CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Mary Louise Francis, Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Heather D. Larkin, Asst. Superintendent/Student Services
Mr. Lawrence W. Oliveira, Chief Administrator/Finance and Operations
Ms. Cheryl A. Costa, Human Resources Manager

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Honorable Scott W. Lang, Chairman Ex-Officio
Dr. John J. Fletcher, Vice-Chairman
Atty. Thomas R. Clark
Dr. Lawrence J. Finnerty
Mr. Joaquim Nobrega
Ms. Marlene Pollock
Mrs. Jill Marie Ussach

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Central Administration 1
School Committee 1
Message from the Principal 4
School's History 5
Guiding Principles: Mission, Vision, Belief 6
Special Programs and Services 7
School Hours 8
Inclement Weather 8
Arrival and Dismissal Routines 8-9
Busses 9-10
Early or Emergency Dismissal 10
Dismissal - Special Circumstances 10
Academic and Classroom Expectations 11
General School Rules 11-12
Student Expectations of Conduct 12
Cafeteria Rules 12
Fire Drills 12-13
Health Care 13
Parent Involvement 13-14
Attendance Regulations & Procedures 14-16
New Bedford Public Schools Promotion Policy 16-17
Homework Policy 18-19
Parent Conferences 19
Field Trips Policy 20
Dress Code 20
District, State, and Federal Guidelines:
- Disciplinary Due Process 21
- Discipline and Students with Disabilities 22
- Non-Discrimination Notice 23
- Harassment 23
- Harassment/Discrimination Grievance Procedure 24
- JFCK-Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures for Students 24-25
- Student Records 25-26
- Massachusetts General Laws C.71 §37H and C.71 §37H1/2 26-27
- Services and Accomodations for Students with Disabilities 27
- Notification to Parents of Teacher Qualifications 28

Bullying and Cyber-Bullying 28-29

PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Welcome to the James B. Congdon Elementary! I am excited and fortunate to be your principal for the 2010-2011 school year. We have made gains in both our ELA and Math MCAS scores. Our goal is to make you and your child a partner in our school community so we can accomplish a common goal—

the successful academic and social growth of your child !

We welcome your involvement and participation in our school family. From the moment your child walks through the doors of our school, we are committed to involving you in your child's education. Research has shown that children whose parents are involved in their children's education not only have more academic success, but feel better about themselves. Working together, we can build a successful academic year.

As parents, you are your child's first and most influential teacher. Therefore, we count on you to form a partnership with the school so we can provide the best possible educational environment for your child. Your participation means a lot to us and most especially, to your child.

I hope this handbook will be useful to you and will answer some of your questions. On behalf of the faculty and staff, I would like to extend an invitation to you to visit the school, attend school functions, and become part of our parent volunteer program.

I know that with your involvement continued support, this will be another for the James B. Congdon school community. Please take time to review the policies within this handbook and return ONLY the last page.

We are happy to have you and your child at the James B. Congdon School.

With great hopes in mind,

Steven K. Machado
Principal

JAMES B. CONGDON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

50 Hemlock Street
New Bedford, MA 02740
(508) 997-4511 Ext. 2242
Email: smachado@newbedfordschools.org

SCHOOL'S HISTORY

James B. Congdon School was erected in 1907. It is a small elementary school located on New Bedford's south side of the city. The building is named after James Bunker Congdon (1802-1880), who was extremely conspicuous in the public life of New Bedford in the 1800's. Mr. Congdon was chairman of the Board of Selectmen, drew up the charter for the city government, and was first to hold the position of President of the City Council. He led the fight to remove the onus of "pauper" from the public schools of the city by serving on the school committee from 1833-1844. His most outstanding public service occurred in 1852, when he established the New Bedford Free Public Library, first in the United States to be built with public funds. It is fitting then, that our school is named after one who dedicated his life to public service and to establishing the first free public library - a place where one would avail himself of the opportunity to broaden their knowledge.

James B. Congdon Elementary School
Guiding Principles

" Success Begins With Me "

Mission:

We are committed to developing a community of learners who are academically proficient, demonstrate strong character and exhibit self-confidence.

Vision:

The faculty and staff believe that every student will be given the opportunity to maximize his or her ability to learn. We recognize that education is fostered through cooperation between teacher, students, parents and community. To this task, we commit ourselves to build an atmosphere for learning which will provide our students the opportunity to develop self-esteem and the skills necessary to continue individual growth to become successful students and productive members of the community.

We at the James B. Congdon School believe:

- All children can be successful learners.
- All children have a positive attitude towards learning and yearn to feel a sense of accomplishment at school.
- Children learn best when they feel safe to take risks, are motivated, and are nurtured.

The School Pledge:

" I am a smart, special, valuable person.
I respect myself and I respect others.
My words and actions are kind and honest.
I expect only my best in all I do.

I AM PROUD TO BE ME ! "

SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

TITLE I

Since Congdon School is part of a citywide Title I Project, all students are eligible for Title I services. Our literacy and mathematics coaches are funded by Title I. Both teachers provide teacher and parent workshops. In our computer lab, children have access to the **Accelerated Reader Program** and books are provided ***to every reader to take home every night***. Remediation in both mathematics and reading (**Lexia**) takes place in the lab as well. The literacy coach manages a guided reading room, containing at least 1,000 books, for teachers to borrow to use in class. Classroom libraries, which move from classroom to classroom, are generated from the reading room as well. The mathematics coach has developed a math game library for teachers and students to borrow from.

TEACHER/FAMILY RESOURCE ROOM

During this school year, we will be opening a teacher/family resource room. Workshops will be offered to parents and held in this room during the school day as well as at night. Parent meetings will also be held in this room. Parent volunteers will be staffing the room. We feel it is the responsibility of the home and school to work together to ensure that students reach their potential. A parent volunteer sheet is sent home every September, and the school always welcomes phone calls if you'd like to volunteer.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Some children have special needs that require extra supportive services to help them succeed in school. These services might include tutoring by a vision teacher, speech therapist, occupational therapist, physical therapist or placement in a special classroom. Parents or teachers refer students they are concerned about to the principal or school adjustment counselor. An evaluation is conducted and then a TEAM meeting is held with parents and school staff to determine if special need services are needed. A plan is written which describes the goals and objectives that are needed to help the child. The plan is reviewed annually or whenever needed.

