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ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the Natick Public Schools to consistently seek out opportunities to reduce or eliminate, to the extent possible, the use of toxic chemicals and generation of wastes.

It is our goal to safeguard the environment and provide a safe and healthful work and learning environment for our employees and students while undertaking the Town's responsibility to serve the residents of our Town.

A priority of the Natick Public School's is to integrate pollution prevention into all its activities appropriate to the Town's goal of preventing pollution at the source. Where waste cannot be avoided, we will seek, to the extent possible, to use environmentally preferable purchasing, reuse, recycling, treatment and disposal in ways that minimize undesirable impacts to air, water and land.

SAFETY PROGRAM

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

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

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

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

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:55C and Acts of 1985c 614 Sec 1
Board of Education 603 CMR 36:00

CROSS REFS.: EEAE, School Bus Safety Program
GBGB, Staff Personal Security and Safety
IHAM, Health Education
JLI, Student Safety

PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Natick Public Schools are committed to providing a safe and properly maintained environment for all staff, students and visitors. To achieve this end, the School District will implement integrated pest management procedures for its buildings and grounds.

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

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

I. OVERVIEW AND GOALS

- A. The Natick Public Schools shall develop and implement an integrated pest management program.
- B. An integrated pest management program is a pest control approach that emphasizes using a balanced combination of tactics (cultural, mechanical, biological, chemical) to reduce pests to a tolerable level while using pesticides and herbicides as a last resort to minimize health, environmental and economic risks.
- C. Pesticides and herbicides will be used only as a last resort, based on a review of all other available options.
- D. The integrated pest management program shall strive to:
 - 1. Reduce any potential human health hazard.
 - 2. Reduce loss or damage to school structures or property.
 - 3. Minimize the risk of pests from spreading in the community.
 - 4. Enhance the quality of facility use for school and community.
 - 5. Minimize health, environmental and economic risks.

II. RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF PESTICIDES AND HERBICIDES

- A. When pesticides or herbicides are used, they must be classified as an EPA Category III or IV. Application of any pesticide or herbicide may be performed only by certified applicators.
- B. Application of pesticides and herbicides may only be accomplished during a school break or when the building will be clear of students for at least 48 hours.

III. NOTIFICATION OF PESTICIDE AND HERBICIDE USE

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

IV. RECORD-KEEPING

- A. The District will keep a record of pesticides and herbicides used, amounts and locations of treatments and will keep any Material Safety Data Sheets, product labels and manufacturer information on ingredients related to the application of the pesticides or herbicides.
- B. All records of pesticides and herbicides used and correspondence will be available for public review upon notice and during normal school hours.

V. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES AND EDUCATION

- A. Designated staff (School Nutrition, Buildings and Grounds, etc.) will participate in sanitation and pest exclusion procedure appropriate to their roles. For example: keeping doors closed, repairing cracks, removing food waste within 12 hours, keeping lids on garbage receptacles and keeping vegetation properly out.
- B. Ongoing education of all appropriate District staff will be a priority to ensure a safe and clean environment.

LEGAL REF.: Chapter 85 of the Acts of 2000, "An Act to Protect Children and Families from Harmful Pesticides."

FIRST AID

The school attempts to provide a safe environment. If an accident or sudden illness occurs, school personnel will administer first aid and, if necessary, activate the Emergency Medical System (911) and prepare for transport to hospital.

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

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

1. The school nurse or another trained person will be responsible for administering first aid. The school nurse is required to assess the student for all clinic visits.
2. When the nature of an illness or an injury appears in any way serious, every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian immediately.
3. No student will be dismissed from school due to illness or injury without parental/guardian authorization, unless the student requires emergency care in which case Emergency Medical Services (911) will be contacted.
4. In extreme emergencies, the school nurse, school physician or Principal may make arrangements for immediate hospitalization of injured or ill students, contacting parent or guardian in advance if at all possible.
5. The nurse completes an accident report on all students who go to the emergency room, are referred to their physician, or suffer a substantial injury.
6. All injuries involving students and staff members that require interventions greater than first aid will be reported as soon as possible to the Superintendent and, if the Superintendent deems appropriate, to the School Committee. Injuries are evaluated on an individual basis and those injuries that require further evaluation for treatment or are done with intent are reported to the Principal, nurse leaders, and the Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:55A; 71:56

CROSS REF.: JLC, Student Health Services and Requirements

EMERGENCY PLANS

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

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

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

CROSS REF.: EBCD, Emergency Closings

INTERIM POLICY ON ISSUES RELATED TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The School Committee establishes an emergency, interim policy for the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic that will:

- promote public safety and the safety of students, faculty, and staff;
- maintain the district's commitment to an inclusive, equitable education;
- ensure support for all students, including those at highest risk educationally, socially, and/or economically;
- adhere, to the extent possible, to the guidance of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), MA Department of Public Health and other agencies of state and federal government; and expedite, in collaboration with the Natick Board of Health, the COVID-19 health and safety protocols.

