

**Reading Public Schools**  
**School Committee Meeting Packet**  
**August 24, 2023**



Open Session 7:00p.m.

Reading Memorial High School Library  
Reading, MA



# Town of Reading Meeting Posting with Agenda

## Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

School Committee

Date: 2023-08-24

Time: 6:00 PM

Building: School - Memorial High

Location: School Library

Address: 62 Oakland Road

Agenda: Revised

Purpose: Open Session

Meeting Called By: Thomas Wise, Chair

Notices and agendas are to be posted 48 hours in advance of the meetings excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Legal Holidays. Please keep in mind the Town Clerk's hours of operation and make necessary arrangements to be sure your posting is made in an adequate amount of time. A listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting must be on the agenda.

**All Meeting Postings must be submitted in typed format; handwritten notices will not be accepted.**

## Topics of Discussion:

6:00 p.m.	A.	Call to Order
6:00 p.m.	B.	Public Comment Consent Agenda 1. Minutes (08-10-2023) 2. Warrant Reports (08-10-2023 and 08-17-2023)
6:05 p.m.	C.	Personnel 1. Appointment of Superintendent to MSBA Killam Designer Selection Panel (A)
6:10 p.m.	E.	New Business 1. Review and Approval of District-Wide Student Handbook (A) 2. Outline Community Math Pathways Committee Timeline, Process, & Expectations
6:20 p.m.	D.	Old Business 1. Second Reading – DBDA – Special Education Reserve Fund (A) 2. Liaison, Subcommittee, and Charter Review Committee Appointment Notification
6:30 p.m.	E.	New Business 3. Policy Updates – Review and Vote on Amended Policies (A): a. ADF – School District Wellness Program b. DJE – Procurement Requirements c. KCD – Public Gifts to the Schools d. DBJ – Budget Transfer Authority 4. Appointment of School Committee Member to Wellness Committee (if necessary – depending on Policy ADF amendment passing)

This Agenda has been prepared in advance and represents a listing of topics that the chair reasonably anticipates will be discussed at the meeting. However the agenda does not necessarily include all matters which may be taken up at this meeting.



## Town of Reading Meeting Posting with Agenda

6:50 p.m.	B.	Reports 1. Assistant Superintendent of Student Services 2. Director of Finance and Operations 3. Superintendent 4. Liaison/Sub-Committee
7:00 p.m.	G.	Executive Session 1. Joint Session with the Finance Committee - To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining (Reading Teachers Association, Reading Paraeducators Association, and Reading Administrative Secretaries Association) as an open meeting will have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Reading School Committee.
	F.	Information / Correspondence 1. Rebecca Liberman - "Re: Please expand access to middle school algebra!" 2. Rebecca Liberman - "Re: Community Math Pathways Committee"
9:00 p.m.		Adjourn

\*\*Times are approximate

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://readingpsma.zoom.us/j/83657021146>

Meeting ID: 836 5702 1146

One tap mobile

+16469313860,,83657021146# US

+13017158592,,83657021146# US (Washington DC)

**Reading Public Schools**  
**School Committee Meeting Packet**  
**August 24, 2023**



**Consent Agenda**



# Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

## Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

### School Committee

Date: 2023-08-10

Time: 7:00 PM

Building: School - Memorial High

Location: School Library

Address: 62 Oakland Road

Session: Open Session

Purpose: Open Session

Version: Draft

#### Attendees: **Members - Present:**

Shawn Brandt, Carla Nazzaro, Erin Gaffen, Tom Wise and Sarah McLaughlin

#### **Members - Not Present:**

Charles Robinson

#### **Others Present:**

Superintendent Dr. Thomas Milaschewski and Director of Finance and Operations Dr. Derek Pinto

**Minutes Respectfully Submitted By:** Olivia Lejeune on behalf of the chairperson.

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### Topics of Discussion:

- A. **Call to Order** – Mr. Wise called the meeting to order at 7:02pm reviewing the agenda.
- B. **Public Comment** – Chris Haley of 71 Tennyson Road discussed the success of last year's 'dunk the readings' at the Fall Street Fair and is returning to ask for help from the community again this year. This year's donations will go to Reading Rotary and 2020 RMHS graduate Autumn Hendrickson who has been working on a book and research for all the men and women who served during World War II.

#### **Consent Agenda**

1. Minutes (06-22-2023)
2. Accept the FY24 Investigating History Implementation Grant Award
3. Accept the RMHS PTO Donation

Mrs. Gaffen motioned to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Mr. Brandt, vote passed 5-0.

### Reports

1. Assistant Superintendent of Student Services – No report
2. Assistant Superintendent of Learning & Teaching – No report

3. Director of Finance and Operations – Dr. Pinto commented on the great work the facilities team is doing to make sure schools are ready for the start of the new school year. The IT Department is ahead of their timeline and laptop distribution for the high school will start early on Wednesday-Friday of next week. We have begun notifying families about transportation for the school year and sharing bus assignments and routes. Finally, there are a lot of great updates in the Food Services department. Joshua Eaton is undergoing a full kitchen renovation and other schools throughout the district are having new equipment installed.
4. Superintendent – Dr. Milaschewski thanked Dr. Pinto for diving in right away as a new member of the leadership team. The Extended School Year (ESY) wrapped up today and we thank the staff for giving up the vast majority of their summer to spend with our students. If anyone is interested in joining the RPS team we do have some openings available, mostly in Para positions. Finally, we have invited students in the district to join us in recording the back-to-school video. Anyone who is interested in doing a little dancing for the video, please come to the Performing Arts Center on August 11<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am.
5. Liaison/Sub-Committee
  - a. Mrs. Nazzaro – Killam Building Committee now has the OPM on board. The committee approved members to be on the design search team. Yesterday, there was a kickoff meeting with the OPM at Killam. The committee hopes to have a designer on board by the end of November.
  - b. Mr. Brandt – No Report
  - c. Mrs. Gaffen – No Report
  - d. Ms. McLaughlin – No Report
  - e. Mr. Wise – The report is covered in the agenda with four more policies to be reviewed.

## C. Personnel

### 1. Appointment of Superintendent to Collaborative Boards (A)

Mrs. Gaffen motioned to appoint Dr. Milaschewski, the Superintendent of Reading Public Schools, to the Board of Directors of the SEEM Collaborative and the North Shore Education Consortium according to MGL, Chapter 40, Section 4e, seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro, vote passed 5-0.

### 2. Superintendent Review Timeline Discussion (A)

A memo in the packet outlines some options for the review timeline. Historically, the committee has done one-year reviews. The second option would be a two-year review with a formative review May/June 2024 and a summative review in May/June 2025 review. Mr. Brandt noted it is a high-energy year and so he is inclined to stick to a one-year cycle as it will be an impactful year. Ms. McLaughlin agreed in favor of a one-year cycle given the points Mr. Brandt made. Mrs. Gaffen noted a two-year cycle formative review in May/June would be an opportunity to give clear feedback. Mrs. Nazzaro is inclined to vote for a two-year cycle as there are checkpoints that stay consistent allowing for consistent feedback to be given. Mr. Wise would default to a one-year cycle and raise

the bar on the categories reviewed. Mr. Brandt noted there are elements of Dr. Milaschewski's contract that are dependent on a one-year review.

Mrs. Gaffen motioned to approve the two-year Superintendent review timeline with a formative review in May/June 2024 and the summative review in May/June 2025, seconded by Mr. Brandt, the vote passed 5-0.

#### **D. Old Business**

##### **1. Policy Updates – Review and Vote on Amended Policies (A)**

Mr. Wise included policies from back in June in the packet and added a memo with feedback from Dr. Coram. We have received feedback from Michelle Roach and Susan Bottan.

Mrs. Gaffen motioned to waive the reading of all policies in section D1 of the agenda, seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro, the vote passed 5-0.

Mr. Wise reviewed the following policies, and the committee discussed each one individually:

Policy GCI: Mrs. Gaffen motioned to adopt policy GCI – Professional Teacher Status as amended, seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro, and the vote passed 5-0.

Policy DGA: Mrs. Gaffen motioned to adopt policy DGA – Authorized Signatures as amended, seconded by Mr. Brandt, and the vote passed 5-0.

Policy DH: Mrs. Gaffen motioned to adopt policy DH – Bonded Employees and Officers, seconded by Mr. Brandt, and the vote passed 5-0.

Policy DI: Mrs. Gaffen motioned to adopt policy DI – Fiscal Accounting and Reporting as amended, seconded by Mr. Brandt, and the vote passed 5-0.

Policy DIE: Mrs. Gaffen motioned to adopt policy DIE – Audits as amended, seconded by Mr. Brandt, and the vote passed 5-0.

Policy DJ: Mrs. Gaffen motioned to adopt policy DJ – Purchasing, seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro, and the vote passed 5-0.

Policy DJA: Mrs. Gaffen motioned to adopt policy DJA – Purchasing Authority, seconded by Mr. Brandt, and the vote passed 5-0.

Policy DK: Mrs. Gaffen motioned to adopt policy DK – Payment Procedures, seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro, and the vote passed 5-0.

##### **2. Review and Vote to Revoke Policy DJG – Vendor Relations (A)**

Mr. Wise noted policy DJG is being revoked as it is unnecessary. It is a recommendation by MASC and the recommendation was seconded by our legal counsel and Director of Finance and Operations.

Mrs. Gaffen motioned to revoke policy DJG – Vendor Relations, seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro, and the vote passed 5-0.

## **E. New Business**

### **1. First Reading – DBDA – Special Education Reserve Fund**

Mr. Brandt motioned to waive the reading of policy DBDA – Special Education Reserve Fund, seconded by Mrs. Nazzaro, and the vote passed 5-0.

Mr. Wise gave some background on the policy which comes from the approval of the new Special Education reserve fund. The committee suggested adding language.

Mrs. Gaffen motioned to approve the first reading of policy DBDA – Special Education Reserve Fund, seconded by Mr. Brandt, and the vote passed 5-0.

### **2. Liaison and Subcommittee Discussion w/ Potential Appointments**

Mr. Wise discussed potential appointments with Mr. Robinson prior to the meeting as he could not be in attendance. Mr. Robinson did offer to sit on the Charter Review Committee and would like to stay on SWEC and Recreation. Mr. Brandt is happy to take something on but would not like to be on the Charter Review Committee.

The committee discussed and it appears members are happy with their appointments and there is no need to mix things up.

### **3. Charter Review Committee Discussion w/ Potential Appointment**

There is no appointment for the Charter Review Committee.

### **4. Policy Notification – Policies to be Reviewed for Amendment or Creation over the next few meetings:**

There will be four more policies for single review at the next meeting on August 24<sup>th</sup>. Another item to note, the meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> will start with an Executive Session with the Finance Committee.

## **G. Executive Session**

### **1. To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body (Reading Teachers Association, Paraprofessionals, and Secretaries)**

Mrs. Gaffen motioned to adjourn to Executive Session and not to return to discuss strategy concerning collective bargaining with Reading Teachers Association, Reading Paraeducator Association and Reading Administrative Secretaries Association as the chair



declares an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the school committee, seconded by Mr. Brandt:

Roll Call Vote to adjourn to Executive Session, Mrs. Nazzaro – yes, Mr. Brandt – yes, Ms. McLaughlin – yes, Mrs. Gaffen – yes, Mr. Wise – yes. The vote passed 5-0.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aYh5t4CNMww>

**The meeting adjourned 8:24 pm.**

# Reading Public Schools

## School Committee Meeting Packet

August 24, 2023



Personnel



Office of the Superintendent of  
Schools  
82 Oakland Road  
Reading, MA 01867  
781 944-5800

Office of the Town Manager  
16 Lowell Street  
Reading, MA 01867  
781-942-9043

## KILLAM SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE

Carla Nazzaro Chair  
Karen Gately-Herrick Vice-Chair

John Coote  
Kirk McCormick  
Sarah McLaughlin  
Ed Ross  
Greg Stepler  
Pat Tompkins  
Nancy Twomey

Thomas Milaschewski, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

Fidel A. Maltez  
Town Manager

TO: Reading School Committee

FROM: Carla Nazzaro, Killam School Building Committee Chair

DATE: August 16, 2023

TOPIC: Designate Superintendent to serve on the MSBA Designer Selection Panel

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Now that Colliers is part of our team as the Owners Project Manager, the Killam School Building project is beginning to progress more rapidly. It is very exciting! The next step in our process is to work with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to form a Designer Selection Panel. This panel is made up of 10 MSBA representatives and 3 Town of Reading representatives. The three Town Representatives are typically, the Town Manager, The Superintendent of Schools, and the Chair of the School Building Committee.

Reading's General Bylaw requires members of Town Boards to be inhabitants of the Town. While the Designer Selection Panel is not a Town Board, Town Counsel recommends that the Select Board and School Committee take official votes to designate the Town Manager and the Superintendent of Schools as representatives on this panel. The Designer Selection Panel will meet on November 7, 2023.

At our August 24, 2023 meeting, I respectfully request that the School Committee vote to appoint Dr. Milaschewski as its representative to the Designer Selection Panel.

# Reading Public Schools

## School Committee Meeting Packet

**August 24, 2023**



New Business

# Reading Public Schools

*Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow*



82 Oakland Road  
Reading, MA 01867  
Phone: 781-944-5800  
Fax: 781-942-9149

TO: Reading School Committee  
FROM: Dr. Jennifer Stys, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services  
DATE: August 22, 2023  
RE: Introduction of the Updated RPS District Handbook and Mandatory Parent/Guardian Notifications

Dear School Committee Members,

Attached to this memo, you will find the updated 2023-2024 Reading Public Schools District Handbook for your review and approval. This handbook serves as a vital resource for our students, parents, and staff, outlining the policies, procedures, and expectations within our school district. The handbook provides the mandatory notifications that must be provided to parents and guardians as required by law. These notifications cover a wide range of topics and often need to contain the legal language as outlined in the regulations. Legal counsel has played an instrumental role in reviewing and verifying the content of the handbook. This collaboration ensures that the information provided aligns with current legal obligations and provides our parents and guardians with accurate information. It is essential that our parents and guardians have easy access to all relevant policies and information that pertain to their children's education and well-being. Below is a summary of the key changes that have been made during this revision process:

- **User-Friendly Format:** Our main objective during this revision process was to enhance the readability and accessibility of the handbook. The content has been organized and presented in a clear and concise manner to facilitate easy understanding with a new table of contents.
- **Links to Policies:** Throughout the handbook, links to the specific policies that govern various aspects of our district's operations have been included. This enables readers to access detailed information should they wish to delve deeper into any given topic.
- **Removal of Sexual Education Section:** The most notable substantive change in this updated version is the removal of the sexual education section from the handbook. Instead, this section will be included in each school's handbook, along with the relevant course instruction and opt-out procedures. This change aims to ensure that information is tailored to the specific needs and requirements of each school and its student body.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication to RPS and its mission to provide a safe, inclusive, and nurturing educational environment for all our students.

