilities, equipment or supplies; discuss their 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.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAW
(Source: www.mass.gov/ethics)

Chapter 268A of the General Laws governs your conduct as a public official or employee. Below are some of the general rules that you must follow. You could face civil and criminal penalties if you take a prohibited action. Many aspects of the law are complicated and there are often exemptions to the general rules. We encourage you to seek legal advice from the Commission or your agency's legal counsel regarding how the law would apply to you in a particular situation.

In general:

- You may *not* ask for or accept *anything* (regardless of its value), if it is offered in exchange for your agreement to perform or not perform an official act.
- You may *not* ask for or accept anything worth \$50 or more from anyone with whom you have official dealings. Examples of prohibited "gifts" include: sports tickets, costs of drinks and meals, travel expenses, conference fees, gifts of appreciation, entertainment expenses, free use of vacation homes and complimentary tickets to charitable events. *If a prohibited gift is offered:* you

may refuse or return it; you may donate it to a non-profit organization, provided you do not take the tax write-off; you may pay the giver the full value of the gift; or, in the case of certain types of gifts, it may be considered “a gift to your public employer”, provided it remains in the office and does not ever go home with you. You may not accept honoraria for a speech that is in any way related to your official duties, unless you are a state legislator.

- You may *not* hire, promote, supervise, or otherwise participate in the employment of your immediate family or your spouse’s immediate family.
- You may *not* take any type of official action that will affect the financial interests of your immediate family or your spouse’s immediate family. For instance, you may not participate in a licensing or inspection process involving a family member’s business.
- You may *not* take any official action affecting your own financial interest, or the financial interest of a business partner, private employer, or any organization for which you serve as an officer, director or trustee. For instance: you may not take any official action regarding an “after hours” employer, or its geographic competitors; you may not participate in licensing, inspection, zoning or other issues that affect a company you own, or its competitors; if you serve on the Board of a non-profit organization (that is substantially engaged in business activities), you may not take any official action which would impact that organization, or its competitors.
- Unless you qualify for an exemption, you may *not* have more than one job with the same municipality or county, or more than one job with the state.
- Except under special circumstances, you may *not* have a financial interest in a contract with your public employer. For example, if you are a full time town employee, a company you own may not be a vendor to that town unless you meet specific criteria, the contract is awarded by a bid process, and you publicly disclose your financial interest.
- You may *not* represent anyone but your public employer in any matter in which your public employer has an interest. For instance, you may not contact other government agencies on behalf of a company, an association, a friend, or even a charitable organization.
- You may *not* ever disclose confidential information, data or material which you gained or learned as a public employee.
- Unless you make a proper, public disclosure in writing – including all the relevant facts – you may *not* take any action that could create an appearance of impropriety, or could cause an impartial observer to believe your official actions are tainted with bias or favoritism.
- You may *not* use your official position to obtain unwarranted privileges, or any type of special treatment, for yourself or anyone else. For instance: you may not approach your subordinates, vendors whose contracts you oversee, or people who are subject to your official authority to propose private business dealings.
- You may *not* use public resources for political or private purposes. Examples of “public resources” include: office computers, phones, fax machines, postage machines, copiers, official cars, staff time, sick time, uniforms, and official seals.
- You may *not*, after leaving public service, take a job involving public contracts or any other particular matter in which you participated as a public employee.

You will be provided a summary of the Conflict of Interest Law by the Town Clerk’s Office. It provides more detail regarding the law and you will be asked to sign a **separate document** indicating that you have received and read the summary. This document must be returned to the Town Clerk’s Office within ten (10) days of receiving it. In addition, the Town Clerk’s Office must have a copy of a certificate of completion of an online training on the law as noted below.

Training on the Conflict of Interest Law

The Commission currently has on its website an online training program that provides a general introduction to the conflict of interest law, including information on the requirements of the law that

apply to former public employees. All state, county, and municipal employees must complete the online training program that is currently on the Commission's website within 30 days of becoming a public employee, and then once every two years afterwards. Upon completion of the training program, a certificate of that completion will appear on the computer screen. Please be sure to print that certificate out as Belchertown Public Schools' employees must ensure that the Town Clerk's Office receives a copy as evidence of having completed the training program. A public employee who completes the training currently on the Commission's website will not be required to take a new online training program until the next two year period. The online training program may be accessed by clicking on this link: http://db.state.ma.us/ethics/quiz_MEthics/index.asp

If you have any questions about the Conflict of Interest Law, please contact your principal or supervisor, or the Belchertown Town Clerk's Office at 413-323-0281.

FUNDRAISING POLICY

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy JJAA)

The Superintendent and Principals will approve fundraising activities, to supplement the school budget, which meet the following guidelines:

1. Participation in any fundraising activity must be optional, not required;
2. The fundraising activity must have a stated purpose that will benefit an individual school, the district, or specific recognized groups within the school or district;
3. The fundraising activity must specify how the funds will be allocated prior to approval and implementation;
4. For individual school fundraising proposals the approval process is:
 - Step one: the specific school must have its School Council review and recommend the proposed fundraising activity to the Principal;
 - Step two: the Principal must approve, approve with modifications, or disapprove the proposed fundraising proposal;
 - Step three: the Principal must notify the Superintendent within ten school days prior to the implementation of the fundraising proposal of their approval, giving the superintendent the opportunity to approve, further modify, or veto the proposal for good reason.
5. For district-wide fundraising proposals the approval process is:
 - Step one: the fundraising proposal must be submitted to the Superintendent for review;
 - Step two: the Senior Leadership Team must review and endorse the proposed fundraising activity;
 - Step three: the Superintendent or designee shall give final approval or denial of the fundraising activity.
6. The school councils, Principals, and Senior Leadership Team shall consider, at a minimum, the following criteria to evaluate fundraiser proposals:
 - a. Timing of project
 - b. Workload on school personnel
 - c. Appropriateness and value of stated purpose
 - d. Impact on students and families
 - e. Conflicts with other school-related fundraising organizations
 - f. Appropriateness of the promotional materials and items to be sold

- g. Cost and quality of the merchandise
 - h. Percentage of return to schools from gross revenue earned.
7. No student assemblies, without special permission from the Superintendent or designee, will be allowed to promote fundraisers and no incentives or prizes shall be part of any fundraising activity;
 8. All materials used for the promotion of the fundraiser and all materials sold as part of the fundraiser must be pre-screened by the school for appropriateness;
 9. All funds collected, except by outside school committee approved school affiliated organizations must be deposited and spent in accordance with the Student Activity Agency Accounts policy guidelines; and
 10. No fundraisers shall be approved that use students and the schools to solely promote the interests of a private business.

GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF
(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GBECB)

Gifts

The acceptance of personal gifts by school personnel from school suppliers, from parents and/or students can be subject to misinterpretation and a source of embarrassment to the school system and all persons involved. When families, students, or others wish to express personal appreciation to a teacher or other staff member, the School Committee urges them to find modes of expression that do not involve personal gifts.

In keeping with this policy, no employee of the School Committee will accept a personal gift from a business concern supplying, or with an interest in supplying, goods, materials, equipment, or services to the school system. This restriction does not relate to the acceptance of gifts for the school system, or to the acceptance of small and clearly identifiable advertising and promotional materials.

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 must be held at a minimum. Therefore, no solicitations of funds for charitable purposes will be made among staff members except with specific Superintendent or designee approval two weeks prior to the drive. Whenever such solicitations are made, no pressure will be exerted to obtain contributions even though the drive is one that has specifically been approved.

The solicitation of funds for the United Way will be permitted on an annual basis.

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY EMPLOYEES
(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GBEC; GBEC-R)

The School Committee prohibits the use or consumption by employees of alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs on school property or at any school function included but not limited to field trips, sporting events, school dances and/or performances. While on school grounds or at a school sponsored event, an employee shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; steroids; or any illegal or controlled substance, including but not limited to, opioids.

Additionally, any employee who is under the influence of substances described above prior to, or during, attendance at or participation in a school-sponsored activity and/or the supervision of students and/or the carrying out of duties as assigned by the principal/superintendent/supervisor will be subject to action described in School Committee Policy GBEC-R.

The School District 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 work-place; 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.

