



## PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### 2020-2021 PORTLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL HANDBOOK

Portland Middle School      860-342-1880



*The purpose of the Student/Parent Handbook is to give students and their parents/guardians an understanding of the general rules and guidelines for attending and receiving an education in our schools. This handbook should be considered as a subset of the Portland Board of Education Policy Manual which contains those policies relating to students in addition to other information related to the daily operation of the school. In case of a conflict between a Board policy and the provisions of this handbook, the Board Policy most recently adopted by the Board will prevail. The Portland Board of Education policies can be found on the district website [www.portlandctschools.org](http://www.portlandctschools.org), under the Board of Education link.*

*The Portland Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age or disability in providing education services. Mrs. Dawn Davis has been designated to coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended. Mrs. Dawn Davis has been designated to coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.*

*The Portland Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of disability by denying access to the benefits of district services, programs, or activities. To request information about the applicability of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), interested persons should contact Mrs. Dawn Davis, [ddavis@portlandct.us](mailto:ddavis@portlandct.us).*

**Portland Middle School  
93 High Street  
Portland, CT 06480  
860-342-1880**

**2020-2021 Middle School**

Middle School Principal & Co-Principal 7-12	Mr. Chuck Hershon
High School Principal & Co-Principal 7-12	Mrs. Kathryn Lawson
School Counselor	Ms. Jamie DeRose
Grade 7 Team Leader	Mrs. Diane Stolting
Grade 8 Team Leader	Mr. Alan Stekloff
Unified Arts Team Leader	Ms. Sarah Ketterer
Office Assistant	Mrs. Maritsa Ellam
Administrative Assistant	Mrs. Katie Picard
School Nurses	Mr. David Opuszynski, R.N. & Renee Hyland
Superintendent of Schools	Dr. Charles Britton (860-342-6790)
Director of Student Services	Mrs. Dawn Davis (860-342-6790)
Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Technology	Mr. Eric Martin (860-342-6790)

<b><u>Staff:</u></b>	<b><u>Subject:</u></b>
Ms. Jen Bell	Math
Mr. Alex Jensen	Math
Ms. Kathryn Kelly	Eng Lang Arts
Mrs. Dayna Tait	Eng Lang Arts
Mrs. Fylliccia D'Angelo	Eng Lang Arts
Ms. Jeanna Crook	Eng Lang Arts
Mrs. Melissa McManus	Eng Lang Arts
Mr. Robert Raines	Social Studies
Mr. Alan Stekloff	Social Studies
Mrs. Suzanne McDougall	Science
Ms. Diane Stolting	Science
Mrs. Stefanie Junker	World Languages
Mrs. Catherine Beck	World Languages

<b><u>Staff:</u></b>	<b><u>Subject:</u></b>
Mrs. Karen Lutkus	Family and Consumer Science
Mr. Corey Toussaint	Tech and Manufacturing
Ms. AnnMarie Szerejko	Visual Arts
Mr. Sam Tucker	Choral Director
Ms. Sarah Ketterer	Band Director
Mr. Steve Bengston	Physical Education/Health
Mrs. Katherine Hunter	Special Education
Mrs. Heather Macomber	Special Education
Mrs. Eileen Mullen	Para-Educator
Ms. Moesha Turner	Para-Educator
Mr. Tom Roulx	Para-Educator
Ms. Diane Joseffy	Para-Educator

**PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
CORE VALUES AND BELIEFS**

To meet the learning expectations of the 21st century, The Portland Public Schools provide positive environments which encourage and challenge all students to reach their potential and to become self-motivated, lifelong learners. The schools collaborate with the community to foster the development of citizens who will be productive in a diverse global society. Our ultimate goal is that students move throughout our school system as independent learners, responsible students, caring individuals, and contributing members to the greater Portland community.

## **Performance Expectations for Student Learning**

### **Academic**

*The Portland Secondary School student will:*

- Demonstrate growth and proficiency in critical thinking and creative problem solving strategies.
- Utilize technology to obtain, process, and evaluate information.
- Communicate effectively through oral, written, visual, artistic, and technical modes of expression.

### **Social**

*The Portland Secondary School student will:*

- Work cooperatively with others, recognize individual differences, and respect the rights of others.
- Exhibit an understanding of the value of physical fitness and healthy lifestyle choices.
- Demonstrate responsibility in self-discipline, self-reliance, time management, and personal behavior.

### **Civic**

*The Portland Secondary School student will:*

- Demonstrate an understanding of the value of leadership and service to the school and community.
- Demonstrate an understanding of cultural and political factors necessary for active citizenship.

### **Necessary Skills to Achieve The Goals for Student Performance**

1. Learn the important information and make connections among and between big ideas, themes, and essential questions of the various disciplines.
2. Use individual and cooperative group problem solving skills such as brainstorming, experimentation, critical and creative thinking, risk-taking, and decision making.
3. Find and use accurate and appropriate information through reading, listening, viewing, and interacting with hands-on activities.
4. Communicate clearly through written, graphic, oral, and artistic formats to the intended audience.
5. Use mathematics with accuracy and confidence.
6. Use technology as a tool to support learning, problem solving, and communication.
7. Work collaboratively with people of various talents, skills, backgrounds and interests.
8. Demonstrate global awareness through an understanding of political, economic, and environmental issues, and individual responsibility to these issues.
9. Develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle.
10. Demonstrate responsibility and self-reliance in the areas of:
  - a. Work Habits,
  - b. Conflict Resolution,
  - c. Leadership,
  - d. Goal Setting,
  - e. Effective Self-assessment, and
  - f. Self-evaluation

### **Portland Student Honor Code**

*In accordance with the Portland Public Schools' Core Values and Beliefs, students at Portland Middle School will demonstrate **Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, and Trust** in order to achieve their fullest potential in the areas of academic excellence and personal character.*

### **Responsibilities**

Students will... Exercise academic honesty in all aspects of their work.  
Prepare sufficiently for all types of assessments.  
Seek extra help from teachers.  
Avoid cheating, plagiarizing, and lying.  
Report any violation of the Honor Code to the course teacher/administration.

Teachers will... Develop, model, and sustain ethical practices within the classroom.  
Monitor student behavior closely during all assessments.  
Report violations to counselors and administrators.  
Confer with those who violate the Honor Code.  
Contact the student's parent or guardian regarding a violation.  
Record a failing grade for the assignment when honor code is violated.

### **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

All Middle School students have academic programs in language arts (reading, writing), mathematics, social studies and science. In addition, special area programs include art, family and consumer science, world languages, technology education, music, library skills, physical education and health education. Classroom and special area teachers meet regularly to integrate the curriculum wherever possible to provide a more meaningful program. A program summary, with all of the major topics, themes, and skills presented during the year is reviewed during our annual Open House events in September. Should you need more specific information, you are encouraged to contact the teacher with your questions.

### **Support Programs**

There are a number of student support programs offered to provide individual or small group help to students. These small group settings allow for personalized support and skill remediation.

These include:

- Extra Reading/Math Support – Small group and intervention for more intensive language arts and mathematics support
- Speech/Language – For children with identified speech/language deficits.
- Occupational or Physical Therapy – For children with identified neurological, orthopedic or other developmental disabilities.
- School Psychologist/Social Worker – For students experiencing school adjustment issues or students with emotional needs.

### **Special Education Services & Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) (BOE Policies 6159, 6171.2, 61871.3)**

For students in need of Special Education programs, a planning and placement team (PPT) is designed to provide communication and decision-making at the school level concerning the effective use of available resources. The team is also responsible for follow-up and periodic review of all students presently in Special Education and special services programs. Any child identified as possibly needing special education and/or related services must be referred to a special education Planning & Placement Team for evaluation (PPT). The PPT will determine whether special education services are required. Parents must give their consent before any evaluation can be done or any services can begin. An Individualized Education Plan, based upon the diagnostic findings of the evaluation study will be developed by the PPT, with parental involvement. Parents will be informed regarding the use of scientific, research-based interventions. Parents have the right to have the school paraprofessional assigned to their child, if any, attend and participate in PPT meetings. Parents, as required by law, will be provided information at PPT meetings about their right to have advisors and paraprofessionals attend PPT meetings. A student with an individualized education program (IEP) has certain rights under both federal and state laws. The *Transition Bill of Rights* for parents of students receiving special education will help parents and students understand a student's rights related to getting an education and other important issues regarding the transition to life after high school. School districts will provide this document annually at a planning and placement team (PPT) meeting to all parents, guardians, and surrogate parents of students who are receiving special education services in Grades K-6, as well as to students who are 18 years of age or older. Students, parents, guardians, and surrogate parents are important members of the PPT. Parents, guardians, surrogate parents, and students 18 years of age or older have the right to receive a copy of *Procedural Safeguards in Special Education* which explains the rights and responsibilities in the federal law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). These procedural safeguards are provided at least annually at a PPT meeting by each school district. This publication describes a student's right to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) through specialized instruction and related services in a student's IEP.

## **Scientific Research-Based Interventions Program (SRBI)**

Scientific Research-Based Interventions Program (SRBI) emphasizes successful instruction for all students through high-quality core general education practices, as well as through differentiated interventions for students experiencing learning, social-emotional or behavioral difficulties. Core general educational practices include comprehensive curricula in key academic areas, effective instructional strategies, creation and maintenance of a positive and safe school climate, and a comprehensive system of social-emotional learning and behavioral supports. Student interventions that are used are scientific and research-based as much as possible. The focus of SRBI involves instruction and interventions in general education at the onset of concern about a student's performance. Parents are notified at the onset of the SRBI process and are encouraged to participate throughout the entire process.

### **Key School Elements of SRBI**

1. School-wide SRBI Team (Principal, Social Worker, Classroom Regular Ed Teacher, and as needed, Reading Specialist, Math Specialist, Math Tutor, Special Ed Teacher, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist and Speech Pathologist) will systematically meet to assess, plan interventions and monitor student performance to support student success.
2. Use of core general education curricula that are comprehensive in addressing a range of essential competencies in each academic domain, culturally relevant and research-based to the extent that research exists to inform their selection or development.
3. A school-wide comprehensive system of social-emotional learning and behavioral supports.
4. Differentiation of instruction for all learners, including students performing above and below grade-level expectations and English language learners (ELLs).
5. Universal common assessments of all students that enable teachers to monitor academic and social progress, and identify those who are experiencing difficulty early.
6. Early intervention for students experiencing academic, social-emotional and/or behavioral difficulties to prevent the development of more serious educational issues later on.
7. Educational decision making (academic and social/behavioral) driven by data involving students' growth and performance relative to peers; data are carefully and collaboratively analyzed by teams of educators (e.g., data teams, early intervention teams), with the results applied not only to inform instruction for individual students, but also to evaluate and improve core general education practices and the overall efficacy of interventions.
8. A continuum of support that is part of the general education system, with increasing intensity and/or individualization across multiple tiers of intervention.
9. A systemic school-wide approach to core educational practices in which teachers within a grade use the same common formative assessments for all students (academic and social/behavioral), address the same curricular and social-emotional competencies, and share the same behavioral expectations; assessments curricular and social-emotional competencies and behavioral expectations are also well-coordinated across all grades.

### **Some Ways You Can Help Your Child Succeed in School**

- Make sure your child gets to school. Every day your child should get to school on time; dressed properly; well-rested and well-fed; prepared (with all needed homework, books and supplies). However, please do not send your child to school when he/she is sick.
- Pass on a love for reading and learning. Set a good example by letting your child see you read often and encourage him/her to do the same. (Of course every child loves to be read to.)
- Reduce the amount of time spent with devices. Children need fresh air and physical activity, not to mention quality family time.
- Talk about school. This shows you think school is important. Ask your child about his or her classes. Encourage your child to come to you with any problems.
- Make a time and place for study. Set up a "quiet zone" in your home for homework and study. Try to keep down the noise and distractions while your child is working.
- Check your child's assignments. Review homework to be sure it is complete. Help your child if he or she needs it – but don't do the work for him or her.
- Review progress reports/report cards. Go over these with your child. Praise his or her efforts. Ask about areas where he or she may be having difficulty.

- Please be sure to read our newsletters and notices. These are sent home electronically every Friday and inform you about special events and other school news.

### **How Students Can Help**

- **Get Organized** – Come to class with all necessary books (including this agenda), three-ring binder, pencils, pens, calculator, notebooks, and an independent reading book. Write down assignments in your agenda. Keep your notebook neat and organized by subject.
- **Be Attentive in Class** – Stay focused on what is happening in the classroom. Take good notes and ask questions when you are confused about something (chances are, if you are confused, so are others).
- **Get Involved** – There are many activities at Portland Middle School. Get involved! It will greatly enhance your middle school experience.
- **Set Aside Quiet Time for Homework** – Block some time at home to do homework. If you establish a routine, you will discipline yourself to complete assignments.
- **Be Prepared for Class work and Homework** – Have all assignments and materials for class ready and available. All work should be neat, organized and complete. Assignments must include a proper heading. Take pride in your class work and homework.
- **Set Goals** – Decide on what you want to accomplish at Portland Middle School, and then develop a plan to achieve it. Remember a dream is only a dream until you write it down. Once it is written down it becomes a goal!
- **Never Quit** – Don't underestimate yourself. If you are having troubles with something, ask for help. We are here for you.
- **Follow the School Rules** – There is too much to do! You can't afford to hold yourself back. We can't allow you to hold others back.
- **Have Fun** – The intellectual, social and physical aspects of middle school can be very enjoyable, if you have the right attitude.