Attachment: [District Handbook - Linked PDF](#)



# **READING PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2023-2024 STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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- Y. STUDENTS WHO ARE MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS (MLL)
- Z. HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES
- AA. STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE
- BB. EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MILITARY CHILDREN
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- DD. SCHOOL MEDICAL POLICIES
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- FF. PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
- GG. TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AND INTERNET SAFETY POLICIES
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## Reading Public Schools

# Student Rights & Responsibilities Handbook

### RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

Students have rights by virtue of guarantees offered under the federal and state constitutions and statutes. As a student, you have the right to know the standards of behavior that are expected of you, and the consequences of misbehavior.

In connection with rights, there are responsibilities that must be assumed by students.

Among these rights and responsibilities are the following:

1. Civil rights--including the right to equal educational opportunity and freedom from discrimination; the responsibility not to discriminate against others.
2. The right to attend free public schools; the responsibility to attend school regularly and to observe school rules essential for permitting others to learn at school.
3. The right to due process of law with respect to suspension, expulsion, and decisions the student believes injure his rights.
4. The right to free inquiry and expression; responsibility to observe reasonable rules regarding these rights.
5. The right to privacy, which includes privacy with respect to the student's school records. Exceptions to the right to privacy are included in this handbook.

### RIGHT TO AN EQUAL EDUCATION

Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where she/he actually resides, subject to the following section. No school committee is required to enroll a person who does not actually reside in the town unless said enrollment is authorized by law or by the school committee.

*“Any person who violates or assists in the violation of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly attended public schools. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions.”<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> [Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 5](#)

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT**

The Reading Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination against students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or parenting status, disability, homelessness, religion, age, immigration status, or any other legally protected class status as applicable pursuant to federal and state laws and regulations. The Reading Public Schools are also committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, age, disability, or any other legally protected class status as applicable pursuant to federal and state laws and regulations. In addition, the district provides equal access to all designated youth groups. Consistent with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, the District also does not discriminate against students on the basis of homelessness. Every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, support services, and extracurricular and athletic activities. The Reading Public Schools is also an equal opportunity employer.

A complete copy of the District's Civil Rights Grievance Procedures and a complete copy of the District's Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures are [available here](#).

To file a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment by Reading Public Schools on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, homelessness, religion, age or immigration status or to make inquiry concerning the application of Title II, Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, the ADA, the Age Discrimination Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act or applicable state laws and their respective implementing regulations, please contact:

Civil Rights Grievances for Student Issues: Dr. Jennifer Stys

Email: [Jennifer.Stys@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:Jennifer.Stys@reading.k12.ma.us).

Phone: 781-942-9129

Address: 82 Oakland Road, Reading, MA 01867

Civil Rights Grievances for Staff Issues: Michelle Roach

Email: [Michelle.Roach@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:Michelle.Roach@reading.k12.ma.us).

Phone: 781-670-2882

Address: 82 Oakland Road, Reading, MA 01867

## **RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT**

*The schools of Reading are open to those students who qualify as residents under the laws of the State of Massachusetts and in accordance with the prevailing common rule. A pupil who lives within the system permanently, or with no present intention of removal, whether with a guardian, one who stands in loco parentis, or an emancipated minor is entitled to all school privileges as a resident of the system. Reading also participates in the School Choice program, authorized by the School Committee annually. Please see the following School Committee Policies <sup>2</sup>:*

- *Sections JF (School Admissions),*
- *JFA-E (Residency)*
- *JFBB (School Choice)*
- *JIE (Pregnant Students)*
- *JFABC (Admission of Transfer Students from charter Schools)*
- *JFABD (Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services)*
- *JFABE (Educational Opportunities for Military Children)*
- *JFABF (Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care)*
- *JFHD (Exclusions and Exemptions from School Attendance – Denial of Admission)*

*The Reading Public Schools complies with all requirements of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act <sup>3</sup>*

## **EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD (AGE OF MAJORITY)**

Students who have reached the age of 18 have full legal capacity, pursuant to M.G.L c. 231, § 85P<sup>4</sup>, to make educational decisions and access rights relative to any transactions and decisions with the Reading Public Schools. This means that each student who is 18 or older is an adult with the independent rights and privileges to make educational decisions. Adult students will be solely responsible for all school-related matters, including but not limited to, educational decisions, compliance with attendance policies, and disciplinary actions. Under Massachusetts state regulations, parents/guardians of a student who has reached the age of 18 continue to maintain rights related to student records, unless expressly limited in writing, by the adult student. Even if the adult student expressly limits the parent/guardian's rights in writing, the parents/guardians still maintain the authority to inspect the student's record upon request. Unless the school district receives written notice of a limitation of parent/guardian rights, parents/guardians will also continue to receive school-related correspondence and notifications regarding the adult student.

## **STUDENTS PERMANENTLY LEAVING SCHOOL (MGL c.76, §18<sup>5</sup>)**

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<sup>2</sup> [School Committee Policies](#)

<sup>3</sup> [McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act](#)

<sup>4</sup> [M.G.L c. 231, § 85P](#)

<sup>5</sup> [MGL c.76, §18](#)

No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered to have permanently left public school unless an administrator of the school which the student last attended has sent notice within a period of five (5) days from the student's tenth (10th) consecutive absence to the student and the parent/guardian of that student in both the primary language of the parent/guardian, to the extent practicable, and English. The notice shall initially offer at least two (2) dates and times for an exit interview between the superintendent, or a designee, and the student and the parent/guardian of the student to occur prior to the student permanently leaving school and shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview. The notice shall indicate that the parties shall agree upon a date and time for the exit interview, and that interview shall occur within ten (10) days after the sending of the notice. The time for the exit interview may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian and no extension shall be for longer than fourteen (14) days. The superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with any such interview without a parent/guardian if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian. The exit interview shall be for the purpose of discussing the reasons for the student permanently leaving school and to consider alternative education or other placements.

The superintendent or a designee shall convene a team of school personnel, such as the principal, guidance counselor, teachers, attendance officer and other relevant school staff, to participate in the exit interview with the student and the parent/guardian of the student. During the exit interview, the student shall be given information about the detrimental effects of early withdrawal from school, the benefits of earning a high school diploma and the alternative education programs and services available to the student.

## **TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972**

The Reading Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination against students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of sex. The Reading Public Schools is also committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on sex, including harassment based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status. The Reading Public Schools' policy of nondiscrimination extends to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in employment, admission to a public school of Reading Public Schools or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of sex. Please refer to [Reading School Committee Policy Manual](#), Sections G and J .

How to Report Sexual Harassment: Individuals are encouraged to report allegations of sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator(s) identified below or the principal. Any report of sexual harassment, as defined under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, will be responded to promptly in accordance with the District's Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures, [available here](#). Reports of discriminatory harassment not constituting sexual harassment as defined under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, will be initially addressed through the District's Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure and may, if dismissed under that

procedure, be investigated in accordance with the District's Civil Rights Grievance Procedures, [available here](#).

Upon receipt of a report of sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will: (1) promptly and confidentially contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures; (2) inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a Title IX Formal Complaint; (3) consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures; (4) if the school district does not provide the complainant with supportive measures, document the reasons why such response was reasonable; and (5) explain to the complainant the process for filing a Title IX Formal Complaint.

Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be directed to the District's Title IX Coordinator and/or the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights<sup>6</sup>.

<p>The District's Title IX Coordinator is: Dr. Jennifer A. Stys Phone: 781-942-9129 Email: <a href="mailto:jennifer.stys@reading.k12.ma.us">jennifer.stys@reading.k12.ma.us</a> Address: 82 Oakland Road, Reading, MA 01867</p>
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## **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN**

The Reading Public Schools are committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying or harassment. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

We understand that members of certain student groups, such as students with disabilities, LGBTQ students, students of varying races and ethnic backgrounds, and homeless students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing. The school and/or district will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment.

We will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, harassment, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. We will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, harassment or retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent/guardian involvement.

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<sup>6</sup> [U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights](#)

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and harassment, and the school or district is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, harassment, and retaliation.

The school or district expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee. Reports may be made through the RPS online form, available [here](#) or by making a report verbally or in writing to the student's principal or designee. The full text of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is [here](#) and can be found in [Reading School Committee Policy Manual](#), Section JICFB.

## **CHEMICAL HEALTH POLICY**

Concern for the health and well-being of students of the Reading Public Schools has led to the prohibition of illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco/nicotine/vape (hereinafter referred to as 'banned substances'). In addition to the fact that the possession and use of drugs and alcohol is illegal, research shows that students who use banned substances are less successful in the classroom and the likelihood of addiction is increased. Through these guidelines, we hope to assist students in making decisions that will enhance their ability to grow and thrive in both the academic and extracurricular realms of their school experience. [Reading School Committee Policy Manual](#), Section JICH and JICH-R.

These guidelines are general in nature, and the principal and/or their designee may impose disciplinary consequences appropriate in scope to the merit and nature of the infraction, including short-term suspension, long-term suspension, and expulsion in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H<sup>7</sup>, 37H1/2<sup>8</sup>, and 37H3/4<sup>9</sup>.

## **HELP FOR DEPENDENCY**

Students who feel they have a dependency on banned substances are encouraged to seek help by communicating with a member of the Reading Public Schools community. This may include, but is not limited to, teachers, guidance counselors, school psychologists, the school nurse, staff, or administrators. All arrangements made on this basis are confidential, except in situations

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<sup>7</sup> [M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H](#)

<sup>8</sup> [37H1/2](#)

<sup>9</sup> [37H3/4](#)

where a staff member is required to notify the student's parent/guardian or maintain their obligations as a mandated reporter under M.G.L. c. 119 § 51A<sup>10</sup>.

When a student voluntarily confides in a staff member, the staff member will encourage the student to seek assistance through community-based counseling services or school support services and refer the student to Guidance Counselor or School Administration for follow-up services.

All 10th graders will be screened in accordance with Chapter 52 of the Acts of 2016<sup>11</sup> for substance abuse prevention purposes, commonly referred to as SBIRT training. Parents/guardians may choose to have their student not participate in this mandated, verbal screening process by written notice to the Principal at the start of the student's 10<sup>th</sup> grade school year.

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR BEHAVIORS INVOLVING BANNED SUBSTANCES/CHEMICAL HEALTH ON SCHOOL GROUNDS OR AT SCHOOL SPONSORED OR SCHOOL RELATED EVENTS**

Students are prohibited from the possession, use or distribution, or the attempted possession, use or distribution of banned substances. Any student who is found to have assisted or conspired with one or more others in the possession, use, or distribution of banned substances may be deemed guilty of such possession, use, or distribution.

Any student removed from a school-sponsored activity or school grounds because of banned substance-related behavior may be excluded from all other school activities for the remainder of that school year. There will be no refund of user fees or ticket purchases to students removed for these reasons.

Representing Reading Public Schools, through team, club, or other extra-curricular association, is a privilege that carries with it a high standard of behavioral choices. The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA)<sup>12</sup> has set standards and guidelines for penalties for student athletes during the season of practice and play. Reading applies this standard to all extra-curricular participants.

The Reading Public Schools standard for the application of consequences for extracurricular activities and athletics related to this policy covers the full calendar year from July 1 to June 30.

### **SPECIFIC PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION OF ILLEGAL DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO POLICY ON SCHOOL GROUNDS OR AT SCHOOL SPONSORED OR SCHOOL RELATED EVENTS**

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<sup>10</sup> [M.G.L. c. 119 § 51A](#)

<sup>11</sup> [Chapter 52 of the Acts of 2016](#)

<sup>12</sup> [Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association](#)

If a student is found to be in possession of or using banned substances or is attempting or conspiring with others to possess or use banned substances:

## FIRST OFFENSE

### Faculty/Staff member will:

- refer student to administrator

### Administrator will:

- refer student to nurse
- notify student's parent/guardian
- conduct search which may include possessions, clothing, locker, and/or automobile
- confiscate all contraband
- notify police
- follow the disciplinary due process procedures in this handbook, and at their discretion based on the individual circumstances and nature of the offense impose a short-term suspension, long term suspension, or expulsion, as applicable in accordance with in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H<sup>13</sup>, 37H1/2<sup>14</sup>, and 37H3/4<sup>15</sup> and/or contract with student for Alcohol & Substance Use Diversion Program
- release to parent, guardian, or make other arrangements with parental input
- refer to police for protective custody when appropriate
- direct student to submit to a Breathalyzer if there is reasonable suspicion of alcohol use. Refusal to submit to the use of the breathalyzer will result in consequences which may include a five-day out-of-school suspension, short-term suspension, or long-term suspension after disciplinary due process in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 37H3/4<sup>16</sup>.

### School Nurse will:

- assess impairment
- refer for medical follow up, as needed

### Students enrolled in extracurricular activities will:

- be ineligible for interscholastic competition for 25% of the season, in accordance with MIAA guidelines
- be ineligible for all extra-curricular competition and performance activities for 25% of the club year as determined by the administration
- be relieved from all leadership positions for the school year in which the violation occurred.

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<sup>13</sup> [M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H](#)

<sup>14</sup> [37H1/2](#)

<sup>15</sup> [37H3/4](#)

<sup>16</sup> [M.G.L. c. 71 37H3/4](#)



- abide by requirements of the Diversion Program contract which refers to the building leader's ability to develop a plan that works best for the student and family which support from local resources.

If the student agrees to attend an Alcohol and Use Diversion program, the disciplinary consequences may be reduced. Failure to complete the program will result in the original consequence(s) being instituted.

## SECOND OFFENSE AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES

### Faculty/Staff member will:

- refer student to administrator

### Administrator will:

- refer student to nurse
- notify student's parent/guardian
- conduct search which may include possessions, clothing, locker and/or automobile
- confiscate all contraband
- notify police
- follow the disciplinary due process procedures in this handbook, and at their discretion based on the individual circumstances and nature of the offense impose a short-term suspension, long term suspension, or expulsion, as applicable in accordance with in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H<sup>17</sup>, 37H1/2<sup>18</sup>, and 37H3/4<sup>19</sup> and/or contract with student for Alcohol & Substance Use Diversion Program
- release to parent, guardian or make other arrangements with parental input
- refer to police for protective custody when appropriate
- direct student to submit to a Breathalyzer if there is reasonable suspicion of alcohol use. Refusal to submit to the use of the breathalyzer will result in consequences which may include a five-day out-of-school suspension, short-term suspension, or long-term suspension after disciplinary due process in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 37H3/4<sup>20</sup>.

