

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL • ACHIEVING SUCCESS



ACCEPT Education Collaborative:
Parent/Student Handbook
August 2016

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Executive Director's Welcome

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

We appreciate the trust and confidence you have shown by selecting an ACCEPT program. We look forward to working with your child and developing a partnership with you that will enhance your child's success. Please take a few moments to review this Handbook; many of your questions will be answered by the information it contains. Parents/guardians and students are welcome to communicate any concerns or questions with program staff. You are encouraged to communicate concerns through the use of email, communication books, telephone calls, site visits and meetings.

Every day the professionals at ACCEPT, in partnership with parents, guardians, and the community, work to make a positive, safe, civil school environment a reality where honesty, respect, and excellence are reflected in all aspects of our programs. With our students at the center of everything we do, we provide high-quality special education programs for students from elementary through high school, with transition programs for students up to 22 years of age. We call this the ACCEPT Advantage!

If you have specific questions or concerns don't hesitate to call (508-653-6776) or email me (mberkowitz@accept.org).

Sincerely,



Marcia J. Berkowitz, Ed.M., M.Ed.
Executive Director

AFTER READING THE FOLLOWING HANDBOOK PLEASE COMPLETE SIGNATURES FOR BOTH THE HANDBOOK AND OUR TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 14TH BY FOLLOWING THIS LINK: [Signature Page](#)

Mission and Guiding Principles

ACCEPT's mission throughout all programs is as follows:

To use the collective power of member school districts to provide programs and services that maximize the potential of students, their families, educators, and communities.

- We anticipate and respond to evolving educational needs with innovative, forward-thinking, high-quality, best-in-class programs and services.
- We complement and extend in-district options by leveraging our expertise, utilizing economies of scale, and building strength through collaboration.

ACCEPT's guiding principles are as follows:

- Respect for diversity
- and human differences
- Best practices
- Continuous improvement
- Open and honest communication
- Integrity

It is with this mission and these guiding principles that the following expectations, regulations, and procedures are implemented for all ACCEPT students to follow.

Legal Policies

Attendance

School attendance is paramount to a student's ability to succeed in school (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/ssce/truancy.html>). They must be present in order to benefit from academic instruction, clinical supports, and other instruction provided throughout the school days. It is for this reason that both ACCEPT and the state of Massachusetts takes attendance very seriously.

If a student is to miss school for any reason, parents are expected to notify their child's school program by 9:00 a.m. via phone. If the school does not hear from the parent by that time, the parent will be notified via phone of the child's absence within one day of the absence. Parents will also be notified via phone and in writing when a student has had 5 or more unexcused absences over the course of a school year. At that point, the school will schedule a meeting with the parent or guardian of the student in order to develop an action plan with the goal of reducing future absences.

On an ongoing basis, LEAs are notified of student attendance. ACCEPT will defer to individual districts to address any concerns regarding truancy or other attendance matters.

Anti-Hazing Policy

The term "hazing" is defined as any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, that willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Hazing is a serious offense in the state of Massachusetts and any student found to have been involved in an incident of hazing will be immediately suspended from the school and any school related groups or events. Their parent/guardian will be notified in writing and by phone of the infraction and administration at the student's LEA will be notified as well. Furthermore, the student and the incident will be reported to the local police. Punishments for hazing in Massachusetts may include fine or imprisonment. Any ACCEPT student involved in any form of hazing will be subject to administrative disciplinary action and possible police intervention.

see MGL c. 269 s. 17-19 in appendix a

Suspensions

Suspension is rarely used as a disciplinary measure. Students may be suspended for extreme misbehaviors such as aggression, intentional destruction of property, stealing, and/or continued refusals to follow ACCEPT policies and procedures.

If the Program Coordinator or his/her designee makes the determination that a student needs to be suspended, a call is placed to the student's parent/guardian to ensure a responsible adult is available to receive the student. In the event that a parent/guardian is unable or unwilling to pick up the student and, if the student continues to pose a serious threat to the safety of him/herself or others, the police or crisis team is called. LEA representatives are also notified of the suspension. The Program Coordinator may assign tasks

for the student to complete during his/her suspension (e.g., draft an apology letter, compile a list of strategies for future behavioral episodes, research the legal ramifications of specific behaviors). Suspensions are serious and will require a re-entry meeting or Team meeting in order for a student to return to the program. At a re-entry meeting, students will be expected to demonstrate that they understand why they were suspended. They may be asked to present work products completed during the suspension. They will also be asked to take part in developing a plan to ensure that behavior that led to the suspension does not occur again the future. articulate the reasoning behind their suspension

The Program Coordinator has the authority to impose short-term suspensions (less than 10 days). The following procedures will apply:

1. Any student faced with suspension must be given an informal hearing in the form of a conference between the student and the Program Coordinator or his/her designee. At this conference, the student shall be informed of the reason for the conference, shall be given the opportunity to present his or her side of the story, and shall be given a decision on the suspension. If a student is unable to take part in a hearing due to dangerous or disruptive behavior or threats of such, a hearing will not take place and the suspension will stand. That student will be entitled to a meeting following the suspension to address any unanswered questions.
2. Prior to putting a suspension into effect, the Program Coordinator or his/her designee shall make a reasonable effort to telephone and inform the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of the impending suspension; this shall include attempts to contact the parents or guardian at home and at work.
3. A letter will be mailed to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the suspended student explaining:
 - The reason for the suspension along with effective date and duration
 - The student's right to make up schoolwork missed
 - Any tasks to be completed by the student during the suspension.
4. The parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be requested to attend a re-entry conference with the Program Coordinator or his/her designee upon the student's return to school.

Any student who is serving a suspension shall have the opportunity to earn credits. As applicable, s/he may make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The Program Coordinator shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such a suspension is imposed.

Bullying Prevention and Intervention

ACCEPT students are expected to behave in a friendly and respectful manner to maintain a positive environment that promotes learning and contributes to each child's social, emotional, academic and physical development. One of ACCEPT's objectives is to enhance and sustain a safe and healthy environment by reducing the incidence of bullying. All reported acts of bullying will be thoroughly investigated and when appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken. The degree of discipline will be in proportion to the severity of the behavior of a particular student and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student and other relevant factors.

ACCEPT, in partnership with parents, guardians, and the community, and in keeping with its core value of respect for human differences, believes that a positive, safe, engaging environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve. Bullying disrupts a student's ability to learn by preventing that student's full engagement with his or her education. Moreover, bullying compromises a school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. The ACCEPT Education Collaborative therefore, prohibits bullying, including cyberbullying, and retaliation. Our goal is to maintain a positive environment that promotes learning and contributes to each student's academic, social, emotional, and physical development. The complete Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan can be found on the ACCEPT web site [here](#).

The following definitions are consistent with [Massachusetts General Law](#) and have been adopted by ACCEPT:

Bullying is conduct that is repeated by one or more students and targets another student, causing one or more of the following:

- physical or emotional harm to the targeted student or damage to his/her property;
- placement of the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or of damage to his/her personal property;
- a hostile environment at school for the targeted student;
- infringement of the rights of the targeted student at school; or
- material and substantial disruption of the educational process or the orderly operation of the school.

(e.g., Bullying may involve repeated conduct over time generally involves “picking on” a student over time and may include conduct such as hitting and shoving; pressuring a student into taking an action he/she does not wish to take; words that involve threats, teasing, putdowns or name-calling; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations and social isolation.)

Cyberbullying is bullying through use of cell phones, computers, or other technology and may include conduct such as sending mean or threatening email messages, instant messages or text messages; creating web content (including but not limited to social networking sites) that makes fun of, humiliates, or intimidates others; and posting or sending embarrassing pictures of others. It may also include creating a website, blog or posting by which the creator/author impersonates another person.

Hostile Environment is a circumstance in which the targeted student becomes so concerned about bullying that he/she is unable to participate in and concentrate on his/her schoolwork and other school activities.

Retaliation involves a student “getting back at” another student because of a belief that the student reported bullying or provided information about it to an adult or others who may help the targeted student.

Students who believe they are targets of bullying or retaliation, or who know about bullying can and should report the conduct to a teacher, or other ACCEPT staff member, who will in turn report the incident directly to the Program Coordinator. Parents of students who are made aware of bullying or retaliation can and should also report conduct to an ACCEPT staff member. Both parents and students may choose to utilize ACCEPT’s Bullying Prevention and Intervention Report Form found on the ACCEPT website [here](#).

Parents and students may opt to report incidents anonymously; however, no disciplinary action can be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. All ACCEPT staff are mandated to report any incidents of bullying they witness directly to the Program Coordinator. Reporting does not prevent staff from following additional disciplinary procedures as may be appropriate per ACCEPT rules and regulations.

Following a report of bullying or retaliation, the Program Coordinator will conduct an investigation consistent with ACCEPT’s Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. While an investigation is being conducted, staff will work to rebuild a sense of safety for the target(s) and ensure that they are protected from possible bullying or retaliation during the investigation. The following measures may be taken: creating a personal safety plan, assigned seating during classes and lunch to provide distance between involved students, identification of a “safe” staff person the student feels comfortable confiding in, and altering the accused “aggressor’s” schedule to prevent access to the “target.”

