



**THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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**PROGRAM SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING**

Thursday, September 25, 2014

5:00 pm

Superintendent's Office – District Office  
2 Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

**AGENDA**

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. REPORTS/DELIBERATIONS/DISCUSSION**

- \* A. Student Discipline Policy, File JK to comply with Chapter 222
- \* B. Student Conduct Policy, File JIC
- \* C. Student Absences and Excuses Policy, File JH
- \* D. Review of Computer Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy for Students, File IJNDB (Grades 2 to 5 and Grades 6 to 12)
- E. Discussion items that were not reasonably anticipated by the Chairperson, in accordance with M.G.L., Chapter 30A, Section 18-25

**III. ACTION**

**IV. ADJOURNMENT**

## STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The Massachusetts General Laws require the School Committee to adopt written policies, rules and regulations not inconsistent with law, which may relate to study, discipline, conduct, safety and welfare of all students, or any classification thereof, enrolled in the public schools of the District.

The implementation of the general rules of conduct is the responsibility of the Principal and the professional staff of the building. In order to do this, each school staff in the District shall develop specific rules not inconsistent with the law or in conflict with School Committee policy. These building rules shall be an extension of the District policies by being more specific as they relate to the individual schools.

The purpose of disciplinary action is to ~~restore acceptable behavior~~ **maintain a safe and educational environment**. When disciplinary action is necessary, it shall be administered with fairness and shall relate to the individual needs and the individual circumstances.

Students violating any of the policies on student conduct and control will be subject to disciplinary action. The degree, frequency, and circumstances surrounding each incident shall determine the method used in enforcing these policies. Most of the situations which require disciplinary action can be resolved within the confines of the classroom or as they occur by reasonable but firm reprimand, and/or by teacher conferences with the student and/or parents or guardians.

If a situation should arise in which there is no applicable written policy, the staff member shall be expected to exercise reasonable and professional judgment.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#); 71:37H1/2; 71:37H3/4; 71:[37L](#); [76:16](#); 76:[17](#); 603 CMR 53.00

## STUDENT CONDUCT

The School Committee believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Each Principal shall include prohibited actions in the student handbook or other publication and made available to students and parents.

Principals and staff shall not use academic punishment of any form as a consequence to inappropriate behaviors/actions by students.

The Principal may, as a disciplinary measure, remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the remainder of this policy, law, or regulation.

### **Suspension**

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, a Principal shall consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

### **Notice of Suspension**

Except for emergency removal or an in-school suspension of less than 10 days, a Principal must provide the student and the parent oral and written notice, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing before imposing suspension as a consequence for misconduct. The Principal shall provide both oral and written notice to the student and parent(s) in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English. The notice shall include the rights enumerated in law and regulation. To conduct a hearing without a parent present, the Principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent.

### **Emergency Removal**

A Principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the Principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

The Principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal including a description of the danger presented by the student.

The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal shall: Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters required in the notice; Provide written notice to the student and parent as required above; Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with applicable regulations, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Principal, student, and parent; Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of applicable law and regulation.

A Principal shall also ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation prior to removal.

### **In School Suspension – Not More Than 10 Days Consecutively or Cumulatively**

The Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

The Principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the Principal follows the process set forth in regulation and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by law and regulation.

### **Principal's Hearing – Short Term Suspension of up to 10 Days**

The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, the Principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information.

The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the Principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in law and regulation.

The Principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

The Principal shall, based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The Principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as required by law and regulation. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

**Principal's Hearing – Long Term Suspension of more than 10 days but less than 90 days (consecutive or cumulative)**

The hearing with the Principal shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights: In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; The right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the Principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

The Principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

The Principal shall, based on the evidence, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as required by law and regulation, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The Principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Principal and the parent.

If the Principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal; Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as required by law and regulation; Inform the student of the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee, but only if the Principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, and shall include the following information: The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the Principal's determination on appeal.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension before the suspension takes effect.

### **Superintendent's Hearing**

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Principal shall have the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent.

The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent within the time period noted above (see Principal's hearing – Suspension of more than 10 days). If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The Superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Superintendent shall grant the extension.

The Superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the Principal's hearing for long-term suspension.