### School Nurse will:

- assess impairment
- refer for medical follow up, as needed

### Student will:

<sup>17</sup> [M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H](#)

<sup>18</sup> [37H1/2](#)

<sup>19</sup> [37H3/4](#)

<sup>20</sup> [M.G.L. c. 71 37H3/4](#)

- be ineligible for all athletic or extra-curricular competition and performance activities for 60% of the season or club year, in accordance with MIAA guidelines (The district follows MIAA guidelines Plus. This means that the guidelines are applied to all extracurricular activities)
- be relieved from all leadership positions for the school year in which the violation occurred. Leadership positions include, but are not limited to any position elected, appointed, or selected.

**POSSESSION WITH INTENT TO DISTRIBUTE BANNED SUBSTANCES:**

**FIRST OFFENSE AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES**

**Faculty/Staff member will:**

- refer student to administrator

**Administrator will:**

- notify student’s parent/guardian
- conduct search which may include possessions, clothing, locker, and/or automobile
- confiscate all contraband
- notify police
- follow the disciplinary due process procedures in this handbook, and at their discretion based on the individual circumstances and nature of offense impose a short-term suspension, long term suspension, or expulsion as applicable in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H<sup>21</sup>, 37H1/2<sup>22</sup>, and 37H3/4<sup>23</sup> and/or contract with student for Alcohol & Substance Use Diversion Program
- Refer to police for protective custody when appropriate

**Student will:**

- serve the imposed consequence (e.g. suspension, expulsion, participation in Diversion Program, etc.)
- be ineligible for all athletic or extra-curricular activities including competitions and performances for up to one (1) calendar year and relieved from all leadership positions for the school year in which the violation occurred. Leadership positions include, but are not limited to any position elected, appointed, or selected.

<sup>21</sup> [M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H](#)

<sup>22</sup> [37H1/2](#)

<sup>23</sup> [37H3/4](#)

## **CONSEQUENCES FOR STUDENT ATHLETES AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR PARTICIPANTS UNDER ILLEGAL DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO/NICOTINE POLICY IN THE COMMUNITY**

Student actions in the community reported to the school by the Reading Police Department, may be subject to the following consequences. In all cases, parents/guardians will be informed of such a report and have the opportunity to be present prior to the application of disciplinary consequences by the school administration.

Students suspended from participation may request the opportunity to continue to practice through the principal and the Director of Athletics and Student Activities.

School administrators may also contact parents to conference about concerns relative to student safety based upon reports to the school by the police of students being in the presence of illegal drug, alcohol, or tobacco activity.

The district follows MIAA guidelines Plus. This means that the guidelines are applied to all extracurricular activities.

### **SPECIFIC PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS OCCURRING IN THE COMMUNITY**

Using or assisting or conspiring with one or more others in the possession, use, or distribution of banned substances:

#### *FIRST OFFENSE*

- Following an opportunity for the student to be heard, students determined by the high school administration to be using, in possession of, or selling drugs or alcohol in the community may be immediately ineligible to participate in athletics or any extra-curricular activity for 25% of an activity season in accordance with MIAA guidelines. Students will lose all leadership positions for the school year in which violation occurred. Leadership positions include, but are not limited to any position elected, appointed, or selected.

#### *SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES*

- For each subsequent offense, the student may be ineligible for all extracurricular activities, clubs, athletics for 60% of the next consecutive interscholastic events in accordance with MIAA guidelines. The penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of participation. The student may not hold leadership positions during the school year in which violation occurred from the date of the determination. Leadership positions include, but are not limited to any position elected, appointed, or selected.

#### *Possession with intent to distribute and/or being in possession of banned substances in the community*

- Following an opportunity for the student to be heard, a student determined by the school administration to be in possession of with intent to distribute any banned substance in the community may be ineligible for all athletics and extra-curricular activities including

competitions and performances for the school year, and be relieved from all leadership positions for the school year in which violation occurred. Leadership positions include, but are not limited to any position elected, appointed, or selected. In addition to the application of immediate disciplinary consequences as set forth in this Handbook, the student may be subject to discipline, including short term suspension, long term suspension, and/or expulsion, in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 §37H1/2.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

- Students are hereby given notice that they have no expectation of privacy in their school issued accounts, technology, Internet services and/or school lockers, desks and other school issued tools and storage. School issued technology, accounts, services and physical items may be searched by school administration at any time with or without reasonable grounds. Students and families are advised that school administrators may engage in periodic searches of student issued accounts, technology, services and physical items without notice or cause.
- For search of student's personal items not issued or controlled by school, searches may be conducted by authorized school personnel when, under ordinary circumstances, there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that a search will turn up evidence that a student has violated either the rules of the school or the law. All measures adopted in conducting searches of students, their possessions, their vehicles on school property, while under school supervision or in attendance at a school function will be limited in scope by the objectives of the search in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction being investigated. As required by law, authorized personnel will adhere to the protection of the 4th Amendment of the United States Constitution.
- The principal, assistant principals, and faculty chaperones are the only persons authorized to conduct searches of students, their possessions (including backpacks, gym bags, handbags, etc.), or their vehicles parked on school property or at school functions. In the case of physical search of students, a teacher, administrator, or the school nurse of the same gender identity will conduct the search when possible.
- "Reasonable grounds" for search is defined as inferences drawn from circumstances, patterns of behavior, suspicious acts, moving around and about the school without proper authority, unauthorized absence from class or school, being present where unauthorized or illegal activities are known to occur with some regularity, any number of events which suggest violations of school rules or illegal activities; third party information which identifies a student(s) as participant(s) in rule violations or illegal activity; and violation of rules listed in the student handbook.
- Contraband is defined as any material of an unauthorized or illegal nature (such as tobacco products, vaping products and paraphernalia; drug paraphernalia; drugs, illicit and prescribed; alcohol; weapons; explosives and such similar items) not authorized to be brought to or kept in school on a person, in a locker, or vehicle or any other place on school grounds.

- Personal possessions such as fireworks, stink bombs, disguises, water pistols, or dangerous items of attire, which could cause potential disruption or injury to students, faculty or school staff, their possessions, or the school facility or grounds, are contraband. As a condition of entry into any school event, for student safety, all belongings and vehicles are subject to search for contraband.
- Contraband seized as a result of routine locker or backpack/bag inspection will be turned over to the police if the material seized is of an illegal or dangerous nature. Parents will be notified of the seizure as soon as possible after the seizure. **VEHICLES PARKED ON SCHOOL GROUNDS OR AT SCHOOL FUNCTIONS ARE SUBJECT TO SEARCH.**

## **ARTICLES PROHIBITED FOR POSSESSION/USE BY STUDENTS-CONTRABAND**

- At no time and under no circumstances may students have weapons, dangerous instruments, laser pointers, fireworks, explosives, stink bombs, water pistols, tools, disguises, or wear dangerous items of attire to school or school-sponsored events except as authorized by the administration.
- Contraband materials, which may potentially cause injury to students, faculty or staff, are prohibited in the building or school grounds and at school-sponsored or supervised events.
- All contraband will be removed from students. Illegal material will be turned over to the police.
- Any unauthorized use of cell phones will result in the cell phone being confiscated. Students are forbidden to use their phones as cameras or recording devices during the school day without permission from school staff for educational purposes. Any use during the school day that has not been approved will result in confiscation by any faculty/staff member and given to the administration. The confiscated articles will be returned to the student or the parent/legal guardian at administrator's discretion.
- Use of any vehicles in the school building is prohibited. Skateboards, roller skates and roller blades, bicycles, mopeds, scooters, motor vehicles and other such equipment will be confiscated.
- Items not listed here which are not normally utilized specifically for school purposes are subject to confiscation until a determination has been made by the school administration that the items are appropriate for a specific school purpose.

## **DISCIPLINARY DUE PROCESS**

### **Due Process Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾**

For ALL offenses except for possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, assault on staff, and felony offenses. For due process for offenses under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H1/2, see the appropriate section below.

### **Definitions Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4**

**Superintendent** – the superintendent or designee for disciplinary purposes.

Expulsion: the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) consecutive school days. Expulsion is prohibited for M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4 offenses.

In-School Suspension: the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Short-Term Suspension: the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. A principal may, in their discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Long-Term Suspension: the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H(a) or (b), or M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 1/2 no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than 90 school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

Principal: the primary administrator of the school or the principal's designee for disciplinary purposes.

Written Notice: Written correspondence sent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or email to an address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

*Please note: these due process procedures apply to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4 only. For due process procedures for offenses under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 please see the appropriate sections below.*

In every case of student misconduct under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4 for which suspension may be imposed, a principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense; consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and shall not use long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried shall not suspend or expel a student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented and, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, and in

cases where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports. The principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker shall also implement school- or district-wide models to re-engage students in the learning process which shall include but not be limited to: (i) positive behavioral interventions and supports models and (ii) trauma sensitive learning models; provided, however, that school- or district-wide models shall not be considered a direct response to a specific incident.

Emergency Removals; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾ - A principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. In such a case, the principal shall immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal, the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of: (1) the emergency removal; (2) the reason for the need for emergency removal; (3) the disciplinary offense; (4) the basis for the charge; (5) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; (6) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges, present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing; (7) the date, time, and location of the hearing; and (8) the right of the student and the student's parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate. Before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent, the principal must provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with either the short-term due process or long-term due process set forth below, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing. Additionally, the principal is required to render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of notice of the decision for short-term suspension or long-term suspension as set forth below, whichever is applicable. A principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

Due Process for In-School Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: Prior to the imposition of an In-School Suspension, the student will be informed of the disciplinary offense and provided with an opportunity to respond. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal will provide oral notice to the student and parent of the length of the In-School Suspension and will make reasonable efforts to meet with the parent.

Principal's Decision – In-School Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: – On or before the day of suspension, the principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the In-School

Suspension, including the reason and the length of the In-School Suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth in 603 C.M.R. 53.10(4)<sup>24</sup>, if such a meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. Students have the right to appeal an In-School Suspension that will result in their In-School Suspension for more than ten (10) school days in a school year.

Due Process for Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: In the case of disciplinary offenses not involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension.

Notice – Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: Except as provided in cases of In-School Suspension or Emergency Removal, a principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing. The principal shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language: the disciplinary offense; the basis for the charge; the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing; the date, time, and location of the hearing; the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate.

The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

Principal's Hearing - Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: At the principal's hearing, the student and parents (if participating) may dispute the charge(s) against the student and present information, including mitigating facts, for the principal's consideration in determining consequences for the student.

Principal's Decision – Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended,

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<sup>24</sup> [603 C.M.R. 53.10\(4\)](#)



the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, 21. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice. The principal's decision shall be final with no opportunity for appeal. If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

Due Process for Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: In the case of disciplinary offenses not involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension.

Notice - Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: Written notice of the date and time for the hearing will be provided in English and in the primary language of the Student's home and will identify the disciplinary offense with which the student has been charged, the basis for the charge, the potential length of the student's suspension, and inform the parent and student of the right to interpreter services if necessary to participate in the hearing.

Where a student may be subject to a Long-Term Suspension, the principal will also notify the student and parent of the following rights: (1) in advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; (2) the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; (3) the right to produce witnesses on their behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; (4) the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school; and (5) the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made, and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

Principal's Hearing - Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The student will have the rights identified in the written notice and the principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Principal's Decision – Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a Long-Term Suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any

other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: (1) identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; (2) set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal; (3) identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; (4) include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, § 21; (5) inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language: (a) the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the Long-Term Suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that (b) the Long-Term Suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

Superintendent Appeals – Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: A student who is placed on a Short-Term suspension under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾ following a hearing with the principal does not have appeal rights. The principal's decision is final. A student who is placed on Long-Term Suspension under M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾ following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent. The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the Long-Term Suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar. If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in their discretion, for good cause.

Superintendent Appeal Hearing; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the superintendent shall grant the extension. The superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing. The superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension as identified above.

Superintendent's Decision; M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which: (1) identifies the disciplinary offense and the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; (2) sets out the key facts and conclusions reached by the superintendent; (3) identifies the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; (4) includes notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, § 21; and (5) notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision. The decision of the superintendent shall be the final decision of the Reading Public Schools with regard to the long-term suspension.

### **Due Process Under M.G.L. 71, §§ 37H and 37H1/2 Offenses**

*(For offenses involving dangerous weapons, drugs, assaults on staff, and felony offenses)*

Removal Pending Hearing M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2— For disciplinary offenses involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the Principal may remove the student pending a hearing scheduled within ten (10) school days, if the Principal determines that due to the nature of the offense and information available, the student poses a continuing danger to persons or property or is an ongoing threat to disrupt the academic process. The student will be given oral notice of the violation with which the student is charged and an opportunity to respond thereto, prior to the principal's imposition of any removal pending hearing. Upon imposition of a removal pending hearing of (10) consecutive days or less pending further disciplinary proceedings, the student and parents will be provided with written notice of the removal pending hearing, rationale for the interim removal pending hearing and the date and time of the formal disciplinary hearing scheduled within ten (10) school days of the removal as well as all other due process rights relative to the hearing as outlined below.

Long-Term Suspension/Expulsion; M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 - Unlike M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4, for offenses that fall within M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2, a principal may long-term suspend a student for more than ninety (90) days or permanently expel a student. Long term suspension/expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for (1) possession of a dangerous weapon; (2) possession of a controlled substance; (3) assault on a member of the educational staff; or (4) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint (suspension only) or conviction (suspension or expulsion), or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½. The

principal's Hearing and appeals process identified below apply to suspensions under M.G.L. c. 71 §§ 37H and 37H 1/2.

### **Dangerous Weapons, Drugs and Assaults on Staff - M.G.L. c. 71, §37H**

1. 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 Reading Public Schools by the principal.
2. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the Reading Public Schools by the principal.

Principal's Hearing, Long-Term Exclusion – M.G.L. c. 71, §37H - Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraphs 1 or 2 shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation at their own expense, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, the principal may, in their discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraphs 1 or 2 above.

Appeal to the Superintendent – Long-Term Exclusion – M.G.L. c. 71, §37H - A Principal's decision to suspend rather than expel a student pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, s. 37H is final and not appealable. Any student who has been expelled from the Reading Public Schools pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of their appeal. The student has the right to counsel (at their own expense) 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.

Suspensions or expulsions are decisions that must consider a student's due process rights. The principal or their designees are required to report to the police department the presence of any weapon on school premises.

