Orange Public Elementary Schools

Fisher Hill, Dexter Park, Butterfield
Grades K-6

STUDENT HANDBOOK
AND
CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

www.orange-elem.org

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Ralph C. Mahar Regional School District
Orange Elementary School District
Petersham Elementary School District
Consolidated Central Offices

Michael R. Baldassarre
Superintendent

Fall 2012

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students:

During the previous school year stakeholders in the Orange Elementary and Petersham Elementary Schools worked hand in hand in the articulation of a common Vision, Mission, and Core Values for the Elementary Schools. In looking to provide meaningful opportunities for children in Orange and Petersham to maximize their potential, it is our mission to inspire and challenge students to think, learn, achieve, and care.

The 2012 – 2013 school year presents new opportunities in our region, and this handbook is intended to be a guide for these opportunities. It provides beneficial information regarding practices, policies, procedures, and programs that are common to the elementary schools of Orange and Petersham. We also encourage you to visit our websites at www.orange-elem.org and www.petershamschool.org as updates and additional news and information related to the schools are posted.

This handbook is just one of many opportunities for communication between the school system, students and their families. There are many options for parents and guardians to become involved in the education of their children. You are encouraged to contact your school's administration and faculty whenever you have questions, comments, or concerns.

Please read this handbook and complete the forms that are sent home. This handbook was prepared for you, and it is our hope that it is helpful as we work together in service of our school community.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Baldassarre
Superintendent of Schools

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School Committee Members	Telephone Number	Term Expires
Stephanie Conrod	544-2084	2015
Elizabeth Peirce	544-6207	2013
Angela Littlewood	544-2389	2013
Paul Gervais	544-2325	2014
Briana Aldrich-Boatwright	544-2779	2015

Superintendent of Schools
Michael Baldassarre 544-6763 (office)

Principals		
Ms. Maureen Donelan	Fisher Hill School	544-0018
Mr. Jennifer Haggerty	Dexter Park School	544-6080
Mr. James Trill	Butterfield School	544-6136

Director of Pupil Services
Dr. Jay Conway 544-2542 X 262

Literature Distribution

Literature distribution for independent outside organizations is distinct from sponsorship**.** Because of the Boy Scouts restrictive admission policy, 603 C.M.R. 26.06(1) precludes a public school from sponsoring the Boy Scouts as an extra-curricular activity for students. For purposes of its regulation, the department of Education interprets “sponsoring” to mean endorsing, supervising or participating in the organization of the activity.

Literature distribution is part if the limited forum that our district provides. The Orange School committee is not sponsoring or endorsing the outside organizations whose literature the school makes available to students.

ON BEING A PARENT / GUARDIAN OF A STUDENT

As the introduction to this Handbook indicates, the primary educators of children are parents, and the schools are established, by the community, to provide special resources and assistance in that special task. It makes a difference if the student understands that his / her parents support the schools as an extension of their own efforts to provide for their growth toward intellectual and social maturity.

It makes a difference to students when their parents get to know their teachers and the specialists and administrators of the school. Opportunities are provided for parents (and even grandparents) to come to the school for special events, for group conferences about what the students are learning in such subjects as reading, math and science, and for individual conversations about students' progress. In addition, parents are encouraged to contact a teacher at any time that questions arise or problems seem to be developing. Studies indicate that it is of particular importance that fathers, or father figures, take an active interest in their children's school experience.

It makes a difference when parents ask their children about the day's experience in school, about what assignments they may have to work on that evening, and what special events are coming in the near future. It is very important that parents read to their children or listen to their children read. Sometimes our children can become our teachers by sharing what they are learning in school.

Occasionally, a student may report that he/she has been mistreated by another student or by a teacher or administrator. It is, of course, important for the parent to take a complaint seriously, but it is equally important that the parent contact the school for whatever additional information may be available. A cooperative approach to problem solving is a gift to everyone involved.

CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL SCHOOLS

Building a Learning Community. One of the major goals of our schools and of each of our teachers is to encourage social behavior marked by the self-control and concern for others. This is so essential to the learning environment. The rules, regulations and procedures listed in this handbook are designed, of course, to ensure the safety of students and staff, but they are also designed to describe a learning community in which our differences are cherished, individual rights are protected, and we commit ourselves to work together towards common goals.

Parental Concerns. Parents who have a concern about their child's progress or behavior should first talk with the classroom teacher. A conference time convenient for both the parents and the teacher may be arranged by calling the school office. Should they be unsatisfied after this conversation, parents may turn to the principal and teacher together, and then to the Superintendent.

Parents and visitors to the schools are required to go to the office to register their presence before proceeding to a classroom or other area. This is important for the safety of everyone. **Parents must sign in and out and wear a visitor's badge when they are visiting the school buildings**. Trespassers will be prosecuted.

Attendance: Students are required by law to attend school when it is in session. If a student is ill or for some other reason cannot attend, or will arrive late, a parent or guardian **must** call the school with this information, and do so each day that the student will be absent or arrive after the beginning time. If we do not hear from you, we will put our ***call back*** system in place. Our school nurses will call you to verify that you know that your child is absent. When a student returns to school after an absence, or arrives after the beginning of school, he or she is still **required to bring a note** from the parent or guardian indicating the nature of the absence or the reason for the tardiness.

The Department of Transitional Assistance requires that under the Welfare Reform Law, in order to receive benefits under the Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children Program, children under the age of 14 must meet specific school attendance requirements. The school may release attendance records to D.T.A.

under 603 CMR. The school must have written absence notes stating the reason for the absence.

Truancy: (State Law - Ch.76) A child will be considered truant if he/she misses 7 or more day sessions within any period of six months.

Attendance at Field Trips and Other Special Events

Field trips and other special activities and events are integral parts of the whole education of the child. They enhance day-to-day curriculum by offering hands-on experiences that bring to life what students read about in books or hear about from their teachers. Our hope is that all children will always be part of these experiences. There are times, however, when alternate decisions need to be made regarding attendance at these events. If a child's behavior is such that it is deemed unsafe to take him/her on a field trip or to an event, then the principal will notify the parent of this decision as early as possible.

Dismissal: Students who ordinarily ride a particular bus and who, on a given day, will not be returning home on that bus, **must bring** a note from a parent or guardian which provides the school and the driver with that information. Parents are asked not to request such a change by telephone, except in an emergency. If a family emergency or other special circumstances require that a student be dismissed before the end of the school day, the parent/guardian should notify the classroom teacher through the school office. The parent/guardian should come to the school office to meet the student at the time, which has been stipulated. A student dismissed early will not be allowed to wait outside the building for his/her ride. Students in emergency situations may use the school telephones. Children involved in after school programs **must** be picked up at the ending time of the activity by a person who has been identified as the responsible party to pick up the student.

Emergency Cards: Parents are responsible for completing and returning the emergency cards sent home on the first day of school. These cards are very important to the office as they are used to call parents and caretakers in emergency situations and when a child is sick or needs to be dismissed for some reason. These cards should be updated as changes in telephone numbers and addresses are made. Please fill out all **TWO** additional names at the bottom of the card. No student will be dismissed to unauthorized individuals without parental consent via note (or telephone call in emergencies). These persons, if unknown to the schools, will be asked to produce proper identification.