The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of law and regulation. If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Principal's decision. The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

### **Expulsion**

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently as allowed by law for possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Any student alleged to have committed one of these acts shall be afforded the same due process rights as for a long term suspension. Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

## **Academic Progress**

Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The Principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

The Principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under the law.

The Principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

## **Reporting**

The school district shall collect and annually report data to the DESE regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals, access to education services, and such other information as may be required by the DESE.

The Principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status in accordance with law and regulation.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. [71:37H](#); [71:37H ½](#); 71:37H3/4; 76:17; 603 CMR 53.00

Proposed Policy

## STUDENT CONDUCT

Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others.

Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Any of the following actions may subject a student to expulsion by the Principal under the terms of M.G.L. 71:37H and/or M.G.L. 71:37H ½:

1. Found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance.
2. Who assaults a Principal, Assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff member on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related event including athletic games.

Students will be subject to suspension, expulsion (subject to School Committee action), or other disciplinary measures included in the District code of conduct which shall include, but not be limited to, the following actions:

1. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause damage to school property; or stealing or attempting to steal school property.
2. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause damage to private property; stealing or attempting to steal private property.
3. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury to another person except in self-defense.
4. Using or copying the academic work of another and presenting it as his own without proper attribution.
5. Repeatedly and intentionally defying the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, or administrators.

The above prohibited actions will be printed in the student handbook or other publication and made available to students and parents.

School building administrators will not suspend a student, or recommend a student for suspension or expulsion, unless the student has engaged in one of the prohibited actions mentioned above or included in the student code of conduct

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:37H ½

## STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Committee recognizes that parents of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons: illness or quarantine; bereavement or serious illness in family; weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child; and observance of major religious holidays.

A child may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the Principal or designee.

A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of his character. Parents can help their children by not allowing them to miss school needlessly.

Accordingly, parents will provide a written explanation for the absence or tardiness of a child. This will be required in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible.

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justified.

### **Student Absence Notification Program**

Each Principal will notify a student's parent/guardian within 3 days of the student's absence in the event the parent/guardian has not informed the school of the absence.

Each Principal or designee shall meet with any student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has missed five (5) or more unexcused school days (a school day shall be equal to two (2) or more class periods in the same day) in a school year. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall be developed jointly by the Principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies.

### **Dropout Prevention**

No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered permanently removed from school unless the Principal has sent notice to a student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has been absent from school for ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absence. The notice shall be sent within five (5) days of the tenth consecutive day of absence and shall offer at least 2 dates and times within the next ten (10) days for an exit interview with the Superintendent or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The notice shall be in both English and the primary language of the home, if applicable. The notice shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview and shall indicate the parties shall reach an agreement on the date/time of the interview within the ten (10) day timeframe. The timeframe may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian and no extension shall exceed 14 days.

The Superintendent or designee may proceed with any interview without a parent/guardian present, provided the Superintendent has documented a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian.

The Superintendent or designee shall convene a team of school staff to participate in the exit interview and shall provide information to the student and, if applicable, the student's parent/guardian on the detrimental effects of early withdrawal from school and the alternative education programs and services available to the student.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [76:1](#); 76:1B; [76:16](#); 76:18; [76:20](#)

## STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Committee does recognize that parents of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons:

1. Illness or quarantine.
2. Bereavement or serious illness in family.
3. Weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child.
4. Observance of major religious holidays.

A child may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the school administrator.

A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of his character. Parents can help their children by refusing to allow them to miss school needlessly.

Accordingly, parents will provide a written explanation for the absence and tardiness of a child. This will be required in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible.

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justifiable.

SOURCE: MASCLEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 76:1; 76:16; 76:20

## **COMPUTER NETWORK AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR STUDENTS**

The Internet, a worldwide network of interconnected computers, provides an opportunity for users to communicate with each other, no matter how far apart they are geographically. Because of its enormous size, the Internet provides an almost limitless amount of information that can be put to great educational purposes. The potentially limitless amount of information available on the Internet creates the potential for the posting or retrieval, intentionally or unintentionally, of inappropriate or harmful material. It is the purpose of these guidelines to assist all members of the Gloucester Public Schools Computer Network, which includes World Wide Web access and electronic mail capability, to use this resource safely and appropriately.