If an incident(s) of bullying has been verified the following will occur:

- The ACCEPT Director of Special Education, or in the case of a transportation issue the Transportation Manager, will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of the procedure for responding to the incident(s). There may be circumstances in which the ACCEPT Director of Special Education contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation.
- The ACCEPT Director of Special Education, or in the case of a transportation issue the Transportation Manager, will promptly notify a representative from the LEA of each student involved.
- At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation including after an investigation, if the ACCEPT Director of Special Education has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, s/he will notify the local law enforcement agency after consulting with the school resource officer (if any) and any other individuals s/he deems appropriate. This also applies to incidents occurring on school grounds which involve former students under the age of 21 who may or may not be currently enrolled in school.
- ACCEPT staff will utilize skill-building approaches to further teach appropriate behavior. Please see Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan for specific approaches.
- Students who engage in bullying will be subject to discipline. Disciplinary actions will be based upon the severity of the incident and whether it is an isolated incident or involves a pattern of behavior over a period of time.
- ACCEPT's Director of Special Education will continue to consider and make any adjustments that may need to be made to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well.
- Within a reasonable period of time, the ACCEPT Director of Special Education will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If additional measures are identified, the Director of Special Education will work with appropriate staff to implement them immediately. In cases of transportation-related incidents, the Transportation Manager will conduct necessary follow-up.

If, following an investigation, the Executive Director or his/her designee determines that a student knowingly made a false accusation of bullying against another student, that student will be subject to disciplinary action.

Non-Discrimination

The ACCEPT Education Collaborative does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ([Title VI](#)); on the basis of sex, in accordance with [Title IX](#) of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ([Section 504](#)) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ([ADA](#)); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination Act of 1974 ([Age Discrimination Act](#)). Nor does it discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or religion, in accordance with Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971 ([M.E. c.76, §5](#)) and [Chapter 151B](#) of the General Laws.

Students who engage in harassment based upon protected classifications or who otherwise create an environment that is discriminatory based upon these classifications will be subject to disciplinary action. To file a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment in a program sponsored by ACCEPT, the Grievance Form (available on the ACCEPT website) should be completed and returned to the Program Coordinator. If the grievance concerns the Program Coordinator, return the form to the Executive Director. The Collaborative will disclose the contents of the report only to those persons having a need to know about it. By signing the Grievance Form, individuals you authorize the Collaborative to disclose, as needed, the information they you have provided and may in the future provide regarding their your report.

Harassment

ACCEPT is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion,

national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Consistent with our Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan, ACCEPT specifically prohibits all conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile environment for others.

Harassment includes communications such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct which offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability, when such communication or conduct is sufficiently serious to deny or limit the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from their educational programs or school sponsored-events. By law, the particular communication or conduct is viewed from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals.

Sexual harassment includes not only the types of conduct listed above that is based upon gender, but can also include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Harassment in the school environment is unlawful and is absolutely prohibited. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. In addition, retaliation against any individual who has filed a complaint of harassment or who cooperates in an investigation of possible harassment is unlawful and is prohibited. Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/ expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or school committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

ACCEPT will promptly investigate every complaint of harassment. If you believe that you may have been harassed, or if you witness or learn about the harassment of another individual, you should inform the Program Coordinator immediately who will investigate the incident. Such investigation may include identification and questioning of witnesses and other appropriate actions. Confidentiality of grievant and respondents and witnesses will be maintained, to the extent consistent with ACCEPT's obligations relating to investigation of complaints and the due process rights of individuals affected. If the Program Coordinator determines harassment has occurred, he/she will take action to end the harassment, and take appropriate steps to make sure that it is not repeated. Such steps may range from counseling to discipline, which could include suspension or expulsion.

ACCEPT encourages all individuals to bring any concerns or complaints of harassment to the attention of staff so that they can address the issue as appropriate. The federal agency responsible for enforcing laws prohibiting harassment for students is the [United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights](#), 33 Arch Street, Boston, MA 02110 t. 617-289-0111 (TTY: 1-877-521-2172) The state agencies responsible for enforcing such laws are the [Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education](#), 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-5023 (telephone 781-338-3000) (TTY 1-800- 439-0183) or the [Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination](#) at One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108 (telephone 617-994-6000) (TTY 617-994-6196).

Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ([FERPA](#)) and the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations ("Regulations") together provide parents and eligible students (those who have reached the age of 14 or who have entered ninth grade) certain rights with respect to the student's education records. A general overview of those rights is provided below. Parents and students may obtain a complete copy of their rights under the

Massachusetts Student Record Regulations by contacting the Director of Special Education.

The **right to access** the student's education records: Parent(s)/Guardian(s) or eligible students should submit their request for access to the Executive Director. Access is generally provided within ten days of a request. However, [Massachusetts General Laws c. 71, §34H](#) ("Section 37H") law provides specific procedures that must be followed prior to release of records to a parent/guardian who does not have physical custody of a child. Information about these procedures can be obtained from the Director of Special Education.

The **right to request amendment** of the student's education records: Parents or eligible students should direct their request to the Executive Director, clearly identifying the part of the record they wish to have amended, and why.

The **right to consent to disclosures** of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA and the Massachusetts regulations authorize disclosure without consent: One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests in the records. Such school officials include professional, administrative and clerical staff who are employed by or under agreement with ACCEPT or sending district personnel who need access to a record in order to fulfill their duties.

The **right to file a complaint** concerning alleged failures by ACCEPT to comply with the regulations and laws governing student records. Complaints may be filed at the Massachusetts Department of Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148. In addition, complaints relative to federal statutes and regulations governing student records may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington DC.

Temporary Records consist of all the information not kept on the transcript. This information includes the student's standardized test scores and evaluations by teachers, counselors, and other staff members. Said record shall include, but not be limited to, any incidents involving suspension or violation of criminal laws or any incident reports in which the student was charged with any suspendable act. In accordance with Department of Education regulations, a student's temporary record will be destroyed five (5) years after leaving school.

Notices regarding storage of records

The following notices are hereby given to parents and eligible students regarding student records:

- The Collaborative forwards the complete school record of a transferring student to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Such transfer of records takes place without consent of the parent or eligible student.
- The temporary record of a student will be destroyed no later than seven (7) years after that student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the school system. When the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from school, and if the eligible student or the parent/guardian want the temporary record, they must request, in writing, prior to the last day of school, that the documents be provided to them. No additional notice, other than this notice in the Handbook, will be provided to the student or his parent/guardian of such destruction.
- Each year, the Program Coordinator, and/or teachers, and/or other service providers may destroy the following documents that are considered part of the student's temporary record: disciplinary records (other than documentation of suspensions/expulsions/exclusions), any notes from the Parent/guardian or other documents concerning absences, early dismissals, late arrivals, as well as examples of student work. If the eligible student or the parent/guardian want those records, they

must request, in writing, prior to the last day of school that the documents be provided to them, rather than be destroyed. No additional notice, other than this notice in the Handbook, will be provided to the student or his parent/guardian of such destruction.

Directory Information Notice

The Collaborative has designated certain information contained in the education records of its students as directory information consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the Student Record Regulations.

The following information regarding students is considered directory information: (1) name, (2) address, (3) telephone number, (4) date and place of birth, (5) major field of study, (6) participation in officially recognized activities and sports, (7) weight and height of members of athletic teams, (8) dates of attendance, (9) degrees, honors and awards received, (10) post high school plans of the student.

Directory information may be disclosed for any purpose at the discretion of the Collaborative, without the consent of a parent of a student or an eligible student. Parents of students and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information; such refusal must be in writing and made annually. In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent or student, or as otherwise allowed by law. You are hereby notified that pursuant to this notification, the school system will provide requested directory information to military recruiters unless the parent or eligible student specifically directs otherwise (a requirement of the No Child Left Behind Act).

Any parent or student refusing to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed must file written notification to this effect with the Program Coordinator on or before the 15th day of each September.

In the event that a refusal is not filed, it is assumed that neither a parent of a student or eligible student objects to the release of the directory information designated.

Student Conduct

The discipline code is in effect both at school and at school-sponsored events, whether or not such events take place on school property. Even misconduct that does not take place in school or at a school sponsored event can result in discipline if it is of a serious nature and has a direct relationship to the school or causes substantial disruption to the school environment.

The procedures outlined in this Section provide an explanation of ACCEPT's disciplinary process. In addition, this section provides examples of conduct that is prohibited. However, not every type of prohibited conduct can be listed. Students are expected to recognize that any conduct that is inconsistent with maintaining an appropriate environment, either at school or at a school-sponsored event, could lead to discipline including suspension or expulsion.

Classroom Expectations

All ACCEPT staff members have specific expectations, both disciplinary and academic, for their classes. When a student does not adhere to these expectations, ACCEPT staff members may communicate with the parent/guardian via phone, mail, or e-mail. Students whose behavior interferes with the opportunity for other students to learn and for the teacher to teach may be removed from the class. In all instances of

classroom disciplinary action, the individual behavior needs of the student and their corresponding behavior program will be taken into account. Positive behavior supports, teacher modeling, and reinforcement-based redirection will be the predominant form of intervention.

Dress Code

Students are expected to adhere to both the dress code outlined by administration for the building in which their program resides as well as the ACCEPT dresscode outlined below. Building dress codes can be found on the website for that specific school building.

While students are generally free to determine their own styles, student appearance must be clean, neat, and safe. Any style of dress that is provocative and/or disruptive in school is not permitted. The following guidelines are designed to set clear expectations regarding student attire:

- Tops must be long enough to cover the midriff when arms are raised overhead.
- Tank tops must have straps at least two inches wide, and cannot be oversized and revealing.
- Skirts and shorts must reach at least mid-thigh.
- Footwear is to be worn at all times. Socks are not considered footwear.
- Jackets, hats, hoods, or other head coverings are to be removed upon entering the school building and stored until students leave the building unless they are worn for religious purposes.