Please be advised that the Belchertown Public Schools Policies forbid the use of drugs or alcohol (as described in School Committee Policy GBEC) on school property or at any school function included but not limited to field trips, sporting events, school dances and/or performances. Violations of these policies will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Your cooperation in helping us keep our schools drug and alcohol-free is expected and appreciated.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Belchertown Public Schools' employees are eligible to participate in the town's Employee Assistance Program, when the need arises to address wellness issues relating to a variety of life's challenges. The Wellness Corporation provides confidential, experienced counselors trained to deal with a variety of issues that you may find interfering with your work life. This service is free and confidential. If you feel the need for some assistance in dealing with issues related to the stresses of life and family or drug/alcohol use, please call: 1-800-666-5327 or 1-800-252-4555. More information about the Employee Assistance Program can be found on the following web site: www.EducatorsEAP.com

EMPLOYEE SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GBED)

In keeping with the Massachusetts Legislature's Smoke-Free Workplace Act, required be implemented no later than July 5, 2004, the Belchertown School District has adopted a Smoke-Free Workplace Policy.

The policy has been approved to keep the Belchertown Public Schools smoke-free in an attempt to protect school employees, volunteers, and visitors from health hazards caused by exposure to second hand smoke.

Under this act, designated smoking rooms in public school buildings and designated smoking areas on public school grounds, including vehicles parked on public school grounds, are not permitted. No-smoking signs are posted at the entrance of each Belchertown School District building.

Therefore, absolutely no smoking by school personnel, volunteers, and visitors will be permitted at any time while in school facilities, school grounds, or at off-campus school activities. The Board of Health, appropriate municipal governmental agencies (i.e., which are allowed to have local laws that are stricter than the Smoke-Free Workplace Act), the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission, and the State Department of Public Health, may enforce this Act by requesting a civil fine of up to \$300 to be filed against the employer.

Please be aware that any violation of this law may result in disciplinary action against employees and restrictions against volunteers and visitors. Also, please be aware that the Belchertown Public Schools may seek compensation from any individual who causes the school district to pay a fine related to the Smoke-Free Workplace Act.

PART VII

STAFF PERSONAL SECURITY AND SAFETY

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GBGB)

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

Prior to employment in the school system, all employees will submit evidence of freedom from tuberculosis, as specified by state law. Additional physical examinations will also be required of bus drivers and food handlers as law or state regulations require.

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

BUILDING SECURITY AND SAFETY PLAN

(Source: the Parent/Student Handbook for your school)

In order to support facility safety and security within the Belchertown School District for all school personnel, students and visitors, the following district-wide and school-site procedures shall be followed during regular school hours:

1. After all school personnel and students arrive in the morning and are in their classrooms or work areas ready to begin the regular school day; all exterior doors must be closed and locked for the duration of the regular school day. Prior to the time when doors are closed and locked, school administrators shall assign available school personnel to areas of the facilities requiring special supervision.
2. After the doors are locked, individuals wishing entry into the school building must enter through the front doors only and immediately proceed to the main office.
3. Individuals must report directly to the school offices upon entering the buildings. Individuals may not leave the school offices for other areas of the building without permission, and must sign-in and wear badges (e.g. volunteer badges, visitor badges). Prior to leaving the building, individuals must report back to the main office, return the badges, and sign out.
4. All students arriving late, leaving early, or being taken out and brought back during the school day (e.g. for medical or dental appointments) must report to the main office in the company of parent, guardian or designated person, in order to be signed out/in by the office secretary or other designated individuals. Parents or other individuals entering the building in order to dismiss or return a student must report to the main office. No one may go directly to a classroom without authorization from the main office and issuance of identification badges.
5. At dismissal time (i.e. at the end of the regular school day), students or other individuals must leave or enter the building through the front doors. Available school personnel shall be assigned to supervise specified areas at dismissal time (e.g. the bus loading area and the student parking lot).
6. Police canine teams shall be used from time-to-time in order to identify controlled substances, explosives, and weapons. Searches shall be limited to school lockers and storage spaces, general areas of the buildings and grounds and vehicles parked on school property. The identification of any controlled substances, explosives, and weapons by canines shall be dealt with directly by school administrators prior to involving local police.
7. In order to insure the safety and security of all school personnel and students, and as deemed necessary by school administrators, hand-held metal detectors shall be utilized to check for weapons. Any weapons so identified shall be dealt with directly by school administrators prior to

involving local and State Police. Individuals who refuse to submit to such a screening will be refused entry into the building.

8. Individuals are encouraged to report information to the administration of your school which could help keep our schools safe and prevent potential violence.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

The Superintendent may close the schools, delay their opening, 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 may 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. Inasmuch as is possible, the Superintendent will make the decision to cancel or delay school by two hours and publicly announce the decision by 6:00 am. However, extraordinary circumstances may cause that announcement to occur prior to or after that time. Calls will be made to every family via our School Messenger call system, using the home and cell phone numbers, as well as emails, provided to us. It is imperative that you keep your contact information current in order to receive proper notification. Should you not wish to receive these notifications, please contact the Superintendent's Office at 323-0423 to request that your name be removed from the list.

In addition to the School Messenger phone system, notifications of school cancellations, delays, or early release of students will be relay via the following media channels:

Radio Stations:

WHMP 1240 AM
WHYN 93.1 FM
KIX 97.9 FM
WRNX 100.9 FM
WHAJ 98.3 FM
WPVQ 95.3 FM

Television Stations:

WGGB TV 40, ABC 40, FOX 6
WSHM-CHANNEL 3, CBS 3
WWLP 22 NEWS

Websites:

www.belchertownps.org
www.whyn.com
www.wggb.com
www.wwlp.com

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency evacuation routes are posted within each classroom and procedures will be reviewed periodically with students by staff. Emergency evacuation drills will also be held periodically. The function of these drills is to create a rapid, safe and organized method of evacuation of the building. All persons present during a drill or actual emergency should follow the established evacuation routes and procedures. Any visitor or student that is not with their class at the time the alarm sounds should leave the building by the closest exit. Students should report to the nearest adult for further instructions. All individuals in the school building at the time are expected to evacuate and move away from the building according to requirements of the Fire and Police Departments.

ALL DRILLS MUST BE CONSIDERED AN ACTUAL EMERGENCY. No one should return to the building until the all-clear signal has been given.

The Belchertown Public Schools Crisis Plan is a one-page poster displayed prominently in all classrooms and other spaces within the district, provides more information regarding what to do in the case of an actual emergency or emergency drill. Please be sure to review this poster to ensure you are up-to-date on the procedures contained in it. If you do not have a copy, please speak to your principal or supervisor.

SCHOOL CRISIS TEAM

Each school has a Crisis Team that will organize the school's response to a school-wide crisis.

***DO NOT TALK TO THE PRESS; DEFER ALL COMMENTS TO THE SUPERINTENDENT**

What is a crisis that would put the teams into actions?

1. Death of a student or staff member.
2. Sensational or sudden death of family member or community member.
3. Major tragedy or accident that effected many students or town people.
4. Principal thinks it is necessary due to crisis at another level.

The Team gathers information and notifies all staff of a special staff meeting. You will be called as a crisis Team Member.

At this meeting, the team may be given the following information:

- A statement to be read to all students in classroom groups by classroom teachers.
- Discussion topics and activities for teachers to use in their classrooms.
- The location of counseling centers in the building for both students and faculty and the identity of professionals from the community that will be helping in the building.
- Where teachers can go for support if needed.

If a teacher is unable or uncomfortable about reading the statement to students, a Crisis Team Member will cover for them. Crisis Team Members will also be available to facilitate classroom discussion if a teacher is unable to do so or requests assistance.

The superintendent and/or principal will prepare a notice to go home with students and/or use the Connect5 phone system to alert parents to the events of the day before the end of the day. At the end of the day, there may be another faculty meeting to debrief and plan for the next day.

C.O.R.I. REQUIREMENTS

(Belchertown Public Schools Policies ADDA; ADDA-R; ADDA-E-1; and ADDA-E-2)

It shall be the policy of the Belchertown Public Schools to obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information (C.O.R.I.) from the criminal history systems board 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 C.O.R.I. 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 criminal history systems board 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 C.O.R.I. Law Advisory dated February 17, 2003, “‘Direct and unmonitored contact with children’ means contact with a child when no other C.O.R.I. cleared employee of the school or district is present. A person having only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact with children in commonly used areas of the school grounds, such as hallways, shall not be considered to have the potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children. These excluded areas do not include bathrooms and other isolated areas (not commonly utilized and separated by sight or sound from other staff) that are accessible to students.”

