



PORTSMOUTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

"The purpose of the Portsmouth Schools is to educate all students by challenging them to become thinking, responsible, contributing citizens who continue to learn through their lives."

WELCOME

I take great pleasure in welcoming you to Portsmouth Middle School. You will spend a good part of the day here at school and I hope it will be a rewarding experience. The faculty and staff are here to work with you to make your time here as rewarding as possible. This section of your agenda book has been prepared to help you better understand the rules and regulations of your school. While it is not possible to record every detail of every rule in such a book, I ask that you take the time to understand what is written here, then to apply common sense to your experiences at Portsmouth Middle School so that everyone can work to do their best and have a successful year.

Phillip R. Davis
Principal

WHAT IS A MIDDLE SCHOOL?

Our middle school provides a comprehensive educational program for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students. Programming at Portsmouth Middle School is designed to enhance the development of the whole child. Social and emotional development and good citizenship skills are considered to be of equal importance to academic achievement.

Some characteristics of a middle school include: team teaching, interdisciplinary teaching, exploratory curriculum, an Advisor-Advisee Program, Parent Advisory Council, and extra-curricular activities which are age appropriate.

STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

It is the policy of the Portsmouth School District not to discriminate on the basis of handicap as required under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 in the admission of students to programs or any educational services or in the employment of personnel. The Portsmouth School Department does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, or social or economic status, as required under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Grievance procedures are available which provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging violations of Section 504 or Title IX. These may be obtained at the Office of the Coordinator, which is located at Central Office, 1 Junkins Avenue, Suite 402., Portsmouth NH 03801. The telephone number is 431-5080.

DRUG-FREE SCHOOL ZONE

The State legislature established Drug-Free School Zones (RSA 193-B) as of 7/2/91. The law makes it unlawful to sell or possess with intent to sell controlled drugs in the zones. The penalties are twice what were otherwise authorized under other RSA's with mandatory minimum one-year imprisonment. The law defines drug-free school zones as "an area inclusive of any property used for school purposes by any school, whether or not owned by such school, within 1000 feet of any such property, and within or immediately adjacent to school buses."

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/Town: _____

Phone: _____ Homeroom: _____

STUDENT AGENDA BOOKS

The *Portsmouth Middle School* Staff have prepared this Agenda Book to help students understand what is expected of them during the school year. Students are required to keep this Agenda Book with them throughout the year. Agenda Books should be kept in the original condition, pages should not be torn out, and the covers should be left intact. There will be a \$5.00 charge to replace missing or destroyed Agenda Books.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE

At the middle school, prompt and regular to all classes is required. Unless it is absolutely impossible, you should be in school every day. Experience shows that good attendance and success in school go hand in hand.

If a student is going to be absent from school, parents should call the school at 436-5781 between 6:30 AM and 8:30 AM on each day the student is absent. A student's absence will be marked as unexcused unless there has been parent contact either by phone, or by a written notice before or after the absence.

If a student is absent for only part of the day, he/she must report to the office for an admission slip to class. Students who miss all or part of the day without parent permission and a legitimate reason are considered *truant* from school. Truancy will be handled through contact with parents and, if necessary, through the court system. Should a student have excessive absences from school, the administration may consider a CHINS Petition. Details of the attendance policy approved by the School board on February 14, 2017, are available in the Parent Handbook.

COMMUNICATION

Email Messages

Much of the communication with parents/guardians concerning middle school and school district activities and events are distributed by email. Parents are encouraged to provide and keep current their email address. Email addresses for middle school faculty and staff are provided in the Staff Directory section on the Middle School page of the City of Portsmouth website: (www.cityofportsmouth.com/school/pms).

Parent Portal

For its student information system the Portsmouth School District uses *Infinite Campus*. This program allows online access for parents and students. Parents, guardians and students can check their attendance, schedules, assignments and grades by going online to the following web address:

<https://ic.portsmouth.k12.nh.us/campus/portal/portsmouth.jsp>

Parents/Guardians of more than one student in the district will be able to look at all information through the same login. Parents should have received their individual ID numbers by mail. Use this ID number to create your personal Infinite Campus Username and Password. If you do not know your ID number, contact Ms. Dube in the main office for more information.

PERMISSION TO LEAVE SCHOOL

Students are *not* permitted to leave the school at any time during the day unless they bring a note from a parent and sign out through the office. Leaving the school without permission is considered truancy from school.

HOMEWORK AND HOMEWORK REQUESTS

Homework is an essential part of the school program. All students are expected to complete homework assignments within the time schedule set by the teacher.

Students are expected to make up all work missed due to absence from school. It is the student's responsibility to check with his/her teachers about make-up work and complete it in a timely manner.

If a student is out 2 or more days, parents may contact the guidance secretary to collect work for the parent to pick up. These requests must be made by 9:00 AM to allow teachers ample time to gather work, and the work will be available for pick up between 3:15 and 4:15 PM in the main office on days with normal school hours.