Legal Documentation: If legal documentation exists pertaining to your child, please provide the office with copies of such documentation. This may be in the form of custody papers, restraining orders, adoption papers etc. We know that family situations may change at any given time therefore changing the legal documentation. We **must** be notified with updated information in order to look out for the best interest of all students and families. Our schools comply with all MA laws regarding custodial access to student information.

Fire Drills & Emergency Evacuations: Each school has fire drills. The schools may also be confronted with other emergencies that require the evacuation of the school. If it becomes necessary to evacuate the schools, there are procedures in place for such evacuation. It is mandatory on such occasions that every occupant of the building leave the building in an orderly manner and in silence. Students are to remain with their teacher or other staff member and may not re-enter the building without explicit instruction to do so.

Student Behavior. Should a student's behavior become disruptive to the learning process, or appear to be dangerous to him or herself and/or to others, the teacher will be the first to seek a change in such behavior. If change does not occur, the teacher will discuss the matter with the parents and may also seek the assistance of the principal. Examples of unacceptable behavior include throwing objects, fighting, vandalism, vulgar language, mocking others with reference to their religion, color, economic status, gender or physical attributes, disrespect for teachers and staff and disregard for the rules of the classroom, bus, playground or cafeteria. If a student should need to be restrained, it will be in accordance with School Committee Policy and Massachusetts General Laws. See the attached appendix for restraint policies

Discipline: The health and safety of children is one of our primary goals. All of our resources are used, and the assistance of the parents earnestly invited, in order to alter behavior, which is disruptive or dangerous to the student or others. If suspension or relocation to another academic setting seems to be the only alternative, the rights of the student and of the parents will be fully protected in accordance with School Committee policies and the laws of the Commonwealth. The "out of school" suspension of a student is a rare event.

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, section 37G, prohibits the use of corporal punishment and this law is, of course, observed in our schools.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS (from Article II.A.15.f.)

The Orange Elementary Schools are committed to the regulations set forth by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as they apply to the use of physical restraint on students of publicly funded elementary and secondary schools. This policy and regulations apply to all students including regular education students, collaborative students, and students with disabilities.

The two goals that this policy enforces, only after less intrusive methods have been attempted or considered, are:

- To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student or member of the school community from imminent, serious physical harm; and

- To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as the result of the use of physical restraint.

It should be noted that nothing in the policy precludes a teacher or other staff member from using reasonable force to protect students, themselves, other persons from assault or imminent, serious physical harm, as noted in MA DOE Regulations 46.05 (1).

Please refer to details in the policy manual on line at www.orange –elem.org.

STAFF PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH STUDENTS (from Article II.A.15.g.)

The purpose of this policy statement is to provide all employees with guidance and direction with respect to physical contact between employees and students. It is in addition to our policy and prohibitions regarding sexual harassment and to any applicable criminal laws. It is an area of educational policy, judgment and law, which is fraught with uncertainties and changing standards. What constitutes appropriate physical contact in one circumstance may be totally inappropriate in another. Its appropriateness will depend on a variety of factors, not the least of which will be the purpose and nature of the contact, the age of the student, the setting, etc. The School Committee expects all its employees to conduct themselves in a manner, which is educationally sound and acceptable, both within the professional community and the community at large.

General Principles

1. All physical contact between employees and students should have a valid educational purpose and objective necessary to meeting the student's (not staff member's) needs.
2. The use of physical contact or force in order to impose the staff member's will upon a student, except as necessary to protect themselves or others from immediate physical harm from the student, is strictly prohibited.
3. Employees who observe physical contact between students and employees, which they deem to be inappropriate, are required to report said observations to the building principal and/or the Superintendent of Schools immediately. If the contact is perceived to be immediately harmful by the observer, prompt intervention to prevent further harm is expected.

4. Questions of the appropriateness of physical contact will be determined by the context of the contact on a case-by-case basis. Issues such as intent, contact, location, circumstances, age and sex are all considerations, which may be relevant. Examples: Hugging a first-grade child who is crying may be perfectly appropriate while any touching of eighth-grade students of either sex who is not posing an immediate risk to himself or others of physical harm, may never be appropriate. While holding or comforting a first-grader who has fallen and is crying may be appropriate, placing a hand on a child's head to redirect his attention to the front of the room is not.
5. Touching students under clothing, or in the genital areas, or on the buttocks, or breasts is prohibited.
6. Instances of inappropriate physical contact initiated, encouraged, practiced and/or tolerated by employees, in even a single instance, may result in disciplinary action, which may include dismissal.

Summary
Given the complexity of this issue, the School Committee recognized that some employees might deal with it by implementing a practice of never touching any students of any age. While that is a legitimate choice, that is not the School Committee's intent or objective.

THE USE OF ANY VIDEO AND DIGITAL OR TECHNOLOGY THAT CAPTURES AND REPRODUCES IMAGES

Philosophy - The Orange School Committee acknowledges that media documentation can be used for the improvement of teaching and learning, as well as for the maintenance of discipline and security. We also recognize that media documentation can be abused and, therefore, the policies which follow are designed to maximize the benefits and avoid possible misuse.

Busses - Cameras may be used to monitor behavior in school busses. The images from bus cameras may be shared with teachers, parents, students and other appropriate authorities at the discretion of the building principal with the concurrence of the Superintendent. The images from bus cameras are not to be made available to the general public.

School Buildings and Grounds - Cameras may be used to monitor school buildings and grounds. The images and/or audio from this equipment may be viewed only by the building principal and/or the Superintendent, or by a person appointed by either to view such images and/or audio. At the discretion of the Superintendent, they may be released to appropriate civil authorities.

Teaching Events - Media documentation may be done in classrooms or at other teaching events and, in all but the most exceptional circumstances, such documentation shall be at the request of, or with the consent of, the teacher(s) involved. The viewing of such documentation shall be at the discretion of the teacher(s) involved, and/or the building principal and/or the Superintendent.

Public Events - Parents and other persons may be granted permission, explicitly or implicitly, to document concerts, lectures, exhibits and other public events sponsored by an individual school or by the school district as a whole. The person in charge of a particular event may, with the concurrence of the building principal and/or the Superintendent, request that documentation not occur. Parents and other persons shall have the privilege of media documentation in classrooms only for a specific reason and only with the express consent of the classroom teacher(s) and the building principal.

Restrictions - No images and/or audio documentation, whether made at a teaching event or a public school event can be used for commercial purposes without the express consent of the Superintendent.

Restrooms - No image and/or audio equipment of any kind shall be installed or operated in any school restroom.

Inspection and Searches: The Schools reserve the right to inspect students' lockers, desks and personal possessions if there is a reasonable suspicion that they may harbor illegal drugs, tobacco products, dangerous weapons, alcohol or any other item which may be detrimental to that student or to others and to take possession of any item which is found. If such a search is indicated it will be done by at least two persons, one of whom, when possible, should be a school administrator. Inspections of all lockers and desks for the purpose of encouraging tidiness may also be made.

Bringing Things to School: Young people sometimes have a desire to bring favorite things to school to show to their friends and the teacher, such as, trading cards, small toys, etc. Since some things may disrupt the learning environment or prove injurious to others, students may bring to school only what is necessary for the school program, unless they have explicit permission from the teacher. **All audio and/or video devices are prohibited on school grounds or on buses on daily trips back and forth to school. On field trips, audio equipment may be allowed with permission from the classroom teacher and bus driver.** Special occasion deliveries, for example flowers, balloons, etc., are discouraged at all schools. At Fisher Hill and Dexter Park, all deliveries will be held in the office until the end of the day when it is expected that an adult will pick them up.