### **ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

All students will be offered an opportunity to purchase a standard student accident insurance policy at the beginning of each year. Students not covered by this policy who are injured during the year are responsible for all medical bills incurred.

### **ADMISSION / PLACEMENT (BOE Policies 5111, 5118, 5122)**

Each Building Principal will have the responsibility and the authority for assignment of each student to his or her class and, therefore, his or her teacher with the best interests of the child in mind. Principals will not take requests to place children with particular teachers. The parent(s) is/are encouraged to consult with their Principal or designee in the spring prior to classroom assignments concerning the child's learning style, specialties and difficulties, and particular needs, personal or educational. The parent(s) is/are also encouraged to discuss with the Building Principal the child's progress in the fall once classes are underway. However, the Principal will make the final determination in placing all children. Children who apply for initial admission to the district's schools by transfer from nonpublic schools or from schools outside the district will be placed at the grade they would have reached elsewhere pending observation and evaluation by classroom teachers, guidance personnel, and the school Principal. After such observations and evaluations have been completed, the Principal will determine the final grade placement of the children. Children who have attained the age of nineteen or older may be placed in an alternative school program or other suitable educational program if they cannot acquire a sufficient number of credits for graduation by age twenty-one. Students transferring from a school accredited by a state department of education will enroll at the grade level and with the course credits indicated by the records of the previous school. Students transferring from a school that is non-accredited or from a Home School will be accepted for enrollment at the grade level in which the student was enrolled, but the level of mastery and the quality of their previous class work must be validated against Portland Public School's performance standards and benchmarks. A student transferring from an accredited school must meet all graduation requirements set forth by the Portland Board of Education to receive a Portland High School diploma.

**AIDS CURRICULUM**  
**(BOE Policy 6142)**

It is the policy of the Board of Education to provide during the school day, planned, ongoing, systematic instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiencies Syndrome (AIDS). Parents who wish to have their child excused from such instruction shall communicate this request to the principal.

**ANIMALS IN THE CLASSROOM**  
**(BOE Policies 6163.3, 6163.32)**

Students must receive prior consent of the Principal before any animal is brought into the school. This Board of Education policy is to protect all the students in our school.

**Service Animals in Schools**

The Board of Education (Board) adopts this policy to ensure that individuals with disabilities are permitted to participate in and benefit from district programs, activities and services, and to ensure that the District does not discriminate on the basis of disability. Service animal means any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. A “service animal” per 28 C.F.R. 35.104, for purposes of this policy is any dog that has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual or other mental disability. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability or necessary to mitigate a disability. Federal regulation 28 C.F.R. 35.104 provides examples of types of work or tasks that would qualify. Service animals do not include any other species of animal, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, except that a miniature horse will be permitted for use as a service animal if reasonable modifications can be made after assessing the specific factors listed in 28 C.F.R. 35.136(i). Animals whose sole function is to provide emotional support, well-being, comfort, companionship, or therapeutic benefits, or to act as a crime deterrent, are not service animals for the purpose of this policy. The Board shall permit individuals with disabilities to use service animals in District buildings; on District property; and on vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the School District, upon request and submission of required documentation. As well as School/District sponsored activity.

**ASBESTOS CONTROL**  
**(BOE Policy 3516.12)**

Legislation requires all school buildings to be reevaluated to determine if asbestos is present and if it poses a significant health hazard to the building’s occupants. The District has on file plans showing the location of asbestos in each building and measures undertaken to comply with regulations to maintain a safe school environment. Requests to review these plans may be made in the school office.

**ATTENDANCE**  
**(BOE Policy 5113)**

Connecticut state law requires parents to make sure that their children between the ages of 5 to 18 attend school regularly. Daily attendance is a key factor in student success, thus any absence from school is an educational loss to the student. These rules are designed to minimize student absenteeism while providing students the opportunity to make up school work missed due to a legitimate absence. Absence means an excused absence, unexcused absence or an in-school suspension that is greater than or equal to one-half of a school day. A student is considered to be “in attendance” if present at his / her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school, such as a field trip, for at least half of the regular school day. A student serving an out-of-school suspension or an expulsion will always be considered absent. A child whose total number of absences at any time during a school year is equal to or greater than 10% of the total number of days that the student has been enrolled at the school during the school year is considered a “chronically absent child.” The child will be subject to review by the district and / or the school attendance team.

**Absence**

Every attempt should be made to confine necessary appointments to after school, weekends and vacation periods. When a parent determines that an absence is necessary, parents are requested to telephone the school between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence. If it is not possible to telephone the school on the

day of absence, the parent is requested to send a written excuse to the school on the date of the student's return. The student should submit the excuse directly to the office. Parents should contact the main office in order to take advantage of special services such as the collection of homework assignments if the student must be out for several days.

### **Excused Absence**

A student's absence from school shall be considered "excused" if a written documentation of the reason for such absence has been submitted with ten (10) school days of the student's return to school and meets the following criteria:

- A. For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered "excused" when the student's parent / guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate written documentation to school officials. Such documentation includes a signed note from the student's parent / guardian, a signed note from a school official that spoke in person with the parent / guardian regarding the absence, or a note confirming the absence by the school nurse or by a licensed medical professional, as appropriate. Documentation should explain the nature of and the reason for the absence as well as the length of the absence. Separate documentation must be submitted for each incidence of absenteeism.
- B. Students receive an excused absence for the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, when they are absent from school for the following reasons:
  - Student illness, verified by a licensed medical professional, regardless of the length of the absence.
  - Students' observance of a religious holiday.
  - Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family.
  - Court appearances which are mandated. (Documentation required)
  - The lack of transportation that is normally provided by the district other than the one the student attends.
  - Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by District administration and in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education Guidelines.
  - Additional ten days for children of active service members.

The responsibility for makeup of work lies with the student, not the teacher. Unless a student has an extended illness, all makeup work will be completed within five days after the student returns to school.

### **Unexcused Absence**

Unexcused absences are those which do not fall under any of the excused absences. Such absences may also be reflected in the student's quarterly progress reports. Absences which are the result of school or district disciplinary action are excluded from the definitions. Although the school will maintain records and keep parents informed within the limit of its capability, parents and students are expected to keep accurate attendance records and compare them to report cards issued quarterly. Parents are also encouraged to contact the teachers, school counselors and administrators to get help in verifying attendance and attendance records at any time during the year.

### **Release of Students from Schools/Early Dismissal**

Parents are asked not to request early dismissals, except in emergencies. Efforts should be made to schedule medical and dental appointments after school hours or on vacations. Under no circumstances may a student leave the school or school grounds during school hours without permission from his / her parents or guardians and school administration. In the event it is necessary for a student to be dismissed early, a parent or guardian should send a written request to the office. Telephone requests for early dismissal of a student shall be honored only if the caller can be positively identified as the student's parent or guardian. Children will be released only upon the request of the parent whom the court holds directly responsible for the child and who is identified as such in the school records, unless prior arrangements have been made with the school. The parent must sign the student out in the office. If someone other than a parent / guardian picks up the student, the person appearing in the school office must provide proper identification and authorization from the parent or guardian.

### **Tardiness**

Students who are not in the building by 7:45 a.m. are considered tardy and must report directly to the office. A student discovered on school grounds who has not signed in at the office will also be considered tardy. A student who is repeatedly tardy may be considered truant. Students may be subject to disciplinary action if the principal determines that tardiness is excessive.

### **Truancy**

A student age five to eighteen inclusive with four unexcused absences in one month or ten unexcused absences in a school year will be considered truant. Parents have the responsibility to assist school officials in remedying and preventing truancy. The Superintendent of Schools will file a written complaint with the Superior Court Juvenile Matters if the parent fails to cooperate with the school in trying to solve the student's truancy problem. General district wide truancy data will be posted in the state's annual profile reports.

### **Absences, Tardiness, and Participation in School Activities**

Students who are absent from school or arrive at school after 11:00 a.m. may not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities, or other school sponsored activities on that day. Students must remain in school for the entire day in order to participate in any activities. Exceptions to this procedure will be made by the administration in cases where extenuating circumstances prevail.

### **Vacations**

School policy strongly encourages the scheduling of family vacations and trips during times which coincide with school vacations. Student absences for reasons of a family vacation trip that takes place when school is in session may be considered "unexcused absences." Teachers may be unable to provide work which will adequately make-up for all a student should have learned while in school. Likewise, it is discouraging to students to miss school and have to maintain progress and make up work upon return. If a student is to miss school 5 or more days on a family vacation, the parent is asked to write a note to the principal explaining the reasons why the vacation had to be scheduled during school time. Make-up work will be possible under the usual make-up policies. However, assignments will not be given to students prior to the vacation period. Such work must be requested by the student after returning to school.

### **Late Openings**

The Board of Education has approved planned late openings for teacher/staff professional learning. Please consult the 2020-2021 calendar for the dates. On these designated days, our secondary schools begin at 9:45 A.M.

### **AUTOMATED PHONE MESSAGING SYSTEMS**

The Portland Public School system uses an automated phone messaging system which gives school administrators the ability to easily contact parents/guardians immediately of news that needs to be communicated. Administrators have the ability to send personally prerecorded messages to the entire school community, or they can tailor transmissions to smaller groups, when needed. The system allows the District to program up to three numbers for each parent/guardian of a District student. (home phone, work phone, cell). Such calls are permitted without prior consent if limited to notice of emergency items, such as weather-related closures, issues of student safety and health, and threats of imminent danger.

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board members are unpaid elected public officials with the responsibility for governance of the school district. In order to perform its duties in an open and public manner and in accordance with state law, the Portland Board of Education holds regular business meetings on the first and third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM in the Portland High School Media Center. Board of Education agendas and minutes are posted on the district website [www.portlandetschools.org](http://www.portlandetschools.org). Parents, students and other community members are encouraged to attend. Meetings of the Board follow a planned and posted agenda. At a certain time in the agenda the Board chairperson will recognize individuals who want to make a statement, not more than 5 minutes in length, or to express a viewpoint. The Board's main purpose is policy setting designed to improve student learning. Board members are interested in the public's opinion on district issues, which can assist them in formulating policy which reflects community values and expectations.

## BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

Board of Education policies are available on the district's website at [www.portlandetschools.org](http://www.portlandetschools.org). The policies are subject to modification by the Board at any time.

## BULLYING AND SCHOOL CLIMATE (BOE Policy 5131.911)

Bullying behavior by any student in the Portland Public Schools is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in the disciplinary action, including suspension and / or expulsion from school. "Bullying" means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyber bullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:

- A. Causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property,
- B. Places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. Creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. Infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or physical, mental, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics. *(The student against whom the activity is directed must be attending school in the same district as the students engaged in the activity.)*

Students who engage in any act of bullying, on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile devices owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

- A. Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim,
- B. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
- C. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Students and/or parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his / her rights of due process. Board policy and regulation #5131.911 set forth the prohibition and the related procedures in detail, and are available to students and their parents / guardians upon request and located on the district website

[www.portlandctschools.org](http://www.portlandctschools.org). The Annual Bullying Notice, Appendix A, is shared with parents/guardians for review and sign off on the district website under PARENT PORTAL - "Update Student Information."

### **BUS TRANSPORTATION AND CONDUCT (BOE Policies 5131.1 and 5131.11)**

The safe and efficient operation of school buses requires the cooperation of parents and students. Transportation to and from school is provided for Portland students living more than one mile from school (for students enrolled in kindergarten the distance is reduced to a ½ mile). Routes are subject to change and pickup/drop off times are estimates. Therefore, parents and students should be at the stop 5 minutes before the scheduled arrival. Walkers are not permitted to ride buses, and bus students may not change assigned buses except in rare instances approved by the principal and the bus company. If you need to have your child take a different bus on certain consistent days throughout the year, you can fill out an "Alternate Bus Request" form, which will be considered by the bus company. This request form must be completed by mid-July for it to be approved for the first day of school. Bus transportation is provided by M & J Bus Company at (860) 342-2217. Mrs. Debbie Johnson is the dispatcher for Portland. Riding to and from school on the bus is a privilege and each student is expected to respect the rights and safety of others on the bus. While the students are being transported, the bus driver is at all times in full charge of the bus and all students riding therein. All general rules of school conduct are applicable to bus transportation and any violation is subject to the normal disciplinary actions of the school as well as denial of bus privileges for a period of time. Three bus referrals for disciplinary reasons may result in suspension from riding the bus. Parents will be notified of bus referrals. Video cameras may be used on school buses in order to help assure a safe climate and maintain appropriate student behavior and enforce school rules and regulations.

#### **Bicycles**

Children may ride their bicycles to school, with parent's permission. While on school property they must "walk" their bikes. Children are advised to lock their bikes to one of the bike racks, since the school cannot be held financially responsible for bicycle damage or theft. State law requires anyone under the age of 16 to wear a helmet while riding a bicycle.