The following are prohibited:

- Clothes that are tight or low cut
- Clothes that reveal or expose undergarments
- Clothing or body art with language or symbols related to drugs, alcohol, gangs, illegal activity or that which can be interpreted as inflammatory or provocative. In the case of body art, students may be asked to cover the area in question.
- Other attire deemed inappropriate by ACCEPT staff.

Violations to the Dress Code may result in the student being removed to a space away from other students until one of the following occurs: the student is sent home, the student is asked to change and complies, the apparel item in violation of the above code is confiscated, or other action deemed necessary.

Parents/guardians will be notified of violations and in some cases, staff or a family member may provide alternative clothing.

Students are not permitted to carry backpacks or other bags during the school day. These items must be stored in designated areas at the beginning of the day. Additionally, students are requested to have a change of clothes available at school in case of emergency. Students may leave the extra clothing in the classroom or store it in their backpacks, lockers, or cubbies as appropriate.

Students who have frequent infractions may be subject to disciplinary action.

Corridor Behavior

In order to establish a climate of courtesy and mutual respect and for the safety and well being of everyone, students are asked to observe the following:

- Walk in the hallways at all times.
- Respect the personal space of others by keeping hands, feet, and body to one's self.
- Use appropriate language and vocal volume.
- Only use the lavatory that is consistent with the gender with which one identifies.

The above means:

- No running in the hallways at any time.
- No shoving, pushing, or playing of any kind in the hallways.
- No yelling, shouting, or vulgar language in the school building.

- No banging, slamming, or kicking of locker doors or classroom doors.
- Under no conditions should a student who identifies as male be in the girls' lavatory nor should a student who identifies as female be in a boys' lavatory.

ACCEPT Programs are housed in our host-district school buildings and we must represent the Collaborative well and be respectful of the environment.

School Cafeteria

The school cafeterias in each of the Collaborative's host buildings serve hot lunch at a minimal cost. Beverages and other items may be purchased separately. The cafeteria is a communal place in which to eat where students are expected to practice the general rules of good manners and proper decorum consistent with ACCEPT's expectations for its students. Students are responsible for emptying all debris into proper receptacles and leaving the table and surrounding area clean. Students found in other areas of the building without an escort during their scheduled lunch will be subject to disciplinary action. Students, who by their behavior, indicate that they cannot act in a responsible manner in the cafeteria may lose the privilege of eating in the cafeteria and be subject to disciplinary action. Students who throw food or beverages or tamper with other students' food or beverages may be subject to suspension. The consumption of food and beverages is not permitted outside the cafeteria unless authorized by the administration. Each ACCEPT program will set their own rules and regulations regarding food and beverages throughout the school day. Students are expected to adhere to those rules and regulations set forth by their program of enrollment.

Personal Electronic Devices

Students are not permitted to use personal electronic devices during the school day which may include but are not limited to phones, tablets, and video game devices. During transport to and from school, students are required to follow the rules of their transportation company regarding such devices. If students choose to bring these devices to school, they must turn them into staff in the morning to be locked up and returned at the end of the school day. Students abusing this privilege will not be allowed to carry personal electronic devices to school.

If a personal electronic device is found to be in a student's desk, workspace, locker, or other area utilized by that student it will be considered to be in that student's possession. Any student suspected of concealing a personal technology device during the school day may be subject to a search as outlined later in this Handbook. Devices suspected of having been utilized for illegal activities (*e.g., drug or alcohol activities, bullying, or sexting*) may be turned over to the police. The owner, upon verification of ownership, will be able to retrieve the item directly from the local police department when the department makes the device available.

Field Trips

Field trips are recognized as a meaningful extension of classroom learning and are offered both as enrichment and as part of the curriculum. Students must have parental permission to go on a field trip and must file a permission form with the host teacher. All school rules of conduct apply during any field trip. Students are responsible for all work missed while on a field trip. Students may be denied participation due to academic/behavioral difficulty or for extenuating circumstances agreed upon prior to the trip. Students may be ineligible for the trip for the following reasons:

- Behavior in which the administration and staff believe that the student may pose a safety risk on the field trip. Examples of such behavior may be, but are not limited to:
 - A transportation report in which the student displayed dangerous or disruptive behavior.

- Behavior in school of a dangerous or disruptive nature, in which staff and administration deem that attendance on the field trip may result in a potential safety or behavioral issue.
- Proper attire is necessary. Students who come to school not dressed for the weather, may stay behind, as improper dress could result in a health and safety issue.

Students not attending the trip will be provided an alternative assignment for the class that is involved in the trip and are expected to attend all other classes that day.

Searches

This policy establishes the procedure that ACCEPT follows in an effort to ensure a safe learning environment, free of all contraband including illegal drugs, alcohol, weapons, and stolen property. All desks, lockers, cubbies, and other common spaces (including bathrooms and corridors) are considered to be property of the Collaborative and/or the host building. They are, therefore, subject to search and inspection at any time without prior notice. Such searches can be conducted at the discretion of the ACCEPT administration, ACCEPT staff, or the administration of the host building.

Based upon reasonable suspicion, Staff may conduct searches of students and/or their personal property to ensure the safety of the school community. Staff will keep record of such searches including time, reason, witness(es), and result. Consequences for theft and possession of the illegal drugs, alcohol, or weapons will be implemented. Any student who refuses to participate in a search is suspended immediately; a re-entry meeting with parent(s)/guardian(s), LEA representatives, program staff, and program administrator(s) will be required prior to their return to the program.

Prior to a search the student and his/her belongings are brought to a private space, and accompanied by at least two staff members. The student will be informed of the nature of the suspicion and reminded of the search policy. During the search, the student will be asked to empty all pockets and hand all bags and coats over to program staff. Bags, coats, hats, the contents of the student's pockets, and external clothing areas (e.g. shoes and socks) will be inspected with the student present. All searches will be conducted in a reasonable manner, given the age and sex of the student as well as the nature of the suspected infraction.

In order to protect the safety of our students and staff as well as the school environment, ACCEPT reserves the right to report incidents to the local police, including the nature of the offense and the name of the offender.

Weapons

ACCEPT strives to maintain a safe environment for students and staff at all times. Weapons, or objects that can be used to hurt, threaten, and/or intimidate another person at school or on a van transporting students have no place in our school community; student involvement with them will be dealt with severely. Objects traditionally used as weapons, such as guns, knives, blackjacks, martial arts sticks, etc., and non-traditional objects used in a threatening or dangerous manner (scissors, penknives, etc.) are all considered weapons..

Any student discovered or suspected of bringing a weapon to school or onto a school van, selling weapons to another student, possessing an object from school with an intent to wield it as a weapon, or concealing a weapon at school or on a van will immediately be referred to the Executive Director. Staff will immediately confiscate any weapon found. Students suspected of being in possession of a weapon will be subject to a search (see above). If the student refuses to cooperate, he/she will be suspended immediately. If the weapon or object is to be returned, it will be returned only to a parent/guardian. Any student in possession of a weapon is subject to serious disciplinary action, up to and including immediate suspension and emergency termination.

In accordance with [General Law 71.37H](#): Any student who is found on school premises or at a

school-sponsored or school-related event, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon may be subject to expulsion from the school or Collaborative by the Executive Director.

ACCEPT reserves the right to report the incident to the local police, including the nature of the offense and the name of the offender.

Smoking/Tobacco Use

Smoking is a serious threat to both smokers and nonsmokers alike. ACCEPT is committed to the health and well-being of all its students. As such, smoking is not allowed by any ACCEPT Program or ACCEPT sponsored activity (consistent with [Massachusetts law](#) for all schools in the Commonwealth). This policy also applies to the possession/use of e-cigarettes, vaporizers, etc., and associated paraphernalia, including but not limited to all substances used for vaporization whether or not they contain nicotine. Violations of the smoking/tobacco use policy include:

- Possession, distribution or use of any tobacco product, matches, and/or lighters in school buildings, outside of school buildings, on school grounds, on school buses or other vehicles, or at any school sponsored or related event regardless of location at any time.
- Holding a tobacco product lit or unlit.
- Having the smell of fresh tobacco on one's breath.
- Smoking or utilizing any tobacco product within a "line of sight" of the school grounds
- Being in the presence of cigarette smoke regardless of whether a student is engaging in smoking

Any student utilizing nicotine replacement therapies must comply with ACCEPT's rules and regulations regarding prescription medication and must be under the care of a licensed health care professional.

Additionally, ACCEPT bans any smoking or tobacco related advertising on school grounds including that found on clothing (see dress code).

For all offenses, all tobacco products, lighters and/or matches, and advertising products will be confiscated.

Any student who violates the above prohibitions will be subject to suspension from school.

Alcohol and Drug Infractions

The possession and/or use of illegal drugs or alcohol in school, on the school bus or at any school sponsored event are strictly forbidden. Selling and/or distribution, including sharing of any illegal drug or alcohol in school, on the school bus or at any school sponsored event or activity, are likewise strictly forbidden. If an ACCEPT staff member suspects that a student is under the influence or in possession of drugs, alcohol, or drug paraphernalia they are required to report their suspicions to the Program Coordinator as soon as possible without making the student aware of the suspicion. Students suspected of being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs will be evaluated by the nurse to determine if immediate medical attention is warranted. If such attention is indicated emergency services will be called to transport the student and the parent will be notified immediately. Additionally, once information has been reported to the Coordinator the following may occur:

- The student is observed for symptoms of drug or alcohol use.
- The student may be interviewed by the Coordinator and/or his/her designee during which time the student may respond to the suspicions in question.
- The student may be moved to a classroom or other area away from their classmates and supervised by staff until further investigation can be conducted by staff.
- A search of the student's person, personal belonging, assigned spaces within the school (e.g., locker), and/or work space may occur.