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 a request form authorizing receipt by the district of all available C.O.R.I. data from the criminal history systems board. In the event that a current employee has questions concerning the signing of the request form, they may meet with the Principal or Superintendent; however, failure to sign the C.O.R.I. request form may result in a referral to local counsel for appropriate action. Completed request forms must be kept in secure files. The School Committee, Superintendent, Principals or their designees certified to obtain information under this policy, shall prohibit the dissemination of school information for any purpose other than to further the protection of school children.

C.O.R.I. 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. C.O.R.I. may be shared with the individual to whom it pertains, upon their request, and in the event of an inaccurate report the individual should contact the criminal history systems board.

Access to C.O.R.I. material must be restricted to those individuals certified to receive such information. In the case of prospective employees or volunteers, C.O.R.I. material should be obtained only where the Superintendent has determined that the applicant is qualified and may forthwith be recommended for employment or volunteer duties.

The hiring authority, subject to applicable law, reserves the exclusive right concerning any employment decision made pursuant to Chapter 385 of the Acts of 2002. The employer may consider the following factors when reviewing C.O.R.I.: the type and nature of the offense; the date of the offense and whether the individual has been subsequently arrested, as well as any other factors the employer deems relevant. Unless otherwise provided by law, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, determinations of suitability based on C.O.R.I. checks will be made consistent with this policy and any applicable law or regulations.

If a criminal record is received from the Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB), the Superintendent will closely compare the record provided by CHSB with the information on the C.O.R.I. request form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant, to ensure the record relates to the applicant. If the district is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of the C.O.R.I. check, the applicant will be notified immediately. The applicant shall be provided with a copy of the criminal record and the district's C.O.R.I. policy, advised of the part(s) of the record that make the individual unsuitable for the position or license, and given an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the C.O.R.I. record.

The Superintendent shall ensure that on the application for employment and/or volunteer form there shall be a statement that as a condition of employment or volunteer service the school district is required by law to obtain Criminal Offender Record Information for any employee, individual who regularly provides school related 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 (see attachment) 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 commissioner of probation may answer 'no record' with respect to an inquiry herein relative to prior arrests, criminal court appearances or convictions. An applicant for employment with a sealed record on file with the commissioner of probation may answer 'no record' 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 complaint 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 the 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.

As soon as possible after the district obtains the certification from the criminal history systems board to receive C.O.R.I. data, the Superintendent shall obtain such data for any person then providing volunteer service, as a condition of continued service.

FINGERPRINT-BASED CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD INFORMATION (CHRI)
CHECKS MADE FOR NON-CRIMINAL JUSTICE PURPOSES

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy ABBD)

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:

Fingerprint-Based CHRI Checks Made for Non-Criminal Justice Purposes

I. 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 (DCJIS) and the FBI, and failure to comply with such rules and regulations could lead to sanctions. Title 28, U.S.C. § 534, Pub. L. 92-544 and Title 28 C.F.R. 20.33(b) 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.

II. 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 themselves 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.

III. Retention and Destruction of CHRI

Federal law prohibits the repurposing 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
- Evidence for any subsequent proceedings based on information contained in the CHRI.

CHRI will be kept for the above purposes in a locked file cabinet in the Superintendent's Office.

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 Belchertown Public Schools.

IV. CHRI Training

An informed review of a criminal record requires training. Accordingly, all personnel authorized to receive and/or review CHRI at Belchertown Public Schools 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.

V. Determining Suitability

In determining an individual's suitability, the following factors will be considered:

- a. the nature and gravity of the crime and the underlying conduct,
- b. the time that has passed since the offense, conviction and/or completion of the sentence,
- c. nature of the position held or sought,
- d. age of the individual at the time of the offense,
- e. number of offenses, and
- f. any relevant evidence of rehabilitation or lack thereof.

A record of the suitability determination will be retained. The following information will be included in the determination:

- a. the name and date of birth of the employee or applicant;
- b. the date on which the school employer received the national criminal history check results; and,
- c. 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.

VI. Relying on Previous Suitability Determination.

The Belchertown Public Schools may rely on a suitability determination made by another school employer under certain circumstances consistent with 603 CMR 51.06. Relevant factors shall include: date of previous suitability determination, type of organization that conducted the previous determination (public school district, private school), and state of residence of subject of suitability determination.

VII. Adverse Decisions Based on CHRI

If inclined to make an adverse decision based on an individual's CHRI, the Superintendent 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 to correct or complete the CHRI.

VIII. 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:

1. Subject Name;
2. Subject Date of Birth;
3. Date and Time of the dissemination;

4. Name of the individual to whom the information was provided;
5. Name of the agency for which the requestor works;
6. Contact information for the requestor; and
7. The specific reason for the request.

IX. Reporting to Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, § 71R and 603 CMR 51.07, if the Superintendent 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 Superintendent shall report such decision or action to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education in writing within 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 603 CMR 51.07(1) to the Commissioner.

Pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, § 71R and 603 CMR 51.07, if the Superintendent 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 603 CMR 7.15(8)(a), the Superintendent shall report to the Commissioner in writing within 30 days of the discovery, regardless of whether the Superintendent 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 603 CMR 51.07(2) to the Commissioner and shall also send a copy of the criminal record check results to the employee or applicant.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GBJ)

Information about staff members is required for the daily administration of the school system, for implementing salary and other personnel policies, for budget and financial planning, for responding to appropriate inquiries about employees, and for meeting the School Committee's education reporting requirements. To meet these needs, the Superintendent will implement a comprehensive and efficient system of personnel records 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, payroll 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. With a 24-hour notification to the Superintendent, each employee will have the right, upon written request, to review the contents of his own personnel file.
5. 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 written response in the file.

6. Lists of school system employees' names and home addresses will be released only to governmental agencies as required for official reports or by the laws.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT PROCEDURES

(Belchertown Public Schools Policies ACAB; ACAB-R)

Definition & Examples

Sexual harassment may be defined as utilizing sexually offensive visual material, exhibiting physical conduct, or making verbal comments or advances or requests of a sexual nature when:

1. submission to or rejection of such material, conduct, comments, advances, and requests is made, either explicitly or implicitly, as a term or condition for employment or educational opportunities, or as a basis for employment or educational advancement-, or,
2. such material, advances, conduct, comments, advances, or requests have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or educational achievement by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment is not limited to inappropriate behavior by a male toward a female (i.e., the harasser may be either male or female and likewise the victim may be either male or female). In addition, sexual harassment is not limited to inappropriate behavior of an administrator toward an employee (i.e., harassment can be employee toward an administrator, employee toward a co-worker, non-employee toward an employee, employee toward a student, student toward a peer, and student toward an employee). In any form, sexual harassment is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Belchertown School Committee.

The motive or intent of the advances, conduct or requests of the harasser will not necessarily determine whether sexual harassment has occurred. The impact of the unwelcome behavior on the victim shall be the primary factor as to whether sexual harassment has occurred.

Please be advised that the Belchertown School Committee policy on sexual harassment may go beyond what is strictly prohibited by law. While it is not possible to list all the conditions or circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- making unwelcome sexual advances of any type (i.e., physical or not) and exerting pressure on another for sex or for a romantic relationship
- making lewd sexual gestures with hands, face, or body movements
- following, shadowing or stalking an individual (e.g., at work, in school, to and from car, to work or to home, at home if work related)
- exhibiting or sending sexually explicit or suggestive material or pornography in any form or through any vehicle (i.e., including the utilization of computers)
- making unwelcome whistling sounds, cat calls, kissing or sexual sounds, or sexual remarks which makes an individual feel uncomfortable
- telling jokes or stories of a sexual nature or making sexually insulting or vulgar comments
- making sexual comments about another person's body, dress, movements, prowess, deficiencies or sexual orientation
- turning discussions into sexual topics or asking questions about an individual's sexual life, experiences, activities or orientation
- telling lies or spreading gossip or rumors about an individual's sexual life
- repeatedly asking an individual for a date or to socialize outside of work after being informed that such requests are unwelcome or making repeated demands or threats for dates or sexual favors
- grabbing, fondling, touching, shoving, patting, pinching or groping an individual
- constantly standing too close or brushing up against an individual after being given sufficient warning to stop

- inappropriate touching of self around another individual
- making a performance review (evaluations/grades) or advancement (promotion) subject to dating or sexual favors
- demoting an individual because of an individual's refusal to date or provide sexual favors

Self-Responsibility

Each individual is personally responsible for ensuring that their conduct does not in any way sexually harass another individual and is expected to be supportive of any individual being sexually harassed. Further, each individual is expected to fully cooperate with any official sexual harassment investigation and is obligated to stop, and report in writing, any sexual harassment of students so witnessed or so learned of and is also encouraged to report any sexual harassment of colleagues, if witnessed or so learned of.