EMERGENCY AND FIRE DRILLS

Emergency and Fire Drills are required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is extremely important that when the first signal is given, students quietly follow directions and clear the building immediately by the prescribed route. Directions are posted in each classroom and teachers will discuss these directions with students

VISITORS IN SCHOOL

During the school year (particularly just before vacations) students request that visiting relatives and friends be allowed to accompany them to school. We cannot allow any visitors during the last month of school. At other times during the year, students wishing to bring a guest to school must have prior approval of their teachers and the Principal.

SCHEDULED EARLY RELEASES

At certain times during the school year, students will be dismissed 2 hours earlier than usual. This gives teachers time to plan activities and interdisciplinary units, as well as receive essential training. Please consult your school calendar for specific dates.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS OR DELAYED OPENINGS

Announcements relating to school cancellations and delayed openings due to weather, etc., will be carried on: WOKQ, WTSN, WERZ, WOQL and on wmur.com. You will also receive an automated phone message from our Superintendent from our Alert Now system.

TELEPHONES/CELL PHONES

Students are discouraged from using the office phone. The office telephone is a business phone and may be used by students for emergencies only. Students may use classroom phones with teacher permission. Communication with others via text or chat messaging is a distraction to students and classroom learning, therefore, students are not permitted to use cell phones to call or text at any point during the school day. Student phones should be locked in lockers during the school day, only to be used when a teacher posts BYOD in their classroom.

COMPUTERS/BYOD

All students will have access to computers and other school related technological devices. At the beginning of the year, an agreement will be sent home and signed by both student and parent regarding appropriate use of this technology.

Instruction in classes at Portsmouth Middle School often relies upon or utilizes the internet or applications on a computer device. It is the intent of the school to provide PSD devices to students within the classroom for use; however, at times due to either heavy use, or an organic learning experience students may be asked to use their own device for learning. Students who have signed both the Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) agreement and Acceptable Use technology agreement may use their own personal internet capable device under the direction and supervision of their classroom teacher for curricular purposes when it is posted as a BYOD day in the room.

At no time during the school day is texting or communicating via apps the acceptable use of a student's personal device. If a student is using their personal device in a manner not consistent with this policy, faculty or administration will confiscate the device. The device in question can be picked up by the student at the end of the school day. On a student's third such event and every time thereafter, the phone will be returned only to a parent or guardian. Any student who has not signed the BYOD paperwork will be provided a school device for use at school when learning objectives call for the use of technology and the internet.

FIELD TRIPS

At various times throughout the year, students will be taken on Field Trips. Students whose behavior is not acceptable during school may not be allowed to attend a trip. This decision will be up to the student's Team teachers who will make a recommendation to the Principal who will make the final decision. Students are reminded that all school rules are in effect during the entire length of the Field Trip.

BOOK BAGS AND POCKETBOOKS

Students are *not allowed* to carry book bags or backpacks during the day. A major goal of the *Portsmouth Middle School* is to teach students to be organized and to plan ahead. Therefore, all book bags, backpacks, etc. should be placed in a student's locker at the beginning of the day. Students may carry a pocketbook that measures 6" by 6" or smaller.

VALUABLES AT SCHOOL

Students should not bring large sums of money or valuables to school. The school is not responsible for lost articles. If a student must bring money or valuables to school, these items should be left in the Main Office for safe keeping. Items such as laser pens, toys, perfume spray bottles, pets, handheld electronic game devices, etc. are not permitted at school. iPods, tablets, and cell phones may be brought to school but must be turned off and kept out of sight during school hours unless they are working within the BYOD guidelines.

BICYCLES, SKATEBOARDS ROLLER BLADES & SCOOTERS

Students bringing skates, bikes, skateboards or scooters onto *Portsmouth Middle School* property need to obey the following rules:

- *Wear safety equipment including helmets*
- *Use skates, skateboards, and scooters in a safe and courteous manner keeping in mind that schools are very busy places at arrival and dismissal*

- *Please do not Use this equipment inside the building.*
- *Please do not ride at entrances/exits or on walkways on school property.*
- *Please do not use this equipment on the bus loop until all busses have departed from the school grounds.*

Bicycles should be locked to the bike racks in front of the school or at the Connie Bean Center. We cannot be responsible for bicycles damaged or stolen.

Skateboards and scooters must be stored in lockers, in the main office, or in a teacher's classroom.

DRESS CODE

Due to the nature of the age level, large growth rate and the varied economic setting *Portsmouth Middle School* draws from, it is difficult to mandate a specific Dress Code for all students. Therefore the following guidelines have been established:

1. Students shall be clean, neat, and properly dressed at all times.
2. Students should be covered with clothing from above their chest to their mid-thigh. There should be no skin showing in this region.
3. Student's dress and grooming shall be appropriate and enhance the goals of self-respect and respect for others in the school and community.
4. Grooming or clothing that interferes with instruction or is a disturbing factor in class shall not be permitted.
5. Students shall leave coats, jackets, and hats in their lockers.
6. Footwear shall be worn at all times. Flip-flops and high platform soles are not recommended for safety reasons.
7. The Principal shall make the final decision as to what is appropriate dress within the school.