- The student's parent or guardian may be contacted for information or asked to come to the school as soon as possible to help further the school's investigation.

If the school's investigation results in reasonable confirmation of drug or alcohol usage or possession or the student fails to comply with the above investigative measures the following may occur:

- The student may be suspended from school for 1 to 10 days by the Coordinator or his/her designee. All suspension procedures will be implemented at this time (see section on Suspension).
- The parent or guardian may be asked to come to the school to facilitate a medical and/or drug screening for their child.
- The local police department may be contacted to provide assistance with further investigation.

If police are contacted so too will the student's parent/guardian and asked to come to the school in order to be present for the police investigation. If a parent/guardian is unable or unwilling to come to the school, it can be expected that the administration and local police will continue with their investigation due to reasonable confirmation of drug or alcohol usage or possession. The police can be expected to use any and all procedures available to them including but not limited to interviews, searches, use of additional personnel, or the use of trained canine units. Furthermore, the police can be expected to take any necessary steps to ensure the safety of ACCEPT's and the host building's students and staff such as taking a student into custody or ordering them to a local hospital for a recommended Psychiatric Emergency Screening. If a Psychiatric Emergency Screening is recommended, a parent/guardian will first be required to facilitate such a measure. Failure of the parent/guardian to facilitate a screening may result in the filing of a 51A by the school or police.

If the school's investigation confirms the use of drugs or alcohol or possession of either the following may occur:

- Police will be contacted and the situation will be directly reported to them.
- Formal charges may be filed.
- A team meeting may be called to review the student's Individual Education Program if applicable.
- Emergency placement termination may occur (see section on Emergency Termination).
- The student may be referred for an out of school assessment and subsequent treatment.
- The police may arrest the student, take him/her into custody, and file any appropriate charges with the local court.
- A 5 to 10 day suspension may be implemented.

Theft

Any student who is suspected of having stolen from another student, a staff member, or the school building may be subject to search procedures outlined earlier in this Handbook. Any student found to have stolen from another student, a staff member, or the school building will be subject to discipline. Parents/guardians will be notified of the infraction. Legal authorities may be notified depending on the value of the item(s) taken.

Valuables

Students are strongly discouraged from bringing valuable items to school. This includes jewelry, electronic devices, expensive watches, large amounts of money, and other items of value. While every effort is made to keep valuable items safe, ACCEPT cannot and does not assume responsibility for items brought to school. If a student brings an expensive item to school and gives it to a staff person, this does not mean the Program or the staff member assume responsibility for the item. Students should also not bring items to school to gift,

sell, trade, or buy.

Vandalism

The Collaborative should be respected as a teaching and learning environment where students, staff, parents/guardians and community members can feel safe and secure. The Collaborative is committed to maintaining orderly educational and administrative processes in keeping schools and administrative offices free from disruptions.

Vandalism not only affects the aesthetics of the building or property, but also creates a negative learning environment, creates a poor appearance of the Collaborative and host buildings to the community, promotes further acts of vandalism, and fosters negative perceptions within the host building. These acts are also counterproductive in that they disrupt the normal flow of activities in and around the school. Furthermore, staff time and energy is invested in cleaning and repairing that is better served working directly with or for students. In cases of severe damage, valuable instruction time may be lost if students are displaced from their classrooms.

Every person who commits any of the following acts with respect to any real or personal property not his or her own, in cases other than those specified by state law, is guilty of vandalism: 1) Defaces with graffiti or other inscribed material, 2) Damages, or 3) Destroys.

“Vandalism” has a number of definitions, all of which have the common elements of destruction, damage, injury, or defacement of another’s property. In recognition of the debilitating impact of vandalism, current law (see below) provides for criminal penalties, the imposition of student discipline, as well as civil liability for students and their parents/guardians.

In order to curtail vandalism and ensure that proper respect is shown of the property of others, acts of vandalism involving Collaborative or host building property or the property of Collaborative/host building employees and/or students will be considered serious offenses. Any student(s) who commits such an act of vandalism will be held strictly accountable. Disciplinary measures will be at the discretion of the Program Coordinator, the Executive Director, or his/her designee (following [M.A. General Law and other state regulations](#)). Disciplinary action may include but is not limited to the following:

- Assignment to repair, clean up, or otherwise remediate damages done
- Requirement to complete acts intended to rebuild relationships damaged by vandalism (e.g., writing an apology letter to a classmate, helping a teacher with chores around a classroom during non-academic time).
- Suspension
- Personal and parental/guardian liability and responsibility for damages. Full restitution for damages, including monetary restitution may be required to the maximum extent permitted by law.
- Referral to the criminal justice system when appropriate

Runaway Student

A “runaway student” shall be defined as: a student who has left the classroom, assigned area with staff, or school environment without permission. The student may or may not be exhibiting additional unsafe and/or noncompliant behavior. A student who has left his or her designated space, but is within the immediate area and within the staff’s visual field is not a runaway student; however, their behavior may be defined a “bolt” from the area or staff and may be addressed through a behavior plan.

If a student runs off school grounds, the following procedure will be implemented:

- The local police department will be immediately notified.
- The Program Coordinator or his/her designee will be immediately notified.
- The Program Coordinator or his/her designee will make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian within the same day.
- A team meeting may be called following the student's safe return in order to evaluate services and supports in place to discourage such behavior in the future.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

The ACCEPT Collaborative reserves the right to utilize video surveillance for the purpose of enhancing school safety and security. Image-only video surveillance may be used in public areas (e.g., grounds, entrances and exits, cafeteria, lobby, or corridors) to promote a safe and secure teaching and learning environment for students and staff, to protect school property, and to deter and prevent criminal activity. Audio will not be recorded at any time. Surveillance equipment will not be utilized in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy such as restrooms, locker rooms, or a clinician's or nurse's office. Should surveillance equipment be utilized, signage will be posted to alert individuals of its use. Furthermore, students, parents, and staff will receive written notification at the beginning of the school year, the time of enrollment, or at the start of surveillance usage as applicable (notification may include staff and student Handbooks). Any footage recorded by surveillance will only be viewed by authorized personnel as designated by an ACCEPT Collaborative administrator in the case of a suspected emergency or safety concern. Documentation will be kept and maintained of all access or use of recorded materials. Material will only be released with permission of the Executive Director or her/his designee as applicable and allowed by law. All video footage will be stored in a secure place to avoid tampering and to ensure confidentiality.

Parent/Guardian Participation

Parent/Guardian Communication

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are valued members of the Team. By working together we can ensure the school experience is positive for students. ACCEPT Academy staff communicates regularly with parent(s)/guardian(s) to plan, evaluate, and share information. These interactions may take place in a variety of formal and informal ways including meetings, weekly reports, and phone calls. We encourage you to contact staff with any pertinent information.

Parent/Advocate Visitation Guidelines

ACCEPT Academy welcomes requests for visits by parent(s)/guardian(s) and their representatives. These visits provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with first-hand knowledge of the program and the way staff engages students. Observations may be conducted by the parent(s)/guardian(s) or his/her designated private evaluator or educational consultant. ACCEPT Academy will provide an opportunity for observation of sufficient duration and extent to enable evaluation of the child's performance in his/her current program or to evaluate a proposed program.

The following guidelines apply to arranging for program observations:

- ACCEPT Office Staff will schedule visits upon request
- No more than two individuals may observe during a visit

- An ACCEPT staff member will accompany the observer(s) during the visit
- Visits cannot infringe on classroom routines, expectations, or other aspects of operations
- Given the ongoing responsibility of teachers and therapists to serve students, they will generally not be available for conversation during or immediately before/after the visit
- ACCEPT expects all observers to avoid disclosing any personally identifiable or confidential information they might obtain during the course of a visit

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) or Student Complaints

No parent(s)/guardian(s) will be denied the right to bring their complaints to the ACCEPT Board, they will be referred through the proper administrative channels for resolution before investigation or action by the Board of Directors. ACCEPT believes that complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the ACCEPT Board. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline, learning materials, or related matters as follows:

1. Teacher
2. ACCEPT's Program Coordinator
3. ACCEPT's Executive Director
4. Chairperson of the ACCEPT Board of Director

Complaints should be submitted in writing and include all pertinent specific information, including the desired action or outcome.

Procedure for Parent(s)/Guardian(s) or Students with Complaints Regarding Education & Care

ACCEPT welcomes feedback from parent(s)/guardian(s). Should a parent/guardian wish to register a complaint regarding their child's education and care, the following procedure is followed:

- Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students may register their complaint either verbally or in writing with the teacher of their child's program. Alternatively complaints may be register with the ACCEPT Program Coordinator.
- Once the complaint is registered, ACCEPT will complete an internal investigation and attempt to resolve the situation. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified of any findings and receive a written response within ten school days of the date of the complaint.
- If the parent(s)/guardian(s) are not satisfied with the results of the investigation they may appeal to the Executive Director, who will review the complaint and make a final decision within ten school days of the filing of the appeal.

Procedure for Students with Complaints Regarding Discrimination and/or Bullying

ACCEPT does not tolerate discrimination based on legally protected categories (race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, disability) and has procedures in place to ensure a prompt and equitable response:

- ACCEPT has developed, implemented, and made available to students a set of written procedures that may be used to register complaints regarding the discrimination and/or bullying at ACCEPT programs that includes specific timelines and the appeals process.