Procedures

As a first step, any person who believes they are being sexually harassed should immediately:

1. Confront the harasser (if possible)
2. State the exact conduct being objected to
3. State that the conduct is offensive, intimidating and/or embarrassing
4. Insist that the person or persons engaging in the inappropriate conduct stop and never repeat the conduct
5. Report the incident to an administrator or complaint officer, both verbally and in writing, if the conduct does not stop or if it is repeated (i.e., you might also want to tell a friend if no witnesses were present)

Every written report should consist of:

1. The date, time and place when the alleged harassment took place
2. The name of the alleged harasser
3. The specific conduct objected to and details about the incident (who said what or did what to whom)
4. The names of any witnesses (if no witnesses, the individual should tell a colleague or friend)
5. Attachments of any documents (e.g., pictures, notes) that would help to corroborate the sexual harassment.

Reporting

Any adult-to-student and adult-to-adult sexual harassment incident should be reported to a school administrator when experienced or witnessed. The administrator shall follow all due process requirements, conduct an immediate and thorough investigation, and take action with sanctions if appropriate. The administrator shall keep detailed notes and records of the entire process and file a written report, with all investigatory notes and documents, with the Superintendent within five (5) working days of the reported incident. In every harassment case, whenever possible, written, dated and signed statements should be taken from all parties involved. These statements should be included with the report. In addition, the harasser should be requested to sign the report, to verify that they have read and received a copy of the report. All records of adult sexual harassment incidents shall be maintained in the appropriate employee's official personnel file at the Central Office.

Any student-to-student and student-to-adult sexual harassment incident should be reported to either a school administrator or a complaint officer when experienced or witnessed. Every harassment complaint brought to an administrator or complaint officer shall be quickly and thoroughly investigated. Due process requirements shall be followed and detailed notes must be taken pertaining to every harassment case. A complaint officer, when handling a harassment case, must submit a written report, along with all

investigatory notes, to their school administrator. The school administrator must review the harassment case with the appropriate harassment officer, make a decision and take appropriate action, including sanctions if needed, and submit a detailed report to the Superintendent within five (5) working days of the reported incident. In every harassment case, whenever possible, written, dated and signed statements should be taken from all parties involved. These statements should be included with the report. In addition, the harasser should be requested to sign the report, to verify that they have read and received a copy of the report. All records of student sexual harassment incidents shall be maintained in the appropriate students' discipline records and must be included in the discipline reports which are submitted to the Superintendent on a regular basis (i.e., indicate sexual harassment as the infraction next to the students' names).

School Administrators are:

Early Childhood Center (PreK-K)
Elementary (1-3)
Intermediate School (4-6)
Middle School (7-8)
High School (9-12)

Andrea Mastalerz
Robert Kuhn & Eileen Farrington
Jennifer Champagne & Jonathan Stogner
Thomas Ruscio
Christine Vigneux & Robert Marchewka

School Complaint Officers are:

Early Childhood Center (PreK-K)
Elementary (1-3)
Intermediate School (4-6)
Middle School
High School

Andrea Mastalerz & Jenna Evans
Robert Kuhn & Mary Sharma
Jennifer Champagne & Pamela McConnell
Richard Morton & Jennifer Parker
Margaret Folli & Debra Davidsohn

Both school administrators and complaint officers shall conduct all harassment investigations with professionalism and discretion. All individuals involved in the investigations of any sexual harassment complaints (e.g., victims, harassers, witnesses) are mandated to keep all aspects of the investigations confidential (i.e., except to provide information to representatives or legal agents who are rendering assistance).

Sanctions

Individuals found responsible of sexual harassment are subject to disciplinary actions by the appropriate school administrator, including but not limited to: warnings, reprimands, suspensions, expulsions and terminations.

It should also be understood that retaliation against any individual reporting sexual harassment, being a witness to sexual harassment, or cooperating in a sexual harassment investigation is prohibited by law and is subject to severe sanctions.

Alternate Reporting

The Belchertown Public Schools' District Grievance Officer is Mr. Brian Cameron. Reports may be directly filed with Mr. Cameron at the Belchertown Public Schools Central Office, 14 Maple Street, PO Box 841, Belchertown, MA 01007 or by phone at 413-323-0423.

Any individual being subjected to sexual harassment may choose to file a direct complaint with any of the following agencies:

The United States Equal Employment
Opportunity Commission
10 Congress Street, 19th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 565-3200

The Massachusetts Commission Against
Discrimination
One Ashburton Place, Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 727-3990

or

The Massachusetts Commission Against
Discrimination
424 Dwight Street, Room 220
Springfield, MA 01103
(617) 739-2145

Employee Acknowledgement of Policy

Every employee of the Belchertown School District is expected to complete and sign a **separate form** on an annual basis, verifying having received and read this policy, and to return it to the Central Office for review and filing.

GENDER IDENTITY ANTI-DISCRIMINATION

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GBCB/JBA)

A person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth. Gender-related identity may be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity, or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held as part of a person's core identity; however, provided that gender-related identity shall not be asserted for any improper purpose.

Harassment

Harassment is oral, written, graphic, electronic or physical conduct on school property or at a school-related activity (relating to an individual's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or disability (i.e. protected status), that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the district's programs or activities, or to interfere with or limit an individual's employment, by creating a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive educational or work environment. For purposes of this Policy, harassment shall also mean conduct, if it persists, that will likely create such a hostile, humiliating, intimidating or offensive education or work environment. A single incident, depending on its severity, may create a hostile environment.

Harassment based on a person's protected status may include, but is not limited to:

- Degrading, demeaning, insulting, or abusive verbal or written statements;
- Taking personal belongings, taunting, teasing, name-calling, or spreading rumors;
- Drawing or writing graffiti, slogans, visual displays (such as swastikas), or symbols on school or another person's property (e.g., books or backpacks);
- Telling degrading or offensive jokes;
- Unwanted physical contact of any kind;
- Physical violence, threats of bodily harm, physical intimidation, or stalking;
- Threatening letters, e-mails, instant messages, or websites;
- Defacing, damaging, or destroying school (e.g. desks, lockers or school walls) or another person's property; or throwing objects (eggs, paints).

Refer to Sexual Harassment Procedure.

BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY FOR THE BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy JICFB)

Belchertown Public Schools Priority Statement

The Belchertown Public School community is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning and working environment, where all students, employees, and visitors, are free from bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and intimidation. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, a culture of respect and tolerance; and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behaviors that can impede the learning process.

Definitions

Bullying

The law defines bullying as the repeated use of a written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional (aggressors) of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that has the effect of:

- causing physical or emotional harm to the student (target) or damage to their property;
- placing the student (target) in reasonable fear of harm to their self or of damage to their property;
- creating a hostile environment - which is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education – at school for the target;
- infringing on the rights of the student (target) at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Examples of bullying include but are not limited to repeated acts of:

- Intimidation, either physical or psychological (in person or via an electronic device)
- Threats of any kind, stated or implied (in person or via an electronic device)
- Assaults, whether verbal, physical, psychological, or emotional
- Attacks on student property
- Demeaning names or phrases directed at an individual student
- Touching another individual in a demeaning manner
- Exclusion.

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, families, and staff 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 Belchertown Public Schools.

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 Belchertown Public Schools 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.

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying, which is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic means, which includes, but shall not be limited to; cell phones/smart phones, personal electronic devices and computers using email, social networking sites (such as Facebook, My Space, Twitter, FormSpring, etc.), any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or part by wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including but not limited to; electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. This includes, but shall not be limited to, the distribution of communications such as text messages or emails and posting of material on web sites that can be accessed by more than just the student who may be the target of such bullying.