HEALTH OFFICE

The Health Office is located on the first floor to the right of the Main entrance. If a student feels ill during the day, he or she must obtain a pass from a teacher and report to the nurse. If there is a necessity to go home, the student may call home from the Health Office, after the Nurse has assessed the student. Students are not to go to the Health Office without a pass or between classes unless it is an emergency. If the Nurse is not there, students should report to the Main Office. Our school nurse is there to evaluate your medical needs. Students should not call parents to be picked up without first consulting with the school nurse in the Health Office.

MEDICATION GUIDELINES

If it is necessary for a student to take medication during school hours:

- ◆ *Parent permission* forms for prescription medication are available from the Nurse.
- ◆ *All medication* must be in the original container obtained from the pharmacy. The label must include student's name, name of medication, directions for administration, date and the physician's name.
- ◆ *All medications must be* brought to school by a parent/guardian.
- ◆ All medications must be left with the school nurse.
- ◆ All medication will be administered under the nurse's supervision.

Students may keep their inhalers with them. Cough drops are permitted. Elevator access is permitted with permission from the nurse.

GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

The Guidance Department helps all students discover their own abilities, aptitudes, and interests. We also assist students in making decisions and solving problems. The Guidance counselors and secretary are located on the first floor of the C building in the Guidance Office. A student seeking out their counselor should ask a teacher for a pass to come to Guidance.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Parents must notify the guidance office of any change of address or telephone number. Proof of the new address should be given to the Guidance Office secretary.

CHANGING SCHOOLS

Students who are moving to another school should bring a note from home at least 24 hours prior to their last day indicating the last day the student will attend our school, and destination of the new school. This note should be given to the guidance secretary. Students are responsible for returning their books (including school library books).

LOST AND FOUND

Students are asked to turn in lost articles to the office. If a student should misplace something, they should check with the office. Unclaimed items will be donated to charity on a periodic basis.

SCHOOL FUNCTIONS

All rules that apply during the school day also apply during school functions such as after school activities, field trips, dances, *etc.*

PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL/PTA

Portsmouth Middle School has an active Parent Advisory Council/PTA. We welcome and encourage all kinds of parent involvement in our school. The association periodically provides newsletters to parents regarding a variety of events and activities

LOCKERS

After signing the Locker Agreement (below), students will be assigned a lock and a locker by their 7th period teacher. Each student is responsible for his/her own locker and for the items placed in the locker. The combination to a locker is confidential. Students should not share this information with any other student. Students who lose their lock will be required to pay \$7 for its replacement.

Students should take the study materials needed for morning classes before first period. The materials needed for afternoon classes should be taken from lockers after lunch. Students will be permitted to return to lockers at intervals as permitted by Team Policy.

SCHOOL LOCKER AGREEMENT

Students wishing to use a locker provided by the School Department will be required to sign the agreement stated below. A parent/guardian signature will also be required.

The undersigned student of the *Portsmouth School System*, in consideration of being provided the use of a school locker during the school year acknowledges and agrees to the following:

- 1) The use of the locker is a privilege, which is provided at the discretion of the Portsmouth School Department.
- 2) A condition of the granting of the use of this locker is that the *Portsmouth School Department* reserves the right to conduct inspections of the locker at such times and in such a manner as the Department determines to be appropriate.
- 3) There is no expectation of privacy afforded to the undersigned with respect to the locker or any contents that might at any time be within the locker.

GRADING

Report cards are issued to students at the end of each nine-week term. Students are responsible for bringing the report card home. Report cards are printed and posted online approximately one week after terms close.

Marks are recorded by letters, which indicate scholastic achievement. The interpretation of these letters is as follows:

A	93-100%
B	85-92%
C	77-84%
D	70-76%
F	below 70%

Students receiving an *incomplete* mark will have two weeks to make up any missing work. After two weeks, any work not made up shall be counted as a missing assignment, greatly influencing a student's final average.

Students will also be graded on their Habits of Work using the rubric on pg. 14. Students who receive all 3s (Proficient) or 4s (Proficient with Distinction) in their Habits of Work are eligible to receive a Merit Card. Privileges associated with Merit Cards are listed on the reverse of a student's Merit Card itself.

WARNING REPORTS

Warning reports are issued about halfway through each term to students who are doing poorly and could possibly fail that term. These reports are mailed home and must be signed by parents and returned to the teacher who issued the report.

HONOR ROLL

Honor Roll students are decided on the following basis:

Highest Honors consists of students receiving all A's.

High Honors consists students receiving only A's and B's.

Honors consists students receiving all B's or B's and one C with at least one A

END OF TERM DATES

2017 – 2018

Term 1 – November 02

Term 2 – January 22

Term 3 – April 04

Term 4 – June 15

EXTRACURRICULAR ELIGIBILITY

Students who are suspended may not participate in any extracurricular school activities, including dances and sports practices. Students who have an out-of-school suspension are not permitted on school grounds during the suspension.