EXTRA SUPPORT SERVICES

You and your child are fortunate to have on staff a variety of people who are available to offer emotional and educational support to you and your child. The school adjustment counselor, school psychologist, and school therapists and agency counselors are available and eager to offer assistance whenever needed.

SCHOOL HOURS

School starts at 8:15 A.M.. The first dismissal is 2:30 P.M.. Dismissal on Friday's at 1:00 P.M.. **No afternoon Kindergarten classes on Friday's** for schools with morning and afternoon classes. Children who have completed their daily assignments, have followed school rules, and are not in need of any extra help will be dismissed at this time.

Parents should be aware that any pupil may be required to remain up to an ***additional one-half (½) hour after the first dismissal.*** Pupils may be kept for disciplinary reasons or for any extra help needed in their academic subjects. In effect, the elementary school day ends at 3:00 P.M. in order that our children can receive the full benefit of all the services provided.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

When "EARLY DISMISSAL" is announced the following schedule will be followed:

Students – 11:30 AM; Teachers – 12:00 PM; Paraprofessionals – 12:00 PM.

"DELAYED START TIMES", when the weather conditions warrant it; and the schedule will be as follows:

Students – 9:15 AM - 2:30 PM; Faculty – 9:10 AM - 2:30 PM.

"CANCELLATIONS", "EARLY DISMISSALS", and/or "DELAYED START TIMES" will be posted/broadcasted at the following:

New Bedford Public Schools' web site: www.newbedfordschools.org
Local Cable Channel 17
Standard-Times' web site: www.s-t.com
Channel 4 WBZ-TV/1030 AM
Channel 5 WCVB-TV
Channel 6 WLNE
Channel 7 WHDH-TV
Channel 10 WJAR
Channel 12 WPRI-TV
FOX 25 WFXT
Radio Station WRKO-AM
Radio Station WSAR
Radio Station WBSM
Radio Station FUN 107

We will try to make these decisions as early as possible to accommodate our working families.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL ROUTINES:

ARRIVAL

It is the policy of New Bedford Public Schools that all persons entering the building enter through the main door off Hemlock Street and report to the principal's office on the first floor. The Hemlock Street door is **always locked – PLEASE RING THE OFFICE FOR THE DOOR TO BE OPENED AND PREPARED TO IDENTIFY YOURSELF AND YOUR REASON FOR VISITING THE SCHOOL.** A visitor's pass will be issued in the office for identification purposes. Visitors must log in/out in the logbook when visiting.

Paraprofessionals provide supervision on the playground at approximately 8:00 a.m. every morning. We are asking that all children play on the surfaced playground at the rear of the building. We ask that parents keep students at home so that arrival to school does not occur until 8:00 a.m., since playground supervision cannot be adequately provided before that time. During inclement weather, students will be allowed to proceed to the auditorium where paraprofessionals will be on duty. Students will be allowed to enter at 8:00 a.m., when supervision is provided, prior to that time, students must remain outdoors.

The school day begins at 8:15 a.m. First bell and entry is at 8:10 a.m. Children prepare to enter for school-wide breakfast which is served at 8:15 in the classrooms. Students are considered tardy after the 8:25 a.m. bell and must report to the office for a tardy slip. First dismissal is at 2:30 p.m. Children who have completed their daily assignments, have followed school rules, and are not in need of any extra help will be dismissed at this time. **If there is a change in your child's dismissal procedure we need to be notified in writing. No child will be dismissed to any person unless their name(s) are listed on their emergency form. This form needs to be kept updated by the parent. All parents will be required to sign the dismissal logbook located in the office when their child is released for any reason. This permits us to ensure that each student is dismissed to the *appropriate* parent or guardian.**

All students in classrooms on the first floor will enter the building from the Thompson Street entrance. Students in classrooms on the second and third floors will enter the building from the Rockland Street entrance. Students will line up on the playground at their respective door, under the paraprofessionals' supervision.

Parents should be aware that **any student might be required to remain up to an additional one-half (½) hour after the first dismissal**. Students may be kept for disciplinary reasons or for any extra help needed in their academic subjects. Due to the safety of our students, it is imperative that dismissal procedures are followed and children are in their proper lines. We ask that you not come into the office to dismiss your child prior to 2:30 p.m., unless there is an emergency. Parents who meet their children after school need to pick them up at the designated dismissal area. If a parent/guardian is not present, students will be escorted back into the building and you may then pick up your child at the main office. Students will be dismissed at 2:30 from the Thompson and Rockland Street doors. Bus students will be dismissed from the Hemlock Street door.

DISMISSAL

Parents picking up students should remember that safety rules must be followed. **PLEASE DO NOT CALL YOUR CHILD TO RUN OUT OF LINE TO YOU OR YOUR CAR – THIS COULD CAUSE A SERIOUS ACCIDENT. NO CARS WILL BE ALLOWED TO PARK IN THE AREA USED BY THE BUSSES (HEMLOCK STREET). THE BUSSES CANNOT BE DETAINED AND MUST HAVE THE RIGHT OF WAY AT ALL TIMES. DO NOT CROWD THE AREAS IN FRONT OF THE EXITS (THOMPSON, ROCKLAND AND HEMLOCK STREETS).** Teachers are unable to conduct an orderly and safe dismissal when there is a crowd in front of the exits. Teachers will walk children to the corners to cross the streets – please wait for your child on the corner that they cross to. Students using the Thompson Street door will cross at either Thompson and Bolton or Thompson and Hemlock. Students using the Rockland Street door will be walked off the playground and they will proceed home, crossing at Rockland and Bolton or Rockland and Hemlock. Please wait for Rockland door students off the playground.

Students will not be dismissed to parents in cars or to parents standing along the sidewalk – students will be walked to corners and dismissed from his/her appropriate corner to walk home. We must conduct a safe and orderly dismissal.

BUSSES

New Bedford Public School Busses

Students who ride the bus to school must cooperate with the driver. They must not be excessively raucous, changing seats, throwing objects, placing arms or head out of the window, hitting or striking other students. Conduct violations, if issued by the driver, will be sent home to the parent/guardian by school administration.