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.

The following definitions describe other behaviors that may be associated with bullying and are governed by state and federal laws, as well as Belchertown Public Schools policies:

Discrimination

Treating people differently, or interfering with or preventing a person from enjoying the advantages, privileges, or course of study in a public school because of an individual's protected status (i.e., race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability). A person may not be subjected to discipline or more severe punishment for wrongdoing, nor denied the same rights as other students because of their membership in a protected class (See Belchertown Public Schools Policy JB).

Harassment

Harassment is oral, written, graphic, electronic, or physical conduct on school property or at a school-related event, function or activity relating to an individual's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability, that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent, so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the district's programs or activities, by creating a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive educational environment. For purposes of this policy, harassment shall also mean conduct, if it persists, that will likely

create such a hostile, humiliating intimidating, or offensive educational environment. A single incident, depending on its severity, may create a hostile environment (See Belchertown Public Schools Policy JBA).

Hate Crime

A hate crime is a crime motivated by hatred, bias, or prejudice, or where the victim is targeted or selected for the crime at least in part because of their actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability, or sex. A hate crime may involve a physical attack, threat of bodily harm, physical intimidation, or damage to another's property (See Belchertown Public Schools Policies: JB and JBA).

Prevention and Intervention Plan

The Superintendent and/or their 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 representatives, 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 their school.

Reporting

Individuals, 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.

The district shall have a means for anonymous reporting by individuals of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. A member of the school staff may be named the "aggressor" or "perpetrator" in a bullying report.

Any student or school staff member 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 to the school principal or designee as soon as possible.

Belchertown Public Schools Faculty and Staff, which includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extra-curricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals take bullying very seriously and will investigate and take prompt action with individuals who engage in these activities. Belchertown Public Schools Faculty and Staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or designee.

Through the Belchertown Public Schools' Memorandum of Understanding with the Belchertown Police Department, the Belchertown Public Schools may share any and all information with regard to student safety, and/or possible illegal activity with the Belchertown Public Schools Resource Officer and/or other members of the Belchertown Police Department.

Investigation Procedures

The Principal or 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 Principal or designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying Intervention and Prevention Incident Reporting Form, which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

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. Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law.

If the Principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred, they 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. The Principal or designee shall contact the parents or guardians regarding the status of the investigation throughout the investigation process.

Disciplinary actions for students or staff members who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies for students and due process/appropriate discipline for staff.

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. All reports shall be provided to the Superintendent for his/her files.

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B section 3, when a Special Education Team determines that a student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying harassment or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and to respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

The principal or their designee will take any step they determine are necessary and/or advisable to protect, to the extent practicable, the complainant, witnesses, and other individuals from further incidents or from retaliation pending the outcome of the investigation.

The principal or their designee will maintain a separate confidential file containing the original completed Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form, investigatory interview notes, and reports, findings made, the results of the investigation, including any decision for action, and other relevant investigatory materials.

Retaliation

Belchertown Public Schools' Faculty and Staff will also investigate retaliation which is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student (target) who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. Retaliation is prohibited.

Target Assistance

The Belchertown Public Schools 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. In the case of a school staff member, the Belchertown Public Schools will refer the individual to the town's Employee Assistance Program.

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-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 Belchertown Public Schools website www.belchertownps.org.

Relationship to Other Laws

Nothing in our policy prevents the Belchertown Public Schools from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies. In addition, nothing in this policy is designed or intended to limit the authority of the Belchertown Public Schools to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71 sections 37H or 37H ½, other applicable laws, or local or school district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether our policy covers the behavior.

BULLYING AMENDMENTS TO SCHOOL BULLYING LAW

On April 24, 2014, Governor Patrick signed into law "An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools," Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014, which legislation expands the protections of the 2010 anti-bullying law. The law goes into effect 90 days after April 24, that is, July 25, 2014. The new law revises certain provisions of the current anti-bullying law, G.L.c. 71:380, and adds several new subsections to that statute.

There are four main components for the new law: (1) it requires school's anti-bullying plans to recognize that certain enumerated categories of students may be more susceptible to bullying, including LGBTQ students; (2) it requires school districts to annually report bullying incident data to DESE; (3) it requires DESE to develop and school districts to administer surveys at least once every four years on the climate

of the school district and prevalence of bullying; and (4) it grants DESE the power to investigate certain alleged incidents of bullying. The law also permits school districts to “adopt an anti-bullying seal to represent the district’s or school’s commitment to bullying prevention and intervention.”

PART VIII

STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES⁸

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GBK)

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

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

BELCHERTOWN TEACHERS ASSOCIATION

The Belchertown Teachers Association (BTA) represents most of the employees of the Belchertown Public Schools. There are five bargaining units within the school district:

- Unit A: Teachers
- Unit B: Secretaries
- Unit C: Custodians
- Unit D: Food Service
- Unit E: Paraprofessionals.

You are encouraged to keep current with regard to the contract for the unit in which you work. Contracts are available from the BTA or on our web site, www.belchertownps.org. From time to time, additional Memoranda of Agreement are negotiated between the BTA and the School Committee between full contract negotiation periods. These memoranda are also posted on our web site.

⁸ Please refer to Article 2 of your unit's contract for more information on grievance procedures.

PART IX

SCHOOL COUNCILS⁹

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy BDFA)

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 are 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.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy BDFA-E-1)

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

⁹ For more information about the School Council in your building, please see your principal.

- b. The council may not expand the scope of its authority beyond that established in law or expressly granted by School Committee policy.

CURRICULUM ADOPTION¹⁰

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy IGD)

The 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 system.

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 Committee itself will consider, and officially adopt, new programs and courses when they constitute an extensive alteration in instructional content or approach.

The Committee wishes 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.

Navigate to sites.google.com/site/belchertowncurriculum/ and click on the “Documents” area, where you will find the Curriculum Design Review document and the Instructional Resource Proposal document. Both of these documents outline the criteria used in the review process.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAMS

The Educational driving forces are comprised of the District Instructional Leadership Team and five School Instructional Leadership Teams. The District Instructional Leadership Team is composed of a cross-section of district educators who meet regularly with the Director of Teaching and Learning to analyze data, create, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the District Improvement Plan, assessments and curricula. The School Instructional Leadership Teams are composed of cross-sections of school educators who meet regularly to analyze data, create, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the School Improvement Plan. The School Improvement Plans are linked to the District Improvement Plan which is guided by a District Strategic Plan.

FIELD TRIPS

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy IJOA)

The School Committee recognizes that firsthand learning experiences provided by field trips are a most effective and worthwhile means of learning. It is the desire of the Committee to encourage field trips as part of and directly related to the total school program and curriculum.

Specific guidelines and appropriate administrative procedures shall be developed to screen, approve, and evaluate trips and to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken for the safety of the participants. Said guidelines and procedures should be developed by the Administration and reviewed and approved by the School Committee.

These guidelines and appropriate administrative procedures shall ensure that all field trips have the approval of the Principal and that all overnight trips have the prior approval of appropriate Administrative level.

¹⁰ For more information regarding the School Committee’s policies regarding instruction, see Section I of the Belchertown Policy Manual, which can be found on our district web site, www.belchertownps.org. There are policies that govern a variety of instructional issues and practices with which you should become familiar.

The Superintendent will establish regulations that ensure 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.
- 5) U.S. Government Out-of-Country Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts will be monitored. No field trips will be approved or permitted to countries where an active Travel Warning or Travel Alert has been issued.
- 6) The School Committee reserves the right to review and, if necessary, rescind out-of-country travel based on travel warnings and alerts.

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 School Committee. Fundraising activities for such trips will be subject to approval by the appropriate Administrator.

OUT-OF-STATE/COUNTRY, LATE NIGHT & OVERNIGHT SCHOOL-SPONSORED STUDENT TRAVEL

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy IJOA-R)

A. Trip Approval Process

1. Advance approval by the school committee should be required for any student trip involving late night or overnight travel.
2. The approval process must be completed prior to engaging students in fundraising activities or other preparations for the trip.
3. Overnight trips must offer significant educational benefit to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips must be appropriate for the grade level.
4. Teachers and other school staff are prohibited from soliciting privately run trips through the school system. The trip approval process should apply only to school-sanctioned trips; school committees will not approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.
5. Policies and procedures for trip approval must take into account all logistical details involving transportation, such as passports, accommodations, fundraising required of students, and the educational value of the trip in relation to its costs.