### **Felony Complaints - M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ½**

#### Issuance of a Felony Criminal Complaint

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 of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal if said principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Notice of Principal's Hearing/Decision – Long-Term Exclusion – M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2 - The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the opportunity for a hearing;

provided, however, that the student may have representation (at their own expense), along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After the hearing, the principal shall issue a written decision. The student shall also receive written notification of their 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.

Appeal to the Superintendent- Long-Term Exclusion - M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2 - The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent in writing and must notify the superintendent of their request for an appeal no later than five (5) 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 (3) 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 their behalf and shall have the right to be represented by counsel at student's own expense. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the 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 Reading Public Schools with regard to the suspension.

Adjudication of Delinquency, Admission of Guilt or Conviction

Upon a student being convicted of a felony or felony delinquency charge or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Notice of Principal's Hearing/Decision – Long-Term Exclusion/Expulsion - M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2 - The student shall receive written notification of the charges and be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation (at their own expense), along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After the hearing, the principal shall issue a written decision, which will include reasons for the expulsion. The student shall also receive written notification of their 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.

Superintendent's Appeal/Decision – Long-Term Exclusion/Expulsion - M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 1/2 - The student shall have the right to appeal the long-term suspension/expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of their request for an appeal no later than five (5) 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 their behalf and shall have the right to be represented by counsel at student's own expense. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the 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 Reading Public Schools with regard to the long-term suspension/expulsion.

## **OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

The Reading Public Schools shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion in a manner consistent with M.G.L. c. 76, § 21<sup>25</sup>. If the student moves to another school district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new school district shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan under M.G.L. c. 76, § 21.

For all suspensions, students will be entitled to the following in terms of the opportunity to make academic progress:

**Less Than 10 Consecutive Days** - Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school.

**More than 10 Consecutive Days** - Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services, earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, in accordance with the school's education service plan.

The school-wide education service plan will be provided to the parent and student at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension.

## **Discipline and students with disabilities**

All students are expected to meet the Reading Public Schools' requirements for behavior in school and abide by the rules set forth in this handbook, the handbook of the student's school, and the policies and procedures of the Reading Public Schools. In addition to the due process protections afforded to all students in disciplinary matters, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the regulations promulgated pursuant to these statutes provide additional procedural protections for students with disabilities. These procedural protections also apply for students who do not currently have an IEP or Section 504 Plan, but whom the district knows, or has reason to know, that the student may have a disability, prior to the conduct for which the student is subject to discipline.

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<sup>25</sup> [M.G.L. c. 76, § 21](#)

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 their program for more than ten (10) consecutive days in a given school year, or is subjected to a series of short-term removals that constitute a pattern of removal that exceeds ten (10) school days, and are considered to constitute a disciplinary change in placement, building administrators, relevant members of the Student's IEP or 504 Team, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will meet to conduct a Manifestation Determination Review. At the Manifestation Determination Review, the Team will consider whether the violation for which the student is subject to discipline is directly and substantially related to the student's disability or was the direct result of a failure to implement the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan.

If the Team determines that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the student's disability, the student may be disciplined in accordance with the policies and procedures applicable to all students, except that students eligible for special education services shall be entitled to a free appropriate public education as of the eleventh (11th) day of disciplinary exclusion in the school year. Such services are not available to students under Section 504. The student's IEP Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, and may, as appropriate, review any existing behavior intervention plan, or, where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment.

If the Team determines that the behavior giving rise to disciplinary action IS a manifestation of the student's disability, then the district will conduct a functional behavior assessment or review any existing behavior intervention plan and takes steps (with the consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s)) to modify the IEP/504 Plan, the placement, or the behavior intervention plan as appropriate and the student will not be suspended for more than 10 days (either consecutive or constituting a pattern of removal) for the violation found to be a manifestation of their disability.

Regardless of the result of the Manifestation Determination, if a student possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs or a controlled substance on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; possesses a weapon on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; or inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event, the school district may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. The interim alternative setting must enable the student to participate in the general curriculum and progress toward the goals in the IEP. The interim alternative educational setting must also provide services and modifications designed to address the behavior giving rise to the removal and to prevent the behavior from reoccurring. If a student has been placed in an interim alternative education setting because of disciplinary action, the student may remain in the interim setting for a period not to exceed forty-five (45) school days. Thereafter, the student will return to the previously agreed-upon educational placement unless the parent(s)/guardian(s) (or student if 18+) consents to an extension of the IAES, or the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the school agree to another placement, or the parent(s)/guardian(s) or the district has initiated a hearing on the disciplinary action that the district took and a hearing officer orders another placement.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) shall have the right to appeal the Team's manifestation determination, the imposition of a disciplinary change in placement, and the student's placement in an interim alternative educational setting to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals. The student will remain in the disciplinary placement imposed by school authorities pending a decision on the appeal or until the expiration of the disciplinary sanction, whichever comes first.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

The Reading Public Schools complies with applicable federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to Student Records. Those laws and regulations are designed to ensure a parent's or guardian's and eligible student's rights to access, inspect, and to request amendment of the child's student record.

The Massachusetts Student Record regulations and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) apply to educational records maintained by a school on a student in a manner such that he or she may be individually identified. The regulations divide the record into the transcript and the temporary record. The transcript includes only the minimum information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress. This information includes name, address, course titles, grades, credits, and grade level completed. The transcript is kept by the school system for at least sixty (60) years after the student leaves the system.

The temporary record contains the majority of the information maintained by the school system about the student. This may include such things as standardized test results, class rank, school sponsored extracurricular activities, and evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons. The temporary record is destroyed no later than seven (7) years after the student leaves the school system.

The following is a summary of major parent and student rights regarding their student records:

Inspection of Record - A parent/guardian, or a student who has entered the ninth grade or is at least fourteen (14) years old, has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be made available to the parent/guardian or eligible student within ten (10) days of the request, unless the parent/guardian or student consents to a delay. In the event the parent/guardian or student requests copies of a student record, the district may charge the parent/guardian or student for said copies at the district rate. The eligible student or parent/guardian shall have the right upon request to meet with professional qualified school personnel to have any of the contents of the student record interpreted.

Confidentiality of Record - With a few exceptions, no individuals or organizations but the parent/guardian, student, and authorized school personnel are allowed to have access to information in the student record without specific, informed, written consent of the parent/guardian or the student.



Amendment of Record - The parent/guardian and student have the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written materials to the student record. In addition, with limited exceptions under state and federal law, the parent/guardian and student have the right to request that information of the record be amended or deleted. The parent/guardian and student have a right to a conference with the school principal to make their objections known. Within a week after the conference, the principal must render a decision in writing. If the parent/guardian and student are not satisfied with the decision, the regulations contain provisions through which the decision may be appealed to higher authorities in the school system.

Directory Information - Federal law requires that the district release the names, addresses and telephone listings of students to military recruiters and institutions of higher education upon request for recruitment and scholarship purposes without prior consent. In addition, the District may release the following directory information about a student without prior consent: a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major fields of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, post-high school plans and directory information such as homeroom assignments. However, in all instances, parents/guardians may request that such directory information not be released without prior consent by notifying their school building office in writing by the end of September of each school year.

Destruction of Records - The regulations require that certain parts of the student record, such as the temporary record, be destroyed a certain period of time after the student leaves the school system. School authorities are also allowed to destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information in the record from time to time while the student is enrolled in the school system. Before any such information may be destroyed, the parent/guardian and student must be notified, and have an opportunity to receive a copy of any of the information before its destruction.

Transfer of Records – In accordance with 603 CMR 23.07(4)(g)<sup>26</sup>, it is the practice of the Reading Public Schools to forward the student record of any student who seeks or intends to enroll, or already has enrolled in another public school district, if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. The parent/guardian or eligible student has the right to receive a copy of the school record that is forwarded to the new school.

Non-Custodial Parents - Unless there is a court order to the contrary, a non-custodial parent (parent without physical custody of the student) of any public-school student has the right, subject to certain procedures, to receive information regarding the student's achievements, involvement, behavior, etc. A non-custodial parent who wishes to have this information shall submit a written request annually to the child's school principal. Upon receipt of such a request, the principal shall send written notification to the custodial parent by certified and first-class mail that the records and information will be provided to the non-custodial parent in twenty-one (21) calendar days unless the custodial parent provides documentation of the non-custodial parent's

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<sup>26</sup> [603 CMR 23.07\(4\)\(g\)](#)

ineligibility to access such information. In all cases where school records are provided to a non-custodial parent, the electronic and postal address and other contact information for the custodial parent shall be removed from the records provided. 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. Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §34H<sup>27</sup>, the school will notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent. M.G.L. c.71, §34H, 603 CMR 23.07<sup>28</sup>.

Third Party Access - Authorized school personnel to include: (a) school administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the school committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the school committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching, counseling, and/or diagnostic capacity; (b) administrative office staff and clerical personnel, employed by the school committee or under a school committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record; and (c) the evaluation team which evaluates a student, shall have access to the student record of students to whom they are providing services, when such access is required in the performance of their official duties. The consent of the parent or eligible student shall not be necessary.

Complaints - A parent or eligible student has a right to file a complaint with the Student Privacy Policy Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5901, (202) 260-3887 or with the Massachusetts Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148, (781) 338-3300. If you have any questions regarding this notice or would like more information and/or a copy of the Massachusetts Department of Education Student Record Regulations, please contact the building principal.

## **NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)**

PPRA affords parents/guardians certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (DOE): political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian; Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family; sex behavior or attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of others with whom

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<sup>27</sup> [M.G.L. c. 71, §34H](#)

<sup>28</sup> [603 CMR 23.07](#)

respondents have close family relationships; legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers; religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents/guardians; or income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following: any other protected information survey, regardless of funding; any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
- Inspect, upon request and before administration or use: protected information surveys of students; instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.
- These rights transfer from the parents/guardians to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law. Specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement include: the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution; the administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by DOE; and any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

The district will provide parents/guardians, within a reasonable period of time prior to the administration of the surveys and activities, a notification of the surveys and activities and provide an opportunity to opt their child out, as well as an opportunity to review the surveys.

Parents/guardians who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with: Student Privacy Policy Office<sup>29</sup>, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

## **DRESS CODE**

We support the importance of the expression of identity through various forms, including clothing. The Reading Public Schools does not seek to abridge that expression, provided that it does not cause any disruption or disorder within the school. The school district and individual schools are responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, and that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student.

- Clothing should be school appropriate by covering undergarments and private parts of the body fully for health and safety purposes and should reflect our core values by not

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<sup>29</sup> [Student Privacy Policy Office](#)

contributing to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student or cause any disruption or disorder in school.

- No wearing of clothing or other articles that advertise/depict illegal, offensive, or obscene language, messages, or symbols (i.e., drugs, alcohol, tobacco).
- While hats and head coverings are allowed, a staff member may expect removal in certain circumstances, such as (but not limited to): during an assessment, if the student's face is obscured, or if the head covering is being used to obscure earbuds or other items. Head coverings are permitted for religious observance or medical purposes.
- Specialized clothing may be required for specialized courses (e.g., safety glasses, closed toe shoes in laboratories, physical education uniforms).

We understand that there may be unique exceptions to these guidelines and will work with students and families to accommodate personal circumstances.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Whenever a child is going to be absent or late to school, parents/guardians are required to call the students' school to report the absence or tardiness. The absentee line is available 24 hours a day. This is an important way to assure school personnel that parents/guardians are aware of their child's absence or tardiness. If we do not hear from a parent/guardian, an automatic phone call will be sent home. For more information about Attendance Policies, please refer to the [School Committee Policy Manual](#) Section J.

Parents/guardians must notify the school of an absence, tardy or dismissal by phone, or email.

- RISE (781)-942-9179 or [RISEabsences@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:RISEabsences@reading.k12.ma.us)
- Barrows (781)-942-9166 or [AMBabsences@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:AMBabsences@reading.k12.ma.us)
- Joshua Eaton (781)-942-9161 or [JEEabsences@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:JEEabsences@reading.k12.ma.us)
- Birch (781) 944-2335 or [BMeabsences@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:BMeabsences@reading.k12.ma.us)
- Killam (781)-944-7831 or [JWKabsences@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:JWKabsences@reading.k12.ma.us)
- Wood End (781)-942-5420 or [WEEabsences@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:WEEabsences@reading.k12.ma.us)
- Coolidge (781)-942-9158 or [AWCabsences@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:AWCabsences@reading.k12.ma.us)
- Parker (781)-944-1236 or [WSPabsences@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:WSPabsences@reading.k12.ma.us)
- RMHS (781)-670-2819 or [RMHSattendance@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:RMHSattendance@reading.k12.ma.us) or [Absence Reporting Google Form](#)

The Reading Public Schools, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 76, § 1B<sup>30</sup>, will notify the parent or guardian of a student who has at least 5 days in which the student has missed 2 or more periods unexcused in a school year or who has missed 5 or more school days unexcused in a school year. This policy requires that the school principal, or a designee, make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent or guardian of a student who has 5 or more unexcused absences to develop action steps for student attendance. The action steps shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the

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<sup>30</sup> [M.G.L. c. 76, § 1B](#)

school principal, or a designee, the student and the student's parent or guardian and with input from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies.

Here is a link to our [Reading Public Schools' attendance policy and quick guide](#).

Here is a link to our district [attendance guidance and monitoring plan](#).

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Both our State and Federal governments have passed important legislation affecting students, parents, and schools. This legislation is designed to provide equal educational opportunities and to inform parents and students of their rights. Each act of legislation is quite lengthy, so only brief summaries are included in this Handbook. Anyone wishing additional information may contact the Special Education Office.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Pursuant to Section 504, any qualified student with a disability is entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Section 504 FAPE is the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet a student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met.

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA") and M.G.L. c. 71B<sup>31</sup>, some students with disabilities may be eligible for services if they 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. Students may be referred to the Special Education Department for an evaluation of eligibility for special education services. 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)). Within forty-five (45) school days of 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.

*Be sure to visit the SEPAC Website [LINK](#) for information regarding the Special Education Parent Advisory Council.*

For more information regarding the services available to students with disabilities, please contact the principal or special education administrator at your child's school or the Office of the Director of Special Education and Student Services. Please also see [*insert link to Civil Rights Grievance*]

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<sup>31</sup> [M.G.L. c. 71B](#)

*Procedures*], which the district follows for complaints of discrimination, harassment or retaliation on the basis of a person's real or perceived disability status in compliance with state and federal law.

The 504 Compliance Officer is:  
Dr. Jennifer A. Stys  
Phone: 781-942-9129  
Email: [jennifer.stys@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:jennifer.stys@reading.k12.ma.us)  
Address: 82 Oakland Road, Reading, MA 01867

## **OBSERVATIONS OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Observations of a student's current and/or proposed special education program may be conducted by a parent/guardian or his/her designee in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71B § 3<sup>32</sup>. Parents/guardians must request an observation five (5) days in advance and can submit the request to the building Special Education Administrator and building principal. Observers may be required to sign a non-disclosure form to protect student confidentiality.