Students who ride the bus to school MUST go home on the bus unless the teacher receives a WRITTEN, SIGNED note from the parent/guardian stating the date that the child is to walk home or be picked up. Please name the person who is to pick up your child. These are safety precautions. **A simple verbal statement from the child WILL NOT be honored; the child WILL have to go home on his/her assigned bus.**

Private Mini-Busses or Vans
Students will be dismissed by their teacher to the paraprofessionals on duty. Students will wait for their bus outdoors and on days of inclement weather, they will wait indoors. Mini-bus or van transportation is under direct contract between parent and the transportation company selected by the parent – it does not involve the school. **These students will be dismissed from the Hemlock Street door.**

Students who ride a private bus home MUST go home on the bus unless the teacher receives a WRITTEN, SIGNED note from the parent/guardian stating the date that the child is to walk home or be picked up. Please name the person who is to pick up your child. These are safety precautions. **A simple verbal statement from the child WILL NOT be honored; the child WILL have to go home on his/her assigned bus.**

EARLY OR EMERGENCY DISMISSAL

It occasionally happens that a student, for good cause, has to be out of school for part of the day. In such cases, we expect that the student come to school for part of the day not covered by the excuse. It is better for students to spend some of their day in school than to be out all day unnecessarily. Early dismissal disrupts a class. Please do not request early dismissal except for very serious personal or medical needs. If your child needs to be dismissed during school hours a note **must** be sent to school stating the reason and date of the dismissal and must be signed by a parent/guardian. Should you forget the note, the office staff must be called and notified of the early dismissal. ***Students will not be dismissed early without communication from a parent/guardian. All students must be dismissed with an adult who shows a picture I.D.***

Should your child need to be dismissed due to illness, you, or the person designated on the Emergency Form, will be notified and asked to pick up your child. In either case, any child being dismissed early from school will be dismissed from the office and released to a parent/guardian or designated adult. The Dismissal Log Book needs to be signed by the receiving adult.

The ***Emergency Dismissal Form*** must be completed for each student attending the school by a parent/guardian. It is of the utmost importance that we have a form for each student. In the event of an accident or crisis situation, school personnel need to be able to contact a parent/guardian. If you do not have a telephone or cellular phone, name a responsible family member, or responsible friend or neighbor who will be able to reach you immediately. ***Please notify the school if ANY of the information listed on the Emergency Form changes during the school year.***

DISMISSAL – SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

As the safety and well being of your child is our utmost priority, it is essential that in families where special circumstances exist (i.e. visitation rights, custodial rights or protection orders), students will be dismissed from the office at the discretion of the principal.

ACADEMIC & CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Our students are expected to work to the best of their abilities. Effort is critical to their success. Proper classroom conduct is also a key ingredient in order for learning to occur. To accomplish this, our school community has developed the following student beliefs.
Students should adhere to the following academic and classroom beliefs.

Students will:

1. arrive to school on time.
2. be prepared for class.
3. be polite at all times.
4. work quietly so as not to disturb others.
5. listen courteously when others are talking.
6. be friendly to fellow classmates.
7. be truthful and honest.
8. respect our teachers, adults and fellow classmates.
9. cooperate with others.
10. respect school property and the property of our classmates.
11. always do their best.

GENERAL SCHOOL RULES

The rules of this code of conduct are in addition to the Principal's broad discretionary power to maintain safety, order and discipline.

1. Students are not to have in their possession any weapons: i.e., knives, guns or any objects that could be used as a weapon. Students are not to use school items, such as a ruler, pencil or scissors as weapons. Law considers any object that is used as a weapon a weapon.
2. Students may not have firecrackers in their possession. State law prohibits firecrackers entering the state for individual use.
3. Students are not to use vulgar, profane, or disrespectful language – written *or* spoken.
4. Students will not use or threaten others with violence.
5. Students must not leave the classroom, a supervised area, or the school building or yard without permission.
6. Students will not deface the interior or exterior of the building. Vandalism will be reported to the police.
7. Students must not damage schoolbooks. If a book is damaged, a fine will be imposed. For lost or stolen books, parents will need to reimburse the school.
8. Students dismissed at 2:30 will immediately leave the school grounds when dismissed by their teacher.
9. Students who are passing in the corridors must act in a manner that will not disturb other classes.
10. There will be a single line on the stairs at all times: traffic up on the right; traffic down on the left. Students will not lean over or slide down the banister.
11. Students will not throw objects, of any kind, while in school or on school property.
12. Students will not chew gum anywhere in the school.
13. Toys, games, radios, headphones or sports equipment should not be brought to school.
14. Valuable audio equipment such as beepers, cell phones and video games must be left home. The school cannot accept responsibility for lost or damaged toys or equipment.
15. Students may not commit forgery. Forgery is the act of signing another name falsely in order to deceive. Law forbids forgery.

16. Since the school cannot be responsible for money or goods, we strongly discourage the solicitation of staff and children for out of school fund-raisers by students (Little league, Boy or Girl Scouts, etc)
17. Students will not throw snowballs – suspension from school may result.
18. Students are expected to abide by the homework policy for their grade level. Homework is to be returned to school promptly.
19. Students are expected to obey all classroom and cafeteria rules.

Safety, order, and discipline in the context of the whole school outweigh the rights of the individual. In the final analysis, the Principal has the right to interpret that, which negates a reasonable standard of conduct, and appearance, keeping in mind the health and safety of the individual.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS OF CONDUCT

Students are expected to fulfill the following responsibilities:

- **PARTICIPATION**: Students have the responsibility of participating fully in the serious business of learning. Students must report to school daily, on time, remain in classes until excused, pay attention to instruction, complete assignments in a timely fashion and to the best of their ability, and request help when needed.
- **BEHAVIOR**: Students have the responsibility of avoiding any behavior that affects their learning in a poor way. Students must cooperate in maintaining reasonable care of books and all instructional materials. Students must refrain from gossiping, threatening, or fighting with other students.
- **RESPECT FOR TEACHERS AND ADULTS**: Students have the responsibility of showing respect for the knowledge and authority of their teachers and all adults. Any teacher/adult has the authority to correct any student on the spot. Students should not defy authority. Students must use acceptable and courteous language.
- **RESPECT FOR OTHER STUDENTS**: Students have the responsibility of recognizing the rights and human dignity of fellow students. For example, students must refrain from name-calling, fighting, harassment, belittling or engaging in deliberate attempts to embarrass or harm other students.