The School Committee will authorize the Superintendent to act expeditiously in executing COVID-19 related school plans for students, their families, and the community.

Interim changes to policies affected by the pandemic

The Superintendent, with the advice and consent of the School Committee, may suspend or modify individual district policies to address the COVID-19 emergency.

The goal of emergency pandemic policies shall be to:

- ensure the safety and health of students, faculty, staff, and all persons who may come in contact with them;
- provide the most effective education across all learning models, to the extent possible under the circumstances;
- authorize changes to operating protocols, as needed, to open and operate schools effectively from various venues or platforms;
- conduct the business and operational functions of the district as efficiently as possible;
- allow the Superintendent and staff to act quickly to carry out a schooling plans; and
- facilitate the re-establishment of a safe and productive school day and year.

The development and implementation of school operations and procedures falls under the purview of the Superintendent. Per policy File BGD - School Committee Review of Procedures, the School Committee may review procedures developed by the Superintendent for the school system, but does not officially approve procedures and operations except when inconsistent with policies adopted by the Committee, required by state law, or other necessary circumstances. In order to allow the Superintendent to make COVID-related changes to operating protocols that would have been inconsistent with current policy, the School Committee is temporarily amending selected policy subsections.

Added/Amended Sections to the Policy Manual

The following sections of the NPS Policy Manual are hereby added or amended to address the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Face masks and face coverings (File: EBCFA)

A face mask or face covering that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings, and on school transportation, even when social distancing is observed.

Face masks or face coverings may be removed only during school-designated periods for mask breaks and eating or drinking breaks, and while outside whenever permitted by school staff. During mask breaks, individuals must still maintain appropriate social distancing.

Exceptions to this policy under certain circumstances, such as for students with medical, behavioral or other challenges who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by NPS staff in consultation with the school nurse, Director of Health Services, or local Board of Health. Face shields or physical barriers may provide an alternative in some instances.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

- Operations and plant maintenance and security (File EC, ECA)

Subject to the provisions of law, regulation and collective bargaining agreements, the Superintendent may suspend or amend current policy to ensure the efficient operation of business functions and maintenance of school buildings, and other such offices as the district maintains.

- Transportation and busing (File EE, EEA, EEAEC, EEAG)

Subject to current law and regulation, the Superintendent may suspend or modify policies related to the transportation of students by the school district. Legal requirements relating to IEP's that contain transportation for students shall not be altered without the appropriate family consent. These modifications shall be consistent with the district return to school plan.

- School calendar/school year (File IC/ICA)

Subject to the provisions of law, regulation, and collective bargaining agreements, the Superintendent may revise the school calendar with the approval of the School Committee.

- Time on learning and length of school day (File IC/ICA and ID)

Subject to the provisions of law, regulation, and collective bargaining agreements, the Superintendent may suspend or amend requirements for time on learning and may alter daily school hours as needed.

- Home-bound instruction (File IHBF)

The district shall provide remote instruction for students who are temporarily homebound due to illness, quarantine, or disability.

- Student assignment to schools (File JCA)

Subject to the provisions of law, regulation, and collective bargaining agreements, the Superintendent may alter or revise the assignment of students to schools.

- Student absences (File JH)

Subject to operative law and regulations, the Superintendent may suspend or modify policies related to student attendance.

- Discipline and Suspension/Expulsion (File JIC, JK)

The Superintendent, subject to the approval of the School Committee, shall adopt protocols for serving students who are disciplined or suspended during the pandemic emergency. The schools must include opportunities for students to make academic progress during that time. Students may elect to remain at home under the provisions of the policies related to homeschooling.

- Students at risk (JIE, JL, JLC, JLCC)

During the COVID pandemic, the Superintendent or principal of a school may revise or suspend provisions of policy to facilitate the education of students who are at risk, have special physical needs, or play a role as their family caregivers. This includes, but is not limited to, caring for or educating students with disabilities, illness, pregnancy, child rearing responsibilities, or special education needs consistent with law and regulation.

- Eligibility for participation in extracurricular activities including programs outside of the school day, school and school club-sponsored events, and school-sponsored athletics.