The Gloucester Public Schools Computer Network, which includes World Wide Web access and electronic mail capability, exists solely for educational purposes, which are defined as classroom activities, research projects directly related to class assignments, career and professional development and high quality self-discovery activities of an educational nature. The Gloucester Public Schools computer network is not to be considered a resource intended for use as a public forum or for any purpose that is not directly related to the delivery of educational services.

Members of the Gloucester Public Schools community are responsible for good behavior on school computer networks just as they are in a classroom or school hallway. Communications on the network may reach larger audiences than face-to-face conversations or telephone discussions. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. Access to network services will be provided to those who act in a considerate and responsible manner.

The Gloucester Public Schools believes that the benefits to students from access to information resources and opportunity for collaboration available through the Internet exceed the potential disadvantages. However, the parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources. To that end, the Gloucester Public Schools respects each family's right to decide whether or not their child will have independent access to the World Wide Web and an individual e-mail account at school. In making this decision, families should be aware that Gloucester Public Schools intends to incorporate network use, Web access and e-mail in the schools according to grade level as follows:

- a. Grades kindergarten through three. Students at these grade levels will not have individual computer network passwords or e-mail accounts. During school time, teachers of students in grades kindergarten through three will guide them toward appropriate materials. Web access at these grade levels will be limited to teacher-directed and teacher-demonstrated use. Students will not be conducting independent research on the World Wide Web, nor will they be sending or receiving electronic mail independently.

- b. Grades four and five. Students in grades four and five will not have individual computer network passwords or e-mail accounts. Students at these grade levels may have the opportunity to conduct research via the Web in the classroom, and to access electronic mail for a group account, only during directly supervised instruction.
- c. Grades six through twelve. Students in grades six through twelve may be given individual access passwords and receive individual e-mail accounts, and may have the opportunity to access the Web and conduct independent, self-directed research, both during classroom instruction and outside of classroom instruction, under the supervision (direct and or indirect) of a teacher or other staff member.

For students to be permitted to gain independent access to the web or individual e-mail accounts, they must agree to and abide by the rules set out below. For students under 18, parents must provide written permission forms before students will be permitted to gain independent access to the web or individual e-mail accounts. If the Gloucester Public Schools does not receive a signed user agreement and, if applicable, a signed parental permission form, students will not gain independent access to the web or individual e-mail accounts, but they may still have exposure to the Internet during classroom instruction or library research exercises.

The Gloucester Public Schools will make every reasonable effort to minimize the risk that users will encounter objectionable material on the Internet. However, there is no absolute guarantee that this will not happen. The Gloucester Public Schools intends to utilize any blocking or filtering safeguards required by law. With these measures, in addition to user education, implementation of this policy and grade-appropriate supervision, the Gloucester Public Schools believes that the Internet can be used safely to enhance the delivery of educational services.

Rules:

1. Network access is a privilege, not a right. The use of the network must be consistent with, and directly related to, the educational objectives of the Gloucester Public Schools. A violation of the terms of this Acceptable Use Policy may result in suspension or termination of network access privileges (other than directly supervised access during classroom instruction) and may also result in other disciplinary action consistent with the disciplinary policies of the Gloucester Public Schools. Further action may include criminal prosecution where applicable. The Gloucester Public Schools will cooperate fully with law enforcement officials in any investigation relating to misuse of the Gloucester Public Schools computer network.

2. Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy include, but are not limited to, the following conduct:
  - a. Cyberbullying, using profane, vulgar, threatening, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, harassing or otherwise objectionable or criminal language in a public or private message.
  - b. Sending messages or posting information that would likely result in the loss of a recipient's work or system (e.g., viruses, malicious scripts).
  - c. Sending "chain letters" or "broadcast" messages to lists or individuals, subscribing to "listserves" or "newsgroups" without prior permission, or using the Internet access for any other personal use, without prior permission.
  - d. Participating in other types of use which would cause congestion of the network or interfere with the work of others.
  - e. Using the network in a manner that would violate any U.S. or state law. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening material and spreading of computer viruses.
  - f. Accessing or transmitting materials that are obscene, sexually explicit, or without redeeming educational value.
  - g. Accessing any prohibited sites on the Internet. Internet access is to be used solely for educational purposes, which are defined as classroom activities, research projects directly related to class assignments, career and professional development and high quality self-discovery activities of an educational nature.
  - h. Revealing the personal address or telephone number of oneself or another person.
  - i. Revealing one's password to anyone else, using anyone else's password, or pretending to be someone else when sending information over the computer network.
  - j. Attempting to gain unauthorized access to system programs or computer equipment, including attempts to override, or to encourage others to override, any firewalls established on the network
  - k. Attempting to harm, modify or destroy data of another user.
  - l. Exhibiting any other action whatsoever which would in any way subject the user or the Gloucester Public Schools to any civil or criminal action.
  - m. Using the Gloucester Public Schools technology network to buy, sell or advertise anything except with prior staff approval and for educational purposes only.
  - n. Using social networking sites, discussion groups, chat rooms, instant messaging, or other forms of online conversation.
  - o. Using the Gloucester Public Schools technology network for gambling.
  - p. Using the Gloucester Public Schools technology network for political campaigning purposes, including attempts to influence ballot questions or to promote or oppose a candidate for public office.
  - q. Failing to log off the computer network at the conclusion of a work session or at the request of system administrators.
  - r. Using the computer network for recreational purposes or activities relating to personal hobbies.

3. The Gloucester Public Schools assumes no responsibility for:
  - a. any unauthorized charges or fees, including telephone charges, long distance charges, per minute surcharges and/or equipment or line costs.
  - b. any financial obligations arising out of unauthorized use of the system for the purchase of products or services.
  - c. any cost, liability or damages caused by a user's violation of these guidelines.
  - d. any information or materials that are transferred through the network.
4. The Gloucester Public Schools makes no guarantee, implied or otherwise, regarding the reliability of the data connection. The Gloucester Public Schools shall not be liable for any loss or corruption of data resulting while using the network.
5. All messages and information created, sent or retrieved on the network are the property of Gloucester Public Schools. Electronic mail messages and other use of electronic resources by students and staff, including accessing web pages, should not be considered confidential. Copies of all information created, sent or retrieved, including but not limited to web sites visited (cache files), are stored on the computer network's back-up files. The Gloucester Public Schools reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files on the computer system, including web pages accessed, as it deems necessary and appropriate in the ordinary course of its business for purposes including, but not limited to, ensuring proper use of resources, investigating allegations of improper use and conducting routine network maintenance. By participating in the school district's computer network, users are indicating their consent to such monitoring and access. Where appropriate, communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or receiver.
6. Any users caught illegally obtaining software or transferring such software through the network, and any whose accounts are found to contain such illegal files, shall immediately have their accounts permanently revoked. In such event, the user's network access will be limited to directly supervised use during classroom instruction. In addition, all users should be aware that software piracy is a federal offense and is punishable by a fine or imprisonment.
7. Because of size, many kinds of materials eventually find their way to the network. If a user finds materials that are inappropriate while using the Gloucester Public Schools Technology Network, s/he shall refrain from downloading this material and shall not identify or share the material and that user is obligated to report his/her discovery of such material to a teacher or to his/her principal. It should be understood that the transfer of certain kinds of materials is illegal and punishable by fine or imprisonment.
8. Should a user, while using the Gloucester Public Schools Technology Network, encounter any material that s/he feels may constitute a threat against the safety of fellow students, staff members or the property of the Gloucester Public Schools, that user is obligated to report his/her discovery of such material to a teacher or to his/her principal.

9. The Gloucester Public Schools administration reserves the right to amend this policy at any time without prior notice.
10. The Gloucester Public Schools reserves the right to seek restitution from any user for costs incurred by the district, including legal fees, due to such user's inappropriate use of electronic resources.

Approved by the School Committee on September 14, 2011

Current Policy

## **Guide to the GPS: Using Technology in School (Grades 2 – 5 Students)**

### **WHAT IS THE AUP?**

AUP stands for “Acceptable Use Policy.” It means that you agree to only do “acceptable” things when you are using GPS computers. The GPS has rules that all students have to follow when they use the Internet. The “Acceptable Use Policy” tells you and your parents what is “acceptable.” It is a contract you and your parents must sign for you to be allowed to use GPS computer equipment.