Students participating in Portsmouth Middle School Athletic Teams are required to sign an Athletic Agreement.

Eligibility for extra-curricular activities will be based upon the following:

1. Students who fail to report to teacher and/or office detentions will be considered ineligible for participation in after school activities until the responsibility is fulfilled.
2. Students who are suspended will be considered ineligible for participation in after school activities on the day(s) that the suspension is served.
3. Students who are absent from school or who enter school after 10:00 A.M. will be considered ineligible for after school activities on the day of the absence or late entry (this can only be waived by the principal or for extenuating circumstances).

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Students at *Portsmouth Middle School* are encouraged to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities. Offerings may vary from year to year and periodically new clubs are created. During regular advisory periods, on announcements and through parent emails, students will learn about clubs and activities and their start dates and times. The complete list of active clubs is listed on the school website, and the activity booklet is in the main office and guidance office.

LATE BUS

Portsmouth Middle School provides a late bus Monday through Thursday. The bus leaves school at approximately 4:15 PM. Students who use this bus are subject to the same rules as students riding regular buses. In order to use the late bus, students must have a pass indicating that they participated in an after school activity. Students opting to stay at the Connie Bean Center may not use the late bus.

Students in the building after 3:20 PM are expected to be with a teacher. If a student wishes to visit the *public library* after school and ride the late bus home, they must bring a parent note to the office that morning.

THE CAFETERIA

A well-balanced lunch is available to all students during their lunch period. We ask students to follow a few simple lunchroom rules in the cafeteria:

1. Keep your table and the area around your table neat and clean.
2. Deposit all litter in the appropriate container.
3. Talk with your neighbor quietly.
4. Stay seated at your table during lunch.
5. Do not take food out of the cafeteria, except "breakfast-to-go"
6. Do not leave the cafeteria without permission.
7. The maximum number of students per table is 8.
8. Ask permission to leave the cafeteria and have a pass if you are returning to a teacher's classroom.

UNIFIED ARTS

Portsmouth Middle School offers a variety of exploratory courses under the heading of Unified Arts. During the three years a student is at the Middle School, he/she will have an opportunity to take most or all of courses such as: Art, Music, Technical Education, and Family and Consumer Science. In some cases a fee may be required to help offset the cost of these courses. Teachers in these areas will inform students at the beginning of the term as to the amount of the fee.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All students in grades 6-8 at Portsmouth Middle School are assigned to a Physical Education/Health class for the entire year. Classes meet three days out of the six-day rotation. Health class meets one of the three days and Physical Education class meets the other two days. Expectations are that each student will participate in class and either wear or bring sneakers and a change of clothing to do a variety of physical activities in class. Appropriate Physical Education clothing could be items such as: shorts, tee shirts, sweat pants, sweatshirts, wind pants, stretch pants, etc.

The PMS Physical Education Program has 4 major objectives:

1. Promote movement skills and movement knowledge.
2. Develop and maintain positive self-image and personal development.
3. Develop goal-setting techniques, appropriate social behaviors, and a positive work ethic.
4. Motivate and educate students as to the health benefits and importance of positive health behaviors with an active lifestyle to establish a lifetime of Fitness.

THE LIBRARY MEDIA CENTER

The library is a great place to find a book to read, conduct research, or to study quietly. Teachers often sign up to bring their classes to the library for a specific assignment, and students are welcome in the library any time during the school day with a pass from a teacher.

Most books may be checked out for a two-week period. Students must return the books within that period. If they fail to do so, they will lose their library privilege until the books are returned. All overdue Library books must be returned before the end of the school year. Missing books are the financial responsibility of the student. For more information about the library and its resources, check the library page of the Portsmouth Middle School web site.

<http://theclippersbridge.weebly.com/>

CITIZENSHIP CODE

Every student has the right to an education in an atmosphere of cooperation and support. Every student, in turn, has the responsibility to respect the rights of others and to conduct him or herself in a manner that promotes cooperation and a safe, positive learning environment. The staff of Portsmouth Middle School has adopted a policy concerning classroom behavior. The purpose of this citizenship code is to provide students with clear guidelines regarding appropriate behavior within the school setting. These policies work in conjunction with discipline policies developed by the Portsmouth School Board. Any member of the school staff may refer violations of the following citizenship code to a student's team of teachers or to the office. These rules and regulations also apply during school functions such as extracurricular activities, field trips, and dances.

To encourage good citizenship, students are encouraged to sign the following pledge:

- At Portsmouth Middle School, it's good to be different.
- Teachers and students will treat each other with respect and fairness.
- We will not judge each other by what we wear or how we look.
- We will look for the good in each person.
- We will not show sexism or racism.
- We will not use words that hurt.
- We will reach out to people we don't know.
- We will look out for one another.
- We will tell the truth.

DISCIPLINE

Teacher Detentions may be given to students for behavior that includes but is not limited to:

- violation of classroom rules including refusal to follow teachers' directions,
- choosing to be late to class,
- causing a disruption, and
- using inappropriate language.

First Infraction will result in a warning.