Subject to law, regulation, and standards established by the appropriate and legitimate regulatory body, the Superintendent may propose changes to district protocols for participation in extracurricular activities, including programs outside of the school day, school and school club-sponsored events, and school sponsored athletics subject to the rules established by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

For the 2021-2022 school year, FDA approved vaccination against SARS-CoV-2 is required for all age-eligible students to participate in extracurricular activities, events and athletics that occur outside of the school day.

1. Age-eligible students
 - a. Students who participate in extracurricular activities including programs outside of the school day, school and school club-sponsored events, and school sponsored athletics. are required to be vaccinated except as outlined in b (below) .
 - b. Students who are unvaccinated are required to participate in state-sponsored testing through Natick Public Schools or submit evidence of a weekly negative COVID-19 PCR test delivered on the same timeline and due dates as the Natick Public Schools program.
2. Age-ineligible students
 - a. Students are required to participate in state-sponsored pooled, test and stay and symptomatic testing through Natick Public Schools or submit evidence of a negative COVID-19 PCR test delivered on the same timeline and due dates as the Natick Public Schools program.

- Exemptions from health and safety requirements for particular groups of students (File JL)

The Superintendent shall provide protocols to principals and educators teachers regarding students who may require special exemptions from health and safety standards during the pandemic emergency. Such protocols may address, for example, exemptions on the use of masks for the youngest children and/or high risk students.

- Illness and contact tracing (File JLCC)

The Superintendent may establish protocols for tracking student contacts as a means of locating others from whom students may contract or expose other persons to the COVID-19 virus. Such protocols will be consistent with law and regulation and be consistent with standards to protect the privacy of students, their families, and other persons.

- Privacy of Students (File JRA, JRA-R, JRD)

During the pandemic, the rights to privacy held by students and their families shall not be abridged by the public schools. Such rights extend to the confidentiality of student academic records, health data, economic status, and other such information as may be considered confidential by law.

Massachusetts law prohibits the recording of individuals without their permission. Similarly, students may not be recorded in classrooms by audio, visual, or remote means without the permission of parents or, if of age, by individual students. During periods of remote learning, the privacy of students participating in on-line classes shall not be violated by recording them without appropriate permissions.

- Visitors in schools and buildings (File KI)

Subject to current emergency declarations, the Superintendent may propose suspension or modification of district policies regarding visitors to school buildings during the school day and after school hours.

REFS.: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Declaration of State of Emergency To Respond to Covid-19

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, COVID-19 Order No. 31

Center for Disease Control and Prevention Considerations for Wearing Masks

CROSS REF.: [BGD](#) - School Committee Review of Procedures

Adopted and Approved by School Committee on September 20, 2021

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

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

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

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

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

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:4; 71:4A

CROSS REF.: EBC, Emergency Plans

FACE COVERINGS

The Natick School District is committed to providing a safe environment as schools reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to public health experts, one of the best ways to stop the spread of coronavirus and to keep members of our school community safe is the use of face masks or face coverings. Therefore, in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the following requirements are in place until further notice.

A face covering that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings, in clinics and on school transportation, even when social distancing is observed.

Individuals may be excused from the requirement for the following list of reasons, per CDC guidance:

The individual:

- has trouble breathing;
- is unconscious;
- in incapacitated;
- cannot remove the mask or face covering without assistance.

In addition, masks or face coverings will not be required for anyone who has a medical, behavioral or other challenge making it unsafe to wear a face mask or face covering. A written note from a physician is required for a requested exemption. Parents may not excuse their child from the face mask requirement by signing a waiver.

Additionally, face masks or face coverings will not be required when appropriate social distancing is enforced:

- during mask breaks;
- while eating or drinking;
- while outside.
- When staff are alone in classrooms or offices and more than 10 minutes before a visitor or class joins the person in the space.

Exceptions to this policy under certain circumstances, such as for students with medical, behavioral or other challenges who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse or local Board of Health. Face shields or physical barriers may provide an alternative in some instances.

A student's mask or face covering is to be provided by the student's family. Staff members are responsible for providing their own face coverings. However, the district will supply disposable face covering for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one.

If students are in violation of this policy, the building principal will consult with the parent/guardians to determine whether an exception is appropriate, or the student may be removed from the school building for in-person learning until such time as they can comply with the requirement or the requirement is lifted.

Violations of this policy by staff will be handled in the same manner as other violations of School Committee policy.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

LEGAL REF.:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/updated-advisory-regarding-masks-and-face-coverings-july-30-2021-0/download>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention – Guidance for Covid-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools Updated August 5, 2021 -

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.htm>

Center for Disease Controls – Guidance for Covid-19 Prevention on Public Transportation

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/face-masks-public-transportation.html>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – Fall 2021 Covid-19 Guidance

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop/2021-0730fall-2021-covid19-guidance.pdf>

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT

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

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

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

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

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:68
 Town Charter

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SECURITY

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

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

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

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

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

VANDALISM

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

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

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

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

AUTHORIZED USE OF SCHOOL-OWNED MATERIALS

The School Committee wishes to be of assistance, whenever possible, to other town departments and community organizations. Therefore, permission to use school equipment may be granted by the Superintendent upon request by responsible parties or organizations.