Vandalism of school property is prohibited, as is the defacing of the building or grounds itself. Stickers are not to be placed on lockers, inside or out.

In addition to the general expectations listed above, each school has rules, which are specific to that school. These rules are as follows:

BUTTERFIELD SCHOOL

Upon arrival at the school in the morning, all students should report directly to the playground area. Once on school grounds, students may not leave these grounds without permission of the supervisor(s) on duty. Students should not arrive at the school before 7:45 A.M.

Established safety rules for the playground must be observed, including the provision that no one may climb on or over the schoolyard fence. All sport or play equipment brought by students must be checked by the supervisor before it is used.

While the playground is for play in the morning, this is not true at dismissal time. When school is over for the day, the playground area is used for boarding busses and is to be used for that purpose alone.

All students, who travel by school bus should, when school is dismissed, take their places in their designated bus lines until given permission to board by the bus supervisor. In bad weather, the bus lines will form in the gymnasium.

DEXTER PARK SCHOOL

Upon arrival in the morning, all students should go to the designated play area and stay clear of the area used by the busses and the main entrances to the school. Students should arrive at the school no earlier than 7:45 A.M.

All playground rules are to be observed. Violators will be disciplined accordingly. There is to be no rough or

physical play that may endanger a student or others.

No objects that may endanger students (rocks, sticks, snowballs) can be thrown that are not normally associated with structured games.

For safety reasons, only one student is allowed on a swing at a time. It is also for safety reasons that no student or group of students is allowed to play in the woods.

There is to be no sliding on the hill during school hours, whether with or without a sled. Students are not allowed on the playground area in the winter months without boots.

During lunch recess, students are expected to remain on the playground and are not to enter the building without permission from supervising adults.

Students, upon dismissal, may not loiter on the playground. Students are to go directly home unless parental permission to stay has been granted with a note or phone call.

FISHER HILL SCHOOL

Students should arrive at the school no earlier than 7:45 A.M. Upon arrival at the school, students should report to the cafeteria until the duty person dismisses them to the playground. While on the playground they should play at the rear of the building and away from any area used by the busses. When students finish lunch and the weather allows it, they are to leave the building and remain outside until the bell rings. They are not to enter the building without permission from supervising adults.

Safe use of the playground equipment will be explained, and the rules for safe use must be followed.
No student is allowed to play in the woods, on the berm, the hill or in the tall grass. Winter sliding is permitted as long as the student is wearing snow pants, boots, jacket, and hat. All sliding is done under the supervision of a duty person. For safety reasons, sleds are not permitted. Students are not allowed into the field area during winter months (when it is wet and snowy) without boots.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Riding the Bus -Although state law mandates busing only if the student lives two or more miles from the school or from a current bus stop, Orange Elementary Schools use a one-mile limit. Appropriate behavior on the bus is a major factor in assuring the safety of all the students. A driver who is trying to solve a behavioral problem cannot give full attention to driving. The basic bus rules of conduct are the following:

- Follow the driver's directions while waiting for the bus; keep back from the street
- Do not push or shove when getting on or off the bus
- Stay seated, don't switch seats and keep the aisles free
- Keep hands and arms inside the bus
- Speak quietly so that the driver can hear traffic sounds
- The use or possession of tobacco products, alcohol and illegal drugs is prohibited
- The possession or use of a weapon is prohibited, as is the use of any object as a weapon
- Fighting and/or verbal abuse will not be tolerated
- No hanging key chains or toys are allowed on backpacks or clothing
- No loose, long clothing

The driver will report violations of the above rules to the building principal. The principal will determine the appropriate response to a violation. The response will be determined by the nature of the offense(s) and by their frequency. The following are among the principal's options:

- A letter or telephone call to a parent or guardian

- Suspension of the privilege of riding the bus for one or more days
- The parent (s) or guardian may be asked to meet with the principal to discuss the matter

If the student is excluded from riding the bus for one or more days, the parents/guardian become responsible for transporting the student. **A student who does not attend school during a bus suspension is considered truant.**

All busses are equipped with video cameras and tapes are reviewed by the principals on a random basis, or whenever a driver reports a violation of the rules. Parents may be invited to review the tapes, and in some extreme cases the police, but the tapes are not available for general viewing and are not made available to the media. The use of the cameras is to support the safety of our children.

On Walking and Riding a Bicycle to School-

Students who walk to school or to a bus stop in areas with sidewalks are required to use the sidewalks, and where there are crosswalks, to cross in the marked areas.

Bicycles ridden to Dexter Park and Butterfield are the responsibility of the parents / students and it is recommended that they be locked. Bicycles may not be ridden on school grounds. Students should dismount and walk their bikes to the racks.

Because of age and the steepness of the hill, bicycles and scooters are **not allowed** at Fisher Hill School.

In line skates, skateboards and sneakers with wheels are prohibited at all three schools.

A reminder: **State law requires that riders 12 years old and younger wear helmets.**
Failure to wear a helmet will result in the loss of the privilege to ride a bike to and from school.

The school is not responsible for the behavior and well being of students who walk or ride their bikes until they enter the school grounds.

SCHOOL CLOTHING

What a student wears to school is primarily a matter for the student and his/her parents to decide. Clothing that displays offensive or inappropriate language, cigarette, beer, wine or other alcohol advertisements or other offensive pictures or logos are not allowed. If the teacher and or building principal find a student's clothing to be inappropriate for other reasons the parent will be notified and the student may need to change his or her clothing. Once in a while, what a student wears endangers him/herself or others, or is disruptive to the educational process. Should such a situation arise, the student will be asked to make some appropriate change in clothing. In such cases, the teacher and/or principal will be glad to discuss the reason for the request with the parent.

Hats, bandanas, kerchiefs and sneakers with wheels may not be worn inside the school buildings.

It is helpful, particularly in the younger grades, if the students' names are written in or attached to all hats, gloves, coats, boots, lunchboxes and backpacks.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Orange Elementary School Department does not discriminate or exclude a child from any activity, service or resource available in our public schools on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation or handicapping condition.

The Superintendent of Schools, Michael Baldassarre, has been designated by the School Committee to handle

inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies pursuant to Title IX, Title VI and Section 504, and MGL, Ch. 76, Section 5. If you feel that we are in violation, you are encouraged to contact the Superintendent, 544-6763. Further information regarding these policies can be obtained from.

The Bureau of Equity and Language Services
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street

ANTI-HARASSMENT: STATEMENT AND PROCEDURES

General Statement-The Orange Elementary Public School district is committed to protecting the rights of all individuals within the school district to work and learn in an environment that is free of harassment.

Harassment on the basis of race, color, ancestry, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation or disability in any form will not be tolerated. Such harassment includes unsolicited remarks, gestures, physical contact and the display or circulation of written materials or pictures which are derogatory to either gender, or are derogatory to racial, ethnic or religious groups, or are derogatory to an individual's age, sexual orientation or disability.