B. Transportation

1. The use of vans or private automobiles for trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel should generally be avoided. Such trips should generally use commercial motor coaches.
2. Trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel must involve pre-trip checks of companies, drivers and vehicles.
3. School officials must 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 an FMCSA safety ratio of "conditional" or "unsatisfactory." FMCSA carrier ratings are available at <http://www.saftersys.org/>.
4. Districts which are unable to conduct their own in-depth reviews of bus carrier qualifications may elect to use rating and pre-qualifications established by other public entities, such as the Department of Defense's approved list of motor carriers for troop transport:
<http://www.mtmc.army.mil/content/504/approvedlist.pdf>
5. The contract with the carrier must prohibit the use of a subcontractor unless sufficient notice is given to the district to allow verification of the subcontractor's qualifications.

C. Trip Scheduling

1. Overnight accommodations must be made in advance with student safety and security in mind. Whenever possible, the trip schedulers should avoid planning student travel between the hours of midnight and 6 a.m., due to the increased risk vehicular accidents during this time period.
2. 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 under 603 CMR 27.00. However, academic field trips may be considered structured learning time (see the Department's Student Learning Time Regulations Guide). School districts may consider travel for field trips as included in students' schedules, but the Department recommends that schools consider scheduling additional structured learning time when significant travel time is anticipated (i.e., time outside the hours of the regular school day).
3. Trip itineraries must leave enough time for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense.
4. Trip scheduling should take into account the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic, stragglers, and other unanticipated factors.
5. If substantially all members of a class are participating in a trip, the school will provide appropriate substitute activities for any students not participating.

D. Fundraising

1. The amount of time to be devoted to fundraising should be reasonable and commensurate with students' obligations for homework, after-school activities, and jobs.
2. Group fundraising activities are preferred. Students should not be assigned individual fundraising targets.
3. If students are charged individual fees for participation, the district should make every effort to provide scholarships where needed.

E. Student Supervision

1. Students must be accompanied by a sufficient number of chaperones, taking into account the trip scheduling and logistics. All chaperones, including parents and volunteers, must have a C.O.R.I. check and Fingerprint-based CHRI check in accordance with MA Law.
2. All participating students must submit a signed parent/guardian permission form. Such form will include appropriate authorization for emergency medical care and administration of medication.

F. Additional Useful Resources

1. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov>
2. United Motorcoach Association - Student Motorcoach Travel Safe Guide (includes "Motorcoach Safety Checklist") <http://www.uma.org/consumerhelp/studentguide.asp>

SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAMS

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy IGB)

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.

STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy IGB-R)

The following guidelines are provided as a tool to assist the district, schools and teams to provide consistency and continuity regarding support services available to students.

Referral to SST

1. The teacher can refer a student who exhibits weaknesses in one or more of the following areas and has not responded to the typical accommodations and differentiated instruction provided for all of the students in the classroom:
 - Academic
 - Emotional
 - Social
 - Behavioral
 - Fine and/or Gross Motor
 - Communication
 - Medical
2. The referring teacher will:
 - Sign up for initial SST meeting
 - Fill out SST Teacher Checklist completely prior to the initial SST meeting
 - Collect examples of student work in area(s) of concern
 - Generate list of accommodations already attempted that are/aren't successful
 - Maintain regular communication with the parents/guardians
3. The Guidance Counselor will:
 - Schedule the first SST meeting
 - Determine other staff members needed at the meeting and invite them to attend
 - Review the student's cumulative folder
 - Review and prepare other relevant documentation (attendance, behavioral history, disciplinary record, educational history, medical concerns, etc.)

Initial SST Meeting

1. Team members include:
 - Referring teacher
 - Guidance Counselor
 - Another same grade level teacher (when available)
 - Administrator (when available)
 - Other team members as needed (nurse, service providers, school psychologist, etc.)

Parent/guardian participation is not intended for the first meeting, but referring teacher and/or guidance counselor will contact the parent/guardian following the initial meeting to inform parent of the plan for the student

2. Initial meeting will consist of:
 - The Guidance Counselor presenting the educational history
 - The referring teacher presenting all their concerns relating to the student including specific examples of school work, results of assessments, any home concerns as reported by parent/guardian from communication throughout school year, etc.
 - Other team members discussing concerns, if necessary
 - The team discussing the concerns
 - If necessary, the team developing a DCAP based on possible interventions/accommodations generated as a result of presentation and discussion
 - The team will determine length of time for implementation of all DCAP interventions/accommodations (not to be less than 30 school days and not to

exceed 40 school days with the start date being the school day following the DCAP development)

Intervention/Accommodation Implementation

1. The referring teacher will use SST/DCAP paperwork to document in writing:
 - Successful/unsuccessful accommodations
 - New accommodations
 - Continuing concerns
 - Communications with parents/guardians
2. Related Service Providers:
 - Perform observations/screenings as determined by initial SST meeting, document date(s) on forms, produce brief write-up about observation/screening, and attach to SST documentation

Second SST Meeting

*** May or may not occur if the student is successful with the accommodations put in place***

1. Team will include:
 - Referring teacher
 - Guidance Counselor
 - Another same grade level teacher (when available)
 - Administrator (when available)
 - Other team members as needed (nurse, service providers, school psychologist, etc.)
 - Parent/Guardian *(if referring student for evaluation)*
2. Referring teacher will bring:
 - Current DCAP listing successful/unsuccessful accommodations
 - Examples of student work
3. Guidance Counselor will bring:
 - Updated educational history
 - Additional documentation (MCAS scores, attendance report, disciplinary reports, etc.)
4. Other Team Members (if necessary) will bring:
 - Updated documentation (medical, screenings/observations, etc.)
5. Team will:
 - Review and discuss documentation of results of interventions/accommodations
 - Determine next step(s):
 - Continue DCAP accommodations
 - Revise DCAP accommodations/interventions
 - Refer to Section 504
 - Refer for Special Education Evaluation

Next Step(s)

1. If DCAP accommodations/interventions are successful
 - Referring teacher will continue to provide accommodations
 - Referring teacher will document results of interventions
 - Guidance Counselor may provide parent/guardian with a copy of successful interventions/accommodations
 - Referring teacher will modify accommodations as necessary and document modifications

- Referring teacher will notify SST if interventions/accommodations are no longer successful
2. If DCAP accommodations/interventions were not successful:
- Team decides to revise DCAP and continue process
 - Team decides to refer student to 504 Team
 - Team decides to refer student for Special Education Evaluation
3. If the student is referred for an evaluation (Special Education or 504):
- The Guidance Counselor will:
 - if necessary, notify the parent/guardian of the recommendation for referral and unsuccessful accommodations/interventions attempted
 - gather all information from SST meetings (including Teacher and Parent/Guardian packets, service provider observations, nursing notes, etc.)
 - write SST summary notes including all SST evaluation recommendations (to be included as part of 504 or Special Education referral)
 - submit entire referral packet to Assistant Principal/Principal
 - Assistant Principal/Principal will:
 - review the referral packet
 - sign the referral summary written by the Guidance Counselor
 - submit the referral packet to the School Psychologist
 - The School Psychologist will:
 - review the referral packet
 - complete the “Evaluation Action Form”
 - submit the referral packet to the Director of Student Support Services for processing

PART X

DISTRICT CURRICULUM ACCOMMODATION PLAN (DCAP)

Students who have not been identified as having a disability that requires specialized instruction, but are in need of extra supports in order to be successful learners, may have a DCAP in place and on file. That plan originates from the work of the Student Support Team, as noted above. The SST's responsibility is to ensure that **all** teachers who work with the student are made aware of the accommodations for learning outlined in the plan. It is the responsibility of the student's classroom teacher(s) to ensure that the plan is followed, as outlined, in all classes that the student attends.

PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy IHBA; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973)

In keeping with the intention of the state of Massachusetts to offer educational opportunities to all students that 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.