CAFETERIA RULES

1. Students are to be quiet and orderly in line as they pass to and from the cafeteria during lunchtime.
2. Students are to remain seated while eating in the cafeteria. No one should be sitting on his or her knees.
3. Students are not to go to the disposal area until the teacher on duty has dismissed them.
4. Students should use good manners at all times.
5. As a safety issue, a silent lunch will be in effect while students are eating. Following completion of their lunch, students may converse with one another using a “library voice”.
6. No food may be taken from the cafeteria.
7. Students must raise their hand for permission to leave their seat for any reason.
8. Students are encouraged to bring healthy beverages. No glass bottles are allowed. No soda.
9. Students may not throw anything in the cafeteria.
10. Students will wait until they are dismissed from their table before getting in line.
11. Students are responsible for cleaning their own space.

FIRE DRILLS

Teachers are obligated to explain fire drill procedures on the first day of school and must periodically review these procedures. When the fire alarm sounds, it is our responsibility to exit the building in a safe and orderly manner. To accomplish this, the following exiting procedures ***must*** be followed:

- Students must remain silent.

- Students should pass single file from their classrooms.
- Students are to walk quickly to the nearest exit.
- Students must remain with their class or the adult(s) they are with at the time of the alarm until the drill is concluded.
- Students who are passing in the corridor, or in the restroom, etc., when the alarm sounds must exit by the nearest exit and report to the first adult they see to be escorted to their classroom teacher.
- In case of a fire emergency while the students are in the cafeteria or auditorium, students will exit with the adult staff on duty.

HEALTH CARE:

Students who report an illness to their classroom teacher during the school day will report to the school nurse. Every effort will be made to contact the parents. A student cannot be dismissed without parent/guardian contact.

The following are the state regulations governing the administration of prescription medication in school. These policies have been put in place to ensure the health and safety of children needing medications during the school day. These regulations require that the following forms must be on file with your child's health record before we begin to administer any medication in school:

- Signed consent by the parent or legal guardian to give the medication.
- Signed medication order. The written medication order form should be taken to your child's licensed prescriber (your child's doctor, nurse practitioner, etc.) for completion and returned to the school nurse. This order must be renewed as needed and at the beginning of each academic year.
- Medication should be delivered to the school in a pharmacy or manufacturer labeled container by the parent/guardian or responsible adult whom you designate. Please ask your pharmacy to provide separate bottles for school and home. No more than a thirty (30) day supply of medication should be delivered to the school, along with a note stating the number of pills sent in to the school.

Should your child need medication to be given during the school day, please act quickly to follow these policies so we may begin to give the medication as soon as possible. It is recommended that medication be given at home; however, students who must receive medication during the school day are required to comply with the above regulations.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY

It is our belief that when the parent, teacher and child work together in unison, outstanding results can happen. Please check your child's folder and/or planner each night for special notes, accomplishments or other news. We also have a "Monday Communicator " which is sent home each Monday with your child's work. Please sign on the appropriate date.

We believe students succeed when the entire educational team of the student, teacher and parent puts forth their best efforts. Please visit our website for up to date events and news.

Parents can also become involved in our school's PTO as well as School Council.

Homework Helping Tips:

In order to assist your child in completing his/her homework, the following reminders for parents are listed below:

- Provide a quiet place, free from distractions such as television and family activities, if at all possible;
- Do not **"do"** homework for your child but provide encouragement and assistance when needed;

- Check each assignment to see that it is complete;
- Recognize that each child is an individual and may proceed with homework in ways that the parent did not; and
- If your child is having problems completing homework, do not put undue pressure on him/her, but contact your child's teacher to arrange for a conference to discuss your concerns.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The school will have a school council whose membership will consist of school administration, staff members, parents and community members. Parents will be elected by an established voting procedure. The school council will discuss and be apprised of school functions and procedures.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The Congdon School Parent Teacher organization (PTO) meets once a month. A meeting scheduled will be sent home with students in September, The PTO is involved with school fund raisers and other activities to secure funds for field trips and school-related activities. All parents/guardians are welcome to attend meetings.\

ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS & PROCEDURES

It is the belief of the faculty and administration of the New Bedford Public Schools that regular and punctual attendance is essential for every student. Active participation in the learning process is an important component to successful achievement, and regular attendance at school will help our students to become productive and responsible citizens. In light of this, the NBPS has instituted a 95% quota on attendance. All students are expected to meet this quota.

ABSENCES: Written documentation is required from a parent or guardian for any and all absences. The note must list the date(s) of absence(s); the student's full name; and it must clearly state the reason for the absence. The reason must be one of those listed below or the absence will be counted as inexcusable. The student will show each classroom teacher the documentation indicating his/her absence. The note will then be given to the homeroom teacher who will keep it on file for further reference. Homeroom teachers should follow disciplinary procedures to insure that notes are returned in a timely fashion.

Teachers and administrators realize that there are reasons for a student's absence from school. Only the following instances, all of which require official written verification or documentation, would constitute an excusable absence/ tardy:

- Medical appointments/illness verified in writing by a professional health-care provider or the school nurse
- Death of a family member
- Observance of a major religious holiday
- School-related absence (i.e.: dismissals for field trips, suspensions, ASA, sports events, etc.)
- Legal obligation
- Verified post-high school visitation
- Absence approved by the school principal

If a student is absent for one of the above reasons, he/she will provide each classroom teacher with the appropriate notification.