Second Infraction of the same rule will result in a teacher detention and parent contact.

Third Infraction of the same rule will result in an office detention and a Citizenship Code Infraction report being sent to the office to be entered into the student's file.

Parents will be notified of a teacher detention by telephone or a slip sent home. Students who fail to serve a teacher detention will be assigned an office detention and will have their infraction filed.

The school administration supports teachers in maintaining good discipline in the classroom and throughout the school. Therefore, teachers may refer students to the administration when a disciplinary problem is ongoing and classroom discipline or intervention has not effected a change.

Office detentions may be given to students for behavior that includes, but is not limited to:

- tardiness (on the third offence each term),

- not telling the truth,
- defiance,
- unsafe behavior,
- leaving class without permission,
- causing a disruption in a common area, and
- failure to report to a teacher detention.

Discipline (continued)

Failure to report to an office detention will result in an in-school, or out-of-school suspension. Students who receive an office detention for not reporting to a teacher detention will also be required to make-up the teacher detention within a reasonable amount of time

Parents will be notified of out-of-school suspensions by mail and phone call. All students who receive an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed to return to school unless accompanied by a parent

An Immediate Suspension may be given to students for behavior that includes, but is not limited to:

- ▶ vulgar language
- ▶ stealing
- ▶ fighting
- ▶ vandalism
- ▶ truancy
- ▶ failure to attend class
- ▶ failure to attend office detention
- ▶ aggressive or unsafe behavior
- ▶ threatening, intimidating, harassing
- ▶ bold resistance to authority

Out-of-school suspensions are given at the discretion of the school administration and as dictated by Board of Education policy.

BUS RULES

The responsibility for students using school busses rests with the parents until the students actually board the bus for school and after the students get off the bus on the return trip.

A school bus driver has two responsibilities. The first is the safety of the students and the second is to maintain orderly behavior on the bus. For these two reasons, the following rules have been adopted by the School Board:

1. Students will be picked up and discharged only at authorized bus stops. All students will be taken directly to school in the morning and directly to the stop nearest their home in the afternoon. No students are to be picked up or discharged at any place other than an authorized bus stop.
2. Only authorized students may ride the school bus.
3. All students must be seated at all times.
4. There will be no smoking or drinking on the busses at any time.
5. Students are expected to behave in an orderly manner. No loud shouting, use of profanity, throwing things, or other types of misbehavior will be allowed.
6. No one is to touch the emergency exit door except upon instructions from the driver.
7. It is the driver's responsibility to report violations of these rules to the Principal of the building that the students involved attend.
8. Students who break these rules may lose their privilege of riding the school bus for the balance of the school year. The decision regarding the disciplinary action to be taken after students have been reported by a driver is to be made by the Principal after due process.
9. Building Principals have been designated in writing by the Superintendent to administer these rules.

Every student will be issued a Bus Rider's Contract. Parents and students will be required to sign this contract

PORTSMOUTH SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

Non-Smoking/Tobacco Policy

In accordance with State RSA Chapter 126-K:7:

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

- Cigarettes
- e-cigarettes
- vapor pens
- Smoking Tobacco
- Cigars
- Chewing Tobacco
- Smokeless cigarettes
- Lighters/Matches

No student shall possess tobacco-containing products in any school building or on school grounds. Students who violate this policy shall be subject to penalties including but not limited to:

- School suspension
- Smoking cessation program
- Out of school suspension
- Expulsion
- In-house community service
- Students found to be in violation of this section of the policy must be evaluated by a certified substance abuse counselor and a plan of treatment must be developed and implemented prior to readmission to school.

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

- Written reprimand
- Suspension without pay
- Dismissal for cause

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

Selling and Distributing Controlled Substances Policy

Selling and/or distributing are defined as supplying others with alcohol or a controlled substance. If, in the opinion of the school administration, a student is in possession of a sufficiently large quantity of alcohol and/or controlled substance that sale/distribution is possible, it will be considered possession with intent to sell.

If the school administration determines that a student has violated this policy by possession of a sufficient quantity to sell or distribute, the student will receive a suspension of up to ten (10) days, and the matter will be referred to the Portsmouth School Board for a disciplinary hearing. If the Board finds that the student has violated this section of the policy, it may impose such discipline as it deems appropriate based upon the circumstances and nature of the violation up to and including expulsion from school.

Students found to be in violation of this section of the policy must be evaluated by a Certified Substance Abuse Counselor and a plan of treatment must be developed prior to re-admission to school.

Policy Approved by the Portsmouth School Board: June 26, 2001

HIV/AIDS Employee Policy

No school employee shall be terminated, non-renewed, demoted, suspended, transferred, or subjected to adverse action based solely on the fact that he or she is infected with HIV (or is perceived to be infected.) The confidentiality of the employee will be maintained at all times. Universal precautions will be adhered to by all students and staff members.

HIV/AIDS Student Policy

Students infected with the HIV virus of AIDS will be allowed to attend school in an educational environment as determined by the student's physician and parent/guardian in consultation with the school nurse and principal.