#### **Skateboards and Rollerblade Use**

Skateboards/rollerblades are prohibited on school property during school hours unless special permission is given by the building administrator for a specific activity. Use of skateboards/rollerblades on school property during non-school hours is at the user's risk.

### **CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION (BOE Policy 1312)**

If there is a question about a student's classes or work in school, it is best to first contact the person who is closest to the situation. In most cases this is the teacher. The proper channeling of complaints regarding instruction, discipline or learning materials is (1) teacher, (2) principal, (3) superintendent, (4) board of education.

#### **CHEATING / PLAGIARISM**

Cheating may be defined as any act engaged in by one or more students with the intention of deceiving through dishonest means such as copying, use of a cheat sheet, use of wireless devices or the deliberate use of the ideas, writings, work product, etc. of another person. Any student providing his/her work to another student, doing the assigned work of another student or providing plagiarized material to another student is also guilty of cheating. It is the school's responsibility to discourage and prevent cheating of any kind by providing the supervision and climate which will prevent such behavior. With this in mind, the following procedure will be followed for cheating on tests and quizzes and for other incidents including plagiarism in which a student cheats or aids another student to cheat on material required for the evaluation of his/her academic performance:

1. The student(s) will receive a failing grade for the material.
2. The teacher will notify the administration and the student's school counselor in writing. Referral to the counselor provides an opportunity to develop appropriate help for the students.
3. The teacher will notify the student's parents.
4. A student involved in more than one cheating incident will be subject to disciplinary actions up to and including suspension.

**CHILD ABUSE**  
**(BOE Policies 4118.16 & 5145.511)**

It is the policy of the Board of Education to require ALL EMPLOYEES of the Board of Education to report suspected abuse and/or neglect, non-accidental physical injury, imminent risk of serious harm or sexual assault of a student by a school employee. Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect, and staff receive yearly training in their use. Reporting of child abuse, neglect and sexual assault by a school employee is a responsibility which is taken seriously. If there is any doubt about reporting suspected abuse, neglect or a sexual assault, a report will be made. The school will work with the parents and appropriate social agencies in all cases.

The Portland Board of Education has adopted a uniform child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault response policy and reporting procedure in connection with the implementation of its sexual assault and abuse prevention and awareness program, as outlined in Policy 5145.511 Child Sexual Abuse and/or Sexual Assault Response Policy and Reporting Procedure. Upon Receipt of any report of child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault from any source, a school employee shall report such suspicion to the Safe School Climate Coordinator, Policy 4118.16, in addition to complying with his/her obligations under this Policy and the law regarding mandatory reporting of abuse, neglect and sexual assault.

**COMPUTER RESOURCES AND ACCEPTABLE USE**  
**FOR INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY**  
**(BOE Policy 6141.321)**

The Portland Public School District is committed to using technology consistently, responsibly, and effectively for teaching, learning, collaboration, communication, and productivity. The Portland Board of Education provides a technological infrastructure which includes access to hardware, software and the Internet as a means of promoting educational excellence through accessibility, innovation, and communication. The term “technological infrastructure” encompasses all Portland Public School District hardware, software, data, computing devices, storage media, servers, printers, access to the Internet and other internal and external networks and peripherals.

It is the understanding that all who utilize the Portland Public School District’s technological infrastructure will:

- Fully support the goals of the Portland Public School District in using technology consistently, responsibly, and effectively for teaching, learning, collaboration, communication, and productivity
- Uphold the Portland Public School District Student Responsible and Acceptable Use Guidelines for Instructional Technology
- Promote digital citizenship which ensures the safety and security of students, staff, facilities, and operations of the district
- Support the functionality of the district’s infrastructure
- Access only the devices authorized by the district

The Portland Public School District provides staff and students access to the technological infrastructure to enhance and promote 21st Century learning necessary in today’s world. As such, the Portland Public School District’s Responsible and Acceptable Use Guidelines are written to promote positive and effective digital citizenship among students and staff. Digital citizenship represents technology literacy as well as the ability to develop successful, technologically fluent individuals coexisting safely, ethically and with civility in an increasingly digital world. Positive and effective digital citizenship recognizes that information posted on the Internet is public and permanent and can have a long-term impact on an individual’s life and career. Expectations for student conduct are equal to that of in-person interactions. Access to the Portland Public School District’s technological infrastructure is a privilege, versus a right, and carries with it responsibilities for all involved. The online activities of minors are monitored by staff as well as system-wide technology protection measures. However, students must protect information and resources against theft, malicious damage, unauthorized access, tampering, and loss. Misuse of the Portland Public School District’s technological infrastructure means violation of this agreement and the Portland Public School District’s Responsible and Appropriate Use Policy and could result in disciplinary action. It is the view of the Portland Public School District that the education around digital citizenship and using appropriate behaviors with technology is a shared responsibility between students, school personnel and the parent or guardian of each student.

All students within the Portland Public School District agree to follow the outlined procedures and commit to the following Responsible Use Guidelines:

- I will use the Portland Public School network productively, safely, appropriately, and for school-related purposes. I will avoid using any technology resource either supplied by the district or myself in such a way that would disrupt the activities of other students and staff.
- I will responsibly use email and other means of technological communications (e.g. Twitter, blogs, wikis, podcasting, chat, instant-messaging, discussion boards, virtual learning environments, etc.) and represent myself in a responsible manner that provides for the well-being of others.
- I will give acknowledgement to others for their ideas and work.
- I will keep my personal information (including home/mobile phone number, mailing address, and user password) and that of others private.
- I will model digital citizenship through my usage and will immediately report inappropriate use of technology to my teacher or building principal.
- I understand that the Portland Public School administrators will use regulations and policies outlined in the Portland Public School District Responsible and Acceptable Use Policy to deem what conduct is inappropriate if such conduct is not specified in this agreement.
- I understand that the use of the Portland Public School District's technological infrastructure is a privilege and it is my responsibility to maintain the integrity of all equipment (e.g. devices, monitors, Internet accounts, cables, keyboards, printers, etc.)
- I understand that individuals involved with malicious use or misuse of the Portland Public School District's technological infrastructure which results in damage or loss of the property to the Portland Public Schools may be held liable.
- I understand and will abide by the above Responsible Use Guidelines. If I do not exercise digital citizenship and commit a violation, I understand that consequences of my actions could include suspension of computer privileges, disciplinary action, and/or referral to law enforcement. I understand that I can access the Portland Public School District Responsible and Acceptable Use Policy if I so choose.

### **Use of Personal Electronic Devices**

Users are responsible for the safety and use of their privately owned technological devices. If a privately owned technology device is stolen, lost, or damaged, a report should be made to the building principal, who will investigate the loss in a manner consistent with procedures for stolen or damaged personal property. Students, staff and parents should be aware that the Portland Board of Education is not liable for any privately owned technological device that is stolen, lost, or damaged while at school or during a school-sponsored activity. For that reason, students are advised not to share or loan their privately owned technological devices with other students.

Any act using a privately owned technological device that harms the Portland School District's technological infrastructure or otherwise interferes with or compromises the integrity of Portland School District's technology resources will be considered vandalism and will be subject to discipline and/or appropriate criminal or civil action.

### **CONDUCT**

#### **(BOE Policies 5131 & 5144)**

Students are responsible for conducting themselves properly in a responsible manner appropriate to their age and level of maturity. We believe that the life skills of self-discipline, judgment, social interest, the ability to make good choices, and a sense of responsibility are essential in enabling students to learn and to act effectively in life. To that end, our discipline policy strives to be a teaching policy, where problem solving strategies and restorative practices are taught to show students that there are different ways to act in any circumstance. The goal is for the student to be responsible enough to choose the appropriate strategy and then be accountable for its consequences. Expected behaviors are posted in all classrooms and areas of the school to help students with their decision making.

Student responsibilities for achieving a positive learning environment in school or school-related activities include:

1. Attending all classes, regularly and on time.
2. Being prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.

3. Being dressed appropriately.
4. Showing respect toward others
5. Behaving in a responsible manner.
6. Paying required fees and fines.
7. Abiding by the code of conduct.
8. Following all school rules, including safety rules, and rules pertaining to Internet safety.
9. Seeking change in school policies and regulations in an orderly and responsible manner, through appropriate channels.
10. Cooperating with staff investigations of disciplinary cases and volunteering information relating to a serious offense.

The district has authority over students during the regular school day and while going to and from school on district transportation. This jurisdiction includes any school-related activity, regardless of time or location, and any off campus school-related misconduct, regardless of time or location. Students who violate these rules will be subject to disciplinary action and shall be referred when appropriate to legal authorities for violation of the law.

### **Conduct off School Grounds**

Students may be disciplined for conduct off school grounds if such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process and violative of a publicized policy of the Board. In making a determination as to whether such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the Administration and the Board of Education may consider, but such consideration shall not be limited to, the following factors: (1) whether the incident occurred within close proximity of a school; (2) whether other students from the school were involved or whether there was any gang involvement; (3) whether the conduct involved violence, threats of violence, or the unlawful use of a weapon, as defined in section Conn. Gen. Stat. § 29-38, and whether any injuries occurred; and (4) whether the conduct involved the use of alcohol. In making a determination as to whether such conduct is seriously disruptive of the educational process, the Administration and/or the Board of Education may also consider whether such off-campus conduct involved the illegal use of drugs.

Students at school or school-related activities are prohibited from:

1. Striking or assaulting a student, members of the school staff or other persons.
2. Theft.
3. The use of obscene or profane language or gestures, the possession and / or display of obscenity or pornographic images or the unauthorized or inappropriate possession and / display of images, pictures or photographs depicting nudity.
4. Violation of smoking, dress, transportation regulations, or other regulations and / or policies governing student conduct.
5. Refusal to obey a member of the school staff, law enforcement authorities, or school volunteers, or disruptive classroom behavior.
6. Any act of harassment based on an individual's sex, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, disability, national origin or ancestry.
7. Refusal by a student to identify himself / herself to a staff member when asked, misidentification of oneself to such person(s), lying to school officials or otherwise engaging in dishonest behavior.
8. Inappropriate displays of public affection of a sexual nature and / or sexual activity on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity.
9. A walk-out from or sit-in within a classroom or school building or school grounds.
10. Blackmailing, threatening or intimidating school staff or students (or acting in a manner that could be construed to constitute blackmail, a threat, or intimidation, regardless of whether intended as a joke).
11. Possession of any weapon, weapon facsimile, deadly weapon, martial arts weapon, electronic defense weapon, pistol, knife, blackjack, bludgeon, box cutter, metal knuckles, pellet gun, air pistol, explosive device, firearm, whether loaded or unloaded, whether functional or not, or any other dangerous object or instrument. The possession and / or use of any object or device that has been converted or modified for use as a weapon.
12. Possession of any ammunition for any weapon described above in paragraph 11.
13. Unauthorized entrance into any school facility or portion of a school facility or aiding or abetting an unauthorized entrance.

14. Possession or ignition of any fireworks, combustible or other explosive materials, or ignition of any material causing a fire. Possession of any materials designed to be used in the ignition of combustible materials, including matches and lighters.
15. Unlawful possession, sale, distribution, use or consumption of tobacco, electronic nicotine delivery systems (e.g. e-cigarettes), vapor products, drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages (or any facsimile of tobacco, drugs, narcotics or alcoholic beverages, or any item represented to be tobacco, drugs or alcoholic beverages), including being under the influence of any such substances or aiding in the procurement of any such substances.
16. Sale, distribution, or consumption of substances contained in household items; including, but not limited to glue, paint, accelerants / propellants for aerosol canisters.
17. Unlawful possession of paraphernalia used or designed to be used in the consumption, sale or distribution of drugs, alcohol or tobacco.
18. The destruction of real, personal or school property, such as, cutting, defacing or otherwise damaging property in any way.
19. Accumulation of offenses such as school and class tardiness or failure to attend detention.
20. Trespassing on school grounds while on out-of-school suspension or expulsion.
21. Making false bomb threats or other threats to the safety of students, staff members, and / or other persons.
22. Defiance of school rules and the valid authority of teachers, supervisors, administrators, other staff members and / or law enforcement authorities.
23. Throwing snowballs, rocks, sticks and / or similar objects, except as specifically authorized by school staff.
24. Unauthorized and / or reckless and / or improper operation of a motor vehicle on school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity.
25. Leaving school grounds, school transportation or a school-sponsored activity without authorization.
26. Use of or copying of the academic work of another individual and presenting it as the student's own work, without proper attribution; or any other form of academic dishonesty, cheating or plagiarism.
27. Possession and / or use of a cellular telephone, radio, walkman, CD player, blackberry, personal data assistant, walkie talkie, Smartphone, mobile or handheld device, or similar electronic device, on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity in violation of Board policy and / or administrative regulations regulating the use of such devices.
28. Possession and / or use of a beeper or paging device on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity without the written permission of the principal or his / her designee.
29. Unauthorized use of any school computer, computer system, computer software, internet connection or similar school property or system, or the use of such property or system for inappropriate purposes.
30. Possession and / or use of a laser pointer, unless the student possesses the laser pointer temporarily for an educational purpose while under the direct supervision of a responsible adult.
31. Hazing.
32. Bullying, as defined by Board policy and regulation #5131.911 and #5131.914.
33. Cyber bullying, defined as any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.
34. Acting in any manner that creates a health and / or safety hazard for staff members, students, or the public, regardless of whether the conduct is intended as a joke.
35. Engaging in a plan to stage or create a violent situation for the purposes of recording it by electronic means; or recording by electronic means act of violence for purposes of later publication.
36. Using computer systems, including email, instant messaging, text messaging, blogging or the use of social networking websites, or other forms of electronic communications, to engage in any conduct prohibited by this policy.
37. Use of a privately owned electronic or technological device in violation of school rules, including the unauthorized recording (photographic or audio) of another individual without permission of the individual or a school staff member.
38. Engaging in teen dating violence, defined as any act of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, including stalking, harassing and threatening, that occurs between two students who are currently in or who have recently been in a dating relationship.
39. Any action prohibited by any Federal or State law.