Staff members may use school equipment when the use is related to their school employment. Students may use school equipment when it is to be used in connection with their studies or extracurricular activities.

Proper controls will be established by the Superintendent to assure the user's responsibility for, and return of, all school equipment.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The major purpose of the Natick Public School's transportation services is to aid students in getting to and from school in an efficient, safe, and economical manner.

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

1. specifications for school bus design and equipment
2. inspection of buses
3. qualifications and examinations of bus drivers
4. driving regulations
5. small vehicle requirements, if applicable
6. insurance coverage
7. adherence to local regulations and directives as specified in bid contracts

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

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.4:4, 40:5; 71:7A, B and C; 71:37D; 71:48A; 71:68; 71:71A; 71B:4; 71B:5; 71B:8; 74:8A/76:1; 76:12B1; 76:14

WALKERS AND RIDERS

Students will be entitled to transportation to and from school at the expense of the public schools when such transportation conforms with applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws. Students will be entitled to transportation to and from school for a fee when applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws do not grant town paid transportation.

Additionally, the Committee will provide town paid transportation for students as follows:

Grades K - 6: Students living more than two miles from the school they are entitled to attend.

Additionally, the Committee will provide fee-based transportation for students as follows:

Grade K - 6: Students living two miles or less from the school they are entitled to attend; or

Grade 7-12: Any Student regardless of mileage or grade will be transported to the school that he/she is entitled to attend.

Additionally, the Committee shall not provide transportation to a student who resides outside of the attending school boundary.

It is the policy of the Natick School Committee not to allow unauthorized students to ride buses. All students assigned to a school bus will be issued a bus pass and must present the pass to the bus driver upon request.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 71:7A; 71:68; 71B:5

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM

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

1. Elementary Children will be instructed as to the proper procedure for boarding and exiting from a school bus and in proper and safe conduct while aboard.
2. Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted at least twice a year to acquaint student riders with procedures in emergency situations.
3. All vehicles used to transport children will be inspected periodically for conformance with state and federal safety requirements.
4. Seatbelts will be provided on all school buses that transport students from their bus stop to school and back.
5. Security camera systems may be installed on regular buses.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 90:7b as amended by Ch. 246 Acts of 1986
M.G.L. 990:1 et seq.; 713.2; 713:7L
Highway Safety Program Standard No. 17

CROSS REF.: EB, Safety Program

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

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

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

The Code of Conduct as outlined in the student handbook applies to all students on school busses and/or at school bus stops.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

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

1. The activity has the approval of the Superintendent of Schools.
2. The owner of the vehicle being used in transporting students must file evidence with the Superintendent of personal liability insurance coverage on the vehicle in the amounts of \$100,000 - \$300,000 or more.
3. The parents/guardians of students to be transported in this manner will be fully informed as to this means of transportation and will sign a statement to this effect.

SOURCE: MASC

Revised and Approved by the Natick School Committee on May 2, 2022

MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

No motor vehicle operator shall cause or allow any motor vehicle operated by him or her on school grounds to idle unnecessarily, except for any of the following reasons: traffic conditions; queuing at a school for the purpose of picking up or discharging students; turbo-charged diesel engine cool down or warm up; maintenance of appropriate temperature for school buses when accepting or discharging passengers not to exceed three minutes in any fifteen minute period or one minute in any fifteen minute period for other motor vehicles; for circumstances involving safety or emergencies and for servicing or repairing motor vehicles; and as these exceptions are more completely described in the below referenced regulations. The term "school grounds" shall mean in, on or within 100 feet of the real property of the school whether or not it is in session, and shall include any athletic field or facility and any playground used for school purposes or functions which is owned by the municipality or school district, regardless of proximity to a school building, as well as any parking lot appurtenant to such school athletic field, facility or playground. Reasonable efforts shall be made by the district to identify by signage all known and actual air intake systems, which may be within 100 feet of an idling motor vehicle. A motor vehicle operator shall not idle a motor within 100 feet of such air intake system, unless the Natick School District has determined that alternative locations block traffic, impair student safety or are not cost effective.

The Natick School District shall erect and maintain in a conspicuous location on school grounds "NO IDLING" signage as described below. All such signage shall contain appropriate sized font so as to be visible from a distance of 50 feet.