Definitions of Harassment- *Harassment means conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass distress, agitate, disturb or trouble students that:*

- Is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or an employee's ability to undertake his/her job responsibilities, or creates an intimidating, hostile, threatening or abusive educational or work environment; or,
- Interferes with a student's academic performance or learning opportunities; or interferes with an employee's work, continued employment or advancement opportunities.

Harassment of any kind, including bullying and teasing, will not be tolerated.

Bullying- Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, *An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools*, was signed into law on May 3, 2010 and took effect immediately. The law requires each school district, charter school, non-public school, approved day or residential school, and collaborative school to develop and implement a plan to address bullying and intervention. The statute directs the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to promulgate regulations addressing a principal's duties under one of the ten required elements of the bullying and intervention plan, namely, notification to parents or guardians of the victim and the perpetrator of bullying or retaliation and the action taken to prevent further bullying, and notification to law enforcement of bullying or retaliation, when the perpetrator's conduct also may result in criminal charges. The law further provides that the regulations must be promulgated by September 30, 2010.

Definition of Bullying-Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or damage to his or her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying shall include cyber bullying.

Examples:

- Teasing that humiliates or hurts another
- Intimidation, either physical or psychological
- Threats of any kind, stated or implied

- Assaults on students, including those that are verbal, physical, psychological, or emotional
- Attacks on students' belongings

Sexual Harassment- The General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 151C, define the term sexual harassment as follows: "Any sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: 1) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the provision of benefits, privileges or placement services or as a basis of evaluation of academic achievement: or 2) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's education by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive educational environment."

This definition is understood to include, but not be limited to, unwanted sexual attention in the form of verbal comments, touching, off-color humor, or sexually explicit photographs, drawings or graffiti.

Sexual harassment, or the existence of a sexually hostile environment, is to be determined from the viewpoint of a reasonable person in the alleged victim's situation.

In both Federal law (Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972) and State law (Chapter 76, section 5, a.k.a. Chapter 622) sexual harassment is included as an act of sex discrimination and made subject to civil penalties. This policy statement of the Orange Elementary Schools is intended to be in compliance with these Federal and State laws.

Sexual harassment can occur adult to student, student to adult, adult-to-adult, student-to-student, male to female, female to male, female-to-female and/or male-to-male. Sexual harassment can be based on gender or sexual orientation.

Examples:

- Telling sexual jokes or stories
- Making sexual comments about a person's clothing, anatomy, or appearance
- Repeatedly asking out a person who is not interested
- Telling lies, spreading rumors, or gossiping about any person's sexual life
- Whistling, catcalls, making kissing sounds, smacking lips
- Name-calling, teasing, or other derogatory or dehumanizing remarks involving sex, gender or sexual orientation
- Following a person or blocking a person's path
- Drawing or displaying sexually explicit or suggestive posters, cartoons, pictures, calendars, designs on clothing, or other similar materials
- Staring or leering with sexual overtones, making sexual gestures with hands or body movements
- Giving unwanted gifts of a personal or suggestive nature
- Unwanted touching of people, their hair, or their clothing
- Unwanted hugging, kissing, pinching, patting, or stroking
- Assault, attempted rape, or rape

Responses to Claim of Sexual Harassment-STUDENTS who allege harassment by OTHER STUDENTS are encouraged to immediately indicate to the harasser that his or her behavior is unwanted and unacceptable. If the student because of fear of reprisal, or for any other reason, is unable to address the alleged harasser, or if the behavior does not cease, then the student is encouraged to report the incident or incidents to any staff member. The staff member may assist the student in resolving the problem and/or, if necessary, may assist the student in sharing the incident with a principal, counselor or another staff member of the student's choice.

The primary goal in responding to claims is to secure an altered behavior on the part of the person or persons who have harassed another. The staff member to whom a student goes will assist the student to articulate

what has happened and, in person or by letter, to inform the harasser that the attention is unwanted and unacceptable. The staff member will determine that the harasser understands the complaint and that there is good intent to cease the unacceptable behavior.

Confidentiality for all parties involved is of high importance and information gathered shall be shared only when it is necessary to the successful resolution of the situation. Copies of the substance of an oral communication between harassed and harasser, or the letter, if that form be used, together with a resume of the incident and its resolution may, when warranted, be sent to the building principal, the superintendent and to the parents or guardian of the students involved.

A student who, having been counseled, continues to behave in violation of this policy, will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

Any STUDENT who feels that he or she has been sexually harassed by a TEACHER OR STAFF MEMBER is encouraged to immediately share his or her concern with a teacher, counselor, or principal. If first shared with a teacher or counselor, that person will assist the student in sharing the incident with the principal who will, in turn, inform the superintendent. The superintendent and/or principal will conduct an investigation and, if warranted, will chair a discussion of the incident which includes the person to whom the report was first made, the alleged harasser, the parents or guardian of the student who alleges harassment and, if appropriate and if the parents or guardian consent, the student who has made the claim.

If the complaint is satisfactorily resolved in this meeting, a brief record of the complaint and its resolution shall be provided in writing to the student and his or her parents or guardian and to the person against whom the complaint was made, the building principal and the superintendent.

If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved in this meeting, the person against whom the claim is made will be provided a hearing.

In conclusion, school records are personal and the Federal Freedom of Information Act of 1974 must be complied with as well as the State Law.

Please refer to details in the policy manual on line at www.orange-elem.org.

Harassment Based on Race, Color, National Origin, Religion or Disability- Harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion or disability is unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct relating to the characteristics of a person's race, color, national origin, religion, or disability that:

- Unreasonably interferes with an individual's educational or work performance; or
- Creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or work environment.

Examples of harassment based on race or color:

- Using nicknames that emphasize racial stereotypes
- Graffiti containing racially offensive language
- Name-calling, teasing, or other derogatory or dehumanizing remarks involving race or color
- Racial slurs, negative stereotypes, and hostile acts which are based upon another's race or color
- Written or graphic material containing racial comments or stereotypes which is posted or circulated and which is aimed at degrading members of specific racial or ethnic groups
- Physical acts of aggression or assault upon another because of, or related to, race or color

Examples of harassment based on national origin or religion:

- Comments on a manner of speaking or proficiency with the English language
- Negative comments regarding surnames, customs, and/or language

- Graffiti containing offensive language which is derogatory to others because of their national origin, ethnicity, or religion
- Threatening or intimidating conduct directed at another because of the other's national origin, ethnicity, or religion
- Jokes or rumors based upon an individual's national origin, ethnicity, or religion
- Written or graphic material containing comments or stereotypes which is posted or circulated and which is aimed at degrading individuals or member of specific ethnic or religious groups
- Physical acts of aggression or assault upon another because of, or related to, national origin, ethnicity, or religion

Disability harassment includes harassment based on a person's disabling mental and/or physical condition and includes any unwelcome verbal, written, or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's disabling condition.

Examples of harassment based on disability:

- Imitating manner of speech or movement
- Interfering with necessary equipment
- Bullying
- Name-calling, teasing, or other derogatory or dehumanizing remarks involving physical and/or mental disability
- Threatening or intimidating conduct directed at another because of the other's physical and/or mental disability
- Jokes or rumors based on an individual's physical and/or mental disability
- Physical acts of aggression or assault upon another because of, or related to, an individual's physical and/or mental disability
- Other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property which is motivated by an individual's physical and/or mental disability

The above reference descriptions of inappropriate conduct represent examples, and are not intended to serve as an all-inclusive list.