Exclusion from school for the protection of the HIV infected student, i.e. communicable disease epidemic, will be determined in consultation with the student's physician and parent/guardian in consultation with the school nurse and principal. Universal precautions will be adhered to by all staff members and students. HIV/AIDS education will be integrated into the comprehensive health education curriculum 12-K.

Student Drug and Alcohol Policy

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

No student shall enter any Portsmouth school, school grounds, or school-sponsored activity with controlled substances, drugs, or drug-related paraphernalia or alcohol in his/her possession or in motor vehicles under his/her control.

No student shall enter any Portsmouth school, school grounds or school sponsored activity under the influence of alcohol and/or a controlled substance, and/or having consumed alcohol or a controlled substance. All violations of the Drug and Alcohol policy will include a referral to the Portsmouth Police Department. Students found to be in violation of this policy shall be disciplined as follows:

First Offense:

- Suspension from school for up to five (5) school days;
- Participation in an evaluation by a certified substance abuse counselor; and
- Attendance at a meeting between the student, parent/guardian, and school personnel to review the recommendation(s) of the evaluation.

- Continuing attendance at school shall be contingent upon the student's and parent/guardian's agreement to abide by the recommendations included in the evaluation.
- The student and/or parent/guardian may request a meeting with the Superintendent of Schools if there is a disagreement with school officials concerning implementation of any of the recommendations.
- The Superintendent shall be informed of all violations of this policy.

Second Offense:

- Suspension for up to ten (10) school days for a student who repeats a violation of this policy within one calendar year of the first offense;
- Disciplinary hearing before the Portsmouth School Board for possible expulsion;
- Development and implementation of an initial treatment plan prior to readmission to school; and
- Re-evaluation by a certified substance abuse counselor.
- Continuing attendance at school shall be contingent upon the student's and parent/guardian's agreement to abide by the recommendations included in the evaluation.

Pupil Safety and Violence Prevention - Bullying

The School Board believes students are entitled to learn in a safe and secure school environment. Students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for others in accordance with this and other School Board policies and school rules governing student conduct. The Board will take reasonable steps to protect all students from the harmful effects of bullying and cyberbullying that occurs at school and/or that interferes with student learning and orderly school operations. The Superintendent is responsible for implementing this policy, but may delegate specific responsibilities to administrators and others as he/she deems appropriate.

Prohibited Conduct

Students are prohibited from bullying and cyberbullying actions or communications directed toward other students which:

- Occur on, or are delivered to, school property or a school-sponsored activity or event on or off school property; or
- Occur off school property or outside of a school-sponsored activity or event, if the conduct interferes with a student's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operations of the school or school-sponsored activity or event.

Students are further prohibited from retaliating against or making false accusations against a victim, witness, or anyone else who in good faith provides information about an alleged act of bullying or cyberbullying.

Protection of all Students

This policy shall apply to all students on school district grounds and participating in school district functions, regardless of their status under the law.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

"Bullying" means a single significant incident or a pattern of incidents involving a written, verbal or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another which:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student's property;
- Causes emotional distress to a student;
- Interferes with a student's educational opportunities;
- Creates a hostile educational environment; or
- Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

"Bullying" shall also include actions motivated by an imbalance of power based on a student's actual or perceived personal characteristics, behaviors or beliefs, or motivated by the student's association with another person and based on the other person's characteristics, behaviors or beliefs if those actions cause one or more of the results in items listed above. Bullying or cyberbullying of a student on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, race, color, ancestry, national origin, religion, age, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, physical or mental disability may constitute illegal discrimination under federal and/or state laws. Complaints regarding such conduct may be processed through the Harassment Complaint Procedure.

"Cyberbullying" means conduct defined in Paragraph B (1) that takes place through the use of electronic devices.

"Electronic devices" include but are not limited to telephones, cellular phones, computers, pagers, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging and websites.

"Emotional distress" means distress that materially impairs the student's participation in academic or other school-sponsored activities. The term "emotional distress" does not include the unpleasantness or discomfort that accompanies a differing viewpoint. "Perpetrator" means a student who engages in bullying or cyberbullying.

"School property" means all real property and all physical plant and equipment used for school purposes, including public or private school buses or vans.

"Victim" means a student against whom bullying or cyberbullying has been perpetrated.

Disciplinary Consequences and Intervention Programs

Administrators, in consultation with the Superintendent, have the discretion to determine appropriate disciplinary consequences and/or interventions for violations of this policy based upon the relevant facts and circumstances in a particular case, including but not limited to the age and maturity of the students involved; the type and frequency of the behavior; a student's willingness to cooperate in the investigation and correct behavior; and the student's prior disciplinary record. Disciplinary consequences may include detention, suspension or expulsion from school. In addition, students may be required to participate in education programs, mediation, counseling and/or other programs and/or activities to address and prevent recurrence of bullying and cyberbullying behavior.