Please note: Family vacations do not constitute an excused absence.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT: When a student exceeds the following:

- 9 inexcusable absences in a class that meets daily
  or
- 5 inexcusable absences in a class that meets on alternating days

the student will not receive the Unit or portion thereof normally granted upon successful completion of that class. This, in turn, may place the student in jeopardy of attaining the required Units necessary for promotion.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION: Parents or guardians will be notified that a student is in danger of not receiving credit through a documented Notice of Absenteeism. (A teacher may choose to follow up with a telephone call.) Communication will occur on the following days:

- Class that meets daily – on/after the 7th day of absence
- Class that meets on alternating days – on/after the 3rd absence

TEACHER OPTION FOR CREDIT: Once a student has exceeded the minimum absentee days as stated above, the classroom teacher has the option of awarding credit only if the student has made up all the work missed to the teacher's satisfaction and in accordance with the standards set forth in the curriculum. It is strongly urged that the student make up the work as soon as possible. Should the student violate the attendance requirement, without making up work to the teacher's satisfaction, then – even if the student attained a passing grade for the class – the student's report card will indicate:

- No units earned toward promotion for that year
- The mandatory teacher comments: Exceeds minimum attendance/no credit

HEARING PROCESS: Students and parents will have the opportunity to request a hearing within five school days of issuance of the report card. The hearing will include a meeting with the parent or guardian, the student, classroom teacher(s), and the principal (where appropriate.) The parent or guardian may appeal the decision to the principal.

TARDINESS: If a student is not present in his/her classroom/homeroom at the bell, the student is marked tardy; a student attending less than half a day is marked absent. A written excuse (as described above) is required. The first three occurrences of tardiness will result in an after-school period. A detention period will be assigned for further tardiness. If a student is tardy more than 5 times, a conference will be held with the parent or guardian and the principal. Three instances of significant tardiness (approximately one third of the class missed in each case) will count as one absence.

DISMISSAL: A student wishing to be dismissed during a session must present a signed note from the parent or guardian to a principal. It must include the student's full name, reason, date and time for dismissal, and a telephone number where the principal can reach the parent or guardian for verification and approval.

TRUANCY: Truancy is defined as being absent from school without the permission of a parent or guardian. Any student who is found to be truant may be required to return to school accompanied by a parent or guardian.

RETENTION: A student will be retained in Grades 1-6 if he/she is not present for the full school day at least 171 days of the 180 days in a school year (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 2.) The principal will retain full authority to determine, for each student, the number of days that count toward the 171 day minimum requirement and his/her grade placement. A medical certificate is not reflected in the 9-day excused absence requirement.

Adopted:
New Bedford Public Schools, New Bedford, MA

New Bedford Public Schools Elementary Promotion Policy

The New Bedford Public Schools' ***mission*** states that ***we are committed to developing a community of learners, who are academically proficient, demonstrate strong character and exhibit self confidence.***

The ***Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*** set forth the strict guidelines, curriculum objectives and standards for each grade level, therefore, the New Bedford Public Schools has set high expectations at each grade level for all students. Every teacher, administrator, parent and other adult involved in the lives of our students shares in the responsibility to ensure that all students meet these expectations.

This policy:

- further defines the expectations we hold for all students and the support strategies we need to employ to ensure their success.
- ensures promotions are earned and based on academic achievement.
- diminishes grade retentions to the greatest extent possible.
- ensures students will enter classrooms with the skill and knowledge necessary to do grade-level work.
- ensures students are prepared to pass the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessments (**MCAS**).
- recognizes that promotion decisions for Special Education students shall be based on each student's progress toward attainment of measurable annual goals and objectives as specified in his/her Individual Educational Plan (IEP).
- recognizes that teachers will recommend each student for promotion based upon the criteria outlined in this policy and the teacher's professional assessment that the student's classroom performance indicates the ability to succeed at the next grade level. The intent is for all students to have the academic skills and habits to be successful.

Elementary School Promotion Requirements

Students must fulfill several requirements to be promoted to the next grade. Students must:

- in Kindergarten through Grade 5, consistently meet grade level standards to exhibit growth in the following content areas:
    - Reading
    - Language Arts
    - Mathematics
    - Science
    - Social Studies

- attain passing scores on the New Bedford Public School's performance indicators, which are used to evaluate overall school performance. Assessments include, but are not limited to:
    - DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment) in Grades K-5
    - ELA Benchmarks in Grade K-5
    - Mathematics Benchmarks in Grades K-5

- maintain a 95% attendance requirement (172 out of 181 school days) for the school year to meet the federal mandate put forth by No child Left Behind (NCLB) and the district's attendance goal.
    - The principal will retain full authority to determine, for each student, the number of days that count toward the 172 minimum requirement;
    - Excused absences include student illness, medical appointment, death of an immediate family member, observance of a religious holiday and court appearance,

Grade Level Promotion Requirements

DRA Promotion Requirements
Determining Proficiency

An **at-risk student** must be able to score within the following DRA (May/June) benchmark levels for promotion to the following grade:

Grade	Time of year	DRA Benchmark Level
Kindergarten	January	1
	May/June	3
Grade 1	September	3-6
	May/June	16-18
Grade 2	September	16-20
	May/June	28
Grade 3	September	28-34
	May/June	38
Grade 4		40
Grade 5		50

CHANGE IN GRADE PLACEMENT DURING A SCHOOL YEAR

Throughout the school year, a recommendation ***may*** be made by a building team to the principal to change the grade level placement of a student. In making such a recommendation, consideration will be given to the student's age, maturity, attendance, effort, and the student's academic potential. The principal will notify the superintendent or his/her designee of the team's decision.

Adopted:
New Bedford Public Schools, New Bedford, MA

HOMEWORK POLICY

The responsibility of the school district to educate the student is carried out by the teachers through effective classroom instruction and the careful delegation of independent study. It is important for the student to be taught the concepts related to the content area and how to study in school before he/she is given assignments to complete at home. There is, therefore, a progressive increase in the amount of homework expected of students from the elementary grades through high school.

Purposeful homework benefits students. Homework should be an extension of the class lesson, be clearly understood by students, be well planned and meaningful. Homework can be evaluated in multiple ways through review, classroom or small group discussion, and/or direct assessment. Completion of homework will count towards students' cumulative grade for the content area.