### **WHY DOES THE GPS HAVE AN AUP?**

Many people use the Gloucester Public Schools’ network and school computers. We need to make sure that everyone feels comfortable and safe using the network. We also need to make sure that our computers and printers are in working order for everyone to use.

### **WHY DO I HAVE TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT I DO ON THE GPS NETWORK?**

Using the Internet in school is a privilege not a right. The Gloucester Public Schools’ network, web pages, and email accounts are NOT private. GPS staff and the Gloucester Police are able to “monitor” everything you do on the school computers. This means someone can read what you write and see the web pages that you visit.

THINK -- before you do anything online that you would not do in front of your teachers or parents.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IF A STUDENT DOES NOT FOLLOW THE RULES IN THE AUP?**

The GPS has consequences for students who use the Internet in unacceptable ways. Just like when someone breaks classroom rules, there are consequences if you don’t follow the rules in the AUP rules. You need to report to a teacher or other adult anything you see online that does not follow the rules listed in the AUP. If you do not follow this policy, you can lose your computer privileges in school. You can also be punished under the Code of Discipline. The Gloucester Police will get involved if a student breaks a law.

## GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOL'S STUDENT RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY

1. **I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY COMPUTER ACCOUNT AND EMAIL ACCOUNT**

I will not give my password to anyone. I will log off from my account when I am finished. If I see another person's work on a computer screen, I will tell an adult. I will wait to use the computer until an adult has removed the material.

2. **I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY LANGUAGE**

I will only use language on the Internet and in my school email that I would use in the classroom with my teacher. I will not use bad words when I use a computer.

3. **I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR HOW I TREAT OTHER PEOPLE**

I will not write anything mean or hurtful to another person. I will not be a bully or make fun of anyone. I will not "stalk" any person online or by text message. I will tell a teacher if I see anything hurtful to another student online.

4. **I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY USE OF THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS' NETWORK**

I will not look for webpages with pictures, words, or sounds that are not appropriate in school. I will not look for web pages or documents about sex, violence, or weapons. I will not download any files, including music and video files, unless a teacher gives me permission.

5. **I AM A RESPONSIBLE MEMBER OF MY SCHOOL WHEN I AM ONLINE**

I will not write anything or post pictures or video that is hurtful or embarrassing to anyone while I am online.

6. **I AM RESPONSIBLE TO BE HONEST ABOUT WHO I AM ONLINE**

I will not pretend to be anyone else online. I will not send email, create an account, or post any words, pictures, or sounds using someone else's name. I will not use another person's login name or password.

7. **I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR PROTECTING THE SECURITY OF THE GPS NETWORK**

I will not try to change security settings or install any software on school computers without permission. I will not use a phone, personal laptop, or any electronic device in school without a teacher's permission.

8. **I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR PROTECTING GPS PROPERTY**

I will not break or destroy any computer equipment on purpose. I will not move any equipment, including keyboards and mice, without permission.

9. **I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR PROTECTING OTHER PEOPLE'S PROPERTY ONLINE**

I will not "plagiarize." When I use information from a website, I need to let people know where I got the information. I will obey copyright laws and will not download words, pictures, video, or music that belongs to someone else.

10. **I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR FOLLOWING SCHOOL RULES IF I PUBLISH ANYTHING ONLINE**

I will not publish any material on a school website, wiki, blog, podcast, or discussion group without permission. I will not publish a picture, including my picture, with the person's first or last name in the caption.

Proposed Policy

## Acceptable Use Policy Signature Page

Students & Parents/Guardians: Please review the GPS Acceptable Use Policy on pages 1 and 2 then sign the form below to indicate your agreement to use GPS technology responsibly.