- ACCEPT has adopted and published grievance procedures for students providing for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging discrimination based on legally protected categories and/or bullying that includes specific timelines and the appeals process:
 - The student should report the alleged discrimination or bullying to any staff member.
 - The staff member will record the alleged incidents and provide the information to the student's teacher or counselor for investigation.
 - With the student's consent, the person recording the incident will contact the student's parent/guardian and share the facts as known with them.
 - Within 24 hours (or the next school day) the investigator will meet with the student and the person to whom the student reported the incident and will share verbally the result of the investigation.
 - If the discrimination allegation is supported, the Program Coordinator will be informed as well as the LEA. A meeting will be scheduled within 2 days to address the discrimination issue.
 - If the bullying allegation is supported, the resolution involves the steps identified in the ACCEPT Education Collaborative Bullying Intervention and Prevention Plan and the LEA Liaison will be informed of the incident, the result of the investigation and the resolution.

Appeals

In the event that any decision of the Program Coordinator or his/her designee or the report of any investigator of any allegation is not satisfactory, in whole or in part, the eligible student or parent/guardian shall have the right of appeal to the Executive Director; request for such appeal shall be in writing. The Executive Director or his/her designee shall, within 48 hours after being notified of such appeal, review the issues presented and provide a written decision to the student or parent/guardian, stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the student or parent/guardian, the Executive Director or his/her designee shall promptly take such steps as may be necessary to put the decision into effect. In the event the decision of the Executive Director or his/her designee is not satisfactory to the student or parent/guardian, in whole or in part, s/he has the right of appeal to the ACCEPT Education Collaborative Board of Directors. Request for such appeal shall be in writing to the chairperson of the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors shall, within four weeks of being notified or their next meeting, whichever is sooner, will conduct a fair hearing to decide the issues presented by the student or parent/guardian. ACCEPT staff has the burden of proof on issues presented by the student or parent/guardian. The student or parent/guardian has the right to be represented by an advocate of his/her choosing, to cross-examine witnesses, to present evidence, to make a tape or other recording of the proceedings, and to receive a written decision within two weeks after the hearing. If the appeal concerns statements by an employee of the Collaborative, such person(s) shall have the right to be present and to have an advocate of his/her own choosing.

Academic and Instructional Policies

State/District Wide Assessment

Both state and federal law require the full participation of students with disabilities in state and district wide testing programs. In Massachusetts, *all* students in publicly supported programs (including students enrolled in ACCEPT programs) participate in [MCAS](#) per their grade of enrollment. All ACCEPT students will participate in the MCAS in the manner prescribed by their most current IEP and in accordance with student participation requirements as set forth by MCAS publications. Each student's IEP Team is responsible for determining how s/he will participate in MCAS, what accommodations, if any, will be necessary and the format of the Alternate Assessment portfolio evidences if applicable.

Grading and Reporting

The purpose of grading and reporting procedures is to evaluate student growth and progress in relation to the curriculum and to provide a report of this academic growth to the student and parent/guardian. Academic success and achievement with ACCEPT results from regular attendance in school and class, mastery of skills, participation in class, willingness to accept extra help, completion of homework and independent study, a positive attitude, and appropriate behavior. All students will receive quarterly progress reports or reports as outlined in their IEP. Additionally, some students may receive report cards at intervals consistent with regular education peers, dependent on their program of enrollment. Individual programs within ACCEPT will set their own grading policies. Parents/guardians may request these policies directly from their child's Program Coordinator.

Graduation Requirements

The Collaborative meets all requirements from its sending districts for graduation requirements. Each student from Massachusetts must pass the MCAS in addition to earning enough credits to receive a high school diploma. Students who do not pass the MCAS will be eligible for a certificate of attendance. For the number of credits needed from the student's sending school system, please contact the student's Guidance Counselor.

Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Substance Use Prevention

ACCEPT Education Collaborative understands that programs that support and value the social and emotional wellbeing of students, families, and staff help to build a healthy school environment. For this reason, ACCEPT has selected to use Lions Quest, a curriculum based on an approach to education called Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). This curriculum is employed across all of the Collaborative's primary and secondary school programs. Lions Quest is designed to help children learn and generalize knowledge, attitudes, and skills they will need to understand and manage their emotions, set and achieve personal goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (<https://www.lions-quest.org/more-about-social-and-emotional-learning/>).

Lions Quest addresses substance use prevention by helping to foster protective factors in our students. The curriculum directly focuses on specific research-based elements that have been shown to be important in preventing substance use in adolescents. These elements include normative beliefs about personal commitments, social influences, resistance skills and other emotional/social competencies, expectations of drug effects, and bonding and pro-social relationships with peers and caring adults.

Parent/Guardian Conferences

Teachers, clinical staff, and administrators welcome the opportunity to have individual conferences with students and parents/guardians. Parents/guardians are encouraged to confer with faculty members as the need arises. Meeting times can be arranged by mutual agreement. Appointments will be made so that teachers will not have to leave their scheduled classes and clinicians do not have to reschedule student sessions. A formal opportunity for parent/guardian teacher conferences may be scheduled in the fall.

Cheating and Plagiarism

It is only through practice and experience that a student can learn and a teacher can teach that student. ACCEPT expects all students to actively participate in the learning process. Furthermore, ACCEPT fosters an honest and open learning environment and expects honesty at all times from its students. Any act of cheating or plagiarism directly impacts a student's ability to benefit from their academic instruction and is detrimental

to the learning environment.

Cheating is defined as trying to obtain or obtaining for one's self or someone else, credit for work through dishonest or deceptive means. Cheating may include, but is not limited to: lying, copying the work of another person, discussion of answers or questions used for evaluation unless directly allowed by an instructor, obtaining copies of evaluations prior to taking said evaluation unless directly allowed by an instructor, using any form of note or "cheat sheet" during an evaluation unless directly allowed by an instructor, having someone else take a test or complete work for you, changing examination scores, attempts to coerce an instructor into increase a grade, recycling assignments (e.g., turing in the same paper for an English assignment and a Social Studies assignment).

Plagiarism is defined as the act of using the ideas and/or work of another person as if they were one's own ideas or work without giving proper credit to the source of said work or ideas. Proper credit requires use of appropriate referencing. Such an act is not plagiarism if the ideas were arrived at through independent thought, reasoning, or logic (e.g., independently completing a math proof) or where the idea is considered to be common knowledge (e.g., "the earth revolves around the sun"). Plagiarism might include, but is not limited to: turning in work copied directly from another source, failure to give credit for ideas, statements, facts, or conclusions which have been learned from another source, failure to use quotation marks when quoting directly from another, use of another person's project or program without giving credit.

Any student found to have engaged in cheating or plagiarism will receive a zero for the assignment/evaluation in question without opportunity to make-up any credit. Administration may also impose additional disciplinary measures.

Transportation

School transportation vehicles are an extension of the school and proper conduct is required. Misbehavior on a school vehicle is dangerous to the safety of others and cannot be allowed. Students are expected to follow any code of conduct set forth by their transportation provider. Furthermore, students are expected to adhere to the following:

- Upon entering a vehicle, students are to take their seats and remain in them at all times, regardless of whether the vehicle is in motion or stationary.
- Seat belts are to be used at all times.
- Nothing is to be thrown within the vehicle or out of its doors or windows.
- Pushing, striking, shoving, or other physical contact between passengers is not permitted.
- Students must keep all body parts inside the vehicle.
- Students must keep the inside of the vehicle neat and refrain from vandalism or destructive activities. All belongings, including trash, must be removed when departing.
- No eating, drinking, or tobacco use is permitted within a vehicle.

Violation of the above or staff observation of unsafe behavior prior to boarding a vehicle, may be grounds for the student to be excluded from riding on the vehicle. In this case, the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be contacted and responsible for transporting the student. The student will be monitored while the parent/guardian is in transit and will at no time be without proper supervision.

Permission to Drive to School

Providing a student possesses a valid driver's license, and has his or her parent's/guardian's permission, a student may apply for permission to drive his or her car to school; however, parking is limited at each of ACCEPT's host buildings and permission is not guaranteed. The parent/guardian must specifically give his or her permission in writing to the Program Coordinator. If permission is granted, the parent/guardian must also

must notify his or her bus transporter and terminate transportation. The student's bus will not continue to go to the home on a daily basis when the student confirms his or her intention to drive to school in his or her own car. If a student does not have his or her car available on a particular day it will be his/her responsibility and the responsibility of the parent/guardian to secure alternate transportation. Any school missed for this reason will be considered an unexcused absence.

Students are expected to either park on the street (if allowed by the town in which the road lies) or in their designated areas only. Students may not transport other students in their vehicles at the end of the day without the prior written approval of the other students' parents/guardians and the Program Coordinator. Taking another student off school grounds without permission is not allowed. Doing so may result in disciplinary action.

Students must be in good standing behaviorally and academically to receive permission to drive to and from school in their own cars. If a student's behavior is inappropriate, his or her driving privileges to and from school may be revoked and LEA-provided transportation reinstated.

Students are not allowed to sit parked in their cars, smoking or otherwise, before or after school. Likewise, driving students may not permit other non-driving students to sit in their cars, smoking or otherwise, before or after school when the non-driving students are expected to be on their school van. Students who drive to school may not leave school during the school day to return to their cars without an escort to retrieve "forgotten" items. Students must check their keys in with a designated staff member at the start of the school day and will receive them back at the time of dismissal. Keys will be safely locked away during the school day. Failure to check in keys may result in a loss of privileges.