Reporting Bullying and Cyberbullying

Students who are subjected to bullying or cyberbullying, or who observe bullying/cyberbullying by or against other students are strongly encouraged to report it to the Building Administrator, guidance counselor and/or teacher. School staff and volunteers are required to report incidents of bullying or cyberbullying to the Building Administrator as soon as practicable. Parents and other adults are also encouraged to report any concerns about possible bullying or cyberbullying of students to the Building Administrator.

Forms for Reporting Incidents

The District will make available forms for reporting incidents of bullying or cyberbullying and shall encourage the use of these forms. Such forms shall be available in the Building Administrator's office and the Superintendent's office. (SAU 52 student Safety and Violence Prevention Bullying Report Form)

Report Handling and Investigation

The building administrator shall notify the parents/guardians of the alleged victim(s) and perpetrator(s) that a bullying/cyberbullying report has been made within 48 hours of the report and in accordance with applicable privacy laws. However, the Building Administrator and/or Designee may request a waiver of this parent notification requirement from the Superintendent. The Superintendent may waive parent/guardian notification at this stage of the procedure if he/she determines this to be in the best interest of the victim(s) and/or the perpetrator(s). Any such waiver of the parent notification requirement shall be made in writing.

An investigation of the bullying/cyberbullying report will be initiated by the Building Administrator as soon as possible but not longer than five school days. The alleged perpetrator(s), and victim if the report was initiated from a third party, will be provided the opportunity to be heard as part of the investigation. Privacy rights of all parties shall be maintained in accordance with applicable laws. The Building Administrator shall keep a written record of the investigation process. The Building Administrator may take interim remedial measures to reduce the risk of further bullying/cyberbullying, retaliation and/or to provide assistance to the alleged victim while the investigation is pending. The Building Administrator shall consult with the Superintendent as appropriate concerning the investigation and any remedial measures or assistance provided.

The investigation shall be completed within 10 school days of receipt of the report, if practicable. The Superintendent may grant in writing an extension of time to complete the investigation of up to 7 additional school days if necessary. The Superintendent shall notify all parties involved of any such extension. If the Building Administrator substantiates the bullying/cyberbullying report, he/she shall, in consultation with the Superintendent determine what remedial and/or disciplinary actions should be taken against the perpetrator(s) and determine what further assistance should be provided the victim(s), if any.

The Building Administrator shall inform the victim(s), the perpetrator(s) and their parents/guardians in writing of the results of the investigation and any remedies and/or assistance provided by the school, including strategies for protecting students from retaliation. Such written communication shall be provided as soon as possible but no longer than 10 school days upon completion of investigation and shall be in compliance with applicable privacy laws.

Appeals

The procedures under RSA 193:13, Ed 317, and District policies establish the due process and appeal rights for students disciplined for acts of bullying/cyberbullying.

Training

The school administration shall provide appropriate training on this policy for school employees, regular school volunteers and any employees of companies contracted to provide services directly to students. The purpose of the training is to prevent bullying/ cyberbullying if possible, and to educate staff on how to properly identify, respond to and report incidents of bullying/cyberbullying. The school administration shall provide age-appropriate education programs for students and parents regarding this policy, bullying/cyberbullying prevention, how to identify, respond to and report bullying/cyberbullying. All training and education programs shall be initially approved by the Superintendent. Building administrators are responsible for scheduling the required training and education programs each year.

Annual Report to New Hampshire Department of Education

The Superintendent shall prepare and submit an annual report of substantiated bullying/cyberbullying incidents on the form provided by the New Hampshire Department of Education. Such reports shall not contain personally identifiable information regarding students.

Immunity

Any employee of the school unit or contracted service provider company, regular school volunteer, student or parent/guardian shall be immune from civil liability for good faith conduct arising out of or pertaining to the reporting, investigation, findings, and the development or implementation of any recommended response under this policy.

Policy Dissemination

This policy shall be posted on the district website and included in student and employee handbooks. It shall also be provided to employees of any company contracted to provide services directly to students. The policy may also be disseminated by other means as determined by the Superintendent.

Legal References: NH RSA 193-F

Cross References: AC – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity
Portsmouth School Board Approved December 14, 2010

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Identification

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

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

A detailed copy of the Section 504 Procedures is available from the Superintendent's Office located at 10 Jukins Ave, Portsmouth, NH 03801.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Statement

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

Definitions

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

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

Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to: sexual innuendo, verbal harassment, including epithets, derogatory comments or slurs, physical harassment; or visual harassment such as derogatory cartoons, drawings, posters, or graffiti. Sexual harassment can be against members of the same sex as well as against members of the opposite sex. It is determined from the perspective of the recipient as determined by the standard of how a reasonable person of the same gender/position would interpret the incident.

Procedures

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

Discrimination and Harassment Policy

Statement

The policy of the Portsmouth School District is to maintain a learning environment for all of its students free from any form of discrimination or harassment. The district shall promote educational programs and disciplinary procedures for the purpose of identifying and eliminating discrimination and harassment in all district activities.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, *discrimination* is defined as behavior which demonstrates prejudicial and/or preferential treatment toward an individual or group based on gender, race, creed, physical or mental ability, or sexual orientation and *harassment* is a form of discrimination defined as any action by an individual or group which results in a hostile environment for any student or group of students, including, but not limited to:

- Physical and/or verbal threatening or intimidation
- Slurs, insults, taunting or ridicule based on gender, race, creed, physical or mental ability or sexual orientation.