<u>If you are unsure as to whether you have been a victim of any form of harassment, or it you have knowledge of an incident of harassment, you must contact your school principal, or Director of Pupil Services, or other appropriate school staff member with any questions that you may have.</u>

Because what may be acceptable behavior to one individual may not be acceptable to others, all employees and other members of the school community should aspire to the highest standards of respectful, appropriate and professional behavior. For example, ethnic or racial jokes and remarks or sexually oriented gestures or pictures are often offensive to others, and thus should not occur within the Orange Public Schools. The members of the school community include the School Committee, School Councils, Administration, faculty, staff, students, parents, volunteers and authorized visitors, contractors or vendors while they are engaged in school-related activities.

Responsibilities and Procedures (harassment)-Individuals that believe they have been harassed should bring the matter to the attention of an administrator so that appropriate action may be taken at once. (The District will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment. The Principal of each building will be responsible handling all complaints by students alleging harassment.)

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING COMPLAINTS

<u>Reporting Complaints-</u>Any member of the school community who believes that s/he has been the victim of harassment (as defined above) by an administrator, teacher, pupil, visitor, or other personnel of the Orange Public Schools, or who has knowledge of any of the above, must report the alleged acts <u>as soon as possible</u>.

A harassment complaint may be made to the principal or his/her designee. If the complaint involves a staff member, the complainant should file their report with either the building principal or the superintendent of schools.

Upon receiving a complaint, whoever receives it, will immediately notify the building principal, who will oversee an investigation and who will serve as the complaint hearing officer. The building principal or designee will address the concern in a timely manner. Within ten (10) working days, the principal will forward all formal complaints to the superintendent of schools.

Investigation- The principal or designee will consider every report of harassment seriously and will investigate all reports in a timely manner. The Director of Pupil Services will assist the school hearing officer, as needed, in the investigative procedures and identification and delivery of all necessary services to concerned individuals.

The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the alleged harasser, and any other individuals who may have knowledge of the alleged incidents(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the principal or designee should consider the surrounding circumstances, any relevant documents, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, and the relationships between the parties involved. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this procedure requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances. Special care will be taken to make sure that the person(s) accused of harassment has full and fair opportunity to explain his/her side of the story.

In the event that students are involved in allegations as victim, perpetrator, or witnesses, the principal will notify the parents and/or guardians of the allegations in a timely manner using appropriate discretion in the notification.

Whenever possible, the principal will complete the investigation and report within ten (10) school days after the complaint has been filed indicating whether the allegations have been substantiated as factual or not. There will be no reprisal against the person filing the complaint whether or not the complaint is sustained. If the allegations are sustained, the principal, or in a case against an employee, the Superintendent (or designee) must take immediate corrective and/or disciplinary action to resolve the situation. Such action may include, but is not limited to, requiring an apology, direction to stop the offensive behavior, counseling or education, warning, suspension, exclusion, transfer, expulsion, or discharge.

Anyone who is disciplined under this procedure will have the right to appeal to the superintendent of schools within ten (10) working days of receipt of the concluding report.

Alleged abuse by a parent, guardian, school staff, or other caretaker will be reported to the Department of Social Services according to school policy and procedure. If allegations warrant, the local law enforcement agency will be notified.

Confidentiality-The Orange Elementary Public Schools recognizes that both the complainant and the alleged harasser have strong interests in maintaining the confidentiality of the allegations and related information. The privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and all witnesses will be respected as much as possible, consistent with legal obligations to investigate.

Provision against retaliation-Retaliation against a complainant or witnesses will not be tolerated. The Orange Elementary Public Schools will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other school community member who retaliates against:

- Any person who reports alleged harassment
- Any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation of harassment

- Any person who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing related to an allegation of harassment

Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.

Dissemination of procedure -This procedure will be included in all handbooks (faculty and student) and will be made available in all main offices. Faculty members, parents and students will be informed of this procedure annually. Faculty members will be trained in the identification and prevention of all of the type of harassment discussed in this document.

Please refer to details in the policy manual on line at www.orange-elem.org

THE USE OF THE INTERNET

Philosophy - It is the intention of the Orange School Committee to provide all students with the opportunity to understand and to use computers and to access the educational resources available through the computer Internet. The Committee recognizes that some materials available on the internet are clearly not appropriate for elementary school children and that additional material may be considered inappropriate by some parents and/or guardians. The policies, which follow, are designed to facilitate the best use of computers and of the internet, to avoid that use which is inappropriate or illegal, and to invite the support of parents and guardians in achieving these goals.

All access to the internet must be in support of the educational objectives of the Orange Elementary Schools.

Teachers and staff members will assist students to use the Internet in ways that are appropriate to our educational mission. However, the Committee disclaims that it is possible to prevent inappropriate use by every student at all times.

Uses considered inappropriate include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The use of inappropriate language, e.g. vulgarities
- Illegal activities, including the violation of copyright protections
- Claiming the work of others as one's own
- Revealing one's personal address or phone, or that of another person
- Sharing one's personal account with another, or leaving it open and unattended
- Using an account which belongs to another
- The unauthorized infiltration of another computer system
- The sending of materials or messages likely to be offensive to the recipient(s).

Students using the Internet must agree to share with a teacher, principal or other staff member messages or materials that they have received which they consider inappropriate or which make them uncomfortable.

While all students will be introduced to the internet, only those with the consent of a parent or guardian will be granted the privilege of individual access. The form for providing this consent is on the last page of this book and needs to be signed by both parent(s) and child.

The Orange Elementary Schools prohibit the use of any alcoholic or tobacco products, drugs or dangerous weapons within the school buildings, on the school grounds, on school busses at any off-campus athletic, educational or social event sponsored by the schools. Massachusetts' law prohibits smoking in or on any

school property. This includes the parking lots in all schools.

The possession of dangerous weapons, or the use of any item as a weapon, is prohibited on school grounds and school busses, and in school buildings and this prohibition applies to both students and staff and includes off-campus athletic or educational events. All types of toy weapons are also prohibited on school property.

Any physical assault upon any staff member, professional or support staff or other children is prohibited.

The possession, consumption and/or distribution of an alcoholic beverage on the school grounds or school busses or in school buildings is prohibited and this prohibition applies to both students and staff and applies also to off-campus athletic or educational events.

Violation of any of these prohibitions by a student will result in an immediate conference between the principal and the parent(s) or guardian who will determine together the appropriate response, which may include one or more of the following:

- Suspension from school
- In-school counseling
- Outside drug or alcohol counseling / treatment
- Notification of the police

The Educational Reform Act of 1993 contains provisions, which may apply, and, as required, the provisions are printed here.

(a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, Including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter 94 C including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

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

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

After said hearing, a principal may, at his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b) provided, however, that any principal who decides that said student should be suspended shall state in writing to the school committee his reasons for choosing the suspension instead of the expulsion as the most appropriate remedy. In this statement, the principal shall represent that, in his/her opinion, the continued presence of this student in the school will not pose a threat to the safety, security and welfare of the other students and staff In the school.

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a faction determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(e)When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section and applies for admission to another school for acceptance, the superintendent of the sending school shall notify the superintendent of the receiving school of the reasons for the pupil’s expulsion.