This Acceptable Use Policy was developed with input from GPS administrators, teachers, students, and parents. By signing the Acceptable Use Policy, students and parents/guardians acknowledge the following rules and conditions:

- As a Gloucester Public School student, I understand that the use of the school network and email is a privilege, not a right.
- I understand that my school network and email accounts are owned by the GPS and are not private. GPS has the right to access my information at any time.
- I understand that GPS administrators will deem what conduct is inappropriate use if such conduct is not specified in this agreement.
- I will use technology in a manner that complies with laws of the United States and the State of Massachusetts.
- I understand that I am to notify an adult immediately if I encounter material that violates appropriate use.
- I understand the Gloucester Public Schools administration reserves the right to

**Parent or Guardian:**

As the parent or guardian, I have read the GPS Acceptable Use Policy and I have discussed it with my child. I understand that computer access is provided for educational purposes in keeping with the academic goals of GPS, and that student use for any other purpose is inappropriate. I recognize it is impossible for GPS to restrict access to all inappropriate materials, and I will not hold the school responsible for materials acquired on the school network. I understand that children's computer activities at home should be supervised as they can affect the academic environment at school. I hereby give permission for my child to use technology resources at Gloucester Public Schools.

Parent or Guardian's Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Student:**

I understand and will obey the rules of the GPS Acceptable Use Policy (on pages 1 and 2). I will use GPS technology resources productively and responsibly for school-related purposes. I will not use any technology resource in such a way that would be disruptive or cause harm to other users. I understand that consequences of my actions could include possible loss of computer privileges and/or school disciplinary action as stated in the Code of Discipline and/or prosecution under state and federal law.

Student's Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Guide to the GPS: Responsible Use of Technology (Grades 6 – 12 Students)

The Gloucester Public Schools (GPS) provides a wide range of technology resources for student use. These technology resources are to be used only for educational purposes which are defined as: classroom activities, research projects, career and professional development and high quality self-discovery activities of an educational nature.

This agreement outlines appropriate use and prohibited activities when using all technology resources and electronic devices as defined by school administrators. Every student is expected to follow all of the rules and conditions listed, as well as those given verbally by GPS teachers and administrators, and to demonstrate good citizenship and ethical behavior at all times.

The GPS uses a filtering system to track and monitor all computer and Internet use on the GPS network. The system is designed to prevent access to educationally inappropriate sites. It is important to understand that no filtering system is perfect. Due to the nature of the Internet and evolving technology, even with supervision, we cannot guarantee that students will not reach an inappropriate site. It is the students' responsibility to report any inappropriate site to the teacher.

Below are examples, but not an exhaustive list, of online conduct that may constitute a violation of federal and/or state criminal laws relating to cybercrime:

- **Criminal Acts:** These include, but are not limited to, “hacking” or attempting to access computer systems without authorization, threatening/harassing email, cyber-stalking, child pornography, vandalism, unauthorized tampering with computer systems, using misleading domain names, using another person’s identity and/or identity fraud.
- **Libel Laws:** Publicly defaming people through publishing material on the Internet, email, etc.
- **Copyright Violations:** Copying, selling or distributing copyrighted material without the express written permission of the author or publisher (users should assume that all materials available on the Internet are protected by copyright), engaging in plagiarism (using other's words or ideas as your own).

## **GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS' STUDENT RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY**

### **1. I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY COMPUTER ACCOUNT AND EMAIL ACCOUNT**

I understand that passwords are private and that I should not share my password with anyone. I understand that I am responsible for all activities done through my account. I will not allow others to use my account name and password, or try to use that of others. I understand that I will be in violation of the law if I attempt to electronically capture another person's password. I understand that it is important to log off the computer at the end of every session so another user cannot use my password.

### **2. I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY LANGUAGE**

I will use appropriate language in my email messages, online postings, and other digital communications with others. I will not use profanity, vulgarities or any other inappropriate language as determined by school administrators.

### **3. I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR HOW I TREAT OTHER PEOPLE**

I will use email and other means of communications (e.g. blogs, wikis, chat, instant-messaging, discussion boards, etc.) responsibly. I will not send or post hateful or harassing mail, make discriminatory or derogatory remarks about others, or engage in bullying, harassment, or other antisocial behaviors while in school or out of school.

### **4. I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY USE OF THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOL NETWORK**

I will use GPS computer resources responsibly. I will not search, retrieve, save, circulate or display hate-based, offensive or sexually explicit material. I will not search, retrieve, save or circulate images or information about weapons using any GPS computer resources unless authorized by school administrator/teacher as part of a school assignment. I will not use the GPS resources for gambling or political purposes. I will not use the Gloucester Schools' resources for social networking sites, discussion groups, chat rooms, instant messaging, or other forms of online conversation without the consent of my teacher. I understand the use of the GPS network for illegal or commercial activities is prohibited.