40. Any other violation of school rules or regulations or a series of violations which makes the presence of the student in school seriously disruptive of the educational process and / or a danger to persons or property.

### **Detention**

Teachers are responsible for outlining classroom rules and procedures and will administer disciplinary action within reasonable limits whenever these rules and procedures are abused. Teachers may assign detention for tardiness, disruptive behavior, and violation of other class rules. Students will report to their teacher in his/her classroom for the detention assigned. After school detention scheduled by a teacher or administrator is to take precedence over any other student obligation including part-time jobs and athletics. The administration will assign detention for infractions of school rules.

### **Suspension**

The administration hopes that students will not put themselves in a situation which would result in suspension from school. Suspension from school is the least desirable but sometimes the only action that can be taken. Students and parents are advised to review Policy 5144, Student Discipline, is available on the district website [www.portlandtschool.org](http://www.portlandtschool.org). Parents will receive written notification and a telephone call in all cases of suspension.

### **Suspension and Participation in School Activities**

Any student who has been suspended from school will not be allowed to participate in and/or attend any school activities held on or off school campus. The exclusion from activities is for the duration of the suspension. Exclusion begins the day the suspension is assigned and ends at the start of the school day following the last day of suspension.

### **Dangerous Weapons and Instruments (BOE Policy 5144)**

The Board of Education determines that possession and/or use of a weapon, or a facsimile of a weapon, by a student is detrimental to the welfare and safety of the students and school personnel within the district. Possession and/or use of any dangerous instrument or deadly weapon in any school building, on school grounds, in any school vehicle, or at any school-sponsored activity is prohibited. Such weapons include but are not limited to any pistol, revolver, rifle, shotgun, air gun or spring gun; slingshot; bludgeon; brass knuckles or artificial knuckles of any kind; knives having a blade of greater than two inches, any knife the blades of which can be opened by a flick of a button or pressure on the handle, or any pocketknife where the blade is carried in a partially opened position; martial art weapons; destructive device; or facsimiles of firearms. The possession or use of any such weapon will require that the proceedings for the suspension and/or expulsion of the student involved will be initiated immediately by the principal. If the student is found to have possessed a firearm or other dangerous weapon as defined in C.G.S.53a-3 in violation of 29-35 or 53-206, in or on the real property of a school or at any school activity as defined in C.G.S. 10-233a, he/she must be expelled for one calendar year. The Board of Education or hearing board may modify the period of expulsion on a case by case basis. All legal restrictions and requirements will be adhered to pertaining to special education students. The Board shall consider a student's conduct off school grounds that is seriously disruptive of the educational process or is in violation of publicized policies of the Board as grounds for expulsion.

### **Alcohol Use, Drugs, and Tobacco (including Performance Enhancing Substances) (BOE Policy 5131.6)**

Pursuant to the goal of the Board of Education (Board) to maintain a drug, tobacco and alcohol-free school district, schools shall take positive action through education, counseling, parental involvement, and medical and police referral in handling incidents in the schools involving possession, sale, and/or use of behavior affecting substances. These substances shall include but not be limited to alcohol and controlled substances as defined in the Penal Code of the State of Connecticut. Alcohol, tobacco, stimulants, street drugs, including but not limited to marijuana, heroin and cocaine; anabolic steroids, hormones and analogues, diuretics and other performance enhancing substances; including supplements and Creatine, are addressed by this policy and accompanying administrative regulations. Possessing, using, or transmitting any substance which is represented to be or looks like a narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana,

alcoholic beverage, stimulant, depressant, or intoxicant of any kind, including such substances that contain chemicals which produce the same effect of illegal substances including but not limited to Spice and K2 and bath salts are addressed by this policy. Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action which includes, but is not limited to, suspension or expulsion, and/or a program recommended by the Student Support Team. Student athletes who violate this policy, participating in CIAC-controlled activities shall also be declared ineligible for such activities in accordance with CIAC policy and regulation. Any disciplinary actions imposed will ensure that similar violations will be treated consistently. The Superintendent shall propose and the Board of Education shall approve procedures and regulations to ensure that any student violating this policy is subjected to disciplinary action, and that any disciplinary actions imposed for similar violations are treated consistently.

## **CONNECTICUT SEAL OF BILITERACY**

### **(BOE Policy 6146 Appendix)**

The District will award the Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy (Seal of Biliteracy) to recognize high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in English and one or more languages. The Board of Education will affix the Seal of Biliteracy on a student's diploma utilizing the criteria established by the State Board of Education. Foreign language is defined as a world language other than English and includes American Sign Language and any other language spoken by a federally recognized Native American tribe.

Dissemination of Program Information: All students shall receive information on the Seal of Biliteracy upon first entering middle school and again at the entry to high school.

## **COUNSELING SERVICES**

School counselors work with students, staff, families and members of the community as part of the educational program. Counselors address the academic, career, and personal/social developmental needs of all students through a Comprehensive School Counseling program and individual Student Success Plans for grades 6-12.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS BY STUDENTS**

### **(BOE Policy 1140)**

Printed materials may be distributed to parents by students as an inexpensive means of mass communications providing: 1. The materials relate to the school, community, local recreational or civic activities. 2. The materials do not relate to any religious belief or activity, or promote private gain, or political position. 3. The materials do not promote any political party or candidate. Except for requests from parent-teacher organizations, board appointed citizens' ad hoc advisory committees, or other school-connected organizations, requests from groups or individuals to have students distribute materials to parents or other citizens of the community will be referred to the superintendent of schools for approval. On issues to be decided at referenda, information distributed by school personnel or Board of Education members, whether through students or otherwise, may only provide information on the time, date, and location of the referenda and may not advocate positions on the referenda questions.

## **DRESS / GROOMING**

### **(BOE Policy 5132)**

The community and the general public often judge the quality of education by the behavior, appearance and activities of its student body. The responsibility of student dress and general appearance rests with the individual student and parent. However, the Board of Education requires students to attend school in appropriate dress that meets health and safety standards and does not interfere with the learning process or contradict the educational mission of the school. The Board requires students to wear appropriate protective gear in certain classes when necessary. The Board prohibits the wearing of attire bearing any expression or insignias which are obscene or libelous, or which advocate racial or religious prejudice, or which display alcohol, sexual or drug content. The Board prohibits the wearing of various items that interfere with the safe and healthy environment of the school. The Board prohibits the wearing of various items that interfere with the educational process. Any exception to the above must be with specific written prior approval of the school principal or Superintendent of Schools. The Board directs consistent implementation of the above dress codes

throughout all its District buildings that house children throughout their academic career. The administration shall have the authority to require a student to change his/her attire should it be deemed inappropriate according to the above guidelines. The intent of this policy is to encourage all concerned to dress, groom, and conduct themselves in keeping with an atmosphere which reflects a sensitivity to and respect for self and others and the overall functions of the school.

### **Physical Education**

Students must dress appropriately for P.E. classes. Proper attire consists of a T-shirt, sneakers, socks, and gym shorts. Sneakers must have light-colored soles or be labeled “non-marking” by the manufacturer in order to protect the gym floor. If students cannot participate in the physical education program, a physician’s note, in advance, will be required to excuse them.

### **Gang Activity (BOE Policy 5131.9)**

The Board of Education strongly believes that a safe and orderly environment is essential for effective teaching and learning to occur within the school setting. To ensure a safe and orderly school environment, the Board prohibits gang activity on school property, at school-sponsored or school-related activities, while traveling to or from school or school activities, or on school vehicles. Connecticut Statute (29-7n) defines “gang” to mean a group of juveniles or youth who, acting in concert with each other, or with adults, engage in illegal activities. In addition, the Board defines “gang” as a group that identifies itself through the use of a name, unique appearance, or language, including hand signs, the claiming of geographical territory, or the espousing of a distinctive belief system that frequently results in criminal activity. By this policy, the Board prohibits gangs and gang activities at school activities and on school premises. Incidents involving initiations, hazing, intimidation and/or related activities which are likely to cause bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to students are prohibited.

No student on or about District property or at any District activity:

1. Shall wear, possess, use, distribute, display or sell any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, sign, or other things which are evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang;
2. Shall commit any act or omission, or use any speech, either verbal or nonverbal (gestures, handshakes, etc.) showing membership or affiliation in a gang;
3. Shall use any speech or commit any act or omission in furtherance of the interests of any gang or gang activity, including, but not limited to:
  - a. Soliciting others for membership in any gang;
  - b. Requesting any person to pay protection or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person;
  - c. Committing any other illegal act or other violation of school district policies;
  - d. Tagging, or otherwise defacing school or personal property with gang or gang-related symbols or slogans;
  - e. Inciting other students to act with physical violence upon any other person.

Students violating this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension and/or recommendation for expulsion.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL**

In the event that school is postponed or cancelled for weather or emergencies, announcements will be made over local radio and television stations. The District also utilizes an automated messaging system “School Messenger” to communicate closings and delays. Announcements will also be made on local radio and television stations including Channel 3, 8 and 30 and WMRD (1150 AM), and WTIC (1080 AM, 96.5 FM).

### **Late Opening of School**

The Board of Education has approved planned late openings for teacher/staff professional learning. Please consult the 2020-2021 calendar for the dates. On these designated days, (as well as our unscheduled days due to weather conditions) Middle School begins at 9:45 A.M.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/NON-DISCRIMINATION**

### **(BOE Policies 5145 & 5145.4)**

Each student is encouraged to develop and achieve individual educational goals. The district will provide every student with equal educational opportunities regardless of race, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, or disability. No student will be excluded on such basis from participating in or having access to any course offerings, student athletics, counseling services, employment assistance, extracurricular activities or other school resources. Program and activities shall be accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities as prescribed by law. The Director of Student Services is the designated district compliance officer, who will coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

## **EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION**

### **(BOE Policy 6144.1)**

A student will be exempted from instruction on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Bilingual Education, or Family Life and Sex Education upon receipt of a written request for such exemption from his/her parent or guardian. In addition, a student will be excused from participating in, or observing animal dissections as part of classroom instruction upon a written request from the student's parent or guardian. The student must complete an alternate assignment determined by the school.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Clubs and activities are sponsored in order to give students further opportunities to explore and develop their interests and abilities. Clubs and activities may be organized when warranted. Extra-curricular participation is a privilege for students and not a right. The prerequisites are listed below.

1. When participating in or attending school sponsored extracurricular events, to behave as a representative of the district and hold himself/herself to the highest standards of conduct, demeanor and sportsmanship and accept responsibility for his/her actions.
2. To be in regular attendance at school and in classes.
3. To contribute to an orderly, learning centered environment and to show due respect for other persons and for property.
4. To adhere to all behavioral expectations as listed under student discipline and refrain from any school prohibited conduct.

## **GYMNASIUM ACTIVITIES**

The following guidelines are established for conduct while attending activities in the gymnasium:

1. No food, gum, candy, drinks, etc. will be allowed in the gym.
2. Once students leave the gymnasium, they will not be allowed to re-enter.
3. Students are expected to remain in the bleachers and not run around the gym.
4. **Good behavior and good sportsmanship are absolutely essential.** No booing, taunting, or yelling derogatory comments will be allowed.
5. Students are not allowed in the corridors. Lavatories may be used with permission from a staff member or site supervisor.
6. Students not adhering to these guidelines will be asked to leave.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

### **(BOE Policy 6153)**

Educational trips are considered a vital part of the curriculum. All field trips are considered school activities and are subject to all the policies of the Portland Board of Education and the rules and regulations established within the district. In the event of illness or a disciplinary problem with a student on the trip, the parent of the student assumes full responsibility. If called by the advisor, it is the responsibility of the parent to come and get the student. The parent's signature on the "Trip Permission Slip" is an acceptance on the parent's part to comply in full with this regulation.

## **FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS**

### **(BOE Policy 6161.21)**

Students who have a financial obligation to a school (i.e. lost book fees) may not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities until their obligation has been cleared. Students who have overdue library obligations for a period of more than one marking quarter are prohibited from taking out additional library materials.

#### **Textbooks**

The expectation is that students will be careful with their textbooks, library books, Chromebooks, and other educational materials.. Textbooks that are taken home for homework assignments need to be covered. Board of Education policy requires that students pay for lost or damaged materials.