BEHAVIOR SCHOOL RESPONSE INTERACTION WITH POLICE

1. **Behavior**: Student voluntarily confides a drug or alcohol problem to a teacher.
   - **School Response**: Teacher will consult the school nurse or counselor and the principal for assistance in deciding action on referral.
   - **Interaction with police**: None.

2. **Behavior**: School official has reasonable cause to suspect that student is under the influence of alcohol or drugs but none is found.
   - **School Response**: Principal will notify parents and remove the student from class until a parent conference is held. A treatment program representative and the school nurse will be involved.
   - **Interaction with Police**: Informal notification at the principal's discretion. The Youth Officer will decide on the level of police involvement.

3. **Behavior**: Student is found to be or admits to being under the influence of drug/alcohol but none is found.
   - **School Response**: In accordance with the Code of Conduct I Student Handbook, the principal will make immediate notification to the police,the Superintendent of Schools and the parent and hold a conference with the parent, student and appropriate others before the student returns to school. The student will be required to attend outside drug/alcohol counseling or treatment as determined by school personnel and parents. Suspension from school and privileges as stated in the student handbook could result.
   - **Interaction with Police**: Formal notification by the school. Youth Officer and/or School Attendance Officer may also decide whether a CHINS or a Care and Protection Order should be initiated or other court action should be taken.

4. **Behavior**: Student found to be in possession of alcohol/drugs.
   - **School Response**: Same as above with the exception that a suspension from school will be imposed and contraband turned over to police.
   - **Interaction with Police**: Formal notification by the school. Criminal action may be taken. Only under extreme circumstances are arrests made at school.

5. **Behavior**: Student found to be selling/distributing drugs/alcohol.
   - **School Response**: In addition to the parent and police notification. The student will be suspended as provided in the manual and, if convicted in court, the student will be recommended to the School Committee for complete expulsion from the school system.

School personnel can remove (suspend) a child with a disability for short periods of time as long as the removal does not constitute a change in placement. A change of placement occurs if the removal is for more than 10 consecutive school days or the child is subjected to a series of removals that constitute a pattern because they cumulate to more than 10 school days in a school year, and because such factors such as length of each removal, the total amount of time the child is removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another.

School personnel may order, to the extent removal would be applied to children without disabilities, the removal of a child with a disability from the child’s current placement for not more than 10 consecutive school days for any violation of school rules, and an additional removals of not more than 10 consecutive school days

in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct (as long as those removals do not constitute a change of placement).

If District personnel, the parent and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, then the suspension or expulsion may go forward consistent with policies applied to any student without disabilities, except, after a child with a disability has been removed for more than 10 school days in the same school year, the District must provide services to enable the student, although in another setting, to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward IEP goals. In addition, the LEA must conduct as appropriate a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child. If the child already has a behavioral intervention plan, the IEP team shall meet to review the plan and its implementation and modify as necessary.

School personnel may order a change of a placement of a child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days if the child carries a weapon to school or a school function or possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or a school function. A hearing officer may order a change to an interim setting for not more than 45 days if the LEA demonstrates that maintaining the current placement is likely to result in injury to the child or others. If an action is contemplated regarding a 45 day removal or other action that constitutes a change of placement, the parents must be notified and provided procedural safeguards notice not later than the date on which the decision to take action is made.

Immediately, if possible, but in no case later than 10 school days after the date on which the decision to take that action is made, a review must be conducted of the relationship between the child's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action (manifestation determination).

If the child's parent disagrees with the manifestation determination, the parent may request a hearing to appeal. The State or local educational agency shall arrange for an expedited hearing before a hearing officer. If a parent requests a hearing or an appeal to challenge an interim alternative educational setting or the manifestation determination, the child must remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided (45 days), whichever occurs first unless the parent and local educational agency agree otherwise.

If District personnel, the parent and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior IS a manifestation of the disability, the Team completes a functional behavioral assessment and a behavioral intervention plan if it has not already done so. If a behavioral intervention plan is already in place, the IEP Team reviews and modifies it as necessary to address the behavior. The student returns to the original placement, except when the student has been placed in an interim alternative educational setting, (if the behavior involved illegal drugs, weapons, or the infliction of serious bodily injury on another person while in school or at a school function) unless the parents and District agree otherwise or a hearing officer orders a new placement.

Chapter 766, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1997 Amendments), and case law such as Honig v. Doe, affect disciplining students with special needs. The Massachusetts Department of Education and Legislature have also made recent changes to Special Education laws and regulations (effective September 2000).

The section above is only an attempt to highlight applicable laws and regulations and is not meant to replace

the actual documents.

The reader should refer to the actual documents for the full text.
(Federal Register Vol. 64, No. 48, March 1999 S. 300.519 - S. 300.529).

For a discipline flow chart, see: http://www.doe.mass.edu/sped/IDEA2004/spr_meetings/disc_chart.doc

STUDENTS NOT YET DETERMINED TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

- A parent has expressed concern in writing to school personnel that the student is in need of special education and related services (not 504).
- A parent has requested an evaluation in writing.
- The behavior or performance of the student demonstrates need for special education.
- The teacher or other school personnel have expressed concern about the student's behavior or performance to the special education director or to other school personnel involved in the special education referral process.

The District does not assert IDEA protection if any of the circumstances listed below has occurred:
District exception to prior knowledge:

- If the District has proposed an evaluation on a student and the parent has not consented to the Evaluation.
- The parent has previously refused special education services for the student.
- An evaluation has occurred that resulted in a determination of ineligibility.

No Prior Knowledge:

If the District had no knowledge that a child had a disability prior to taking disciplinary measures, the District can change the placement to the extent it changes the placement of non-disabled children. However, if an evaluation is requested while the student is being disciplined, the Orange Elementary School District will place the child in an educational placement pending the results of an expedited evaluation.

THE SCHOOL YEAR
The school year lasts 180 days and includes more than the required 900 hours of instruction.

DAILY SCHEDULE

SCHOOL	GRADE	AM START	DISMISSAL
Fisher Hill	K, 1 and 2	8:20	2:50

Dexter Park	3 and 4	8:25	2:55
Butterfield	5 and 6	8:30	3:00

ENTRANCE AGE
Massachusetts's law requires children to begin school during the calendar year in which they become six years of age.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Kindergarten-A child entering Kindergarten must reside in Orange and be five years of age on or before August 31 of that academic year. There are no exceptions to these requirements.

First Grade- Students entering first grade or transferring to the first grade in Orange from other schools, public or private must reside in Orange or be accepted for School Choice and be six years of age on or before August 31 of that academic year. Children accepted for school choice will follow the same age and date requirements.

Records Required for Kindergarten Entrance-An **official birth certificate** must be shown when the child is registered in the spring (usually in April) prior to the September the child will enter kindergarten. No child can be registered without a birth certificate.

At this registration parents will be provided with an official state school physical form for their child to be completed by their family physician sometime before entrance to school. The doctor will fill out the form as he/she completes the physical examination.

Parents must also provide information that the child has received immunization against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), polio, measles, mumps and rubella. Proof of a lead paint test is also required, and a tuberculin test is recommended.

The only exceptions that are allowed are: 1) a written statement from the parent that such immunization is against their religious beliefs or 2) a physician's statement to the effect that a particular immunization is not in the best interests of a particular child or 3) that the necessary immunization is currently in progress.