Technology Acceptable Use Policy

ACCEPT Education Collaborative provides computer and networking equipment in the classrooms to support student learning. In doing so, staff must take care to ensure students' experiences are educationally relevant and that students are kept protected from unsafe use of the Internet. Computer equipment and the Internet are to be used for educational purposes and are a privilege. Inappropriate use may result in loss of this privilege. At least annually, all students must read and sign ACCEPT's Technology Network and Internet Acceptable Use Policy (see appendix B). Not until a signed policy is provided to the school by the student will that student be allowed to utilize Collaborative computers or networking equipment.

The following rules will apply to all students using computers, tablets, mp3 players, ACCEPT's network, or any other Collaborative networking equipment:

- Students will only visit websites suitable for student use as determined by Collaborative staff.
- Students will not have access to social network sites such as Facebook, Instagram, or SnapChat during school time for any reason.
- Students' work will not be posted on the Internet without prior written authorization by the Program Coordinator and parent(s)/guardian(s).
- Staff will supervise students using the Internet at all times. Any student attempting to hide their activities or impede a screen share will immediately lose technology privileges. Length of time will be determined by staff.
- Students must shut down all computing equipment within a reasonable amount of time following a staff request to do so. Any extended delay may result in a loss of privilege.
- Students must take good care of ACCEPT's equipment at all times. The following actions will be considered violations to this rule:
 - Eating or drinking within close proximity to equipment.

- o Hitting, banging, throwing, or otherwise behaving in a way that the equipment might incur damage.
- o Removing parts of the equipment or otherwise taking parts of the equipment apart.
- o Downloading *any* program or material without direct permission from an ACCEPT employee.
- o Any active and knowing attempt, regardless of success, to make changes to the equipment without direct permission from an ACCEPT employee.

Emergency Termination

Students are expected to behave in a safe and respectful manner at all times. Any student who behaves in a manner that seriously jeopardizes the safety of any member of the school community may be terminated from the program on an emergency basis. Such behaviors include, but are not limited to, possessing or using a weapon in school or on a school bus/van, serious aggression, fire setting, gross destruction of school property, dangerous or self-abusing behavior, or the possession, use, or sale of drugs or alcohol in school or on a school bus/van.

Every effort is made to continue enrollment for students who may be in crisis. However, if a student presents with severe behavioral incidents requiring more support and intervention than is routinely part of our therapeutic procedures, the following processes occur:

- A Team Meeting is convened as quickly as possible to discuss alternative strategies to address the student’s presenting issues. ACCEPT will invite the parent(s)/guardian(s) and LEA representative(s).
- The Team develops an interim action plan which may include:
 - o 1:1 staff supervision and support
 - o Change in length of school day
 - o Change in daily academic and behavioral expectations
 - o Change in environment within the school program
 - o Increased clinical supports
 - o Other options as determined by the Team
- A follow-up Team meeting is scheduled to assess the student’s status.

An emergency situation is defined as a student presenting a clear and present threat to the health and safety of him/herself or others. If a student has been hospitalized due to an emergency situation, a mandatory reentry meeting at the conclusion of the hospitalization will be scheduled. Parents/guardians will be asked to provide a “safe to return” letter from the hospital as well as all discharge paperwork to help inform staff of the student’s needs.

Manifestation Determination

Collaborative administration may suspend a student for up to 10 consecutive days or a total of 10 days over the course of an academic year. Should administration be compelled, because of student behavior, to consider suspensions beyond 10 days an emergency team meeting will be called and a functional behavioral assessment will be conducted to determine whether the student’s behavior is a direct result of his/her identified disability(s). If the Team determines that a student’s behavior is not a manifestation of their disability, then the school may suspend or expel the student consistent with the policies applied to students without disabilities. The Collaborative must, and will at all times provide an appropriate educational program to the student, as determined by the Team. Programs in other settings may be considered. If the Team determines that the behavior is a manifestation of a disability, the Team will review the supports afforded the student through his/her IEP to ensure they are all being provided with fidelity. The team will also develop a behavioral intervention plan or review a current plan and consider appropriate modifications. Except in circumstances involving drugs, weapons, or serious bodily injury, the student will be returned to the placement from which s/he was removed unless the placement is changed by agreement or through the Team process.

Planned Termination

ACCEPT programs ensure flexible procedures and mechanisms that maximize opportunities for enrolled students to gain the capacity to return to a less restrictive educational program. Such mechanisms may include, but are not limited to, a capacity for part-time attendance at a neighborhood public school or other community program or a period of transition from one program option to a less restrictive program option. As a component of the intake/placement process, the LEA will identify student performance expectation for the re-entry to a public school setting.

At each student's annual Team meeting, the Team, through the Vision Statement process, will identify if the student will be likely to transition back to the public school setting within that academic year. If it is determined that the student has reached the goals as outlined in the Student Transition Plan by the LEA at intake, the Team will then develop and proceed with the Student Transition Implementation Plan addressing the following areas:

- Background information – statement of the student's academic/behavioral/social-emotional needs and progress with specifics regarding what has been crucial to the student's success
- School history – recommendation for school placement
- Current educational needs – academic levels, accommodations, and materials needed in all subject areas
- Access to general education classes
- Technology needs
- Behavioral needs recommendations – plan, preferred activities, motivators, frequency
- Additional therapies – short statement of current functioning, accommodations, specific materials, service delivery
- Therapeutic needs – individual/group therapy, daily/weekly check-ins/progress reports, outside therapist/community agency/physician(s) name and telephone numbers
- Goals – transition into school

Health and Safety Guidelines

Health Requirements

The following health requirements are in keeping with [Massachusetts State Law](#) and will be upheld by all ACCEPT programs:

- In order to be admitted to an ACCEPT program, parents/guardians must provide documentation of all required immunizations. To ensure continued enrollment in school, these must be kept up to date at all times. Immunization certificates/records are to be sent directly to ACCEPT's nurse leader.
- Documentation of at least one lead screening (conducted after a child is 9 months of age) must be provided upon a student's entry into an ACCEPT program.
- Record of a physical examination within the last calendar year must be provided to ACCEPT upon entry into a program and updated annually.
- TB screening results for those students determined to be at "high risk" by their primary care physicians

In accordance with Massachusetts state laws, vision, hearing, postural, and BMI screenings will be conducted by the school nurse annually in pre-determined grade levels. Notices are sent home prior to screenings that contain additional pertinent information.

Medication and its Administration

When a child requires medication (over-the-counter or prescription) during the school day, parents are required to contact ACCEPT's nurse leader and provide:

(a) Completed Physician's Medication Authorization and Administration Plan listing each *prescription medication* being administered at school (Form provided in annual health forms and can also be found on ACCEPT's website). This rule also applies to homeopathic remedies. This form must be provided with the medication in order to administer at school.

OR

(b) Completed Parent/Guardian Authorization for Dispensing *Non-Prescription Medication* form. This form is required for students to be able to receive non-prescription medications (such as ibuprofen and tylenol) from the school nurse during the school day. Students who have not returned this form signed by a parent/guardian are not able to receive non-prescription medications at school.

(c) All medications must be brought to the school by a parent/guardian, or designated adult. Medications **MAY NOT** be transported to/from school by students. Medications must be in the original pharmacy-labeled container. Medications brought in pill boxes or bags will not be accepted.

The administration of medications to children at school is managed by a school nurse with provisions for self-administration of selected medications, as determined by the school nurse. ACCEPT does not permit students to carry any medications including homeopathic remedies on their person at any time during the school day or at school.

Medications cannot be transported to or from school by the student or a transportation driver. A parent/guardian or his/her designee must deliver medication to and from school to be handed directly to the

school nurse. Other ACCEPT staff may not accept medications at any time. All medications must be provided in their original container with a prescription label. No more than a 30 day supply will be kept at school. Parents/guardians will be notified of all unused, discontinued, or outdated medications and must retrieve them from the program. If they do not do so within 30 days of notice, medications will be responsibly disposed of by the school nurse.

Over-the-counter medications may be administered in school with parental consent. These include Acetaminophen (Tylenol), Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), Diphenhydramine (Benadryl), Calcium Carbonate (Tums). A consent form for these medications is provided in your child's annual health forms and can also be found on ACCEPT's website. ACCEPT stocks a limited supply of these medications for use during illness or injury. For students with specific over the counter medication needs (i.e. dye-free versions of the above, Fast Melt tabs. etc) parent/guardians must supply the specific medication with a physician's order.

Parents should notify the school if their child's medications have changed (dose increase or decrease) or have been discontinued, or in the event that their child has been prescribed any new medications, including short-term medications. All changes are considered new orders, and there must be a completed Physician's order or parental consent form on file for all medications given at school that matches the current dose being given. Furthermore, ACCEPT asks that the nurse leader be made aware of any medications being taken outside of school and changes to those medications as well.

Illness and Injury

Assessment and treatment by the school nurse are provided for minor injuries or illnesses during the school day. The nurse will dismiss any child who is too ill to be in school, requires further assessment or treatment for an illness or injury, or is considered to be contagious or susceptible to disease. Students who are ill will be sent home, and may include any of the following conditions:

- Has a temperature of 100.0 (temporal). Temperature must be normal for a full 24 hours prior to return to school. The exception is a child with a hypothalamic problem (temperature regulation problem) who is asymptomatic.
- Has a Strep throat and has not been on antibiotic therapy for 24 hours.
- Has a culture(s) pending, (exceptions can be made at the discretion of the school nurse).
- Is on respiratory precautions, and/or has a significant change in respiratory secretions.
- Has chicken pox/shingles, with active rash (rash must be dry, non-weeping, shingles must be covered for student to return).
- Has significant seizure activity.
- Has had persistent vomiting and diarrhea; must be symptom free for 24 hours prior to attending school.
- Has a condition that requires immediate intervention.
- Has a condition that requires ongoing supervision, which cannot be adequately provided in a school setting.
- Is very sleepy or is experiencing excessive bleeding after a dental visit.
- Has untreated pediculosis, scabies, or body lice.
- Poses a significant health risk to others in the normal course of school activities. A significant health risk is when:
 - Any student is in the infectious stage of an airborne transmitted disease.