The immediate purpose of a specific homework assignment may be to:

1. Strengthen basic skills

2. Extend classroom learning

3. Stimulate and further interests

4. Reinforce independent study skills

5. Develop initiative, responsibility, and self-direction/reflection

6. Stimulate use of leisure time that increases understanding and love of learning

7. Acquaint parents with the content/concepts studied in school

Homework assignments shall be planned in accordance with the following principles:

1. If homework is to have value, its purpose and relation to what has been learned in the classroom must be clearly understood by the student.

2. Students should understand not only what to do, but also how to do it.

3. Homework should grow from classroom discussions, problems, projects, and concerns.

4. The student's age, need for play time, and out-of-school responsibilities must be considered when deciding upon length of any assignment. The student must bear responsibility for managing his/her time in a way that homework can be completed and submitted on time.

5. Assignments should make use of a variety of skills and prior knowledge.

6. Every homework assignment must be properly corrected and/or evaluated in keeping with the purpose of the assignment. To the extent possible, such corrections/evaluations shall be shared with the students involved in a timely fashion.

7. When a student's grade or learning expectation are being adversely affected by poor homework performance or non-completion of assignments, the teacher shall communicate orally, or in writing, in a timely fashion with parents/guardians concerning the problem.

8. All homework assigned will be reflected in the child's cumulative grade or learning expectation at the end of the term.

The School Committee encourages the administration to assist teachers in planning homework assignments in keeping with the above guidelines. Additionally:

1. the Committee expects that Principals (or directors/instructional supervisors where appropriate) will monitor the implementation of this homework policy through various approaches such as review of lesson plans, observation of classes, conferences with teachers, examination of student papers and/or other related activities.

2. The Committee expects that each content Director will clearly define the homework policy of his/her department. All such departmental policies must keep with this School Committee homework policy.

3. The Committee expects parents to provide a suitable place for students to do their homework and to monitor their children by questioning them upon the completion of their assignments.

Level	Average Time (minutes per week)
K	(45 minutes)
1-3	(150 minutes)
4-5	(175 minutes)
6-7-8	(300 minutes)
9-12	(600 minutes)

Adopted: 8/10/09
New Bedford Public Schools, New Bedford, MA

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

The staff is always willing to meet with you to discuss your concerns or your child's progress. **Teacher conferences must be arranged by requesting an appointment through the principal's office.** Since it is extremely important that classroom activities not be interrupted, appointments will be scheduled after 2:30 p.m.

A "Back-to-School Night" is scheduled every September. This night gives teachers the opportunity to meet parents and discuss the goals and objective set for the school year. Individual parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled in December and again in March for any students who are at risk and not meeting with academic success. Parents will receive information from the school regarding "Back-to-School Night" and individual parent conferences.

FIELD TRIPS

The School Committee recognizes the educational value of field trips, tours and excursions, when an adjunct to an approved program and designed to attain specific program objectives. The School Committee feels that field trips are a privilege and not an entitlement. To the extent that budgetary resources permit, the Committee encourages and sanctions student trips and other out-of-district school activities, including participation in community civic projects and international travel which are of value in helping achieve each participating student's educational objectives.

All field trips require both the Principal and the Superintendent's administrative approval. Requests for overnight trips must be approved by the Superintendent or designee, with attention paid to the specific instructional objectives and the overall educational value of the trip. All out of state or extended (overnight) trips and excursions, except those required for student participation in tournament competition or contests, must have advance approval of the School Committee. Fund-raising activities for such trips shall be subject to approval by the Superintendent. All Committee policies and administrative regulations concerning students will be in effect for all approved field trips, excursions and travel experiences.

Adopted: 8/10/09
New Bedford Public Schools, New Bedford, MA

DRESS CODE

Law may ban bizarre and indecent items of attire. It is expected that students at all times be dressed neatly and appropriately. Footwear must be worn at all times. Students shall not wear hats, hoods, headbands, bandanas, halter-tops, short shirts (that expose the midriff), tank tops, spaghetti strap shirts, or muscle shirts.

Outer wear (jackets, coats, gloves, etc) should not be worn in the building unless permission has been granted. Coats worn to school will be worn during any school function such as recess, physical education or field trips. Any attire that is though to reflect a gang affiliation or resembles that of any gang will not be tolerated. Inappropriate dress as determined by a principal will result in calling the parent to bring proper apparel to school.

When an individual's behavior, actions, and/or attire undermine or are detrimental to the learning environment, action will be taken by school authorities to correct the problem. In the final analysis, the principal has the right to interpret that, which negates a reasonable standard of conduct, and appearance, keeping in mind the health and safety of the individual.

DISTRICT, STATE, AND FEDERAL GUIDELINES

DISCIPLINARY DUE PROCESS

1. EMERGENCY SUSPENSION**:** A student may be given an emergency suspension by the Principal if the Principal has reasonable cause to believe that:

a. The physical safety of the student or of others is substantially endan-gered and will continue to be endangered; or

b. The student is causing and will continue to cause substantial interfer-ence with classroom instruction.

As soon as practicable following the imposition of an Emergency Suspension, the student shall be provided with an opportunity to respond to the charge on which the suspension is based.

2. SHORT TERM DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS: Except where an Emergency Suspension is warranted, a student will be given oral notice of the offense with which he/she is charged and an opportunity to respond prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in the student's suspension from school for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. In the event that the Principal determines that the student will be suspended from school, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified by telephone and in writing.

3. LONG TERM DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS: Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in a student's suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expulsion, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given written notice of a hearing at which they may be represented by an attorney at their expense and may examine and present witnesses and documentary evidence. Following this hearing, the decision maker (Principal/ School Committee) will issue a written decision. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will have the right to appeal any decision imposing a long-term exclusion from school. Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, the student shall have ten (10) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent of Schools. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H1/2, the student shall have five (5) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Superintendent. For exclusions imposed by the School Committee in accordance with M.G.L. c.76 §17, the student shall have the right to file a written request for reconsideration by the Committee within ten (10) days of the effective date of the exclusion. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect. M.G.L. c. 76 §17, M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, M.G.L. c. 71 §37H1/2.

4. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students who have been identified as students with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or who the school has reason to believe might be eligible for special education services are entitled to additional procedural protections when a disciplinary exclusion is considered**.** In many cases, a student with a disability will be entitled to services identified by the student's Team as necessary to provide the student with a free appropriate public education during periods of disciplinary exclusion exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. For additional information regarding the rights of students with disabilities in the context of school discipline, please contact the Principal or the Director of Special Education.