*The following schedule will be followed for determining the cost of book replacements:*

<b>If Purchased Within</b>	<b>Charge</b>
Current Year or 1 year old	Full Price
2 years old	90%
3 years old	80%
4 years old	70%
5 years old	60%
6 years old or older	50%

#### **Charging in the Cafeteria**

### **(BOE Policy 3542.43)**

The District strongly discourages meal charging, but understands that an occasional emergency may exist. Therefore, the BOE has approved a system to allow a student to charge a meal.

1. All charges must be paid within 10 days.
  - a. Students may charge regular meals up to \$25.00
  - b. After \$25.00, the student will be offered an alternate meal.
2. Additionally, parents will receive a weekly email notification when their child's balance reaches \$5.00.
3. Parents of students who amass a balance of \$25 will be contacted by the school administrator.

## **FIRST AID/EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE**

### **(BOE Policy 5141.27)**

#### **Use of Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs)**

In order to assist individuals who may experience cardiac arrest on school property, the Portland Board of Education has acquired external defibrillators for use in school buildings. It is the policy of the Board of Education to support the use of these automatic external defibrillators by trained personnel on school property. The Superintendent or School District Head Nurse shall be responsible for developing administrative regulations in furtherance of the Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) policy, in conformity with the provisions of applicable statutes and regulations.

## **FOOD AND BEVERAGE**

### **STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS**

#### **(BOE POLICY 5141.25)**

Food and beverage must be consumed in the cafeteria. Student possession of food or beverage containers, other than water, in classrooms, other common areas, and hallways is prohibited. The Portland Public Schools has adopted protocols and procedures to provide a safer school environment for students with life threatening food allergies and glycogen storage disease. While the school district cannot guarantee the elimination of all allergens from the school environment, adoption of the following procedures will help to reduce the possibility of a child's exposure to known allergens. *Please see BOE Policy 5141.25 (Policy/Regulation/Appendix)* for details regarding this very important topic.

#### **School Breakfast and Lunch Program**

### **(BOE Policy 3542.31)**

The Sodexho-Marriott Company provides the breakfast and lunch programs for the Portland Schools. Breakfast is available each morning for \$1.50. This includes both hot items such as waffles, cold items and juice or milk. A hot lunch, including a half-pint of milk, may be purchased each day for \$3.20 (grades 7-12).

For those students who bring their lunch from home, milk (\$0.60) or juice may be purchased. Children can also purchase a variety of snacks ranging in cost from \$.50-1.00 each.

Your child may qualify for either free meals or reduced price meals. The reduced price is 30 cents for breakfast and 40 cents for lunch. An application for the federally subsidized free or reduced lunch program can be found on the district website [www.portlandcityschools.org](http://www.portlandcityschools.org) under the PARENT portal link. If you have any questions about the lunch program, you can contact the lunch program director at Portland High School at (860) 262-7330.

### **Pay for School Meals Online**

Portland's Food Service is excited to offer MySchoolBucks®! This online payment service provides a quick and easy way to add money to your child's school meal account using a credit/debit card or electronic check.

MySchoolBucks provides:

- Convenience – Available 24/7 on the web or with the Mobile App for your iPhone, Android or Windows phone.
- Efficiency – Make payments for your children, even if they attend different schools. Eliminate the need to take money to school.
- Control – Set low balance alerts, view account activity, recurring/automatic payments & more.

Enrollment is easy!

1. Go to [www.MySchoolBucks.com](http://www.MySchoolBucks.com) and register for a free account.
2. You will receive a confirmation email with a link to activate your account.
3. Add your children using the school name and either their birthdate or student ID.
4. Make a payment to your account with your credit/debit card or electronic check. *A program fee of \$1.95 will apply. You will have the opportunity to review any fees and cancel if you choose, before you are charged.*

## **GRADING AND REPORT CARDS (BOE Policies 5121, 5124)**

The Board of Education believes that good communication between parent and teacher is important in the educational process. With this in mind, the Board of Education believes that the reporting contacts between parent and teacher should be varied and frequent. All forms and methods of communications, such as parent-teacher conferences, mail, email, telephone, and school visitation by parents will be utilized. The progress report should reflect the educational growth of the student in relationship to the student's ability, attitudes, interests, conduct or citizenship, and achievement. The school year is divided into academic terms and report cards are issued at the end of each term. Of course, teachers may notify parents at any time of the year regarding a student's progress. Formal parent/teacher conferences are held in November and March of every school year. However, a conference may be requested by either a teacher or a parent at any time. Teachers are available at any time during the year to discuss a child's academic or social progress. They maintain a sampling of the student's work throughout the year, and these items can often be the best indicators of the progress made during the year. Although we have designed a detailed progress report card, a phone call to or conference with your child's teacher is usually very informative. We encourage regular communications with any of your child's teachers to monitor his/her progress. If you have a concern with your child and his/her teacher, discuss it first with the teacher. If this does not produce a mutually agreed upon plan toward resolving the situation, the parent may contact the principal. In the office we maintain a cumulative folder containing school records for each child. In this folder are report cards, standardized test results, and other documents that can be informative for the student's future educators. This folder is passed from one school to the next as your child is promoted.

### **Grading System**

A Parent Portal allows families daily access to academic performance. \*Please contact the school if you cannot access grades.

**Report cards are issued four times a year.**

**Marking Term 1: 9/1-11/5**

**Marking Term 2: 11/6-1/26**

**Marking Term 3: 1/27-4/5**

**Marking Term 4: 4/6-6/11**

Additionally, parents are encouraged to contact teachers at any time of the year regarding a student's progress.

#### **GRADING**

97 -100 = A+	73 – 76 = C
93 - 96 = A	70 – 72 = C-
90 - 92 = A-	67 – 69 = D+
87 - 89 = B+	63 – 66 = D
83 - 86 = B	60 – 62 = D-
80 - 82 = B-	Below 60 = F
77 - 79 = C+	Incomplete = I    Withdrawal = W

Students achieve grades according to a numerical system. Grades earned range from 0 to 100. Students who earn grades below 60 have failed for the quarter. **Students who fail two or more academic classes for the year may be required to attend and pass summer school to be promoted to the next grade level.** Incompletes are assigned to students who are unable to complete their school work due to an extended illness or any other reason approved by the principal. Incomplete grades must be made up within 15 days of the close of the marking period. Failure to meet this deadline results in an “F” being assigned as the Final Grade.

#### **HONOR ROLL**

To be placed on the Honor Roll, a student must earn A's and B's in all courses for the marking period. All A's earns **HIGH HONORS!**

#### **Statewide Proficiency/Mastery Examinations (BOE Policy 6146.2)**

Annually, unless exempted according to federal and/or state criteria, each student, in grades three through eight inclusive shall take a mastery examination (measuring whether or not a student has mastered essential grade level skills in reading, writing and mathematics). Students enrolled in grade eleven shall annually take a nationally recognized college readiness assessment approved by the State Board of Education that measures essential and grade appropriate skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Students in grades five, eight, and ten shall annually take a statewide mastery examination in science. The State Board of Education shall approve the provision and administration of all mastery examinations. All examinations shall take place during the regular school day. Special education students shall participate in mastery testing except in the rare case when their Planning and Placement Team determines that participation would be inappropriate and recommends the use of an alternative assessment as specified by the State Board of Education. Students with significant cognitive disabilities in grades 3 through 8 and 11 shall be assessed in English/language arts and mathematics with the Connecticut Alternate Assessment. Students with significant cognitive disabilities shall be assessed with the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist in grades five, eight and ten. The mastery examination test is one of the measures to be used to determine if students have met the identified standards.

#### **GREEN CLEANING PROGRAM (BOE Policy 3542.2)**

Cleaning chemicals can negatively impact indoor air quality and cause harm to the occupants of a school building. Therefore, the purpose of this policy is to encourage and promote the principles of green cleaning throughout the Portland Public Schools, in compliance with applicable statutes. The Board of Education encourages and supports efforts to implement green cleaning in all District schools. For additional information, please contact Paul Bengston, Director of Buildings and Grounds at 860-342-3428.

#### **HARASSMENT STATEMENT (BOE Policy 5145.4)**

Every child has the right to feel safe, valued and comfortable in school. No one else's behavior should ever make children feel afraid or embarrassed because of their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any disability they may have. The District prohibits harassment of any kind. Students are expected to treat other students and district employees with courtesy and respect; to avoid any behaviors known to be offensive; and to stop those behaviors when asked or told to stop. Parents are urged to reinforce with their child(ren) that if he/she is harassed or sees harassment happening to someone else that he/she should report the behavior to a teacher or the principal. To maintain a productive and positive learning environment, the Board of Education will make every attempt to halt any harassment of which they become aware by calling attention to this policy or by direct disciplinary action, if necessary.

### **HEALTH SERVICES (BOE Policies 5141-5141.7)**

Before starting school state law requires all students to have full records of immunizations. CT State Statute #10-191 requires that all students in grades K, 6, and 10 have a physical examination with the required immunizations or documentation authorizing exemption of the immunizations. Parents are encouraged to have the physical examination done by the family physician. A registered nurse (and/or LPN) is on call during the school day in case of serious illness or injury and to administer medication. Medication is administered in school only after the proper form has been filled out by the prescribing physicians. These forms are available in the nurse's office.

#### **Administering Medication (BOE Policy 5141.21)**

Students who have a legitimate need to bring prescription drugs to school are required to register this information in the nurse's office. This is an extensive policy recently revised by the Board of Education and all parents, guardians and caregivers are advised to read it carefully.

**Applying Sunscreen** *Public Act No. 19-60: An Act Allowing Students to Apply Sunscreen Prior to Engaging In Outdoor Activities*, amended Section 10-212a of the Connecticut General Statutes to allow any student who is six years of age or older to possess and self-apply an over-the-counter sunscreen product while in school prior to engaging in any outdoor activity, with only a written authorization signed by the student's parent or guardian. For students who are younger than six years of age all three of the following requirements pursuant to Section 10-212a-4 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies for self-administration of medication continue to apply:

1. an authorized prescriber provides a written medication order including the recommendation for self-administration;
2. a parent or guardian provides written authorization for self-administration of medications; and
3. the school nurse has assessed the student's competency for self-administration in the school setting and deemed it to be safe and appropriate.

#### **Students with Special Health Care Needs (BOE Policy 5141.25)**

The Portland Public Schools recognize that food allergies and glycogen storage disease may be life-threatening. For this reason, the district is committed to developing strategies and practices to minimize the risk of accidental exposure to life-threatening food allergens and to ensure prompt and effective medical response should a child suffer an allergic reaction while at school. Individualized health care plans (IHCP) shall be implemented for each student determined to have a life threatening food allergy. The district is committed to appropriately managing and supporting students with food allergies and glycogen storage disease. The district further recognizes the importance of collaborating with parents and appropriate medical staff in developing such practices and encourages strategies to enable the student to become increasingly proactive in the care and management of his/her food allergy and/or glycogen storage disease, as developmentally appropriate. ***Please see BOE Policy 5141.25 (Policy/Regulation/ Appendix [below]) for details regarding this very important topic.***

#### **BOE Policy 5141.25 Appendix 1 Students with Special Health Care Needs**

## **Food Safety Guidelines**

Products containing nut or nut products shall not be used in any class for instructional purpose. All surfaces must be cleaned with appropriate cleaners after the consumption or handling of food (meals, snacks, treats).

### **Universal Practices (adults):**

- Food containers must be closed in all common areas. Locations include lockers, libraries, hallways, auditorium, main offices, and gym.
- Food should be consumed in the Staff Room or in classrooms (see below for more information about Allergy Classrooms) if necessary.
- Coffee or creamer with nut flavoring cannot be consumed in the class of a nut allergy or in any common area.
- Food that contains the child's known allergen or has been manufactured in a facility with known allergens cannot be brought into or consumed in any Nut-Free classroom. The "[Safe Snack Guide](#)" is highly recommended in selecting snacks (This is a live document and should not be printed. Only snacks with an "8" or a checkmark are approved.)
- Hands should be washed with soap and water after consuming any food containing known allergens of students in the school- hand Sanitizer does not remove nut oil.
- All adults will participate in the anaphylaxis presentation by the nurse.
- All adults will be offered the opportunity to be trained in the use of the epipen.
- A list of students with medical alerts will be provided to teachers by the nurse.
- A list of medical alerts and these guidelines will be provided by the teacher to any adults substituting in their classroom.
- These guidelines will be provided by the office staff to any adults substituting in the building.
- Epipens will be placed around the school with administration instructions, names of students with allergies and information about the signs of anaphylaxis.
- Food cannot be consumed on the bus.

### **Universal Practices (students):**

- Food will not be used in celebrations, for example birthdays, unless it is provided by Sodexo.
- Food can only be opened and/or consumed in the cafeteria or in classrooms during snack time.
- If a classroom is used for an after-school activity and snacks are consumed, the activity must not take place in a "Nut-Free" classroom.
- Food cannot be consumed on the bus.

### **Allergy Classrooms Practices (students):**

- These are in addition to the universal practices listed above.
- Any food provided in an Allergy Classroom must be cleared by a nurse if not provided by food service.
- Food consumed in the classroom must not contain the child's known allergen. This also includes food that has been manufactured in a facility with known allergens. "[Safe Snack Guide](#)" is highly recommended to assist families in selecting snacks. Only snacks with an "8" or a check mark are approved.