## **STUDENTS WHO ARE MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS (MLL)**

All students, as they enroll in Reading Public Schools, are required to submit a Home Language Survey. If a language in addition to English is spoken at home, or if a student's first language is not English, the student will be assessed for English language proficiency. Students who are not proficient in English will be recommended for MLL services. MLL services include pull-out English as Second Language (ESL) instruction and Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) in all content classes. If parents elect to exclude their child from MLL services, they must contact the district contact person listed on the Notification of Services form or the principal in person, via telephone or email. Students receiving MLL support are required to participate in state-wide assessments. Students will exit the MLL Program after passing statewide MLL testing, and based on the results of standardized testing, classroom performance and teacher recommendation.

## **HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES**

To the extent practical and as required by law, the district will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including

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<sup>32</sup> [M.G.L. c. 71B § 3](#)

Head Start and comparable preschool programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs. A child who is homeless or an unaccompanied youth and attending any school served by the local educational agency is eligible for Title I services and the Free and Reduced Lunch program.

The goal of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act is: (1) To ensure that each child or youth experiencing homelessness has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths; (2) In any State that has a compulsory residency requirement as a component of the State's compulsory school attendance laws or other laws, regulations, practices, or policies that may act as a barrier to the enrollment, attendance, or success in school of homeless children and youths, the State will review and undertake steps to revise such laws, regulations, practices, or policies to ensure that homeless children and youths are afforded the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youths; (3) Homelessness alone is not sufficient reason to separate students from the mainstream school environment; (4) Homeless children and youths should have access to the education and other services that such children and youths need to ensure that such children and youths have an opportunity to meet the same challenging student academic achievement standards to which all students are held.

### **Definition of Homeless Children and Youth**

The term "unaccompanied youth" includes a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. Homeless children and youth are defined as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes children and youth living in the following situations:

- (i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals.
- (ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans.
- (iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- (iv) migratory children who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this part because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

### **Homeless Education Liaison**

Reading provides various types of support for students and their families experiencing homelessness in order to help them attend school consistently. Eligible families may be living in shelters or may not have their own lease because they are temporarily staying with family members or acquaintances due to economic hardship or similar reasons. Contact the district's Homeless Education Coordinator, Jennifer Stys, Homeless Education Coordinator at 781-942-9129 for more details.

## **Enrollment and Dispute Resolution**

Students identified as experiencing homelessness have a right to remain in their school of origin or to attend the school where they are temporarily residing. Students who choose to remain in their school of origin have the right to remain there until the end of the school year in which they become permanently housed, with transportation if needed through the end of the school year (June).

The Reading Public Schools will immediately enroll students experiencing homelessness in school, even if they do not have the documents usually required for enrollment – such as school records, medical records or proof of residency. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. The district's liaison for homelessness will assist students who arrive without records by contacting the previously attended school system to obtain the required records.

Should a parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth disagree with the school placement decision of the liaison for homelessness, the parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth has the right to appeal. The parent/guardian or unaccompanied youth will be provided with written notification in the language of the home of the placement decision and the paperwork to complete the appeal process. While the placement decision is under appeal, the student will be allowed to attend the school of the parent/guardian's or unaccompanied youth's choice and receive transportation, according to the District transportation policy, [School Committee Policy Manual](#) Section EEA Student Transportation Policy, while the dispute is under review by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

## **STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE**

The district will ensure the educational stability of students in foster care. Educational stability has a lasting impact on students' academic achievement and wellbeing, and the School Committee is committed to supporting district and community efforts to ensure that students in foster care have access to high-quality, stable educational experiences from preschool (if offered) through high school graduation.

Irrespective of the location of a foster care placement, students in foster care will continue to attend their school of origin, unless after a collaborative decision-making process it is determined



to be in the student's best interest to enroll in and attend school in the district in which the student resides in foster care. Enrollment of students in the district where they reside in foster care will take place immediately upon such a determination.

The district has designated a point of contact for students in foster care. The district and the point of contact will collaborate with DCF to ensure that students can access transportation and the other services to which they may be entitled.

### **Best Interest Determination**

Decisions about whether a student in foster care should continue to attend the school of origin should be made collaboratively by DCF, the student (as appropriate), the student's family and/or foster family (and if different, the person authorized to make educational decisions on behalf of the student), the school and district of origin, and (when different) the local district where the student is placed. Best interest determinations should focus on the needs of each individual student and take into account a variety of factors. Every effort should be made to reach agreement regarding the appropriate school placement of a student in foster care. However, if there is disagreement regarding school placement for a student in foster care, DCF will finalize the best interest determination.

The district can seek review of DCF's decision by utilizing a Foster Care School Selection Dispute Resolution Process established by DESE and DCF. Decisions made through this process are not subject to review. To the extent feasible and appropriate, the district will ensure that a child remains in his or her school of origin while the disputes are being resolved to minimize disruptions and reduce the number of moves between schools.

### **Transportation**

The district of origin must collaborate with DCF on how transportation will be provided and arranged to ensure that students in foster care who need transportation to remain in their school of origin will receive such transportation while they are in foster care.

Transportation options may include using Title I funds, establishing regional collaborations among districts, coordinating with existing routes for transportation, seeking help from foster parent(s), etc. Absent other agreements between the district and DCF, the district of origin is responsible for providing transportation to and from the school of origin.

### **Immediate Enrollment**

If it is in the best interest of a student in foster care to leave the school of origin, the student must be immediately enrolled in the district in which he or she resides in foster care. During enrollment of students in foster care, DCF representatives will present the district with a form that indicates that the student is in foster care, along with their state-agency identification badge.

If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be permitted to enroll under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to

obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. After enrollment, the district will immediately request available records from the student's previous school.

### **EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MILITARY CHILDREN**

To facilitate the placement, enrollment, graduation, data collection, and provision of special services for students transferring into or out of the district because of their parents or guardians being on active duty in the U.S. Armed Services, the District supports and will implement its responsibilities as outlined in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children. The district believes it is appropriate to remove barriers to educational success imposed on children of military families resulting from frequent moves required by parents' or guardians' military deployment.

### **VEHICLES ON SCHOOL GROUNDS**

Prolonged idling of motor vehicles is prohibited by Massachusetts law on school grounds or within 100 feet of school property. M.G.L. c. 90, § 16B<sup>33</sup>.

### **SCHOOL MEDICAL POLICIES**

Students are not permitted to carry medication in school except with authorization from the school nurse in accordance with 105 C.M.R. 210.000<sup>34</sup>. All other medications needed during school hours, including any prescription and over the counter medication and supplements must be administered under the supervision of the school nurse. Please find here a link to the [School Medical Guidelines](#).

First Aid/Dismissal - Treatment will be administered for minor injuries during the school day. When a student becomes ill or is seriously injured the parent/guardian is notified immediately. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached in an emergency, the child will be transported by emergency personnel to the appropriate medical facility. The nurse will dismiss any child who is considered to be contagious and/or is not fully immunized or exempted by law from required vaccines.

[Medications](#) - Whenever possible, medication administration should be scheduled at times other than during the school day. If it is necessary that your child receive medicine during the school day, the school nurse is responsible for the administration of all medications. All medication must be delivered to the nurse by a parent, guardian or another designated adult. Medication must be in a pharmacy-labeled container and be accompanied by a doctor's order and written parental approval prior to administration. Students are not allowed to carry medicine on their person, with the exception of inhalers and EpiPens in accordance with the requirements of 105 CMR

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<sup>33</sup> [M.G.L. c. 90, § 16B](#)

<sup>34</sup> [105 C.M.R. 210.000](#)

210.000<sup>35</sup>. Students found in possession of unauthorized medications on school grounds or at school sponsored events may be subject to discipline. The entire medication policy is available in the Nurse's Office and on the Reading Public Schools website [here](#).

**IMPORTANT – If it is necessary that your child receive medicine during the day, the school nurse will dispense that medication. Students found in possession of unauthorized medications on school grounds or at school sponsored events may be subject to discipline.**

Special Medical Considerations - Parents of a student with any medical condition which might require special attention or planning should contact the school nurse as soon as possible. This includes, but is not limited to, conditions such as asthma, severe allergies, seizure disorder or diabetes.

### **MANDATORY REPORTING**

All professional staff are informed annually of their obligations to report cases of suspected child abuse and neglect as specified in M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A-51F<sup>36</sup> and M.G.L. c. 71, § 37L<sup>37</sup>.

### **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Reading Public Schools recognizes that on occasion physical restraint is required to protect the safety of school community members from serious, imminent physical harm. Physical restraint may be used only as an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited in public education programs except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed in appropriate under the circumstances. Physical restraint shall mean direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

Physical restraint shall not be used: (a) as a means of discipline or punishment; (b) when the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting; (c) as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a public education program rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm; or (d) as a standard response for any individual student.

No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include the use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort. Physical restraint in a public education program shall be limited to the

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<sup>35</sup> [105 CMR 210.000](#)

<sup>36</sup> [M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A-51F](#)

<sup>37</sup> [M.G.L. c. 71, § 37L](#)

use of such reasonable force as is necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

Nothing in Reading Public Schools policy, or the applicable regulations, prohibits: (a) the right of any individual to report to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or other individual; (b) law enforcement, judicial authorities or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including the physical detainment of a student or other person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk; or (c) the exercise of an individual's responsibilities as a mandated reporter pursuant to M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A<sup>38</sup>. The Reading Public Schools complies with the requirements of Massachusetts regulations governing the use and reporting of physical restraint in schools, 603 CMR 46.00<sup>39</sup>.

## **TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AND INTERNET SAFETY POLICIES**

The Reading Public Schools Technology Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy, [linked here](#) outline acceptable use of the Reading Public Schools network, technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure, including email and online class resources. All students and staff must agree to abide by the Technology Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Policy.

The Reading Public Schools monitors the use of the school District's network. There is no expectation of privacy related to information stored and transmitted over the Reading Public Schools network. Search of particular files of a user shall be conducted if there is a reasonable suspicion that a user has violated the law, school rules of the code of conduct, or Reading School Committee policies. The investigation will be reasonable and in the context of the nature of the alleged policy violation.

Use of the computer network and Internet is an integral part of research and class work, but abuse of this technology can result in loss of privileges. Students who use technology devices, digital resources, and network infrastructure, along with information technology inappropriately may lose their access privileges and may face additional disciplinary or legal action in accordance with the disciplinary due process procedures in this handbook.

### **Unacceptable Uses of Technology Resources**

Inappropriate technology use includes but is not limited to the following:

- Interfering with the normal functioning of devices, computer systems, or computer networks.
- Illegal or criminal activities.
- Damaging or theft of devices, computer systems, or computer networks.
- Accessing, modifying, or deleting files/data that do not belong to you.
- Sending or publishing offensive, bullying or harassing messages and content.

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<sup>38</sup> [M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A](#)

<sup>39</sup> [603 CMR 46.00](#)

- Accessing dangerous information that, if acted upon, could cause damage or danger to others.
- Giving your username or password to any other student or using the username or password of someone else to access any part of the system.
- Sharing and/or distribution of passwords or using another student or faculty member's password.
- Intentional viewing, downloading or distribution of inappropriate and/or offensive materials.
- Gaining unauthorized access to computer and or telecommunications networks and resources.
- Viewing, transmitting or downloading pornographic, obscene, vulgar and/or indecent materials.
- Using obscene language, harassing, insulting or bullying others, posting of private or personal information about another person, spamming of the school email system, violating any federal or state law, local regulation or school committee policy.
- 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: wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant message, text message or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation is a violation under law. 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 is a violation under law. Cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When cyber-bullying is alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents and families is expected.
- Violating copyright laws and/or the district policy on plagiarism.
- Copying software or applications from Reading Public School devices through any electronic means unless the particular licensing agreement in place for the software allows user distribution.
- Intentionally wasting limited network or bandwidth resources.
- Destruction/vandalism of system software, applications, files, or other network resources.
- Employing the network for commercial or political purposes. Using the network internet to buy or sell products.
- "Hacking" and other illegal activities in an attempt to gain unauthorized access to restricted files, other devices, or computer systems.
- Uploading any harmful form of programming, bypassing filters; installing any type of server, aliasing / spoofing, peer-to-peer networking or remote-control software.
- Possession of and/or distribution of any software tools designed to facilitate any of the above actions will also be considered an offense.
- Saving inappropriate files to any part of the system, including but not limited to:

- Music files
- Movies
- Video games of all types, including ROMs and emulators
- Offensive images or files
- Programs which can be used for malicious purposes
- Any files for which you do not have a legal license
- Any file which is not needed for school purposes or a class assignment
- Uses that contribute to the violation of any other student conduct code including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, hazing or harassment, theft, falsification of records, possession of banned substances/items, etc.

NOTE: If a student needs a file for a class project that you think may be considered inappropriate, then he/she needs to have teacher and school administration permission prior to the class project.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ATHLETICS**

The Reading Public Schools provides nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in such a manner as is necessary to afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation. Reading is, however, generally permitted to establish and utilize skill-based eligibility criteria for participation in extracurricular programs and activities (e.g., school-sponsored athletics) so long as the criteria are rationally related to the purposes and goals of the specific program or activity. Reading administrators, in their discretion, may deny or limit a student's access to co-curricular activities as a disciplinary sanction.

Participation in extracurricular activities and athletics is a privilege, not a right. Administrators may, in their discretion, limit student participation in extracurricular activities or athletics as a disciplinary consequence. All student athletes are expected to follow the MIAA rules and guidelines for athletics eligibility and participation.

## **HAZING<sup>40</sup>**

Massachusetts law requires that all secondary students be provided a copy of the state laws concerning hazing.

M.G.L. c. 269 § 17<sup>41</sup>: Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private

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<sup>40</sup> [M.G.L. c. 269 §§ 17-19](#)

<sup>41</sup> [M.G.L. c. 269 § 17](#)

property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

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

M.G.L. c. 269 § 18<sup>42</sup>: Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

M.G.L. c. 269 § 19<sup>43</sup>: Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

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

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

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<sup>42</sup> [M.G.L. c. 269 § 18](#)

<sup>43</sup> [M.G.L. c. 269 § 19](#)

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students.

The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

Please refer to the [Reading School Committee Policy Manual](#), Section JICFA and JICFA-E.

## **READING METCO PROGRAM**

In 1966, Massachusetts General Law Chapter section 12A gave cities, towns, school committees and districts the right to "alleviate racial isolation and "racial imbalance."