INCLEMENT WEATHER AND SCHOOL DISMISSAL

In case of inclement weather, children may enter the building upon arrival at a reasonable time.

A decision to not open school for severe weather conditions is usually made before 5:45 A.M. so that we can notify the bus contractors, personnel and the public. Such a decision takes into consideration the road conditions in all parts of the town. Sometimes it is possible to delay the opening of school if it appears that conditions will rapidly improve. On rare occasions, it is necessary to close school early due to rapidly worsening weather conditions or other emergencies that may arise. It is advisable that parents develop an alternate childcare schedule in the event of an early dismissal.

In order to get such information to you, we notify a number of radio and T.V. stations, including AM The River – WGAW (1340) and WHMP (1240); FM WXRG (99.9), WJDF (97.3) and WHAI (98.3). It is also on, Channels 5 (WCVB) and 7 (WHDH) from Boston and Channels 3 (WCBS), 22 (WWLP) and 40 (WGGB) from Springfield. These stations will announce school closings several times. In addition the Fire Department issues 4-4-4 blasts on the fire signal at 6:30 AM. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOLS, FIRE STATIONS, OR THE RADIO STATIONS.

On days school is canceled due to inclement weather, all activities (and the use of buildings) are canceled.

WELLNESS POLICIES ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NUTRITION

July 1, 2006

A Partnership Among

Ralph C. Mahar Regional School District (Grades 7-12), Orange Elementary Schools (Grades PK-6), and Petersham Center School (Grades PK-6), Massachusetts

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Reza Namin, Ph.D	Superintendent, Ralph C. Mahar Regional School District
Patricia Martin, Ed.D	Superintendent, Petersham Elementary School
Paul Burnim, Ed.D	Superintendent, Orange Elementary Schools
Deb Habib, Ed.D	Orange School Committee Member, Director Seeds of Solidarity
Rebecca R Phillips	Principal, Petersham Center School
Cara Deane	School Committee, Ralph C. Mahar Regional School
Marcia Larocque	School Committee, Ralph C. Mahar and Orange Elementary
Francis W. Zak, Ed.D	Principal, Ralph C. Mahar Regional School
Chris Donelan	Parent, State Representative
Karen Grzesik	Health/Physical Education Coordinator, Ralph C. Mahar
Lydia Bartlett	School Nurse, Ralph C. Mahar Regional School
Valerie Dow	Director of Food Services, Ralph C. Mahar Regional School
Vanessa Delorey	Director of Childcare Services, YMCA
Greg Dunbar	Student, High School, Ralph C. Mahar Regional School
Meghan Durgan	Student, Middle School Ralph C. Mahar Regional School
Joyce Fulmer	Community Coalition for Teens
Donna Bunnell	Health/Physical Education Coordinator, Orange Elementary
Sherry Fiske	Director of Food Services Orange Elementary Schools
Sheri D'Annolfo	Nurse, Petersham Center School
Ann Degnan	Secretary, Petersham Center School
Ann Murray	Teacher, Orange Elementary Schools
Dylan Robichaud	Student, Orange Elementary Schools
Robbie Grenier	Student, Orange Elementary Schools
Kelly Gervais	Teacher, Orange Elementary Schools
Jean Donovan	Nurse, Orange Elementary Schools
Helen Zatryka	Nurse, Orange Elementary Schools
Kathy Mitchell	Nurse, Orange Elementary Schools
Ljiljana Curcija, M.D.	UMass Extension Nutrition Education Program
Rebecca Bialecki, Ph.D	Director, North Quabbin Community Coalition
Joe Hawkins	Athol Area YMCA

Preamble

Whereas, the term **School District** will refer to Orange Elementary Schools (Grades PK-6), Petersham Center School (Grades PK-6) and Ralph C. Mahar Regional School District (Grades 7-12);

Whereas, children need access to healthful foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow learn and thrive;

Whereas, good health fosters student attendance and education;

Whereas, 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;

Whereas, heart disease, cancer, stroke and diabetes are potential consequences of obesity resulting from physical inactivity and unhealthful eating and these habits are often established in childhood;

Whereas, 33% of high school students do not participate in sufficient vigorous physical activity and 72% of high school students do not attend daily physical education classes;

Whereas, only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) eat a healthy diet consistent with the five main recommendations from the Food Guide Pyramid;

Whereas, hunger and food insecurity are prevalent and school nutrition programs are of critical importance;

Whereas, nationally, the items most commonly sold from school vending machines, school stores and snack bars include low-nutrition foods and beverages, such as soda, sports drinks, imitation fruit juices, chips, candy, cookies and snack cakes;

Whereas, community participation is essential to the development and implementation of successful school wellness policies;

Whereas, the Orange Elementary School District Wellness Community has modified this policy to best meet the needs of a PreK-6 district.

Thus, the **School District** is committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Therefore, it is the policy of the **School District** that:

The **School Distict** will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.

- All students in grades K-12 will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.

- Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.

- To the maximum extent practicable, all schools in our district will participate in available federal school meal programs (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program [including after-school snacks], Summer Food Service Program, Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program.

- 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.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

School Health Councils

The **school district** and/or individual schools within the district will create, strengthen or work within existing school health councils to develop, implement, monitor, review and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The councils also will serve as resources to school sites for implementing those policies. (A school council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community an should include parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals and members of the public.)

Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch andBreakfast Programs will:

- Be appealing and attractive to children;
- Be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- Meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirement established by local, state and federal statutes and regulations

- Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;[1]
- At all grade levels, serve only low-fat (1%) and fat-free milk [2] and nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA); and
- Ensure all grains served are whole grain.[3,4]

Schools should engage students and parents, through taste tests of new entrees and surveys, in selecting foods available through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful and appealing food choices. In addition, schools will share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. Such information could be made available on menus, a website, on cafeteria menu boards, placards, or other point-of-purchase materials.

The district shall continue to promote farm-to-school-connections and buy locally-grown fruits and vegetables whenever possible. Cafeterias will strive to model environmentally-sound practices in order to educate students and staff about reducing waste, composting and recycling.

Breakfast

To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

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[1]To the extent possible, schools will offer at least two non-fried vegetable and two fruit options each day and will offer five different fruits and five different vegetables over the course of a week. Schools are encouraged to source fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers when practicable.
[2]As recommended by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010*
[3]As recommended by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010*
[4]A whole grain is one labeled as a “whole” grain product or with a whole grain listed as the primary grain ingredient in the ingredient statement. Examples include “whole” wheat flour, cracked wheat, brown rice and oatmeal.
[25]It is against the law to make others in the cafeteria aware of the eligibility status of children for freereduced-price or “paid” meals.

- All district schools will operate the School Breakfast Program.
- Schools will arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts.
- Schools will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- Schools will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals

Schools will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the over identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced- price school meals.[5] Toward this end, schools may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; provide meals at no charge to all children, regardless of income; promote the availability of school meals to all students.

Summer Food Service Program

Schools, in which more than 50% of students are elibible for free or reduced-price school meals, will sponsor the Summer Food Service Program for at least six weeks between the last day of the academic school year and the first day of the following school year, and preferably throughout the entire summer vacation.