Section 504 Plans

In addition to the DCAP, students who need extra support for a non-special education identified need may best have their needs address through an accommodation plan put into place in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Lynn Forgette is the district Section 504 coordinator and will convene a team to identify the needs and create the plan. It is the responsibility of these teams to ensure that **all** teachers who work with the student are made aware of the accommodations for learning outlined in the plan. It is the responsibility of those teachers to ensure that the plan is followed, as outlined, in all classes that the student attends.

Lynn Forgette's office is in the guidance area at Belchertown High School. She may be reach by phone at 323-9351 or by email: lforgette@belchertown.org.

CUMULATIVE RECORDS FOLDER

(Guidelines in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act [FERPA])

All cumulative records are kept in the main office. Cumulative folders **must not leave the main office**. One cumulative folder is maintained for each child. All information pertinent to a child's progress should be included in each folder. Each teacher **MUST EXAMINE** the folder of **EACH CHILD** entering his/her class as soon as possible. Items that need to be included in each folder:

1. Duplicate Report Card
2. Writing Folder
3. 504 Information
4. ISSP
5. DCAP
6. Other data, class papers, notes, etc. deemed essential to the school history of the child.

Nicknames should not be used on official school records and/or lists. **In addition, no special education reports are to be placed in the student's cumulative folder.**

Information regarding students is **confidential** and should never be discussed with anyone other than appropriate school personnel, parents, or legal guardians of students. If you are unsure of an individual's legal relationship to a child, contact a school secretary or an administrator before disclosing information.

****Please note:** Confidentiality regarding student records extends beyond the actual physical folder to verbal sharing of information with unauthorized persons, either face-to-face or by telephone, or by electronic means, such as emails, text messages, or social media. Faculty and staff members should exercise care and caution with regard to using electronic means to communicate regarding student information, as they cannot be guaranteed to remain confidential. Think of verbal and electronic communications as the equivalent of leaving the student's folder out in plain view for all to see. Inappropriate dissemination of confidential student information, verbally or through electronic means will result in disciplinary action.

ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS AND INFORMATION 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 school 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 a 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.

STUDENT PLACEMENT

The process of placing students into their next year's classes begins in the spring of each year. Placement is a complex and time consuming process and many factors must be taken into consideration. These factors include but are not limited to the following:

- * Class size
 - * Teaching styles
 - * Consideration of Special Needs
 - * Parent input about learning styles
 - * Teacher input about learning styles
 - * Gender balance
- *At the secondary level, some of these decisions are also based on student interest and need for certain classes and credits.

Each student brings their talents to the classroom. Administrators and guidance counselors make a concerted effort to provide a good placement for all students while constructing well-balanced classrooms that are diverse, stimulating, and educationally sound. The following guidelines help the staff in each school schedule the students:

1. Concerns of a serious nature will be given priority.
2. Legitimate stated conflict of interest would result in a child not being placed in a particular classroom.
3. Significant health issues that have been documented.
4. Safety issues will be addressed.

Parental input is taken into consideration; however, specific teacher requests that do not include the above criteria are not used as a basis for making these decisions.

It is important to note that any preliminary class assignments and student schedules are ***confidential*** information. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) forbids that this information be shared with anyone other than the student and their legal guardian(s). Principals will determine when this information should be released to students and their families as class assignments and schedules are often in flux until shortly before the opening of the school year.

If you have any questions about how this process works in your school, please speak to your principal or supervisor.

OPEN HOUSE

Open House gives parents/guardians and teachers a chance to meet. It also allows children to show their classrooms to their families and introduce their new classmates to them. It is not a time to discuss progress or behavior of students. Please consult your building principal for specifics with regard to the Open House in your school.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Personal conferences are an important part of communicating about students' progress in grades K-6. Your principal will have more information about the procedures for these conferences in your school.

SCHOOL PICTURES

School pictures are taken each year during the fall and spring. Pictures are usually distributed in late fall and late spring. A flyer is sent home before picture day to explain the cost, etc. Check with your building principal regarding specifics on dates and schedules.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER INFORMATION

In order to ensure that we have smooth operations on days teachers may be absent from work, it is important that good information is left for substitute teachers, including: class lists and seating charts and lesson plans

(generic alternative plans are also helpful in case the substitute is unable to deliver the day's lesson for some unforeseen reason). Your principal may have other information about what kinds of items need to be included in a substitute packet and will provide you with information about where these items should be stored for easy access by the substitute. Teachers may also leave information for the substitute in Aesop.

TELEPHONE USE

Teachers are not to use school phones or cell phones or accept calls during instructional hours unless it is an emergency. Whenever possible, employees make personal out-of-town calls using a credit card. Cell phones should not be used for calls or texting and/or social media during instruction and should be silenced during those periods. All other employees should limit personal cell phone use to breaks and lunch periods.

VIDEOS AND MOVIES

1. Videos and movies should be considered as an enhancement to instruction and, as such, should be used sparingly. Any movie or video shown during instructional time must be connected to the current curriculum.
2. Any movie or video must be fully previewed by a classroom teacher prior to showing it to a class.
3. The movie rating system, indicating its appropriate use for any age group, is important to its consideration as an instructional tool. **Please consult the principal of your school for which ratings will be deemed acceptable for your grade level.** In addition, any movies or videos that may be deemed as objectionable content by parents/guardians must be preceded by notification and an opportunity for students to opt out with an alternative learning activity provided.
4. Recreational movies for indoor recess periods must comply with the rating policy of this document.
5. Any exceptions to this policy must be pre-approved by the Principal.
6. **In addition, a video use approval form must be submitted and approved by administration prior to viewing.**

Since the penalty for video copyright infringement can include fines ranging from \$250 to \$10,000 per infringement, plus legal fees (and "willful" infringement can mean damages as high as \$100,000 per instance), copyright is not a minor consideration. Liable parties may start with classroom teachers and librarians, and go up to principal, superintendent, and the school board.

Most videos have a public performance restriction (unless public performance rights have been purchased along with the video), but **may be shown under an educational exemption ("fair use") if these requirements are met:**

1. The performing organization must be a non-profit educational institution; and
2. The performance must be presented by instructors or pupils; and
3. The performance must occur in the course of face-to-face teaching activities; and
4. The performance must take place in a classroom or similar place for instruction (including the library); and
5. The performance must be of a legally acquired (or legally copied) copy of the work. (The presenter is protected from liability for illegal copies IF the presenter is unaware that the copies were not legally acquired or made.)

All five of these conditions must be met.

Clarifications: "Face-to-face teaching" means that the teacher must be in the room with the students and the showing must be directly related to the **current** curriculum (not simply related to a lesson past, or lesson to come). Questionable links from audiovisual material to a lesson may be prosecuted as copyright infringement. (One example of a questionable link given by copyright expert Carol Simpson is "showing *The Lion King* during a study of Africa or the great cats.") School showings of videos for reward are copyright

infringements. SPED classes/staff must follow all the copyright requirements above, and an IEP does not override copyright law.

As long as the above conditions are met, videos may be shown to multiple classrooms over the school's internal channel, as long as all classrooms viewing the video have a valid curriculum tie-in to the video.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS¹¹

(Belchertown Public Schools Policies IHBA; IJOC)

Classroom visitors

The 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 system'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 main office upon entering and leaving the building to sign a guest log showing arrival and departure times along with picking up a visitor's badge to wear while in the building. The staff is 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.

When parents wish to schedule classroom visitations, they should contact the Principal for permission. Since younger children distract the attention of both the visitor and the class, parents are strongly urged to make arrangements for them.

School Volunteers

It is the policy of the 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 community. The volunteer program will be coordinated in cooperation with building administrators.

¹¹ All visitors who might be unaccompanied by another adult in the school and volunteers in schools are subject to a C.O.R.I. (Criminal Record Offender Information) check. Please see this handbook's section on *C.O.R.I. Requirements* and the Belchertown Policy Manual; Sections ADDA, ADDA-R, ADDA-E-1, and ADDA-E-2 for more information.

PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT

The Belchertown Public Schools encourage all employees to keep current with best practices in their scope of work. Each of the Association contracts as well as other single contract benefits outline support for these activities. The district also provides opportunities for professional development on release days, Tuesday afternoons, and other venues. Please contact your direct supervisor or the Assistant Superintendent for more information about how you can access opportunities for professional improvement.