The METCO program (Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity) is a grant funded program by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. It is a voluntary program intended to expand educational opportunities, increase diversity, and reduce racial isolation, by permitting students from Boston and Springfield to attend public schools in other communities that have agreed to participate.

The METCO Program has been part of the Reading Public Schools since 1972. We are a proud METCO district, and all students and staff in our district are considered to be METCO students and staff as all benefit from this rich, cultural diversity program.

### Placement of students

The METCO Program is a marginal seating program. This means students from Boston are placed in open seats in the district. Boston resident students cannot take any seats that would require the district to create new programs, hire more teachers, or build new buildings. Each year, seats are filled in the district by the Reading Public Schools METCO Director based on available open seats in the district.

### Rights and Responsibilities

Boston resident students and parents are subject to the same rights and responsibilities as Reading resident students and parents. All participating METCO school districts are expected to provide all of the ordinary services and benefits to its Boston and Springfield resident students that are provided to town resident students and parents.

### Reading METCO Found Family Program



The Found Family Program seeks to create friendships and forge relationships between families from Boston and Reading. The Found Family program will feature scheduled social events that include families from Boston and Reading. The goal is also to ensure that our Boston resident students and their families genuinely feel connected to Reading Public Schools and the town of Reading.

Found Family - A group of people who find themselves united in a family-bond based on shared experiences, mutual understanding, and interpersonal connection. Found Family is not biological but found when placed in a new place.

For more information on the Found Family program please click the link - [Reading METCO Found Family Program](#).

For more information on Found Family and how to sign up please reach out to your school principal.

### Afternoon Transportation

The afternoon bus departs Parker Monday-Thursday at 3:15 p.m. and on Fridays at 2:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday students participate in afterschool programs. The METCO program provides late buses Monday-Thursday for all middle school and high school students with a pick-up time of 6:10 p.m. at Parker, 6:20 p.m. at Coolidge, and 6:30 p.m. pick up time at RMHS.

### FORMETCO (Friends of Reading METCO)

Friends of Reading METCO (FORMETCO) is an independent organization dedicated to bringing together Boston and Reading families from all 8 schools in the Reading Public School District. It is a diverse, all-volunteer group of parents/caregivers and educators from the Reading and Boston communities. FORMETCO is committed to making connections and fostering authentic lifelong relationships between Boston and Reading families. We are one community! To learn more, Email Theresa Wiggins at [villageparent@gmail.com](mailto:villageparent@gmail.com).

If you would like more information about the Reading METCO Program, please email the METCO Director at [kurtis.martin@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:kurtis.martin@reading.k12.ma.us).

# Reading Public Schools

*Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow*



82 Oakland Road  
Reading, MA 01867  
Phone: 781-944-5800  
Fax: 781-942-9149

TO: Reading School Committee  
FROM: Dr. Sarah Hardy, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching & Learning  
DATE: August 22, 2023  
RE: Community Math Pathways Committee Timeline, Process, & Expectations

In the coming weeks, Reading Public Schools will launch a Community Math Pathways Advisory Committee and will elicit members to serve on the committee. A flier with details about the committee will be shared with the RPS community during the first week of school, along with a link to express interest in serving on the committee.

As Reading Public Schools strives to meet our vision for mathematics, we have identified areas of strength and challenges in our systems. RPS Leaders analyzed data and feedback from students, staff, and the community to identify areas for examination by the committee. Identified components to examine include;

- the impact of middle school course placements determining the future ceilings of students within advanced math courses,
- advanced math course enrollment does not reflect school demographics,
- limited options for advanced math course choices,
- lack of flexible opportunities for accessing various math courses, and
- lack of interest-based options for juniors/seniors.

We have committed to revisiting these system components and collaborating with stakeholders to develop a path forward. As such, the committee will be charged with examining current research about math pathways, reviewing national, state and local data, exploring various math pathway models and considering state and local math course requirements. The committee will then summarize key findings and make recommendations to RPS District Leadership to ensure opportunities for access and success for all students in mathematics.

## **Committee Membership**

In forming the advisory committee, we are hoping to have stakeholders of varying roles - educators, parents/guardians, alumni, and community partners - serve on a Community Math Pathways Advisory Committee. Depending upon the interest, we anticipate having a committee of 15-20 people. Ideal committee members will demonstrate good communication skills, vision, leadership, open mindedness, and teamwork mentality. Committee members will commit to attending biweekly meetings and completing required assignments in between meetings. Those expressing interest in serving on the committee will be asked to provide information about their expertise/perspective regarding equitable math pathways, math instruction, or math for career readiness.

## **Virtual Information Meeting**

On Thursday, September 7, 2023, we will hold a virtual informational meeting that all are welcome to join. At that informational meeting, we will review the plan for the Community Math Pathways Advisory

Committee and share the rationale for work, including the research and data that support the need to update our secondary math pathways. We will ask anyone interested in serving on the committee to express interest via a google form (which we will provide) by Friday, September 8, 2023.

### **Community Math Pathways Advisory Committee Meeting Dates**

The Community Math Pathways Advisory Committee will meet on the following dates in person from 5:30-6:45pm:

- Monday, September 18, 2023
- Thursday, October 5, 2023
- Thursday, October 19, 2023
- Thursday, November 2, 2023

### **Timeline**

The formation of the Community Math Pathways Advisory Committee is a continuation of ongoing work to revise the RPS math secondary pathways. As shared at the June 8, 2023 School Committee meeting, during the 2022-23 school year RPS district and school-based leaders engaged in work to identify needs and possible outcomes of mathematics pathways work. As part of that process, we considered research from the field, examined current DESE guidance and collected data about RPS math course enrollment over cohorts and years. We also gather information from colleges and universities about math-related admission requirements and preferences. We developed the following vision statement to guide the continued work of updating the RPS secondary math pathways.

### ***Mathematics Vision Statement for Reading Public Schools***

In Reading Public Schools, students see themselves as problem solvers who continually grow as mathematicians. Our classrooms foster reasoning, collaboration, and curiosity within which students hold the ownership of the work (thinking, talking, and learning by doing) while they take risks, persevere, and communicate.

Educators foster productive struggle through real-world problems that engage students of every background and ability. RPS educators know that all students can achieve in mathematics, and we use ongoing assessments and inclusive practices to support access for all to set students up to find success. The Community Math Pathways Advisory Committee will be formed and begin meeting by mid-September with the goal of providing recommendations to the RPS Leadership team by early November. This timeline enables leadership to decide the changes that will be implemented during the 2024-25 school year in time to reflect those changes in the FY25 budget. Additionally, this time frame allows for the RPS Leadership team to have the necessary information for the RMHS Program of Studies for the 2024-25 school year.

Throughout the process, information will be shared with the school committee and the community.

# Reading Public Schools

## School Committee Meeting Packet

**August 24, 2023**



Old Business

## SPECIAL EDUCATION RESERVE FUND

The School Committee desires to budget responsibly and sustainably. As Special Education costs can occur suddenly, a key tool to achieve the Committee's goal is the establishment and funding of a Special Education Reserve Fund.

The Special Education Reserve Fund will be used in alignment with M.G.L. 40:13E. It will be used for unanticipated or unbudgeted costs of:

1. Special Education
2. Recovery High School Programs
3. Out-of-District Tuition
4. Out-of-District Transportation

While the law allows for the Fund to accrue up to 2 percent of the annual net school spending of the District, the Committee understands that any money within the Fund can only be used for the limited cases listed above. Therefore, it is the policy of the Committee to adhere to the following Funding Rules:

1. The standard practice is to only add money to the Fund up to 1 percent of the annual net school spending of the District. Funds shall not be added to buffer anticipated expenses in the following year.
2. Budget to spend money from the Fund during the next fiscal year once the Fund has eclipsed 1.5 percent, ~~due to interest accrual~~, of the annual net school spending of the District.
3. After the Fund's second year in existence, the Committee will endeavor to maintain a minimum of .5 percent of the annual net school spending of the District.

To assist the Committee in adhering to this policy, the Director of Finance and Operations for the District will work with the Town Treasurer to report the status of the Fund in alignment with annual net school spending annually on two occasions:

1. The first quarter financial report of each school year, or in a standalone report if necessary.
2. The third quarter financial report of each school year.

The first report should be made before or around the annual Finance Committee's Financial Forum in October each year. The School Committee can leverage the Financial Forum to secure secondary approval of the use of the money in the Fund for the next budget year from the Select Board if required to stay in compliance with the second Funding Rule above. If the timing doesn't allow for approval during the Financial Forum, the Committee will endeavor to obtain the approval of the Select Board as soon as possible thereafter and before the budget guidance for the next fiscal year is finalized.

The second report should be made during or before the last June meeting of the school year so the Committee can stay in compliance with the first Funding Rule and, where possible with excess operating funds, the third Funding Rule.

In the event an unexpected need arises outside of a budget cycle, the Director of Finance & Operations in alignment with the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services will submit a request to the School Committee during a normal business meeting. The request will outline the need for the money, in an anonymized way, to provide sufficient documentation so the Committee can approve the request and support the request to the Select Board for their secondary approval.

In either case (annual budget cycle or unexpected need), once approvals of both the School Committee and Select Board are received, the Director of Finance & Operations will work with the Town ~~Treasurer-Accountant and Town Treasurer~~ to directly charge the Fund for appropriate expenses or move the money from the Fund to the appropriate operational account at the appropriate-necessary time, either as soon as possible or at the commencement of the next school year.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. [40:13E](#), [71:91](#)

CROSS REFS: DBJ, Budget Transfer Authority  
DI, Fiscal Accounting and Reporting  
[Town of Reading Home Rule Charter](#)



Administrative Offices  
82 Oakland Road  
Reading, MA 01867  
781 944-5800

## READING SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Thomas Wise Chair  
Erin Gaffen Vice-Chair

Shawn Brandt  
Sarah McLaughlin  
Carla Nazzaro  
Charles Robinson

Thomas Milaschewski, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

TO: Reading School Committee  
FROM: Thomas Wise, Reading School Committee Chair  
DATE: August 20, 2023  
TOPIC: Liaison, Subcommittee, and Committee Appointments

After our discussion at the last meeting and a few follow-up discussions, the Liaison, Subcommittee, and Committee appointments are as follows for the FY23-24 school year:

Board, Committee, or Subcommittee	Liaison or Appointee	Sunset or Timeline Info
<b>Audit Committee</b>	Brandt and Wise	N/A
<b>Finance Committee</b>	Brandt and Wise	N/A
<b>Recreation Committee</b>	Robinson	N/A
<b>Select Board</b>	Brandt and Wise	N/A
<b>RCTV</b>	McLaughlin	N/A
<b>SEPAC</b>	Gaffen	N/A
<b>Permanent Building Committee</b>	McLaughlin and Nazzaro	N/A
<b>Bylaw Committee</b>	Nazzaro	N/A
<b>Board of Library Trustees</b>	Nazzaro	N/A
<b>Reading Coalition for Prevention and Support</b>	Gaffen	N/A
<b>Partners and Allies for Inclusive Reading</b>	Gaffen	N/A
<b>Policy Subcommittee</b>	Gaffen, Robinson, and Wise (Chair)	N/A
<b>Killam School Building Committee</b>	McLaughlin and Nazzaro (Chair)	TBD
<b>Symonds Way Exploratory Committee</b>	Robinson (Vice Chair)	June 30, 2024
<b>Charter Review Committee</b>	Robinson	TBD
<b>Special Education Caseloads JLMC</b>	McLaughlin	TBD
<b>Teacher Assessment Process JLMC</b>	Nazzaro	TBD
<b>Professional Development JLMC</b>	Gaffen	TBD
<b>Technology Impact JLMC</b>	Robinson	TBD

Given the end date (June 2023) for the RTA Salary Schedule JLMC, I have removed it from this list. If the need for representation of such a Joint Labor Management Committee reappears, we can reassess then.

Thank you.

# Reading Public Schools

## School Committee Meeting Packet

**August 24, 2023**



New Business





Administrative Offices  
82 Oakland Road  
Reading, MA 01867  
781 944-5800

## READING SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Thomas Wise Chair  
Erin Gaffen Vice-Chair

Shawn Brandt  
Sarah McLaughlin  
Carla Nazzaro  
Charles Robinson

Thomas Milaschewski, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

TO: Reading School Committee  
FROM: Thomas Wise, Reading School Committee Chair  
DATE: August 21, 2023  
TOPIC: Second Reading of DBDA, Summary of ADF, DBJ, DJE, and KCD, and Wellness Committee Appointment

At our meeting on August 24, 2023, we will undertake the second reading of Policy DBDA – Special Education Reserve Fund. As a reminder, this policy was reviewed by the administration team, reviewed, and updated by the Policy Subcommittee, and passed via a 3-0 vote at our meeting on June 29, 2023. We then made a few edits during our last meeting as a full committee. As promised at our last meeting, Shawn and I will discuss a few alternatives and come to the meeting on Thursday with at least one option to hopefully resolve the prior discussion points.

Additionally, at the Policy Subcommittee meeting on June 29, 2023, the Subcommittee voted 3-0 to approve edits to the following policies which we will review and approve (or table) in this forthcoming meeting:

- (1) **ADF – School District Wellness Program.** This policy undertook a major overhaul vs. the old Reading specific policy and is now much closer to the MASC template policy. The overhaul happened because of the review of the Wellness Program Coordinators, led by Director of Heath Services Mary Giuliana. The policy subcommittee met with Mrs. Giuliana and Dr. Stys in May to discuss options and they agreed more closely align with the MASC model policy. They then took away updates for our review and approval in the June meeting. In the packet, you will see three versions of the document: the current RPS policy, the model MASC policy, and the new RPS policy. We will be reviewing and voting on the new RPS policy, but I wanted all three included for easy reference.
- (2) **DBJ – Budget Transfer Authority.** This policy needed a minor change to align with Policy DBDA. As such, we made that change.
- (3) **DJE – Procurement Requirements.** After a great deal of review with former Director of Finance and Operations Susan Bottan and legal counsel, this policy was finally approved by the Policy Subcommittee. Changes were necessary because of changes in Massachusetts General Law in the fall of 2022. The policy is also far more robust than it was previously.
- (4) **KCD – Public Gifts to Schools.** As the final policy of the financial policies reviewed by MASC in the fall of 2021 and again in the fall of 2022, this policy was reviewed with Director of Finance and Operations Susan Bottan and legal counsel before the review and approval by the Policy Subcommittee.

Of the above, the most important for us to complete is ADF, followed by DBJ. The new and improved ADF will be part of a grant that is being written. Presuming we approve of the changes to ADF, we will need to also discuss the appointment of a School Committee member to the Wellness Committee.