DISCIPLINE AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related regulations require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services.

Students who have been found to have a disability that impacts upon a major life activity, as defined under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act, are, generally, also entitled to increased procedural protections prior to imposing discipline that will result in the student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or where there is a pattern of short term removals exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year.

The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

(1) The IEP for every student eligible for special education or related services shall indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code of the school or whether the code should be modified to address the student's individual needs.

(2) Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for up to ten (10) school days to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given school year or subjected to a pattern of removal constituting a "change of placement", building administrators, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team will meet to determine the relationship between the student's disability and behavior (Manifestation Determination). In most instances, during disciplinary exclusions exceeding ten (10) school days in a single school year, the student shall have the right to the receive services identified as necessary by the Team to provide him/her with a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion.

(3) If building administrators, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the student's conduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students but will continue to provide a free appropriate public education to those students with IEPs. The student's Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan or, where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment.

(4) If building administrators, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the conduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will not be subjected to further disciplinary removal or exclusion from the student's current educational program based on that conduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs, or resulting in serious bodily injury to others) until the IEP or 504 Team develops, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent to a new placement or until the District obtains an order from a court or from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) authorizing a change in the student's placement. The student's Team shall also review, and modify as appropriate, any existing behavior intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment.

(5) If a student with a disability possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a weapon, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school function, the District may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. A court or BSEA Hearing Officer may also order the placement of a student who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days.

NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE

The New Bedford Public Schools provides equal education and employment opportunity without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, or sexual orientation.
The New Bedford Public Schools complies with all applicable State and Federal Laws, including but not limited to, Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Massachusetts General Laws, c.151B, c.151C, c.76, §5, and c.71B.

The New Bedford Public Schools has duly appointed individuals responsible for the overall monitoring, auditing, and ensuring compliance with this policy. For compliance issues regarding educational activities, contact the District's Title IX and Section 504 Coordinators: Dr. Mary Louise Francis, 455 County Street - Room 141, New Bedford, Massachusetts, (508) 997-4511 x-3201. For compliance issues regarding employment activities, contact: Dr. Ronald F. Souza, 455 County Street, New Bedford, Massachusetts, (508) 997-4511. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against in any of the District's educational or employment activities can file a written grievance with the appropriate officer.

HARASSMENT

The New Bedford Public Schools is committed to the principle of diversity in its community and seeks to create an environment in which all people can thrive. It is essential that all individuals recognize certain guidelines for appropriate behavior — that which allows each person the freedom to learn and work without fear of intimidation or humiliation. Behavior that disregards the rights of others is unacceptable and the person engaging in such behavior will be subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, suspension or expulsion from school. In addition, anyone who retaliates against an individual who has brought a complaint of harassment to the attention of the school or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint of harassment will also be subject to disciplinary action.

An individual, who believes he/she has been harassed or who has witnessed or learned of the harassment of another person in the school environment, should inform the Principal. If the individual does not wish to speak to the Principal or if the Principal does not address the problem in an effective manner, the individual should contact the Director of Special Education or the Superintendent of the New Bedford Public Schools, 455 County Street, New Bedford, Massachusetts, (508) 997-4511.

The New Bedford Public Schools will promptly investigate complaints of harassment. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent consistent with the school district's obligations under law and under applicable collective bargaining agreements. The school district will comply with legal requirements governing the reporting of suspected cases of child abuse and will report suspected criminal activity to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

When an investigation has been completed, school personnel will inform the complainant of the results and will file a report with the district's appropriate compliance officer.

HARASSMENT / DISCRIMINATION GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

1. As soon as possible following the occurrence of a act alleging a violation of Section 504, the ADA, c.151B, c.151C, Title IX, G.L. c.76 §5, the aggrieved party shall submit, in writing, to his/her Principal a statement describing the circumstances and specifying the nature of the alleged discrimination. The Principal will send a copy of the grievance to either the Student Affairs Officer or Personnel Officer. Within a reasonable time, not to exceed ten (10) days, the Principal shall investigate the circumstances and reply in writing to the aggrieved.
2. If the grievance has not been satisfactorily addressed at that level, the aggrieved party may submit the matter in writing to the Student Affairs Officer or Personnel Officer who will meet with the parties involved to review all facts in the case. Within ten (10) days following this meeting, the Student Affairs Officer or Personnel Officer shall submit a written answer to the aggrieved party.
3. If the matter is still not resolved, the aggrieved party shall submit in writing, the circumstances of the grievance to the appropriate Assistant Superintendent. The Assistant Superintendent will conduct a hearing at a time convenient to all parties as soon as possible. The Assistant Superintendent will give a written response to the matter ten (10) days following this hearing.
4. If the case has still not been resolved satisfactorily, then the matter may be submitted in writing to the Superintendent who will give written notice of the action to the aggrieved within ten (10) days following a meeting at which the grievance is considered.
5. At any time during the process, a hearing may be requested at the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) for a matter regarding a student, or a complaint filed with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) for matters regarding either students or employees.

JFCK-SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS

Sexual harassment is a form of behavior which adversely affects the learning experience. It is prohibited by State and Federal law. The New Bedford School Department also condemns and prohibits sexual harassment by any student or employee.

Sexual harassment does not refer to purely voluntary social activities. It refers to behavior which is not welcomed by the student, which is personally offensive to him or her, and/or which undermines morale and/or interferes with the ability of the student to learn effectively. It is, therefore, against the policies of the New Bedford School Department for any employee or student, male or female, to harass another student sexually, that is, by making unwelcome sexual ad-vances, requests for sexual favors, or other uninvited verbal or physical con-duct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of obtaining an education:
2. Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by a student is made the basis for educational decision affecting the student;
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with a student's educational performance;
4. Retaliation is threatened or undertaken against a student who com-plains that such conduct is interfering with his or her education; or
5. A hostile or intimidating learning environment is created for the student. Any student violating this policy will be subject to appropriate discipline, includ-ing possible exclusion by the New Bedford School Department.