### **Allergy Classrooms Practices (adults):**

- These are in addition to the universal practices listed above.
- Food consumed in the classroom when students are present must not contain known allergens for any child that will be in the room at any point during the day. Using the "[Safe Snack Guide](#)" is highly recommended.
- If food is consumed when students are not present, it must be consumed at the teacher's desk and the desk must be cleaned using district-provided cleaning materials.

## **Portland School District Concussion Management (BOE Policy 5141.7)**

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury. Concussion occurs when normal brain functioning is disrupted by a blow or jolt to the head. Recovery from concussions will vary. Avoiding re-injury and overexertion until fully recovered are the cornerstones of proper concussion management. While Portland staff will exercise reasonable care to protect students, head injuries may still occur. Physical education teachers, coaches, nurses, and other appropriate staff will receive training to recognize the signs, symptoms, and behaviors consistent with a concussion. Any student exhibiting those signs, symptoms or behaviors while participating in a

school-sponsored class, extracurricular activity, or interscholastic athletic activity shall be removed from the game or activity and be evaluated as soon as possible by an appropriate health care professional. The professional will recommend evaluation by MD or medical facility depending on severity of symptoms. The coach, school nurse, or appropriate school representative will notify the student's parents or guardians and recommend appropriate monitoring to parents or guardians.

**HOMELESS STUDENTS (McKinney-Vento Act)  
(BOE Policy 5118.1)**

Homeless students, as defined by federal and state legislation, will have all programs, services, and transportation that other students enjoy and may continue to attend the school of origin. The local liaison for homeless children is the Director of Student Services.

**HOMEWORK  
(BOE POLICY 6154)**

**General Statement**

We believe that there is a positive correlation between student performance and the assignment of homework. Homework should be viewed as an extension of the classroom. Therefore, assignments should consist primarily of practice and review lessons already taught or of simple introductions to materials about to be covered.

**Preparation of Classwork and Homework**

At the beginning of the school year and/or marking period, teachers will provide students with expectations for class work and homework. These expectations will include, but are not limited to:

1. Proper headings for papers.
2. Whether written assignments will be accepted in pen or pencil.
3. Appropriate use of a computer for assignments.

**Make-Up Work/Extra Help**

All students should feel free and are encouraged to go to their teachers for extra help. The entire faculty is available by appointment and is willing to spend time after school in an effort to help their students. In addition, Homework Club is often available Tuesday- Thursday from 2:15-3:45 PM. Students may sign up in the main office. Students who are absent from school are required to make up all the work that is missed. They should contact the teacher on the first day back at school to ask for missing assignments and a timeframe for completing the work. The teacher is not expected to continually remind students about missing assignments. **For students who are absent three or more consecutive days, homework requests can be made by calling the main office.** Parents who opt to withdraw students for vacations on school days accept responsibility for missed class work, lessons taught, and all incomplete learning.

**INSURANCE**

School insurance is made available to families through a specific program. Brochures are distributed to all students at the beginning of each academic year. While the program is not mandatory, it is suggested that parents take advantage of the opportunity to provide adequate protection for their children while in school. Any such arrangement is contractual between the parent and insurance carriers and the Portland Public School assumes no liability from disputes arising from such contract.

**LIBRARY/MEDIA SERVICES**

A large variety of services and resources are available in the Library/Media Center. Through promoting reading and literature appreciation, teaching information literacy skills, and fostering critical thinking and independent learning, the library media program contributes to student success and the support of lifelong learning. The Library Media Specialist teaches information literacy skills as the basis for enabling students to become independent users of information. Students visit the library regularly for classes and free exploration of library books and magazines. Older students learn how to access Destiny as a means for locating library materials and managing their library checkouts. Many special events, such as book fairs and author visits are

planned in the library through the year. The library contains a large current collection which supports and enriches the curriculum as well as students' interests. Our libraries often carry parental resources, as well.

### **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) STUDENTS (BOE Policy 6141.311)**

The Board of Education recognizes the need to provide equal educational opportunities for all students in the District. Therefore, if the inability to speak and understand the English excludes a student from effective participation in the District's educational programs, the District shall take appropriate action to rectify the English language deficiency in order to provide the student with equal access to its programs. Students in a language minority (LM) or who have limited English Proficiency (LEP) will be identified, assessed and provided appropriate services. No child will be admitted to or excluded from any program based solely on surname or LM status. Parents of Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students participating in a language instructional program will be notified within 30 days of their child's placement in the program. The notification will include an explanation of why, a description of the program, and the parent's rights to remove their child from the LEP program. In addition, the notification will explain how the program will help the child to develop academically, learn English and achieve the standards necessary for promotion. Students not meeting the English mastery standard or demonstrating limited progress will be provided with additional language support services which may include, but are not limited to, English as a Second Language program, sheltered English programs, English Immersion programs, summer school, after-school assistance, homework assistance and tutoring. Students after 30 months in a bilingual program will not be offered additional bilingual education.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

All articles of any description that are found are to be turned in to the office. Students who have lost any items should report the loss to the office.

### **MIGRANT STUDENTS (BOE Policy 6141.312)**

The District has a program to address the needs of migrant students. A full range of services will be provided to migrant students including applicable Title I programs, special education, gifted education, vocational education, language programs, counseling programs and elective classes. Parents / guardians of migrant students will be involved in and regularly consulted about the development, implementation, operation and evaluation of the migrant program.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT /COMMUNICATION (BOE Policy 1110.1)**

Considerable experience and related evidence indicates that meaningful involvement of parents, guardians, and other caregivers in the schooling of children improves the quality of education significantly. The Board of Education believes that closer connections of parents and others responsible for the home care of the children with our schools can result in enhanced academic performance, improved behavior, and reduced absenteeism. Therefore, all parents, guardians, and caregivers of students enrolled in our district are encouraged to take an active role in the education of their children.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

The school's insurance policy does not cover loss or damage to property owned by students or parents. This also applies to property entrusted to us for storage or safekeeping such as sports equipment, musical instruments, etc. The legal principle that applies is that the school is a public place, like a restaurant. If personal property is lost, it is the person's own responsibility. Therefore, leaving items for storage at the school is done so at one's own risk. Cell phones, MP3 players, toys and gadgets that interfere with learning will be taken and given to the main office until the end of the school day. If said object is taken away again, a parent meeting and pick up of the object will be required.

## **PESTICIDE APPLICATIONS**

### **(BOE Policy 3524.1)**

Only certified pesticide applicators shall be used in schools for any non-emergency pesticide use in school buildings or on school grounds. Pesticide applications are limited to non-school hours and when activities are not taking place. Areas to receive pesticide application will be posted and a written record of all pesticide applications will be maintained for five years. Parents/guardians and staff who want to receive advance notice of all pesticide use will be listed on a registry and such notice will be provided as required by law. Parents/guardians who want to be notified prior to pesticide applications inside their child(ren)'s school assignment area may contact the maintenance supervisor.

## **PROMOTION, ACCELERATION, RETENTION**

### **(BOE Policy 5123)**

The Board of Education is dedicated to the total and continuous development of each student enrolled in its schools. The administration and professional staff shall establish a system of grading and reporting academic achievement to students and their parents and guardians. The system shall also determine when promotion and graduation requirements are met. The decision to promote a student to the next grade level shall be based on the following criteria: successful completion of the curriculum, attendance, performance on the statewide testing program (SBAC) and on other standardized tests, maturity, academic potential, student aptitude, social reason not related to academic performance. The District shall provide alternatives to promotion such as, but not limited to transitional programs and may require students whose academic performance jeopardizes their promotion or graduation to attend after-school, summer school or other programs the district offers that are designed to help them. The Board of Education shall approve the grading and reporting systems as developed by the administration and faculty upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools. The Board expects students to progress through each grade usually within one school year. To accomplish this, instruction should accommodate individual students and include strategies for addressing academic deficiencies. Students shall progress through the grade levels by demonstrating growth in learning and meeting grade-level standards of expected student achievement. When high academic achievement is evident, the principal or his/her designee may approve a student for acceleration into a higher grade level. The student's social and emotional growth shall be taken into consideration in making a determination to accelerate a student. Schools shall identify students in danger of failing and being at risk for retention. Prior to deciding on retention for a student not mastering the appropriate skills, the district may require the students to attend one or more alternatives for remedial assistance. In all cases of promotion or retention, the parent/guardian is to be fully involved and informed throughout the promotion/retention decision making process. Parents will be notified as early as possible that retention is being considered. The principal shall be responsible for making the final decision as to retention and assignment.

## **PSYCHOTROPIC DRUG USE**

### **(BOE Policy 5141.231 AND 4118.234)**

School personnel are prohibited from recommending the use of psychotropic drugs for any student enrolled within the school system. School nurses, nurse practitioners, district medical advisor, school psychologists, school social workers and school counselors, may recommend that a student be evaluated by an appropriate medical practitioner when there are behaviors or concerns that may be indicative of medication considerations. Further, the District is prohibited from requiring a child to get a prescription before he/she may attend school, be evaluated to determine eligibility for special education or receive special education.

The Planning and Placement Team (PPT) has the authority and responsibility to recommend a medical evaluation as part of an initial evaluation or reevaluation as needed to determine a child's eligibility for special education and related services, or educational needs for a child's individualized education program (IEP). As required, the District may seek remedy through the due process provisions allowed under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) if a parent and / or guardian refuses consent for a reevaluation.

## **SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES**

The school district recognizes the value of certain ceremonies and observances in promoting patriotism and good citizenship among the students. Therefore, activities in schools commemorating national holidays such as Veterans' Day, Memorial Day, and President's Day are encouraged. The Portland Board of Education reminds students, faculty and administration of the variety of religious belief, and all are urged to be conscious

of and respect the sensitivities of others. An opportunity will be provided for students to observe an appropriate period of silent meditation and to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. Participation in these activities is voluntary. Non participants are expected to maintain order and decorum appropriate to the school environment.

### **SCHOOL CHOICE**

The Board of Education recognizes that students may benefit from having a choice of school to attend within the public school system that is not limited by school and/or district boundaries. An interdistrict public school attendance program will (1) provide parents and students with greater opportunities to choose the school and/or program that best meets the academic needs of the student; (2) positively influence the level of parent involvement and student motivation; (3) improve academic achievement; (4) reduce racial, ethnic and economic balance; and (5) provide a choice of educational programs for students. The District will cooperate with the appropriate regional educational service center in the planning and implementation of an inter-district public school attendance program in accordance with the timelines and provisions contained within applicable Connecticut General Statutes as may be periodically amended and pursuant to the applicable provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act.

#### **Portland Middle and High School Level Students**

The Board of Education provides information and access to: technical education and career schools; regional agricultural science and technology education centers; interdistrict magnet schools; charter schools; and interdistrict student attendance programs provided that attendance is not for the purpose of interscholastic athletic competition. (Students in grade 8 attend an informational seminar regarding these options each spring.) Additional information is available on the school counseling website and in the Program of Studies.

### **SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Respect for the school building and its equipment is a part of a student's responsibility. The destruction or mutilation of school property is a serious offense. Any student who damages or loses school property will be required to restore or repay in full the cost of the property. An estimate of the cost shall be made and a bill will be sent to the student's parents or guardian. Other disciplinary action will be taken as deemed appropriate.

### **SCHOOL REGISTRATION AND TRANSFERS**

#### **New Registrations**

Parents of new students are required to complete an online registration. The registration link is on our website <http://www.portlandetschools.org>. At the completion of your online pre-registration, you will be prompted to schedule an appointment with the Registrar to finalize your student's registration. You will need to bring several required forms with you for the registrar to scan. These are listed when you complete the online process. The Registrar for grades 7-12 is located at Portland High School. Please call 860-342-1720 to make an appointment.

#### **Transfers to Another School District (Withdrawals)**

Parents should notify the principal's office as soon as possible if a child is transferring from our district to another school district. In order for records to be transferred, a form must be signed at the receiving school and mailed to our school. Without these forms, schools are not allowed to exchange records. Please note that a student cannot be registered in a public school in Connecticut without complete medical information.

#### **Updating Existing Student Information**

We also have a site for parents in order to update student information each year <https://portland-update.hosted.src-solutions.com>. Parents will access the site by using their child's DOB and SASID (State Assigned Student Identification Number). Schools will send home a letter with this information that must be completed within 30 days from the start of school. Parents will update emergency contact data and sign-off on required policies.

### **SCHOOL SECURITY AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

#### **(BOE Policy 5141.6)**

It is the policy of the Portland Board of Education (Board) to maintain a safe, orderly, civil, and positive learning environment, and to be prepared, in so far as possible, to prevent and respond to unexpected crises quickly and appropriately. While the very nature of a crisis may make preparation difficult, the Board believes that staff and students should be ready to respond quickly and appropriately to emergency situations. The

Board of Education recognizes that all District staff and students must be prepared to respond quickly and responsibly to emergencies, disasters, and threats of disaster. A variety of emergency drills will be conducted monthly throughout the school year in compliance with CT Department Education Regulations and Connecticut law. Teachers will review existing procedures with students on the first day of class. Teachers will assist students in the various responses using the “All-Hazards School Security and Safety Plan” that has been created with our town’s local emergency management staff.