Thank you.

# Current RPS Policy

File: ADF

## Student Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy

### Policy Intent/Rationale

The Reading Public Schools promote healthy schools by supporting wellness, good nutrition, regular physical activity, and positive dietary and lifestyle practices as part of the total learning environment. Our schools contribute to the basic health status of children by facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity. Improved health optimizes student performance potential and ensures that children need to be healthy to learn and learn to be healthy. The following information builds a rationale for the development of this policy:

- Children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn, and thrive.
- Good health fosters student attendance and education.
- Obesity rates have doubled in children and tripled in adolescents over the last two decades, and physical inactivity and excessive calorie intake are the predominant causes of obesity.
- Heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes are responsible for two-thirds of deaths in the United States, and major risk factors for those diseases, including unhealthy eating habits, physical inactivity, and obesity, often are established in childhood.

To support wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity, the Reading Public Schools will do the following:

- 1) **Empower each school's School Council to be the school's School Health Council and, as such, the Council will develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity guidelines.**

The councils also will serve as resources to school sites for implementing these policies. A school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, PTO representative, school cafeteria employees, community members, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public. The school district will engage all stakeholders in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies. Nutrition lessons will be developed under the leadership of the Director of Nurses and will be taught by the school nurses to grade levels assigned. Nutrition lessons will be included in the curriculum at the grades with specific health curriculum (grades 8, 9 and 11).

- 2) **Provide a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors.**

The entire school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity. A healthy school environment should not be sacrificed because of a dependence on revenue from high-added fat, high-added sugar and low-nutrient foods to support school programs. Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

# Current RPS Policy

File: ADF

### **3) Support and promote proper dietary habits contributing to students' health status and academic performance.**

To the extent possible, all foods available on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities during the instructional day should meet or exceed the nutritional guidelines set forth by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and State of Massachusetts. In addition, all schools in our district will participate in available federal school meal programs. Emphasis should be placed on foods that are nutrient dense per calorie. To ensure high-quality, nutritious meals, foods should be served with consideration toward variety, appeal, taste, safety and packaging. Students will have access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students, as well as, provide a clean, safe, pleasant setting and adequate time for students to eat. These foods should also comply with the District Food Allergy Guidelines that have been established by the Reading Public Schools.

### **4) Provide opportunities for students to engage in physical activity.**

A quality physical education program is an essential component for all students to learn about and participate in physical activity. Physical activity will include regular instructional physical education as well as cocurricular activities and recess, when developmentally appropriate. All students in Grades K-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

### **5) Commit to improving academic performance for all students.**

Educators, health and nutrition staff, administrators, parents, and community members must consider the critical role student health plays in academic stamina and performance and adapt the school environment to ensure students' basic nourishment and activity needs are met.

### **6) Create a monitoring and accountability system.**

To ensure that the wellness policy is enacted, there will be an assessment system created to monitor progress. This will include:

- A monitoring system that ensures that the district is in compliance with the federal mandates at both the district and individual school level.
- An annual report, conducted by the district health-wellness committee, that informs the district and the community stakeholders of program progress.
- Discussions with the School site councils or designee(s) about ways to promote the wellness policy in their buildings.

Adopted by the Reading School Committee on July 31, 2006

Revised and Approved by the Reading School Committee on May 28, 2013

## SCHOOL DISTRICT WELLNESS PROGRAM

The School Committee recognizes the relationship between student well-being and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive district wellness program. Therefore, the school district will provide developmentally appropriate and sequential nutrition and physical education as well as opportunities for physical activity. The wellness program will be implemented in a multidisciplinary fashion and will be evidence based.

### **Wellness Committee**

The school district will establish a wellness committee that consists of at least one (1): parent/guardian, student, nurse, school food service representative, School Committee member, school administrator, member of the public, and other community members as appropriate. If available, a qualified, credentialed nutrition professional will be a member of the wellness committee. The school committee designates the following individual(s) as wellness program coordinator(s): \_\_\_\_\_ (title). Only employees of the district who are members of the wellness committee may serve as wellness program coordinators. Wellness coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will be in charge of implementation and evaluation of this policy.

### **Nutrition Guidelines**

It is the policy of the school district that all foods and beverages made available on campus during the school day are consistent with School Lunch Program nutrition guidelines. Guidelines for reimbursable school meals will not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to law. The district will create procedures that address all foods available to students throughout the school day in the following areas:

- guidelines for maximizing nutritional value by decreasing fat and added sugars, increasing nutrition density and moderating portion size of each individual food or beverage sold within the school environment;
- separate guidelines for foods and beverages in the following categories:
  1. foods and beverages included in a la carte sales in the food service program on school campuses;
  2. foods and beverages sold in vending machines, snack bars, school stores, and concession stands;
  3. foods and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities; and
  4. refreshments served at parties, celebrations, and meetings during the school day; and
  5. specify that its guidelines will be based on nutrition goals, not profit motives.

### **Nutrition and Physical Education**

The school district will provide nutrition education aligned with standards established by the USDA's National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program in all grades. The school district will provide physical education training aligned with the standards established by the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education. The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will develop procedures that address nutrition and physical education.

## **Nutrition Education**

*The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.*

- Students receive nutrition education that teaches the skills they need to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors.
- Nutrition education is offered in the school cafeteria as well as in the classroom, with coordination between the foodservice staff and other school personnel, including teachers.
- Students receive consistent nutrition messages from all aspects of the school program.
- Division health education curriculum standards and guidelines address both nutrition and physical education.
- Nutrition is integrated into the health education or core curricula (e.g., math, science, language arts).
- Schools link nutrition education activities with the coordinated school health program.
- Staff who provide nutrition education have appropriate training.
- The level of student participation in the school breakfast and school lunch programs is appropriate.

## **Physical Education Activities**

*The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.*

- Students are given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education (PE) classes, daily recess periods for elementary school students, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate.
- Students are given opportunities for physical activity through a range of before- and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.
- Schools work with the community to create ways for students to walk, bike, rollerblade or skateboard safely to and from school.
- Schools encourage parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.
- Schools provide training to enable staff to promote enjoyable, lifelong physical activity among students.

## **Other School-Based Activities**

The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, are charged with developing procedures addressing other school-based activities to promote wellness.

*The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.*

# MASC Model Policy

File: ADF

- An adequate amount of time is allowed for students to eat meals in adequate lunchroom facilities.
- All children who participate in subsidized food programs are able to obtain food in a non-stigmatizing manner.
- Environmentally-friendly practices such as the use of locally grown and seasonal foods, school gardens, and non-disposable tableware have been considered and implemented where appropriate.
- Physical activities and/or nutrition services or programs designed to benefit staff health have been considered and, to the extent practical, implemented.

## **Evaluation**

The wellness committee will assess all education curricula and materials pertaining to wellness for accuracy, completeness, balance and consistency with the state and district's educational goals and standards. Wellness program coordinators shall be responsible for devising a plan for implementation and evaluation of the district wellness policy and are charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that schools meet the goals of the district wellness policy. Wellness program coordinators will report to the School Committee annually.

LEGAL REFS:           The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Section 2004, P.L. 108-265  
                              The Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1751 – 1769h  
                              The Child Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1771 – 1789  
                              MGL [111.223](#)  
                              [105 CMR 215](#)

CROSS REFS:           EFC, Free and Reduced-Cost Food Services  
                              IHAMA, Teaching about Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs  
                              KI, Public Solicitations/Advertising in District Facilities

Adopted by the Reading School Committee on July 31, 2006  
Revised and Approved by the Reading School Committee on May 28, 2013

# New RPS Policy

File: ADF

## SCHOOL DISTRICT WELLNESS PROGRAM

The School Committee recognizes the relationship between student well-being and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive district wellness program. Therefore, the ~~school district~~ Reading Public Schools will provide developmentally appropriate and sequential nutrition and physical education as well as opportunities for physical activity. The wellness program will be implemented in a multidisciplinary fashion and will be ~~evidence based~~ evidence-based.

### Wellness Committee and Coordinators

The school district will establish a wellness committee that consists of at least one (1): parent/guardian, student, nurse, school food service representative, School Committee member, school administrator, member of the public, and other community members as appropriate. If available, a qualified, credentialed nutrition professional will be a member of the wellness committee.

The ~~S~~chool ~~e~~Committee designates the following ~~individual~~ role(s) as wellness program coordinator(s): \_\_\_\_\_ (title)

1. Director of Health Services
2. Director of Food Services
3. Director of K-12 Health and Wellness
4. Assistant Principal for Athletics and Activities

~~Only~~ employees of the district who are members of the wellness committee may serve as wellness program coordinators. Wellness coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will ~~be in charge of~~ oversee the implementation and evaluation of this policy.

### Nutrition Guidelines

It is the policy of the school district that all foods and beverages made available on campus during the school day are consistent with School Lunch Program nutrition guidelines. Guidelines for reimbursable school meals will not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the ~~Secretary~~ U.S. Department of Agriculture ~~pursuant to~~ according to law. The district will create procedures that address all foods available to students throughout the school day, including the Reading Public Schools Extended Day Program, in the following areas:

- guidelines for maximizing nutritional value by decreasing fat and added sugars, increasing nutrition density, and moderating portion size of each individual food or beverage sold within the school environment;
- separate guidelines for foods and beverages in the following categories:
  1. foods and beverages included in a la carte sales in the food service program on school campuses;
  2. foods and beverages sold in vending machines, snack bars, school stores, and concession stands;
  3. ~~foods and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities;~~ and
  4. refreshments served at parties, celebrations, and meetings during the school day; and
  4. specify that its guidelines will be based on nutrition goals, not profit motives.

Commented [TW1]: Should this be USDA instead of the Secretary of Agriculture?

File: ADF

5- Foods and beverages offered or sold outside the school day at school-sponsored events (athletic events, performances, dances, etc.) will be strongly encouraged to meet the nutrition standards for meals or food sold during the school day.

**Nutrition and Physical Education**

The school district will provide nutrition education aligned with standards established by the USDA's National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program in all grades. The school district will provide physical education training aligned with the standards established by the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education. The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will develop procedures that address nutrition and physical education.



### **Nutrition Education**

*The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.*

- Students receive nutrition education that teaches the skills they need to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors.
- Nutrition education is offered in the school cafeteria as well as in the classroom, with coordination between the ~~foodservice~~-food service staff and other school personnel, including teachers.
- Students receive consistent nutrition messages from all aspects of the school program.
- Division health education curriculum standards and guidelines address both nutrition and physical education.
- Nutrition is integrated into ~~the~~ health education ~~or~~ and could include core curricula (e.g., math, science, language arts).
- Schools link nutrition education activities with the coordinated school health program.
- Staff who provide nutrition education have appropriate training.
- The level of student participation in the school breakfast and school lunch programs is appropriate and reviewed annually for continual improvement.

**Commented [TW2]:** Staff wanted to add "and will eventually include" here. Let's discuss.

### **Physical Education Activities**

*The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.*

- Students are given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education (PE) classes, daily recess periods for elementary school and middle school students, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate.
- Students are given opportunities for physical activity through a range of before- and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.
- Schools work with the community to create ways for students to walk, bike, ~~rollerblader~~rollerblade, or skateboard safely to and from school.
- ~~Schools encourage parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.~~
- Schools provide training to enable staff to promote enjoyable, lifelong physical activity among students.

**Commented [TW3]:** Staff highlighted this for removal or rewording.

### **Other School-Based Activities**

The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, are charged with developing procedures addressing other school-based activities to promote wellness.

*The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.*

- An adequate amount of time is allowed for students to eat meals in adequate lunchroom facilities.
- All children who participate in subsidized food programs ~~are able to~~ can obtain food in a non-stigmatizing manner.
- Environmentally-friendly practices such as the use of locally grown and seasonal foods, school gardens, and non-disposable tableware have been considered and implemented where appropriate.
- Physical activities and/or nutrition services or programs designed to benefit staff health have been considered and, to the extent practical, implemented.

**Commented [TW4]:** Staff highlighted this as something to discuss. Should the goal be 30 minutes?

**Commented [TW5R4]:** Leave it for now, but explore with the principals prior to full SC meeting.

### **Evaluation**

The wellness committee will assess all education curricula and materials ~~pertaining to~~ about wellness for accuracy, completeness, balance, and consistency with the state and district's educational goals and standards. Wellness program coordinators shall be responsible for devising a plan for implementation and evaluation of the district wellness policy and are charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that schools meet the goals of the district wellness policy. Wellness program coordinators will report to the School Committee annually.

LEGAL REFS:           The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, Section 2004, P.L. 108-265  
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                              The Child Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C. §§ 1771 – 1789  
                              MGL [111:223](#)  
                              [105 CMR 215](#)

CROSS REFS:           EFC, Free and Reduced-Cost Food Services  
                              IHAMA, Teaching about Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs  
                              KI, Public Solicitations/Advertising in District Facilities

Adopted by the Reading School Committee on July 31, 2006.  
Revised and Approved by the Reading School Committee on May 28, 2013.  
Reviewed, Revised, and Approved by the Reading School Committee on

## **BIDDING-PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS**

All purchases of materials and equipment and all contracts for construction or maintenance will conform to the requirements of the law.

**Commented [NP1]:** Thinking this should be the extent to which we mention construction-related contracts.

To foster greater efficiency, the District will enter into state and local intergovernmental agreements where appropriate for the procurement or use of common or shared services.

### **Purchases of \$100,000 & over**

#### **IFBs – Invitation for Bids**

For any purchase of a supply or service over \$~~50,000~~100,000, bids will be advertised appropriately as part of a competitive bidding process. Suppliers will be invited to have their names placed on distribution lists to receive invitations to bid. When specifications are prepared, they will be distributed to all merchants and firms who have indicated an interest in bidding.

**Commented [NP2]:** Would this be to SI or Town's Manager?

All bids will be submitted in sealed envelopes, addressed to the Superintendent, and marked with the name of the bid, bid number, and the time of the bid opening. Bids will be opened in public at the time specified, and all bidders will be invited to be present. ~~The Committee reserves for the District the right to reject any or all bids and to accept the bid that appears to be in the best interest of the school district. The Committee reserves for the District the right to waive any informality in, or reject, any or all bids or any part of any bid. Any bid may be withdrawn prior to the scheduled time for the opening of the bids.~~

Any bid received after the time and date specified will not be considered. All bids will remain firm for a period of 30 days after opening.

The Committee reserves for the District the right to reject any or all bids and to accept the bid that appears to be in the best interest of the school district. The Committee reserves for the District the right to waive any informality in, or reject, any or all bids or any part of any bid. Any bid may be withdrawn ~~prior to~~before the scheduled time for the opening of the bids.