Any student wishing to file charges should do so through the house office.

Complaint Procedure:

1. Any member of the school community who believes that he or she has been subject-ed to sexual harassment will report the incident(s) to the Principal.
2. The Principal will attempt to resolve the problem in an informal manner through the following process:

   a. Within two (2) school days, the Principal will confer with the charging party in order to obtain a clear understanding of that party's statement of the facts.
   b. The Principal will then attempt to meet with the charged party in order to obtain his or her response to the complaint.
   c. The Principal will hold as many meetings with the parties as is necessary to gather facts.
   d. On the basis of the Principal's perception of the situation he or she may:
      i. Attempt to resolve the matter informally through reconciliation; or
      ii. Report the incident and transfer the record to the Assistant Superintendent or his/her designee, and so notify the parties by certified mail.

   The Principal may attempt to gather any more evidence necessary to decide the case, and thereafter impose any sanctions deemed appropriate, including a recommendation to the School Committee for termination or expulsion. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible.

STUDENT RECORDS

In accordance with Massachusetts regulations, an eligible student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall have access to the student record. In no event shall such access be delayed more than ten (10) days after the initial request, unless the requesting party consents to a delay. Upon such request for access, the entire student record regardless of the physical location of its parts shall be made available. Upon request, copies of any information contained in the student record shall be furnished to the eligible student or his/her parent. A reasonable fee not to exceed the cost of reproduc-tion may be charged.

Destruction of Records: The school system will maintain a copy of a student's transcript for at least 60 years after the student leaves the school system. Temporary records will be destroyed within seven (7) years after a student leaves the system. Before any records are destroyed, the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given notice and an opportunity to obtain a copy of any records to be destroyed.

Non-custodial Parents: Massachusetts regulations establish a mandatory process for responding to student record requests from non-custodial parents. When a parent who does not have physical custody of the child/student (non-custodial parent) requests access to the student's student record or other information regarding the student, the non-custodial parent is required to submit a written request to the building principal for the student record with a certified court order indicating that the non-custodial parent is
eligible to access information regarding the student and an affidavit verifying that the order provided remains in effect and that the non-custodial parent is not subject to a temporary or
permanent protective order.

Immediately upon receipt of this documentation the school shall notify the custodial parent that the school will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the student record information after twenty-one (21) days unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation establishing that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to access information regarding the student. When student record information is provided to a non-custodial parent in accordance with the above procedures, the school will delete the address and telephone number

of the student and custodial parent from all records provided to the non-custodial parent. Any such records provided to the non-custodial parent shall be marked to indicate that they may not be used to enroll the student in another school.

Non-custodial parents are required by law to submit a written request for access to their child's student record information each year stating that the parent continues to be entitled to unsupervised visitation with the student and remains eligible to access information regarding the student.

MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS. C.71 §37H

(a) **Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.**

(b**) Any student, who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.**

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).
(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent.

The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(e) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the Superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the Superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion."

Massachusetts General Laws c.71 §37H1/2

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or Principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or Principal if said principal or Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in

effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or Principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or Principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent. The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three (3) calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or Principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

SERVICES AND ACCOMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Some students with disabilities require specialized instruction and/or supportive services to help them make effective progress in school. These services can include, but are not limited to, speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, specialized instruction, or placement in a special classroom. Parents or other people in a care-giving or professional position may refer a student to the Special Education Department for an evaluation of the student's eligibility for special education. Within five (5) school days of such a referral, a consent form authorizing an evaluation of the student will be forwarded to the parent(s)/guardian(s). Upon receipt of the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent, an evaluation will be conducted and a TEAM meeting will be held to determine if the student is eligible for special education services. If the student is found eligible for special education services, the Team will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) identifying the necessary services. In some cases, the evaluation Team determines that a student with a disability may require only individual accommodations as opposed to specialized instruction and /or related services. Such students are then referred for an evaluation of their eligibility for an individual accommodation plan in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

For more information regarding the services available to students with disabilities please contact the school guidance counselor, Principal, or the New Bedford Public Schools' Director of Special Education.

NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS OF TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

The Federal *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2001 requires school districts that receive federal Title I funding to notify parents of their right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct their child.

As a recipient of these funds, the New Bedford Public Schools will provide you with this information in a timely manner if you request it. Specifically, you have the right to request the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

- Whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects he or she teaches.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances.
- The teacher's college major, whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether paraprofessionals provide services to your child and, if so, their qualifications.

BULLYING AND CYBER-BULLYING

"Bullying", the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

"Cyber-bullying", bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

If a student notifies a teacher that they have been bullied, the teacher will immediately respond to the child's concern by contacting the child's parents within 24 hours to inform the parent of the action they will take to investigate and resolve the situation. The teacher will inform the assistant principal on their floor in writing of what was reported to them and the action they took to resolve the issue. If the bullying continues, the teacher may then refer the matter to the assistant principal for further investigation.

If the Assistant Principal receives a referral regarding the bullying incident, the Assistant Principal will work with the Guidance Counselor to conduct an investigation to determine the validity of the referral. The student (s) will be asked to sign a detailed statement, including the perceived bullying incident, the time/location and the alleged perpetrator. However, if a student decides to file an anonymous complaint, the school cannot take action against the alleged perpetrator(s) with the evidence alone.
If the written statement meets bullying designation under Massachusetts General Law, the assistant principal will immediately contact the parents of the student (s) being victimized and the perpetrator (s) to inform them of the situation and of the investigation process.

If the assistant principal or principal determines that a student has been participating in bullying in the school building, or on school property, including riding the bus to and from school, actions may be taken. The actions can include, but are not limited to, assigning the consequences listed below, arranging counseling sessions with the Guidance Counselor or Adjustment Counselor to focus on understanding bullying and developing appropriate social behaviors, and setting up a meeting with School Resource Officer to file charges.

Any student, who is deemed to be a co-conspirator either through hindering the process of reporting bullying incidents or intimidating a victim, may also be subject to the consequences as well.

Please sign and return this page only.

I have received, read and understand this student/parent handbook, school rules and District policies for the James B. Congdon Elementary School.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Student's Name _____

Grade _____ Room _____