### **SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS (BOE Policy 1240)**

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of school volunteers at all levels of schooling. Volunteers can enhance collaboration between the school and community, broaden the school's educational environment and ultimately enrich students' school experience. We encourage you to become school volunteers, sharing a little bit of your time and expertise in our school program. Volunteers will work under the supervision of staff, assisting with tasks which may include: chaperoning field trips, coaching, clerical support, mentoring and other appropriate assignments. In our continued effort to maintain a safe learning environment, all school visitors, including volunteers, must report to the office upon arrival and before departing. A sign-in/sign-out log will be maintained in each school office. Volunteers should record both arrival and departure times and indicate the purpose of their visit. Additionally, volunteers will be provided with identification badges which should be displayed during each visit. All volunteers are expected to exhibit standards of conduct equal to those of the school staff and to observe all Board of Education policies. This includes, but is not limited to: use of appropriate language, maintaining confidentiality, wearing appropriate attire, and exercising good judgment. Volunteers may be required to submit to state and federal criminal record checks and a record check of the Department of Children and Families (“DCF”) Child Abuse and Neglect Registry. No person who is required to register as a sex offender under state or federal law, or whose name is currently listed on the DCF registry, may volunteer in the Portland Public Schools.

### **SEAL OF BILITERACY Connecticut State Department of Education (BOE Policy/Appendix 6146)**

The District will award the Connecticut State Seal of Biliteracy (Seal of Biliteracy) to recognize high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in English and one or more languages. The Board of Education will affix the Seal of Biliteracy on a student's diploma utilizing the criteria established by the State Board of Education. Foreign language is defined as a world language other than English and includes American Sign Language and any other language spoken by a federally recognized Native American tribe.

#### Dissemination of Program Information

All students shall receive information on the Seal of Biliteracy upon first entering middle school and again at the entry to high school. (Districts who have dual language and/or foreign language in elementary school programs are encouraged to share information with students and families at the time of enrollment.)

The information can be provided to students, parents/guardians via student/parent handbooks and by placement on the district/school website. The information shall indicate that students may acquire proficiency in multiple languages through various pathways. Those available in the District may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Traditional middle school or high school world language programs
- Traditional ESL programs
- Bilingual education programs
- Dual language programs
- K-12 world language immersion programs
- Time spent immersed in the target culture
- Saturday language schools
- Heritage language knowledge

#### Eligibility

All students are eligible to receive the Seal of Biliteracy based on evidence of achieving the designated level of language proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation. Students may demonstrate the state-determined level of proficiency in English, as well as one or more additional languages in grade 10, 11, or 12.

#### Earning the Seal of Biliteracy and Eligibility Criteria

To attain the Seal of Biliteracy, students' use of the language must be demonstrated, rather than their knowledge about the language. Therefore, a student must demonstrate proficiency in English AND another language by meeting the criteria described below.

Both native and non-native speakers of English must provide comparable evidence of English language proficiency. The language performance should be demonstrated in both social and academic use of the language, in all modes of communication.

To be eligible to receive the Seal of Biliteracy, the two academic requirements below must be met:

1. Students must complete all English language arts requirements for graduation.
2. Student must demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English in grades 10, 11, or 12 at a level comparable to "Intermediate Mid" on the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines as demonstrated through the following method listed in the Assessment of Evidence Table or any other approved assessment.

### **SEARCH AND SEIZURE (BOE Policies 5145.12 & 5145.122)**

The Board seeks to ensure a learning environment which protects the health, safety and welfare of students and staff. To assist the Board in attaining these goals, District officials may, subject to the requirements below, search a student's person and property, including property assigned by the District for the student's use. Such searches may be conducted at any time on District property or when the student is under the jurisdiction of the District at school sponsored activities.

All searches for evidence of a violation by the District shall be subject to the following requirements:

1. The District official shall have individualized, "*reasonable suspicion*" to believe evidence of a violation of law, Board policy, administrative regulation or school rule is present in a particular place;
2. The search shall be "reasonable in scope." That is the measures used are reasonably related to the objectives of the search and not excessively intrusive in light of the age, sex, maturity of the student and nature of the infraction.
3. District officials may also search when they have reasonable information that emergency/dangerous circumstances exist.

School authorities are authorized to conduct searches of students or their property when reasonable suspicion indicates that a particular student is in possession of an item or a substance that represents a material threat to school routine or is prohibited by school board regulations or by law. Student property shall include, but not be limited to, purses, book bags, and cars. In an effort to deter drug use by students, the Board of Education policy 5145.122 provides that the Administration has the right to authorize law enforcement officials to search school property with drug-detection dogs trained for the purpose of detecting the presence of illegal substances.

#### **Desks and School Lockers**

Desks and school lockers are the property of the schools. The right to inspect desks and lockers assigned to students may be exercised by school officials to safeguard students, their property and school property with reasonable care for the Fourth Amendment rights of students. The exercise of the right to inspect also requires protection of each student's personal privacy and protection from coercion. An authorized school administrator may search a student's locker or desk under three (3) conditions:

1. There is reason to believe that the student's desk or locker contains the probable presence of contraband material.
2. The probable presence of contraband material poses a serious threat to the maintenance of discipline, order, safety and health in the school.

3. The student(s) has been informed in advance that school Board policy allows desks and lockers to be inspected if the administration has reason to believe that materials injurious to the best interests of students and the school are/or contained therein.

Use of drug-detection dogs and metal detectors, or similar detective devices may be used only on the express authorization of the Superintendent. District officials may seize any item which is evidence of a violation of law, Board policy, administrative regulation or school rule, or which the possession or use of is prohibited by such law, policy, regulation or rule.

#### **Student Search**

A student may be searched if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. The scope of the search must be reasonably related to the objectives of the search and the nature of the infraction. Strip searches shall not be conducted by school authorities. All searches by the Principal of his/her designee shall be carried out in the presence of another adult witness.

#### **Police Involvement in Searches and Interrogations of Students**

The District is committed to cooperating with police officials and other law enforcement authorities in order to maintain a safe school environment. Police officials, however, have limited authority to interview or search students in schools or at school functions, or to use school facilities in connection with police work. Students may be searched by law enforcement officials on school property or when the student is under the jurisdiction of the District upon the request of the law enforcement official. Such requests ordinarily, shall be based on (1) warrant; or (2) probable cause to believe a crime has been committed on school property or at a school function; or (3) an invitation by school officials. The school Principal or designee will attempt to notify the student's parents in advance to give the parent the opportunity to be present during the police questioning or search, and will be present for all such searches.

#### **Vehicle Searches on School Grounds**

The privilege of bringing a student-operated motor vehicle onto school premises is hereby conditioned on consent by the student driver to allow the search of that motor vehicle when there is reasonable cause for a search of that motor vehicle. Refusal by a student, parent or guardian, or owner of the vehicle to allow access to a motor vehicle on school premises at the time of a request to search the motor vehicle will be cause for termination, without further hearing, of the privilege of bringing a motor vehicle onto school premises. The Principal, or a building administrator, may request a law enforcement officer to search a motor vehicle on school premises, subject to provisions of this policy.

### **SECLUSION / RESTRAINT / EXCLUSIONARY TIME OUT**

#### **BOE Policy 5144.1**

The Board of Education (Board) believes that maintaining an orderly, safe environment is conducive to learning and is an appropriate expectation of all staff members within the district. To the extent that staff actions comply with all applicable statutes and Board policy governing the use of physical force, including physical restraint of students and seclusion of students, staff members will have the full support of the Board of Education in their efforts to maintain a safe environment. The Board recognizes that there are times when it becomes necessary for staff to use reasonable restraint or place a student in seclusion as an emergency intervention to protect a student from harming himself/herself or to protect others from harm. Training shall be provided by the Board to the members of the crisis intervention team for each school in the district. The Board may provide such training to any teacher, administrator, school professional or other school employee, designated by the school principal and who has direct contact with students regarding physical restraint and seclusion of students.

### **SEX DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

#### **(BOE Policy 5145.5)**

It is the policy of the Board of Education that any form of sex discrimination or sexual harassment will not be tolerated among the students of the Portland Public Schools. Students are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful and courteous to fellow students and to the public. Should sexual harassment be alleged, it is the policy of the Portland Board of Education that it shall be thoroughly investigated, that there

shall be no retaliation against the victim of the harassment, and that the problem/concern shall be appropriately addressed. Under federal law and the Connecticut General Statutes 46a-60(a) (8), sexual harassment is defined as “any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors or any conduct of a sexual nature” made by someone from or in the work or educational setting. Types of sexual conduct include inappropriate attention of a sexual nature from peer(s); i.e., student to student, and all other types of sexual conduct as further defined in (B.O.E. Policy 5145.5). If it is determined that a student has sexually harassed another student, the possible consequences to the offending student may include the following:

- Conference with student
- Community service
- Parent conference
- Detention
- Apology to the victim
- Expulsion
- Suspension
- Referral to the police
- Written report

Reprisals, threats or intimidation of the victim will be treated as serious offenses, which could result in a permanent separation from the school through expulsion for student offenders. Any student or parent/guardian of a student who believes that the student has been the victim of sexual harassment or has questions about this issue, should seek the help of the building administrator(s) or an adult whom they trust, such as a teacher, counselor, nurse, psychologist. All complaints are to be forwarded immediately to the building principal or designee unless that individual is the subject of the complaint, in which case the complaint should be forwarded directly to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee. In addition, a copy of any complaint filed under this policy shall be forwarded to the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator for the Portland Board of Education is the Director of Student Services at 860-342-2778. At any time, a complainant alleging sex discrimination or sexual harassment may file a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 8th Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02109-0111 (TELEPHONE NUMBER (617) 289-0111).

### **SEXUAL ABUSE and ASSAULT POLICY and REPORTING PROCEDURE (BOE Policy 5145.511)**

The Portland Board of Education has adopted a uniform child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault response policy and reporting procedure in connection with the implementation of its sexual assault and abuse prevention and awareness program. Parents (or guardians) of students may file a written report of suspected child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault pertaining to any student enrolled in the Portland Public Schools. The written report of suspected child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault shall be reasonably specific as to the basis for the report, including the time and place of the suspected abuse and/or sexual assault, the number of incidents, the victim of the child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault, and the names of potential witnesses or others with pertinent information. Such written reports may be filed with any building or central office administrator. All reports shall be forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist for the school in which the student is enrolled. The Building principals serve as the Safe School Climate Specialists for their building. The Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall cause such reports to be reviewed and actions taken consistent with this policy. Any adult affiliated with the school community may file a written report of suspected child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault pertaining to any student enrolled in the Portland Public Schools. The written report of suspected child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault shall be reasonably specific as to the basis for the report, including the time and place of the suspected abuse and/or sexual assault, the number of incidents, the victim of the child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault, and the names of potential witnesses or others with pertinent information. Such written reports may be filed with any building or central office administrator. All reports shall be forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist for the school in which the student is enrolled. The Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall cause such reports to be reviewed and actions taken consistent with this policy. Students may make written or verbal reports of child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault to any school employee. All reports shall be forwarded to the Safe School Climate Specialist for the school in which the student is enrolled. The Safe School Climate Specialist or designee shall cause such reports to be reviewed and actions taken consistent with this policy. Upon receipt of any report of child sexual abuse and/or sexual assault from any source, a school employee shall report such

suspicion to the appropriate authority in accordance with Board Policy 4118.16, pertaining to REPORTS OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OR NEGLECT OF CHILDREN OR SEXUAL ASSAULT OF STUDENTS BY SCHOOL EMPLOYEES.

**SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT  
(BOE Policy 1331)**

In accordance with law and to promote the health and safety of all students and staff, the District prohibits all employees, students and patrons from smoking or using tobacco or tobacco products in all school facilities, buildings and buses or other District transportation at all times, including athletic events and meetings. Tobacco includes, but is not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, snuff, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco, nicotine delivery devices or vapor products, chemicals or devices that produce the same flavor or physical effect of nicotine substances; and any other tobacco or nicotine innovations. This prohibition extends to all facilities the District owns/operates, contracts for or leases to provide educational services, routine health care, daycare or early childhood development services to children, as well as facilities in which services are not provided to children.

**STUDENT DATA PRIVACY  
(BOE Policy 6145.3)**

Student publications are important elements of the instructional program and contribute directly to the accomplishment of the school's goals. The Board of Education shall encourage the development of school newspapers, annuals, and magazines. Freedom of speech and of expression in student publications as guaranteed by the First Amendment is to be observed scrupulously by the administration, faculty and students.

**STUDENT DATA PROTECTION & PRIVACY/CLOUD-BASED ISSUES  
(BOE Policy 3520.13)**

The Board of Education (Board) may, pursuant to this policy, enter into a contract with a third party for either or both of the following purposes:

1. To provide services, including Cloud-based services, for the digital storage, management, and retrieval of student records.
2. To provide digital educational software that authorizes a third-party provider of digital educational software to access, store, and use student records in accordance with the contractual provisions listed.