The bidder to whom an award is made may be required to enter a written contract with the school district.

#### **RFPs – Requests for Proposals**

The Town of Reading's Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) has delegated authority to the District's Director of Finance and other certified delegates in the District to take part in the RFP process, as required by Chapter 30B. Reading's CPO also conducts RFPs for and in collaboration with the District.

A bid under an RFP is awarded to the responsive and responsible bidder that submits the most advantageous proposal, taking both price and non-price factors into consideration.

The District will follow all proper RFP procedures as outlined in Chapter 30B, including giving public notice of an RFP within a reasonable time ~~prior to~~before the date for the opening of proposals.

### **Purchases between \$10,000 - \$100,000**

~~A procurement for a supply or service in the amount~~ Purchases of valued between \$10,000 and or greater by not more than \$1050,000 shall require the procurement officer or delegate to attempt to secure three written quotations, one of which will be awarded to the responsible party offering the needed quantity or supply. ~~among three written quotations sought and retained by the procurement officer.~~

### Purchases less than \$10,000

~~Procurement~~ Purchases in the amount of \$10,000 or less shall be obtained through the procurement officer's (or ~~delegated~~ delegate's) exercise of sound business practices to secure the best quality at the best price. ~~School officials shall be governed by the purchasing and bidding practices as required by M.G.L. Chapter 30B.~~

### Exceptions

Under Chapter 30B, the District may make noncompetitive purchases in any amount for software maintenance; library books; school textbooks; or educational programs, courses, or curricula in any media, including educational software, newspapers, serials, periodicals, and audiovisual materials, if the Chief Procurement Officer or delegate determines in writing, after reasonable investigation, that there is only one practicable source for the items.

Additionally, special education contracts for services and supplies are exempt from Chapter 30B.

LEGAL REFS: M-G-L- 7:22A; 7:22B; 30B;-149; 30:39M

CROSS REF: DJA, Purchasing Authority

Adopted by the Reading School Committee on September 28, 2006.

Reviewed, Revised, and Adopted by the Reading School Committee on \_\_\_\_\_.

**Commented [NP3]:** This paragraph is where sole source comes into play, but after speaking with Susan, we both decided that it was best to not overly explain concepts like sole source and just have some information about the most pertinent example of it, which is the purchasing of textbooks.

## PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS

~~In accordance with state law, The Superintendent will have authority to accept all grants and gifts to the District shall be reviewed and accepted by the School Committee before expenditure or use, and offers of equipment for the schools in the name of the School Committee when the gift is of educational value. In the case of gifts from industry, business, or special interest groups, no extensive advertising or promotion may be involved in any donation to the schools.~~

~~Where possible, the District will engage in discussions with the donor on the intent, need, and/or appropriate use of the gift. Gifts that would involve changes in school physical plants or sites will be subject to School Committee approval.~~

Gifts will automatically become the property of the school ~~system~~district. Any gift of cash, ~~regardless of donor intent, whether or not intended by the donor for a specific purpose, will be handled as a separate account~~will be accepted by vote of the School Committee, kept separate from the general fund, and expended at the discretion of the Committee, as provided by law.

~~The Committee directs the Superintendent to assure that an appropriate expression of thanks is given to all donors.~~

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [44:53A, 71:37A](#)

~~CROSS REFS.:~~ [DD, Grants, Proposals, and Special Projects](#)  
[GBEBD, Online Fundraising and Solicitation – Crowdfunding](#)  
[KHB, Advertising in the Schools](#)

Adopted by the Reading School Committee on March 26, 2007.

~~Reviewed, Revised, and Adopted by the Reading School Committee on \_\_\_\_\_.~~

Commented [NP1]: Do we have an advertising and sponsorship policy? If we did, I'd cross-reference it here.

## BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY

In keeping with the need for periodic reconciliation of the school department's budget, the School Committee will consider requests for transfers of funds between cost centers as they are recommended by the Superintendent.

The Committee wishes to be kept abreast of the need for these adjustments so that it may act promptly and expedite financial record-keeping for the school system.

Once the annual budget is approved, all requests for transfers between cost centers must be submitted to the School Committee for approval as part of the Director of Finance and Operations' quarterly report at the business meetings of the School Committee. If a transfer is required more urgently, the School Committee will consider the request as needed.

~~All funds~~ in the general ~~account fund~~ not expended by the ~~close end~~ of the fiscal year will be transferred to the Special Education Reserve Fund in alignment with Policy DBDA and/or returned to the town.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37](#)  
DOR 94-660

CROSS REFS.: DBG, Budget Adoption Procedures  
DI, Fiscal Accounting and Reporting  
DBDA, Special Education Reserve Fund

Adopted by the Reading School Committee on September 28, 2006.

Reviewed, Revised, and Adopted by the Reading School Committee on March 16, 2023.

Reviewed, Revised, and Adopted by the Reading School Committee on \_\_\_\_\_.

# Reading Public Schools

## School Committee Meeting Packet

**August 24, 2023**



Information/Correspondence

**From:** [Wise, Thomas](#)  
**To:** [Rebecca Liberman](#)  
**Cc:** [Milaschewski, Thomas](#); [Lejeune, Olivia](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Community Math Pathways Committee  
**Date:** Monday, August 21, 2023 11:19:47 AM

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Rebecca –

Thank you again for your continued advocacy on this issue.

You are right to point out that we have excellent administrators and educators in our district. However, as a School Committee and Administration team, we firmly believe that the engagement from students, families, and the community will only help to improve the adoption and momentum in moving our offerings forward. Further, as you may know, the engagement of families and the community is one of the four pillars of our greater strategic plan for the next three years. The value we receive from the perspectives of those constituents helps immeasurably. Finally, we do expect this new committee to bring back actionable feedback and recommendations in a short period of time. You can tune in to the meeting on Thursday to hear more about the plan and timeline.

Thank you.

**Thomas Wise**

Reading School Committee

**Email:** [thomas.wise@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:thomas.wise@reading.k12.ma.us)

**SC Distribution List:** [schoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:schoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us)

**Mobile:** (617) 869-6825

**Reading Public Schools Website:** <https://reading.k12.ma.us>

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**From:** Rebecca Liberman <[rfliberman@gmail.com](mailto:rfliberman@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Sunday, August 20, 2023 2:07 PM

**To:** Milaschewski, Thomas <[Thomas.Milaschewski@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:Thomas.Milaschewski@reading.k12.ma.us)>; DG School Committee <[SchoolCommittee@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:SchoolCommittee@reading.k12.ma.us)>

**Subject:** Community Math Pathways Committee

**CAUTION:** This email originated from **outside of Reading Public Schools**. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address and know the content is safe.

Dear Superintendent Milaschewski and Members of the School Committee,  
Could you please explain why we need a community committee to weigh in on math pathways in the Reading Public Schools? We have trained teachers, curriculum coordinators, a STEM coordinator, guidance counselors and a superintendent for teaching and learning already, and these professionals would be much more qualified to make recommendations. If additional expertise is needed, shouldn't we be looking to consultants with the appropriate skills? Why would we want to delegate



the planning of curriculum and pathways to parents and other community members, most of whom have no education experience?

I'd also like to know what the role of this committee would be and whether any recommendations made would ever be implemented. Other parents and I have raised the issue of lack of advanced math access for most Reading students many times over the years. I have suggested that we could easily add a slower paced pathway for Math 7/8 in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, Algebra 1 in 8<sup>th</sup> and geometry plus catch-up on any remaining topics in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, which would effectively bring back the middle track pathway we used to offer until 2012. No new curriculum would be required, and this would be easier than requiring summer math or doubling up for those students who need a slower pace but would still put them on track to take calculus in high school if they wanted to. We could also easily allow the few students who need a faster pace to take Algebra 1 in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Many other districts have these pathways already.

In addition, I worry that some of the voices you would most need to hear from on such a committee would be least likely to participate, including those families who have opted for private school or who have moved out of district.

As things stand, there is a disconnect between what colleges expect and what the Reading Public Schools provide for most of our students in math. As a college interviewer, I see what students in other districts and private schools have access to that many Reading students do not.

I urge you not to wait any longer while more cohorts of Reading students are denied opportunities in math. Instead, please restore the middle track and the fast-track pathways that allowed the vast majority of our students to have access to middle school algebra and high school calculus at the appropriate pace, and then you can convene a committee of educators and parents to evaluate how this is working.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Liberman

50 Pratt Street

**From:** [Wise, Thomas](#)  
**To:** [Rebecca Liberman](#)  
**Cc:** [Milaschewski, Thomas](#); [Lejeune, Olivia](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Please expand access to middle school algebra!  
**Date:** Monday, August 21, 2023 11:22:06 AM

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Rebecca –

In short, many of the questions below will be examined, tested, and answered during the Community Math Pathways Committee meetings. I think I can safely say that the urgency is at its highest level in quite a long time. I believe you will see that when the plan for the Committee is laid out during our next meeting on Thursday evening.

Thank you.

**Thomas Wise**

Reading School Committee

**Email:** [thomas.wise@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:thomas.wise@reading.k12.ma.us)

**SC Distribution List:** [schoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:schoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us)

**Mobile:** (617) 869-6825

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**From:** Rebecca Liberman <[rfliberman@gmail.com](mailto:rfliberman@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, August 9, 2023 5:39 PM

**To:** Wise, Thomas <[Thomas.Wise@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:Thomas.Wise@reading.k12.ma.us)>

**Cc:** Milaschewski, Thomas <[Thomas.Milaschewski@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:Thomas.Milaschewski@reading.k12.ma.us)>; Lejeune, Olivia <[Olivia.Lejeune@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:Olivia.Lejeune@reading.k12.ma.us)>

**Subject:** Re: Please expand access to middle school algebra!

Hi,

Thanks for your quick reply. Yes, I see that pathway now lists an "approved summer geometry program", but again, if not every student has access to this, including those with financial need, those who need transportation, etc., then this cannot be listed as a legitimate pathway in a public school.

Just out of curiosity, what are the approved summer programs? Is there one in Boston that would be accessible for METCO students? Would a student who needed financial aid and/or transportation to attend receive that? Reading used to provide a 6 week half-day summer geometry course. I don't believe the district provided buses, though, so not only was it an inadequate substitute for a full year high school geometry course, but it also wasn't available to all. That's very unfair.

By asking for the removal of any pathways not accessible to all students, I was hoping to increase the

urgency around this issue.

As I have requested many times before, why not let those who test at the very highest level in 6th grade take Algebra 1 in 7th grade right now along with the 8th graders, as we used to do?

And why not create a slower-paced Math 7/8 class in 7th grade followed by a slower-paced Algebra 1 in 8th grade and a special geometry course in 9th to pick up the remaining algebra topics? Basically, this would bring back the middle pathway we used to have and would give more students access to algebra at an appropriate pace, without the need for doubling up or outside classes that are not accessible to all. We have literally reversed ourselves from having over 70% of middle schoolers taking algebra 12 years ago to over 70% of middle schoolers denied algebra now. How is that ok? Most kids don't know what they want by middle school or early high school so to limit their options so early (6th grade) is really unfair. We should return to a system of pathways that provides a straight path to high school calculus to many more students again.

Why don't I get a greater sense of urgency around this?

Thank you.

Rebecca

On 8/9/2023 4:57 PM, Wise, Thomas wrote:

Rebecca –

First, thank you for your continuous passion for this topic. We know it is one you are very interested in, and we continue to value your input.

Second, I have read the article in question. As I understand it, a few Committee members provided a proposal for how to enable Algebra 1 for all eighth graders in Cambridge. That proposal didn't appear to come with the logistics of how or the impact on the schools and students in doing so. It also wasn't approved at the meeting, but rather was tabled. Cambridge, and many other school districts in the state, have been grappling with this issue as we have.

Now, we too in Reading are very invested in this topic and are working on it as well. Multiple members of the School Committee escalated the issue during the Superintendent's Formative Assessment in January and February of this year. Further, during [our meeting at METCO Headquarters in May](#), we heard from Student Advisory Council member, Jayda Hayes, about her personal experience and other parents echoed similar challenges. We also heard from state-wide METCO Director Milly Arbaje-Thomas about how METCO is studying the problem (in the greater context of advanced classes) themselves and how at least one other district in the state is working to address access to the rigorous math pathways and instruction. Then, [during our meeting on June 8<sup>th</sup>](#), we heard about the work that has happened within the district

during the FY22-23 school year. As part of that, we heard about the Community Math Pathways Committee that will be formed very soon with the task of coming back with a plan to improve access to high-level math and potentially additional math options at the High School for students not interested in Calculus. Once again, at that meeting, many members of the Committee expressed the urgency of this topic and the need for quick recommendations from the new committee. Please expect to hear more about the Community Math Pathways Committee and ways to get involved with it in the very near future.

Finally, as for the request to remove the “approved outside program”, I could not find such language in our [current program of studies](#). I do see “(Requires an approved summer geometry course)” as a means for a student to go directly from Algebra 1 to Algebra 2 between their freshman and sophomore years. We can follow up to determine if that has ever blocked a student but based on our current inclusive approach with our Boston families, our low-income families, and other marginalized groups, I fully believe we can make it work for every student.

Thank you again.

**Thomas Wise**

Reading School Committee

**Email:** [thomas.wise@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:thomas.wise@reading.k12.ma.us)

**SC Distribution List:** [schoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:schoolcommittee@reading.k12.ma.us)

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**From:** Rebecca Liberman <[rfliberman@gmail.com](mailto:rfliberman@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, August 9, 2023 8:42 AM

**To:** DG School Committee <[SchoolCommittee@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:SchoolCommittee@reading.k12.ma.us)>

**Cc:** Milaschewski, Thomas <[Thomas.Milaschewski@reading.k12.ma.us](mailto:Thomas.Milaschewski@reading.k12.ma.us)>

**Subject:** Please expand access to middle school algebra!

**CAUTION:** This email originated from **outside of Reading Public Schools**. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender email address and know the content is safe.

Dear SC Members and Supt. Milaschewski,

Today's Globe has an article on efforts in Cambridge to expand access to Algebra 1 to all 8th graders. We need to do that here in Reading as soon as possible! Right now, we effectively cut off access to STEM and medicine studies for the majority of our students

based on testing in 6th grade. This is unacceptable.

You must also immediately remove the pathway listed in the high school program of studies that lists an "approved outside program" unless every RMHS student would have access to that pathway, including those who don't have the financial resources to pay for it, those who would need transportation, including METCO students, those who need special accommodations, etc. If this is not the case, then it is unfair to present this as if it is a viable option for all students, when it is not. Perhaps this would create a greater sense of urgency about expanding algebra access in our middle schools.

Thank you.

Rebecca Liberman  
50 Pratt St.