Any student who engages in the harassment of another student may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Any employee who knowingly permits or engages in discrimination or harassment may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Students, parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and all school employees are encouraged to report any form of discrimination or harassment to their school principal, assistant principal, guidance counselor, or teacher. School administration will conduct a thorough and objective investigation of any allegation of harassment and provide a written report within 20 days. Copies of written reports will be sent to the Superintendent's office for the purpose of collecting data, evaluating the effectiveness of policy and procedures and taking corrective action.

Weapons Policy

No person(s) shall enter any Portsmouth school, school grounds, or school sponsored activities with a weapon of any kind in his/her possession or vehicle without prior, written authorization from the building principal.

No person(s) shall knowingly aid, abet or otherwise assist another person(s) in possessing, bringing, or concealing any weapon into any Portsmouth school, school sponsored activity, or onto any school grounds.

If the school administration determines that a student has violated this policy, the student will be suspended immediately for a period up to ten (10) days, during which time the student will be required to appear before the School Board. The Board will vote to expel or to impose other penalties, based upon the circumstances and nature of the violation.

All violations of this policy will also include immediate referral to the Portsmouth Police Department.

First Aid and Emergency Medical Care

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

1. Administering first aid
2. Calling for medical assistance, including calling 911 and getting the AED
3. Notification to the Administration
4. Notification to parents/guardians
5. Completion of written accident reports

School personnel are responsible for the knowledge of the procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency. Appropriate staff should be aware of special considerations regarding the physical condition of students for whom they are responsible in order to assist in an emergency.

The School Nurse and specially trained staff members shall be available to assist in the treatment in a medical emergency.

Following an accident during school hours, the School Nurse shall assess injuries involving students and document such in the student information system. The School Nurse shall provide written accident reports to the building Principal and the Business Administrator or designee in accordance with established procedures.

The School Nurse, or other designated personnel, may administer other medications to students in emergency situations, provided such personnel has all training required by law. Medication may also be administered in emergency situations to students with a medical action plan on file with their school, to the extent required by law. The School Department will maintain all necessary records relative to the emergency administration of medication and will file all required reports.

Additionally, the School Nurse, or specially trained staff members, may also administer epinephrine to any student in case of a medical emergency, if appropriate. This authorization extends administration of epinephrine without prior notification to parents/guardians.

The School Department does not provide student accident insurance.

Meal Charging

The Portsmouth School Department recognizes the importance of good nutrition and wants to take all reasonable steps to make sure students have access to school meals. These steps include providing access to applications for Free and Reduced Lunch for those families who qualify. Application forms will be sent home at the beginning of each school year, posted on the School Department website and available from the building Principal's office. All students who do not qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch are expected to pay for school meals at the time of purchase. The School Department recognizes that there may be times when a student has forgotten their lunch money, or inadvertently failed to keep a positive balance in their account. Parents or guardians will be contacted by the school by note, e-mail, telephone call or letter when their student's account goes into the negative.

MEAL CHARGING When a student's account becomes negative, or a student has forgotten their lunch money, meal charging may be permitted as follows... Middle School Students will be permitted to charge one meal. If payment is not received for the charged meal prior to the next lunchtime, the student will be offered an alternative meal consisting of the required food groups in place of the main meal. The cost of the alternative meal will be added to the outstanding balance. Up to three alternative meals will be permitted to be charged. If full payment is not made or alternative arrangements made, students will not be permitted to charge additional lunches until the outstanding balance is paid. If a student has exceeds four days of unpaid meals, the student will be assisted in contacting a parent, guardian or other adult from school prior to lunchtime for a bag lunch from home or payment of the unpaid balance. If the student's account has a negative balance the parent or guardian will be contacted by telephone, e-mail or letter regarding the outstanding balance.

ACCOUNT BALANCES The parent or guardian of all accounts with a negative account will receive an e-mail on Wednesdays informing them of the amount due on the account. Arrangements can be made at the individual schools to bring the account current. If a family is having financial difficulty in bringing the account balance they will be assisted in applying for Free and Reduced Lunch or in making acceptable payment arrangements. In addition, the Portsmouth School Department Business Office is open from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday and from 7:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Fridays. Payments can be made by mail payable to Portsmouth Food Services, 1 Junkins Ave, 4th Floor, Portsmouth, NH 03801.

FREE AND REDUCED SCHOOL MEALS Applications for Free and Reduced School Lunch can be submitted to the cafeteria at any time during the school year. School personnel are available to assist anyone in filling out the application for Free and Reduced School Lunch. Any balance owed prior to being determined eligible will remain the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

ONLINE PAYMENT OPTION The Portsmouth School Department offers parents an online payment option. The website is myschoolbucks.com and the information can be found on the School Department website.