- Students are unable to hygienically manage their bowel and bladder functions and they are in the infectious stage of an oral-fecal transmitted disease. Oral-fecal transmitted diseases include, but are not limited:
 - Hepatitis A
 - Gastrointestinal infections such as Giardia, Salmonella, Shigella and Rotavirus)
 - Parasites (such as pinworms)
- Students have a disease which may be transmitted by body fluids, and have open lesions and whose developmental level or behavior makes it difficult for them to refrain from touching the lesion and, therefore, spreading the underlying infection. These infections include:
 - Herpes
 - Impetigo
 - Hepatitis B virus
 - Staphylococcus Aureus
 - Beta Hemolytic Streptococcus
 - Untreated Conjunctivitis

If the school nurse determines that a child must return home, his/her parents/guardians will be contacted. If they cannot be reached, emergency contact will be contacted (parents must provide emergency contacts that can be reached and can pick up a child). If parents/guardians and all emergency contacts are unavailable the child may be brought to the nearest hospital.

In the case of an emergency, 911 will be called immediately and the student will be transported to the hospital via ambulance accompanied by an ACCEPT staff member. Parents/guardians will be immediately notified and asked to meet their child at the hospital.

Injuries that occur while at school will be reported to parents/guardians. In the event that parents/guardians cannot be reached, the designated emergency contact person will be contacted.

Reporting Suspected Abuse or Neglect

Under [Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 119, Section 51A](#), any public or private school teacher, educational administrator, guidance or family counselor, nurse, or social worker, as other professionals who in his/her professional capacity shall have reasonable cause to believe that a student under eighteen years is suffering serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse by a caretaker, including sexual abuse, or neglect, including malnutrition, must immediately report such conditions to the Department of Children and Family ([DCF](#)).

SWCEC staff must adhere to the following guidelines in the handling of suspected abuse and neglect cases.

- Any staff with concerns related to student abuse or neglect will contact the Executive Director. The Executive Director will:
 - Review the circumstance and document any physical signs of abuse.
 - If indicated, file a 51A with the Department of Social Services and contact the parents/guardian.
- If the suspected abuse/neglect is the result of an action of a staff member or another student, the proper paperwork will be completed and forwarded to the DESE by the Executive Director.
- If the student is 18 years of age or older, the Executive Director will file a report with the Massachusetts Disabled Persons Protection Commission.

The name of all reporters remains confidential unless s/he decides to disclose; DCF will not share this information; however, the reporter's identity may be deduced from the content of the report. It is important to note that educators are protected from civil or criminal actions provided that the report was made in good faith.

Health Records-Confidentiality

Student health records are considered school records and are subject to the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ([FERPA](#)). Health records contain requirements for admittance to school such as physicals and immunization records, reports requiring health services provided to a student during the school day, medication information and student diagnosis, and correspondence regarding health issues. Health information will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the nurse's office.

Parents/guardians and students over the age of 18 have the right to inspect all health records concerning that student. They must put the request to inspect health records in writing to the school nurse at least 24 hours in advance. Parents and students over the age of 18 have the right to appeal anything in a student's file which they consider inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student's rights of privacy or other rights.

School health records will be kept for up to 7 years and then destroyed.

Management of Life Threatening Allergies

ACCEPT Education Collaborative recognizes the increasing prevalence of food allergies and the life-threatening nature of allergies for many students. It is the policy of the Collaborative to work jointly with parents, physicians, staff, and students to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to students and to provide a safe educational environment for everyone students. The focus of allergy management within the Collaborative will be prevention, preparation, and emergency response. These policies and procedures aim to assist students in assuming developmentally appropriate responsibility for their personal health and safety while optimizing their participation in educational activities and school-sponsored events.

ACCEPT Education Collaborative cannot guarantee a food allergen-free environment for all students with life threatening allergies, or prevent all possibility of harm to students in emergencies. The Collaborative's goals are instead to minimize the risk of exposure to food allergens that pose a threat to those students, educate the community, and maintain and regularly update a system-wide protocol for responding to student needs. A system-wide effort requires the cooperation of all groups of people within the system.

ACCEPT's full management protocol can be found within our healthcare handbook [here](#).

Parents of students without life-threatening food allergies can choose to have their child opt out of ACCEPT activities involving food items. Please see [Appendix C](#) for more information.

Notification Relative to Sex Education

In accordance with the Massachusetts [General Law, Chapter 71, Section 32A](#), the Collaborative has adopted a policy on the rights of parents/guardians of our students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

Two weeks prior to the start curriculum exposure, or at the time of enrollment after the start of the school year, all parents/guardians of students will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum we offer that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. Each such notice to parents/guardians

will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy, and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

- Exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school administration requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.
- Inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable.

Parents/guardians may arrange with the administration to review the materials at the school, and may also review them at other locations that may be determined by the Program Coordinator.

Fire Drills and Building Evacuation

The buildings must be vacated each time the fire alarm is sounded. Directions for exiting the building are posted in each classroom and are explained by the teacher of each class. The following rules must be observed: (1) Students must move efficiently and quietly with their group to a designated spot at least 50 ft from the building; (2) Students must follow to any directions given by the teacher; (3) Students may only re-enter the building with their group when the all-clear signal is given; (4) Students will return directly to class after the drill is over unless otherwise directed.

Emergency Contacts

Parents are asked to keep their child's emergency contact list updated at all times and at a minimum, are asked to provide updated emergency contacts annually. If changes need to be made at any time, parents should complete the emergency contact form found on the ACCEPT website. When listing emergency contacts, parents should only consider local individuals who can be reliably reached during the day and who have the means to pick up a student in a timely fashion should a pick-up be necessary (e.g., local grandparents who do not work, own their own car, and can drive) .

Restraint

ACCEPT staff attempts to avoid the use of physical restraint with students. If a student demonstrates behavior that is inappropriate and/or disruptive to the learning process, staff will attempt to redirect the student by utilizing de-escalation techniques and behavior management strategies to help students remain safe without the use of physical intervention. Strategies may include:

- Verbal and nonverbal cues
- Timeout may be used as a behavioral support strategy in which the student temporarily separates from the learning environment for the purpose of calming. During time out, staff are available to the student at all times. The space used is clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Timeouts cease as soon as the student has calmed.
- To return from a time-out the student must demonstrate calm behavior (decreased disruptive/acting out behavior)

School staff may physically restrain students only when non-physical interventions would be ineffective and the student's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious harm to self and/or others. Physical restraint is the use of bodily force to limit a student's freedom of movement and does not include touching or holding a student without the use of force for the purpose of guiding or directing the student. ACCEPT uses the *Safety Care* restraint program, and only staff with current *Safety Care* certification may participate in physical restraint if the above criteria are met. If a student is restrained for a period longer than 20 minutes, ACCEPT staff shall obtain the approval of the Special Education Coordinator or his/her designee. At no time may seclusion, mechanical, chemical, or prone methods be used as a means of restraining a student. ACCEPT staff

also discuss whether individualized procedures should be implemented with students with known or suspected histories of trauma.

If a student has been involved in a physical restraint, reasonable efforts will be made to have that student seen within the day by the school nurse. The student will be asked to comply with a body check, during which the nurse will inspect any visible body parts (e.g., arms, legs) that may have had staff contact during the restraint.

In the event of physical restraint, ACCEPT staff will make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's parent of the restraint within 24 hours of the event, and shall notify the parent by written report sent within three school working days of the restraint. All reporting requirements will be adhered to as set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and additional follow-up procedures may include reviewing the incident with the student and staff, and consideration of whether processing is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.

A copy of the state regulations may be obtained at:

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr46.html?section=all>

Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Substance Use Prevention

ACCEPT Education Collaborative understands that programs that support and value the social and emotional wellbeing of students, families, and staff help to build a healthy school environment. For this reason, ACCEPT has selected to use Lions Quest, a curriculum based on an approach to education called Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). This curriculum is employed across all of the Collaborative's primary and secondary school programs. Lions Quest is designed to help children learn and generalize knowledge, attitudes, and skills they will need to understand and manage their emotions, set and achieve personal goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish positive relationships, and make responsible decisions (<https://www.lions-quest.org/more-about-social-and-emotional-learning/>).

Lions Quest addresses substance use prevention by helping to foster protective factors in our students. The curriculum directly focuses on specific research-based elements that have been shown to be important in preventing substance use in adolescents. These elements include normative beliefs about personal commitments, social influences, resistance skills and other emotional/social competencies, expectations of drug effects, and bonding and pro-social relationships with peers and caring adults.

Miscellaneous

Visitors

To ensure the safety of all persons in the Collaborative and its host buildings and to maintain proper order, all visitors must first report to the administrative office upon arrival. There, they will be asked to sign in and will receive a visitor's pass. Upon their departure, they should also sign out. Visitors without scheduled appointments may not be admitted to the Collaborative. Permission to bring a guest must be obtained from the administration and classroom teachers prior to the day of the visit.

Photography

On occasion, there will be publicity concerning your child's school program. Photographs may be taken occasionally during the school year within the Collaborative classrooms. The Collaborative will at times publish/broadcast the resulting images on its website or in brochures, newsletters, newspapers, and other public news formats for the general purpose of student recognition and promotion of the Collaborative. Parents will be asked to sign a photo release at the start of each academic year, or at the time of enrollment. At that time, parents/guardians will have the opportunity to opt their child out of any photos that might be taken.