**Notice of Breach of Security/Data Breaches**

Upon notice of a breach of security by a contractor, the Board shall, not later than two business days after receipt of such notice, notify the students and the parents/legal guardians of the students whose student information, student records, or student-generated content was involved in such breach. The Board shall also, as required, post notice of the breach on its website. Upon the discovery of a breach of security that results in the unauthorized release of student information, excluding directory information, the contract shall contain the provision that the contractor must notify the Board of such breach without unreasonable delay, and in no case later than thirty (30) days from the discovery of the breach. Upon the discovery of a breach of security that results in the unauthorized release of directory information, student records, or student-generated content, the contract shall contain the provision that the contractor must notify the Board without unreasonable delay and in no case later than sixty (60) days from the discovery of the breach.

**STUDENT NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (School Wellness Policy)  
(BOE Policy 6142.101)**

Student wellness, including good nutrition and physical activity, is promoted through the District's educational program, school activities, and meal programs. Federal and state standards will be met pertaining to all foods and beverages available for sale to students. A sequential program of physical education is provided, in addition to time in the elementary school day for supervised recess. By facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity, schools contribute to the basic health status of children. Improved health optimizes student performance potential and ensures that no child is left behind.

## **STUDENT RECORDS; CONFIDENTIALITY (FERPA)** **(BOE Policy 5125)**

A student's school records are confidential and are protected by federal and state law from unauthorized inspection or use. A cumulative record is maintained for each student from the time the student enters the district until the student withdraws or graduates. This record moves with the student from school to school.

By law, both parents, whether married, separated, or divorced, have access to the records of a student who is under 18 or a dependent for tax purposes. A parent whose rights have been legally terminated will be denied access to the records if the school is given a copy of the court order terminating these rights.

The principal is custodian of all records for currently enrolled students at the assigned school. The Superintendent is the custodian of all records for students who have withdrawn or graduated. Records may be reviewed during regular school hours upon completion of the written request form. The record's custodian or designee will respond to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of the records.

Parents of a minor or of a student who is a dependent for tax purposes, the student (if 18 or older), and school officials with legitimate educational interests are the only persons who have general access to a student's records. "School officials with legitimate educational interests" include any employee such as an administrator, teacher, support staff, Board of Education member, attorney, agents, or facilities with which the district contracts for the placement of students with disabilities, as well as their attorneys and consultants, who are:

1. Working with the student;
2. Considering disciplinary or academic actions, the student's case, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for a student with disabilities under IDEA or an individually designed program for a student with disabilities under Section 504;
3. Compiling statistical data; or
4. Investigating or evaluating programs.

Certain other officials from various governmental agencies may have limited access to the records. Parental consent is required to release the records to anyone else. When the student reaches 18 years of age, only the student has the right to consent to release of records. (See BOE Policy 5145.14). The parent's or student's right of access to, and copies of, student records does not extend to all records. Materials that are not considered educational records, such as teachers' personal notes on a student that are shared only with a substitute teacher and records pertaining to former students after they are no longer students in the district, do not have to be made available to the parents or student. A student over 18 and parents of minor students may inspect the student's records and request a correction if the records are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy or other rights. If the district refuses the request to amend the records, the requestor has the right to a hearing. If the records are not amended as a result of the hearing, the requestor has 30 school days to exercise the right to place a statement commenting on the information in the student's record. Although improperly recorded grades may be challenged, parents and the student are not allowed to contest a student's grade in a course through this process. Parents or the student have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education if they believe the district is not in compliance with the law regarding student records. The district's policy regarding student records is available from the principal's or superintendent's office.

Parents may be denied copies of a student's records (1) after the student reaches age 18 and is no longer a dependent for tax purposes; (2) when the student is attending an institution of postsecondary education; (3) if the parent fails to follow proper procedures; or (4) when the district is given a copy of a court order terminating the parental rights. If the student qualifies for free or reduced-price meals and parents are unable to view the records during regular school hours, upon a written request of the parent, one copy of the record will be provided at no charge.

Certain information about district students is considered directory information and will be released to anyone who follows procedures for requesting it, unless the parent objects to the release of any or all directory information about the child. This objection must be made in writing to the principal within ten school days after the issuance of this handbook. Directory information includes a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, grade levels, photograph, e-mail address, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, awards received in school, and most recent previous school attended. (See BOE Policy 5145.15)

Military recruiters or institutions of higher learning shall have access to secondary school students' names, addresses and telephone listings, unless a parent / guardian or secondary student aged 18 or over requests in writing that such information not be released. The District will release to the Parent Teacher Association the names, addresses, telephone number and grade levels of students (unless the District is informed by September 15 of the school year that designation of such directory information has been refused as to a particular student) provided such information is to be used by the PTA for its own school activities or school business.

The District, when a student moves to a new school system or charter school, will send the student's records to the new district or charter school within ten business days of receiving written notice of the move from the new district. Unless the parents / guardians of the student authorize the record transfer in writing, the sending District is required to send a notice when the records are sent to the new district. Parents and eligible students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the Requirements of FERPA. Complaints may be addressed to: Family Policy Compliance Office, US. Department of Education, 5400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, DC 20202-4605. The District's HIPAA Privacy Officer is the Director of Student Services.

### **SUDDEN CARDIAC ARREST & CONCUSSION EDUCATION**

The Board of Education recognizes the importance of ensuring the safety of students participating in the District's intramural and interscholastic athletic programs. Prior to each season, (fall, winter, spring) of each school year, coaches, student athletes and parents sign up on the online registration database (Family ID) and sign off on the sudden cardiac arrest and concussion forms. Parents and athletes are educated about concussions and sudden cardiac arrest through Family ID registration as well as mandatory attendance at an informational "preseason meeting" with the athletic director, athletic trainer and school nurse.

### **SUICIDE PREVENTION/INTERVENTION (BOE POLICY 5141.5)**

The Portland Board of Education recognizes that suicide has become a leading cause of death among young people and consequently, is a concern to the school system and the community it serves. The Board recognizes that suicide is a complex issue and that while the school may recognize potentially suicidal youth, it cannot make a clinical assessment of risk and provide in depth counseling but must refer the youth to an appropriate place for such an assessment and counseling. It is the policy of the Board of Education to actively respond in any situation where a student verbally or behaviorally indicates an intent to attempt suicide or to physically harm himself/herself. The intent of this policy is to protect the safety and welfare of the students attending the Portland Public Schools. This intent demands that the school district through its general philosophy and the curriculum focuses on the identification of significant behaviors that may indicate a student at risk. This in no way limits the district personnel from taking a reactive mode, but makes every effort to focus on a prevention mode through a healthy, positive, productive school climate. The Board of Education recognizes the need for youth suicide prevention procedures and will establish program(s) to identify risk factors for youth suicide, procedures to intervene with such youth, referral services and training for teachers, other school professionals and students to provide assistance in the programs.

### **SURVEYS/STUDENT PRIVACY (BOE Policy 6162.51)**

Surveys can be a valuable resource for schools and communities in determining student needs for educational services. When a survey is used, every effort should be made to ask questions in a neutral manner to ensure the accuracy of the survey. Administrators, teachers, other staff members, and the Board of Education may use surveys for many purposes. Such purposes may include, but are not limited to, the need for student services, the determination of prevailing views pertaining to proposed policies and/or practices, or the determination of student knowledge and/or attitudes related to a specific subject or units. Your child will not be required to participate without parental consent in any survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns:

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
2. mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
3. sex attitudes or behaviors;
4. illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of other individual with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers;

7. income; or
8. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parents.

In addition, parents have the right to inspect, upon request, a survey that is to be administered by a school to a student, prior to its use. Parents will be notified at least two weeks in advance of any survey that will be given to their children. Parents will be notified of any non-emergency, invasive physical examination that is required as a condition of attendance administered by the school and which is not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of students.

### **TEACHER AND PARAPROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (BOE Policy 4112.6)**

In accordance with federal law, the District shall release information regarding the professional qualifications and degrees of teachers and the qualifications of paraprofessionals to parents/guardians upon request for any teacher or paraprofessional who is employed by a school receiving Title I funds and who provides instruction to their child at that school.

### **TEXTBOOK CARE AND OBLIGATIONS (BOE Policy 6161.21)**

Library books, textbooks, and other educational materials are loaned to the students for their use, and shall be returned when requested by school authorities. Teachers shall emphasize to students that texts and materials are the public's property, and should be appropriately cared for. Students must pay the full replacement cost of any book or educational material lost or damaged beyond ordinary wear. Students who fail promptly to return or pay for texts and materials may have grades, transcripts or report cards withheld until restitution is made.

### **TITLE I COMPARABILITY OF SERVICES (B.O.E. Policy 6161.3)**

All district schools, regardless of whether they receive Title I funds, shall provide services that, taken as a whole, are substantially comparable. Staff, curriculum materials and instructional supplies shall be provided in a manner that ensures equivalence among the district's schools.

### **TITLE I PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (B.O.E. Policy 6172.4)**

The Portland Board of Education (Board) endorses the parent involvement goals of Title I and encourages the regular participation by parents and family members of Title I eligible children in all aspects of the program. The education of children is viewed as a cooperative effort among the parents, school and community. In this policy, the word "parent" also includes guardians and other family members involved in supervising the child's schooling. Therefore, complying with Section 1010 of The Every Student Succeeds Act, P.L. 114-95, the Board will provide parents and family members of students participating in District Title I programs meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children within these programs.

### **TRANSGENDER & NON-CONFORMING YOUTH (BOE Policy 5145.53)**

Federal and state law and District policy require that all programs, activities, and employment practices be free from discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression. This policy is designed in keeping with these mandates to create a safe learning environment for all students and to ensure that every student has equal access to all school programs and activities. This policy sets out guidelines for schools and District staff to address the needs of transgender and gender non-conforming students and clarifies how state law should be implemented in situations where questions may arise about how to protect the legal rights or safety of such students. This policy does not anticipate every situation that might occur with respect to transgender or gender non-conforming students and the needs of each transgender or gender non-conforming student must be assessed on a case-by-case basis. In all cases, the goal is to ensure the safety, comfort, and healthy development of the transgender or gender non-conforming student while maximizing the student's social integration and minimizing stigmatization of the student.

**TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMPLAINTS COMPLAINTS/PROCEDURES  
(BOE Policy 3541.5)**

All complaints concerning school transportation safety shall be made to the Superintendent or his / her designee.

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain a written record of all such complaints, and shall conduct appropriate investigations of the allegations. The Superintendent shall provide the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles with a copy of the written record of complaints within thirty days of the end of the school year.

**VIDEO SURVEILLANCE  
(BOE Policy 5131.111)**

The Board of Education recognizes the District's responsibility to maintain order, discipline, safety and security on school property and in school vehicles. The Board also desires to afford students and staff privacy in respect to the records maintained by the District. The Board recognizes the value of electronic surveillance systems in monitoring activity on school property and in school vehicles in protecting the health, welfare and safety of its students and staff. The students and staff of the District recognize that their security and safety depends upon the capacity of the district to maintain discipline, control building access, and that a certain amount of restraint upon the activities of students and building visitors is assumed and expected.

The Board of Education having carefully weighed and balanced the rights of privacy of students and staff against the District's duty to maintain order, discipline, safety and security finds that it is appropriate to provide for the use of video camera surveillance in its transportation vehicles and on school grounds as follows:

1. The District shall notify its students, staff and the public that video surveillance may/will occur on any school property or on any transportation vehicle. The District shall incorporate said notice, in such places as, but not limited to, in the student handbook, staff handbook and District website;
2. The use of video surveillance equipment on transportation vehicles shall be supervised by the District transportation supervisor. The use of video surveillance equipment on school grounds and on other District property shall be supervised and controlled by the building administrator or other responsible administrator;
3. The use of video recordings from surveillance equipment shall be subject to the other policies of the District including policies concerning the confidentiality of student and personnel records;
4. Video surveillance shall only be used to promote the order, safety and security of students, staff and property.

**VISITS/VISITORS TO SCHOOL  
(BOE Policy 1250.1)**

The Board of Education and staff of each school welcomes parents and members of the community to visit our schools. We strongly believe that education is a collaborative venture between parents/guardians and school personnel. At times parents/guardians may wish to visit for a short period of time in a classroom. In such cases, all visitors are under the jurisdiction of the building principal, who has the responsibility to develop rules and procedures to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment. Arrangements for parental classroom visits must be made with the school principal in advance and all visitors must register in the school office upon arrival and be accompanied by a staff member at all times. All students should feel a sense of personal responsibility for courteous treatment extended to visitors to the school.

**STUDENT SUPPORT AGENCIES**

- ALANON/ALATEEN.....1-888-825-2666
- Portland Social Services.....860-342-6756
- Portland Youth Services .....860-342-6758
- National Runaway Hotline..... 1-800-786-2929
- Poison Control Center.....1-800-222-1222
- Suicide Prevention Lifeline .....1-800-273-8255
- Narcotics Anonymous.....1-800-627-3543
- Community Health Center Middletown.....860-347-6971
- CT Child Care Hotline (24 hrs) 211
- DCF Report Hotline 1-800-842-2288

**THANK YOU**

Thank you for your assistance and commitment in supporting the guidelines in this handbook. Please feel free to contact the Principal if you should have any questions or concerns.