### **5. I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MY CONDUCT ON ALL ONLINE SITES**

I understand that what I do on social networking websites should not negatively impact the school learning environment and/or my fellow students, teachers and administrators.

### **6. I AM RESPONSIBLE TO BE HONEST WHILE I AM ONLINE**

I understand that impersonating, spoofing, or pretending to be someone else is forbidden. This includes, but is not limited to, sending out emails, creating accounts, or posting messages or other online content (e.g. text, images, audio or video) in someone else's name.

7. **I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR PROTECTING THE SECURITY OF THE GLOUCESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS' NETWORK**

I will not attempt to bypass security settings or Internet filters, or interfere with the operation of the network by installing illegal software including file sharing, shareware, or freeware on school computers.

8. **I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR PROTECTING SCHOOL PROPERTY**

I understand that vandalism is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to accessing, modifying, or destroying equipment, programs, files, or settings on any computer or technology resources. I understand that I need authorization from a school administrator/teacher to use personal electronic devices that I bring to school, including, but not limited to, memory storage devices (i.e. USB drives).

9. **I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR RESPECTING OTHER PEOPLE'S PROPERTY ONLINE**

I will obey copyright laws. I will not plagiarize or use other's work without proper citation and permission. I will not illegally download materials protected by copyright including, but not limited to, music and movies.

10. **I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR FOLLOWING SCHOOL RULES WHENEVER I PUBLISH ANYTHING ONLINE**

I will follow all guidelines set forth by the GPS and/or my teachers when publishing schoolwork online (e.g. to a website, blog, wiki, discussion board, podcasting or video server). I understand that it is unsafe to post any personal information about myself or others, including but not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers or schools. I will not post photos of students with their first and last names on any online site, including but not limited to: blogs, wikis, and discussions forums.

11. **I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING THE SAFETY OF OTHER PEOPLE AND PROPERTY WHILE ONLINE**

I will report any material that I feel may constitute a threat against the safety of fellow students, staff members or the property of the Gloucester Public Schools to a teacher, administrator or another trusted adult

## Acceptable Use Policy Signature Page

Students & Parents/Guardians: Please review the GPS Acceptable Use Policy on pages 1 and 2 then sign the form below to indicate your agreement to use GPS technology responsibly.

### Acceptable Use Policy for Networks, Including the Internet

This Acceptable Use Policy was developed with input from GPS administrators, teachers, students, and parents. By signing the Acceptable Use Policy, students and parents/guardians acknowledge the following rules and conditions:

- As a Gloucester Public School student, I understand that the use of the school network and email is a privilege, not a right.
- I understand that my school network and email accounts are owned by the GPS and are not private. GPS has the right to access my information at any time.
- I understand that GPS administrators will deem what conduct is inappropriate use if such conduct is not specified in this agreement.
- I will use technology in a manner that complies with laws of the United States and the State of Massachusetts.
- I understand that I am to notify an adult immediately if I encounter material that violates appropriate use.
- I understand the Gloucester Public Schools administration reserves the right to amend this policy at any time without prior notice.

### **Parent or Guardian:**

As the parent or guardian, I have read the GPS Acceptable Use Policy and I have discussed it with my child. I understand that computer access is provided for educational purposes in keeping with the academic goals of GPS, and that student use for any other purpose is inappropriate. I recognize it is impossible for GPS to restrict access to all inappropriate materials, and I will not hold the school responsible for materials acquired on the school network. I understand that children's computer activities at home should be supervised as they can affect the academic environment at school. I hereby give permission for my child to use technology resources at Gloucester Public Schools.

Parent or Guardian's Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **Student:**

I understand and will obey the rules of the GPS Acceptable Use Policy (on pages 1 and 2). I will use GPS technology resources productively and responsibly for school-related purposes. I will not use any technology resource in such a way that would be disruptive or cause harm to other users. I understand that consequences of my actions could include possible loss of computer privileges and/or school disciplinary action as stated in the Code of Discipline and/or prosecution under state and federal law.

Student's Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_