Free or Reduced Lunch

A free or reduced price meal application form is made available to each student on the opening day of school or at the start of their enrollment with the Collaborative. The free or reduced price meals are based on [Federal Standards](#), which are determined by the family size and maximum gross income of the family. These forms should be filled out and returned to the classroom teacher as soon as possible in order for the student to participate in the program at the earliest date.

Dismissal

If for any reason a student needs to be dismissed from school, all arrangements should be made prior to the dismissal. Students who leave the building without permission are subject to disciplinary action. Notes from home specifying the date, time and reason for the dismissal, should be brought to the classroom teacher upon arrival at school. If a student is to go home with another student, the parent or guardian of the parent doing pick-up should also send a note specifying the date, time of pick-up, and the child to be picked up. No child will be dismissed without a confirmed note or phone call from the parent(s)/guardian(s). A student may only be dismissed to one of his/her listed emergency contacts or authorized care providers unless the parent(s)/guardian(s) expressly states a deviation from this in writing to the classroom teacher.

Inclement Weather/School Cancellations

If the district hosting the program in which your student resides announces a school closing, delay, or early dismissal your child will follow that district's schedule. If a child's home district cancels school, his/her transportation will also be cancelled. If a child's ACCEPT program is in session on a day the home district is not, parents may choose to transport their child to and from his/her ACCEPT program or allow their child to stay home. Such an occasion constitutes an excused absence. Finally, ACCEPT reserves the right to initiate school closing, delay, or early dismissal regardless of the decision made by other districts.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) should watch/listen to the following TV and radio stations or check online for school closing/delay/early dismissal announcements:

Television:	WCVB (Channel 5)	WHDH (Channel 7)
Radio:	WRKO (680 AM)	WROR (105.7 FM)
Online:	www.accept.org	

There are rare occasions when school may unexpectedly release early due to inclement weather and increasingly dangerous driving conditions. If this should happen, ACCEPT staff will call parents/guardians (and emergency contacts if necessary) to alert them of the release. Staff will ask that parents/guardians please arrange to be home or have another adult at home to receive their child. Parents are asked to be aware that traffic, weather, or other factors may greatly impact the schedule and duration of the ride to and from school during inclement weather as drivers do all that they can to ensure a safe trip for all passengers .

We encourage parents to use their own discretion and knowledge of the individual needs of their child when sending them to school during inclement weather.

Display/Publication of Student Work

Notice is hereby given that there will be occasions when student work is seen and is on display within the school; for example, at open houses, exhibits, fairs, on bulletin boards, etc. Unless a parent/guardian informs the Collaborative in writing no later than September 15 of each school year, the Collaborative will assume that this publication/display of the student work is acceptable to the parent/guardian.

Meetings, Programs, and Activities

All meetings, conferences, programs, and activities in school department buildings are available, without discrimination, to individuals with disabilities as defined by the [Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) and/or [Title II](#) of the American with Disabilities Act.

Whenever an individual with a disability(ies) wishes to attend or participate in a meeting, conference, program, or activity which is inaccessible, that meeting, conference, program or activity will be relocated to an accessible area. Forty-eight hour notice of the need for relocation should be made by the person with a disability(ies) to the ACCEPT Office Staff.

APPENDIX A: MASSACHUSETTS LAWS REGARDING HAZING (MGL c. 269, s 17-18)

Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which wilfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Section 19. Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of postsecondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of postsecondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of postsecondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student Handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

APPENDIX B: TECHNOLOGY NETWORK AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR ACCEPT STUDENTS

ACCEPT's Technology Network, which includes access to the World Wide Web and electronic mail capability, exists solely for educational purposes, which are defined as classroom activities, career and professional development and high quality self-discovery activities of an educational nature. The Collaborative intends to utilize this computer network, along with all of its other educational resources, to fulfill its ultimate goal of preparing students for success in life and work. To this end, the computer network will be used to facilitate communication between and among students, staff and parents, enhance productivity, assist staff members in upgrading and acquiring skills through a broader exchange of information, and to provide information to the community including parents, government agencies and businesses.

The computer network is not to be considered a resource intended for use as a public forum or for any purpose that is not directly related to the delivery of educational services.

The following rules apply to the use of the Collaborative computer network:

1. Network access is a privilege, not a right. The use of the network must be consistent with, and directly related to, the educational objectives of Collaborative. A violation of the terms of this Acceptable Use Policy may result in suspension or termination of network access privileges and may also result in other disciplinary action consistent with the disciplinary policies of the Collaborative and the applicable provisions of any governing collective bargaining agreement. Users should also be aware that violation for these rules that constitutes a crime may also result in criminal prosecution.
2. Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy include, but are not limited to, the following conduct:
 - A. Placing unlawful and/or inappropriate information on a system.
 - B. Using profane, vulgar, threatening, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, harassing or otherwise objectionable or criminal language in a public or private message.
 - C. Sending messages or posting information that would likely result in the loss of a recipient's work or system.
 - D. Sending "chain letters" or "broadcast" messages to lists or individuals, subscribing to "listservs" or "newsgroups" without prior permission, or using the Internet for access for any other personal use, without prior permission.
 - E. Participating in other types of use which would cause congestion of the network to interfere with the work of others.
 - F. Using the network in a manner that would violate any U.S. or state law. This includes, but it is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening material and spreading of computer viruses.
 - G. Accessing or transmitting materials that are obscene, sexually explicit, and accessing any prohibited sites on the Internet.
 - H. Revealing one's own personal address or telephone number.
 - I. Revealing one's password to anyone else, using anyone else's password, or pretending to be someone else when sending information over the computer network.
 - J. Attempting to gain unauthorized access to system programs or computer equipment, including attempts to override, or to encourage others to override, any firewalls established on the network.
 - K. Attempting to harm, modify or destroy data of another user.
 - L. Exhibiting any other action whatsoever, which would in any way, subject the user of the Collaborative computers to any civil or criminal action.

- M. Discussing highly sensitive or confidential school department information in email communications.
- N. Using the Collaborative technology network to buy, sell or advertise anything.
- O. Accessing discussion groups or “chat rooms”, or engaging in any other form of online conversation or communication whose purpose is not primarily educational.
- P. Using the Collaborative technology network for gambling.
- Q. Using the Collaborative technology network for political campaigning purposes, including attempts to influence ballot questions or to promote or oppose a candidate for public office.
- R. Failing to log off the computer network at the conclusion of a work session or at the request of system administrators.
- S. Using the computer network for recreational purposes or activities relating to personal hobbies.
- T. Installing software or data on the computer network without first having the information scanned by the Computer Technology Coordinator for viruses or other incompatibility.

3. The Collaborative assumes no responsibility for:

- A. any unauthorized charges or fees, including telephone charges, long distance charges, per minute surcharges and/or equipment or line costs.
- B. any financial obligations arising out of unauthorized use of the system for the purchase of products or services.
- C. any cost, liability or damages caused by a user’s violation of these guidelines.
- D. any information or materials that are transferred through the network.
- E. any other inappropriate use of electronic resources of the Collaborative.

4. The Collaborative makes no guarantee, implied or otherwise, regarding the reliability of the data connection. The Collaborative shall not be liable for any loss or corruption of data resulting while using the network.

5. All messages and information created, sent or retrieved on the network are the property of the Collaborative. Electronic mail messages and other use of electronic resources by students and staff, including accessing web pages, should not be considered confidential. Copies of all information created, sent or retrieved are stored on the computer network’s backup files. While the Collaborative does not plan to review cache files or back-up files on a regular basis, it reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files on the computer system, including web pages accessed, as it deems necessary and appropriate in the ordinary course of its business for purposes including, but not limited to, ensuring proper use of resources and conducting routine network maintenance. By participating in the Collaborative’ computer network, users are indicating their consent to such monitoring and access. Where appropriate, communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement in response to proper requests, or to other third parties in the context of proper requests in the course of litigation without prior consent of the sender or receiver.

6. The Collaborative strongly condemns the illegal distribution (otherwise known as pirating) of software. Any users caught transferring such files through the network, and any whose accounts are found to contain such illegal files, shall immediately have their accounts permanently revoked. In addition, all users should be aware that software piracy is a federal offense and is punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

7. The Collaborative reserves its right to seek restitution from any user for costs incurred by, including legal fees, due to such user’s inappropriate use of electronic resources.



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APPENDIX C: PARENTAL REQUEST TO OPT OUT OF NON-MEAL FOOD CONSUMPTION

School Year 2016-2017

Dear Parent/Guardian:

ACCEPT recognizes the importance of providing a wide variety of experiences to our students to help build life skills and maximize their potential. Some of these experiences, such as holiday meals, birthday celebrations, and special events during MCAS week involve food items that are shared with students. We believe that these events provide for important community building within our program as well as opportunities for students to practice skills necessary to be active participants in their home and other social situations.

ACCEPT also recognizes that parents may have concerns about their child consuming food items when at school and are supportive of parent decisions for students to opt out of eating foods not brought from home or purchased at the school cafeteria. If you do not want your child to eat food provided by ACCEPT staff, please follow the link provided below to indicate this preference. Please note that the opt out is only an option for students without known life threatening food allergies. For those students with life threatening food allergies, different protocol and procedure is in place per the Collaborative's Management of Life Threatening Allergies Policy.

If you do not want your child to eat food provided by ACCEPT staff please click [HERE](#)

Sincerely,

Nancy Hopkins, RN
Nurse Leader