NO IDLING PENALTIES OF \$100 FOR FIRST OFFENSE AND \$500 FOR SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES M.G.L. C. 90, § 16B AND 540 CMR 27.00

It shall be the responsibility of the school administration to ensure that each school bus driver employed by the Natick School District and not by a school bus contractor shall, upon employment and at least once per year thereafter, sign a document acknowledging the receipt of copies of M.G.L. c. 90, § 16B and 540 CMR 27.00. The prohibitions contained in M.G.L. c. 90, § 16B shall be enforced by state or local law enforcement agencies.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. c. 71:37H, c. 90:16B and 540 CMR 27.00

FREE AND REDUCED PRICE POLICY

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

A media release in compliance with USDA guidelines will be issued near the beginning of each school year to notify the public that the Natick Public Schools will participate in the National School Lunch Program.

A letter to households and an application will be distributed by the first day of school and accepted throughout the year. Determination of eligibility to receive free or reduced meals will be made by either a school principal or vice principal in accordance with the current Income Eligibility Guidelines. Schools will notify parents/guardians of their determination. Students may also qualify through the DESE Direct Certification Process. Families who qualify through this process will be notified by letter from the Business Office.

The Natick Public Schools will abide by the nondiscrimination practices in accordance with Federal Law and USDA policy and the fair hearing procedures as established by the USDA.

To prevent overt identification of children receiving free or reduced price meals, Natick Public Schools uses a ticketing system for elementary students and a numbering system for secondary students.

Notice will be provided to households selected for verification and determination of verification results will be mailed to households.

As required by state and federal regulations, the Natick Public Schools will annually apply to the State Department of Education to participate in the National School Lunch program.

LEGAL REFS: National School Lunch Act, as amended (42 USC 1751-1760)
 Child Nutrition Act of 1966
 P.L. 89-642, 80 Stat. 885, as amended
 M.G.L. 15:1G; 15:1L; 69:1C; 71:72

MEAL CHARGE POLICY

On behalf of Natick Public Schools, we recognize that it is important to provide healthy and nutritious meals to all students. The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and consistent approach to meal account procedures.

Methods of Payment

Natick Public Schools can accept payment for meals upon purchase in the form of cash at the register, by debit or credit card through the on-line payment system for school lunches, or by check sent to the Food Service Director. Any of these payment methods may be used to create a pre-payment of lunches to a student's account.

It is recommended that families and staff maintain on account a minimum balance equivalent to 5 school lunches for those who participate in the food service program. It is strongly encouraged that families and staff make on-line payments and register for alerts when balances are low.

Parents/Guardians are responsible for all meal payments to the food service program. Notices of low or deficit balances will be sent directly to parent/guardians via email or regular postal mail at regular intervals during the school year. At no time shall any staff member give payment notices to students unless that student is known to be an emancipated minor who is fully responsible for themselves or over the age of 18. If parent/guardians have issues with student purchases they should contact food services for assistance.

Policy Administration

It is within the scope of responsibility between the Business Office and the Food Service Management Company (FSMC) to monitor students' meal accounts with the goal of eliminating negative balances. Upon conclusion of the school year, any uncollected foodservice debt must be covered by the school operating budget.

Students with a zero balance on their account will not be allowed to purchase a la carte items including but not limited to a second entrée, snack, ice cream, or an additional beverage. The student will still be allowed to take a meal, and that meal will continue to be charged to the account at the standard lunch rate based on their meal status. The parent/guardian is responsible for any meal charges incurred. If there is a financial hardship, a parent/guardian should contact food services directly to discuss payment options such as an individualized repayment plan.

Refunds

Refunds for withdrawn and/or graduating students require a written request (email, postal, or in person) for a refund of any money remaining in their account to be submitted. Graduating students also have the option to transfer funds to a sibling's account or to donate to a student in need with a written request.

Delinquent Accounts/Collections

Natick Public Schools

Failure of a parent or guardian to maintain reasonably current accounts may result in a referral to the Superintendent for his/her review. The Superintendent shall ensure that there are appropriate and effective collection procedures and internal controls within the school district's business office that meet the requirements of law.

If a student is without meal money on a consistent basis, the administration may investigate the situation more closely and take further action as needed. If financial hardship exists, parents and families are encouraged to apply for free or reduced price lunches for their child. Each school handbook shall contain detailed instructions for parental assistance.

Policy Communications

This policy shall be communicated to all staff and families at the beginning of each school year and to families transferring to the district during the year.

LEGAL REFS: MGL [71:72](#); USDA School Meal Program Guidelines May 2017

Approved by the Natick School Committee on: September 17, 2018