STUDENT TEACHERS/INTERNS

The Belchertown Public Schools encourage teachers to help develop the next generation of the teachers by sponsoring pre-practicum students and student teachers (interns). Cooperating teachers often receive a course voucher and/or stipend in return for their services, depending on the sponsoring college or university. Please fill out Teacher Intern Forms available in the office and submit to the Superintendents' Office for final approval.

CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN THE BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy JIA; JIA-R)

All persons seeking the participation of students enrolled in the Belchertown Public Schools for testing, research, and evaluation must first obtain written approval from the Superintendent or designee, who shall have the discretion to approve or reject such proposals. The Superintendent shall establish conditions and rules for the approval of such proposals. All research, surveys, protocols or experiments must comply with federal and state laws/regulations and industry standards, including but not limited to regulations requiring Testing, Research, and Evaluation Committee review, Informed Consent documentation and approval, parental permission and child assent.

The Testing, Research and Evaluation Committee (TREC) is responsible for screening and coordinating all research projects, questionnaires, interviews, evaluations, surveys, group assessments and data collection for the Belchertown Public Schools. These activities, as well as pilot projects for such activities, can be carried out only with specific permission of the Committee, which will be subject to a final review by the Superintendent of Schools.

The TREC shall be comprised of two (2) members: the Assistant Superintendent/Director of Student Support Services, and the appropriate building administrator.

To insure a thorough review, please note that the TREC must receive a request at least one month prior to the time the applicant wishes to begin the project.

If the proposal is approved, it is understood that the TREC will receive an interim report immediately following your research. It is further understood that the Committee will receive the final complete report as soon as it is available.

The TREC will review proposals for research in accordance with the following guidelines:

The primary responsibility for the day-to-day assurance for protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects lies with the individual responsible for the conduct of the research activity, (i.e., the principal investigator and/or co-principal investigator). Specifically, the investigator(s) is responsible for:

- a. careful research design;
- b. careful adherence to ethical codes and applicable policies and procedures of the Belchertown Public Schools, the sponsoring agency, and cooperating institutions, if any;
- c. training and supervision of staff and students participating in the research;

- d. providing information required and taking all steps in initial and continuing review of research with human subjects, including copies of informed consent letters for both parents/guardians and students, and proper documentation of same;
- e. retaining required records while ensuring the project includes safeguards to protect the safety and privacy of subjects and maintains the confidentiality of the data;
- f. obtaining prior approval of the TREC for changes in research activity; such as addendums and modifications, and
- g. prompt reporting to the TREC of unanticipated problems and adverse events involving risks to subjects or others.

All proposals Testing, Research, and Evaluation shall be submitted to the TREC at least one month prior to review on the Belchertown Public Schools Application for Testing, Research, and Evaluation Proposals form (see JIA-E).

PART XI

RESIGNATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GCQD)

Professional staff members may discontinue their service in the school system during the school year by submitting a written notice of intent to resign to the appropriate hiring authority.

Such written notice of intent to resign will be given to the Superintendent no less than two (2) weeks prior to departure. 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 or her assigned duties for a period of 30 days after submission of the resignation.

RETIREMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GCQE)

Annually, the Superintendent will inform the Committee of the professional staff members who have indicated their intention to retire at the end of the current school year. No further School Committee action is necessary unless approval is needed for the payment of or participation in continued local benefits, in accordance with Collective Bargaining Agreements.

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GCQF)

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 system, they 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 accordance 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.

SUPPORT STAFF POSITIONS

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GDA)

Education is a cooperative enterprise in which all employees of the school system must participate intelligently and effectively for the benefit of the children. This school system will employ support staff members in positions that function to support the education program.

All support staff positions will be established initially by the Committee. In each case, the Superintendent will submit for the Committee's consideration and action a job description or job specifications for the position.

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.

EVALUATION OF SUPPORT STAFF

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GDO)

A program of continuous observation and evaluation will be developed to find the right employees to fill vacancies, determine assignments and equitable workloads, and establish 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 are some of the major duties of the administration.

The evaluation will cover the major areas of the employee's responsibilities and will include the following:

1. Specific work assignment
2. Attitude toward students
3. Attitude toward public education
4. Attitude toward supervisors, teachers, and fellow employees
5. Work habits

Each employee will be informed of the basis upon which they are to be evaluated in advance of evaluation.

RETIREMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GDQC)

All full-time non-instructional personnel are required to participate in the Hampshire County Retirement System.

Periodically, the Superintendent will present to the Committee the names of support staff members who have indicated their intentions to retire, in accordance with Collective Bargaining Agreements.

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

(Belchertown Public Schools Policy GDQD)

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.

Bus drivers are employed subject to agreed upon contract with provider with continuity of employment conditioned only upon satisfactory performance. In the event of failure to perform as required, the Superintendent may immediately suspend employment.

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.

COMPLIANCE WITH COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS

While this employee manual represents the policies of the Belchertown Public Schools, the School Committee and administration recognize that, in those cases where there are collective bargaining agreements, there is an obligation on the part of all parties to comply with said bargaining agreements.

CENTRAL OFFICE SINGLE CONTRACT EMPLOYEES

Those Central Office Employees not covered by a collective bargaining agreement may find additional information in the Central Office Single Contract Employees Handbook of Benefits.

APPENDIX

Employee Acknowledgement/Agreement Forms



Brian C. Cameron, M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools
E-Mail: bcameron@belchertownps.org

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This acknowledgement must be renewed each academic year. This form must be completed within ten (10) business days from when the handbook was received.

Employee's

Name: _____

Position: _____

Assigned to: _____ Central Office _____ Cold Spring School
_____ Swift River Elementary School _____ Chestnut Hill Community School
_____ Jabish Brook Middle School _____ Belchertown High School

I have read the Belchertown Public Schools Employee Handbook and agree to fully adhere to all of the policies contained therein.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Respect ~ Responsibility ~ Relationship ~ Rigor ~ Reflection ~ Resilience

The Belchertown School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, gender identity, race, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.



Brian C. Cameron, M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools
E-Mail: bcameron@belchertownps.org

**USER AGREEMENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN AN ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM
(IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ACCEPTABLE USE – TECHNOLOGY POLICY)**

This user agreement must be renewed each academic year. It must be completed and returned within ten (10) days of having received the information, outlined in the *Belchertown Public Schools Employee Handbook*.

User's Name: _____

Position: _____

Assigned to: _____ Central Office _____ Cold Spring School
_____ Swift River Elementary School _____ Chestnut Hill Community School
_____ Jabish Brook Middle School _____ Belchertown High School

I have read the District's Acceptable Use Policy and Administrative Procedures and agree to abide by their provisions. I understand that violation of these provisions may result in disciplinary action including but not limited to suspension or revocation of privileges, termination of employment, and criminal prosecution.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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Brian C. Cameron, M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools
E-Mail: bcameron@belchertownps.org

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY/PROCEDURES ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

This acknowledgement must be renewed each academic year. It must be completed and returned within ten (10) days from receipt of this information, as outlined in the *Belchertown Public Schools Employee Handbook*.

Employee's

Name: _____

Position: _____

Assigned to: ☐ Central Office ☐ Cold Spring School
☐ Swift River Elementary School ☐ Chestnut Hill Community School
☐ Jabish Brook Middle School ☐ Belchertown High School

I have read the District's Sexual Harassment Policy/Procedures and agree to abide by their provisions. I understand that violation of these provisions may result in disciplinary action including but not limited to termination of employment.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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Brian C. Cameron, M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools
E-Mail: bcameron@belchertownps.org

DISTRICT POLICY MANUAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This acknowledgement must be renewed each academic year. It must be completed and returned within ten (10) days from receipt of this information, as outlined in the *Belchertown Public Schools Employee Handbook*.

Employee's

Name: _____

Position: _____

Assigned to: _____ Central Office _____ Cold Spring School
_____ Swift River Elementary School _____ Chestnut Hill Community School
_____ Jabish Brook Middle School _____ Belchertown High School

I have reviewed the Belchertown Public Schools District Policy Manual (available at <http://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/Z2Browser2.html?showset=belchertownset>) and agree to fully adhere to all of the policies contained therein.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Respect ~ Responsibility ~ Relationship ~ Rigor ~ Reflection ~ Resilience

The Belchertown School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, gender identity, race, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.