Meal Times and Scheduling

Schools:

- Will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after
- sitting down for lunch.
- Should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.,* lunch should be scheduled between 10:40 a.m.
- and 12:30 p.m.
- Should not schedule tutoring, club, organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities.
- Will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks
- Should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth- brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs (*e.g.,* orthodontia or high tooth-decay risk).

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff

Qualified nutrition professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers and cafeteria works, according to their levels of responsibility.[6]

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

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[6]School nutrition staff development programs are available through the USDA, School Nutrition Association and the John Stalker Institute at Framingham State College.

Schools should discourage students from sharing their foods and beverages with one another during meal or
snack times, given concerns about contagious diseases, allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (*i.e.,* foods sold outside or reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc.) must comply with the "Nutrition Standards" for competitive foods and beverages in public schools, issed in 2011 by The Department of Public Health.

Grades 7-12:

In middle and high schools, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, student stores or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:

Beverages

- Allowed: Water with no added sugar or artificial Sweeteners, but may contain natural flavors and/or carbonation; fruit and vegetable juices (no larger than 4 oz.); unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free fluid milk and nutritionally-equivalent nondairy beverages (to be defined by USDA);

- Per the DPH 105CMR225.200-5 no beverages, other than juice, milk, milk substitute and water shall be sold or provided.

- Not Allowed: Soft drinks; sports drinks; iced teas; Beverages containing caffeine, excluding fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).

Foods A food item sold individually:

- Foods shall not exceed 200 calories per item, with the exception of ala carte entrees which shall not exceed the calorie count of comparable National School Lunch Program entrée items, will have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding a 1 oz. serving of nuts, seeds, nut butters and/or reduced fat cheese and 10% of its calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
- Will have no more than 35% of its *weight* from added sugars; provided, however that a public school may provide or sell: a.) non-fat or low-fat yogurt, including drinkable yogurt, which contains a maximum of 30 grams of total sugars per 8 oz. packaged serving; b.) 100% fruit with no added sugar.
- Will contain no more than 200 mg of sodium per item, with the exception of ala carte entrees; will contain no more than 480 mg of sodium per item.

Elementary Schools

The school food service program and administration will approve and/or provide all food and beverage sales to students in elementary schools. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools should be sold as balanced meals. If available, foods and beverages sold individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits and non-fried vegetables. Any Contract with soft drink, fast food or snack food companies must meet all guidelines set forth in this policy.

Portion Sizes

- All portions will be in compliance with current regulations
- Milk portions shall not exceed 8 oz.
- Juice portion shall not exced 4 oz
- Potable water will be provided in dispensers free of charge every day.

Grades PK-6:

Fundraising Activities- The schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity.

Food-related fundraisers will be encouraged to align with the policy nutrition guidelines. The district shall provide a list to encourage healthy options for events, such as bake sales.

Snacks

Snacks served during the school day, or in after-school care or enrichment programs, will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks and water as the primary beverage. Schools will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritionalneeds, children's ages and other considerations. The district will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel and parents.

- If eligible, schools that provide snacks through after-school programs will pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School LunchProgram.

Rewards

Schools will not use unhealthy food as reward or withhold food as punishment for individual behavior.

Celebrations

Schools should limit celebrations that involve food during the school day to no more than one party per class per month (inclusive of holidays and birthdays). For parties, all foods offered must meet allergy and nutrition guidelines.

School-sponsored Events

(such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances or performances)

Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day shall be aligned with the policy nutrition guidelines.

Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

The School District aims to teach, encourage and support healthy eating by students. Schools will continue to provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- Is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- Is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences and elective subjects;

- Includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits and school gardens;
- Promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods and health- enhancing nutrition practices;
- Emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- Links with school meal programs, other school foods and nutrition-related community services;
- Teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- Includes training for teachers and other staff.

Integrating Physical Activity into Daily Life

For students to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (*i.e.,* at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace regular physical as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end:

- Classroom health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically- active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- Opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons; and
- Classroom teachers will continue to provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate.

Communications with Parents

The district/school will support parents' efforts for providing a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district/school will offer healthy eating seminars for parents, send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. Parents will be required to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The district/school will provide parents a list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards and fundraising activities. In addition, the district/school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

The **district/school** will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during and after the school day and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter or other take-home materials, special events or physical education homework.

Food Marketing in Schools

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and

beverages sold individually (above).[13]

School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages[14] does

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[13] Advertising of low-nutrition foods and beverages is permitted in supplementary classroom and library ' materials, such as newspapers, magazines, the Internet and similar media, when such materials are used in a class lesson or activity, or as a research tool.

not support the overall goals of the district's wellness policy. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

Staff Wellness

The School District highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Staff are encouraged to model positive nutrition behavior among children. Staff will refrain from consuming sodas and coffee and foods of low nutritional value in front of children.

Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Physical Education (P.E.)

All students in grades K-12 will receive physical education for the entire school year. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (*e.g.,* interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement.

Daily Recess

All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment.

Options for student discipline that do not involve withholding recess should be explored and the amount of recess lost should be minimized.

Physical Activity Opportunities In and Out of School

All elementary, middle and high schools will encourage extracurricular physical activity programs, such as physical activity clubs or intramural programs. All high schools, and middle schools as appropriate, will offer interscholastic sports programs. Schools will encourage a range of activities that meet the needs, interests and abilities of all students.

Schools should discourage extended periods (*i.e.,* periods of two or more hours) of inactivity. Teachers are encouraged to take short fitness breaks daily, and lead weekly "extra rec" activities with their students. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools should give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active.

Safe Routes to School

The school district will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the district will work together with local public works, public safety and/or police departments in those efforts.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

[14]Schools should not permit general brand marketing for food brands under which more than half of the foods or beverages do not meet the nutrition standards for foods sold individually or the meals are not consistent with school meal nutrition standards.

School spaces and facilities should be available to students, staff and community members before, during and after the school day, on weekends and during school vacations. These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety and facilities use will apply at all times.

Monitoring and Policy Review

The Superintendent or designee will strive for full compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each school, the principal or designee will strive for compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the school district superintendent or designee.

School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the Superintendent (or if done at the school level, to the school principal). In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes. If the district has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past five years, the district will request from the state agency that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible.

The Superintendent, or designee, will develop a summary report every three years on district-wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from schools within the district. That report will be provided to the school board and also distributed to all school health councils, parent/teacher organizations, school principals and school health services personnel in the district.

Policy Review

Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress and determine areas in need of improvement. As part at that review, the school district will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The district, and individual schools within the districts will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation.

SCHOOL LUNCHES

The diet of school children needs to be planned with special care because they are so active. Students are expected to eat a lunch every day at school (even early release days).

Currently, for $10.00 per full week or $2.00 per day, any child is provided with a balanced lunch. Normally lunches are not sold by the day. Payment is encouraged on the first day of the week for that week's lunches, no matter how many lunches the child is purchasing. If a child is absent on collection day, they will be allowed to make payment for that portion of the week that remains on the day that they return to school. Credit for meals not eaten due to absence will be given the following week.

The Orange Elementary Food Service does not accept checks for less than $10.00. Cash should be sent for all amounts less than $10.00. If checks are returned to us by the Town Treasurer for insufficient funds **TWICE**, we will no longer accept a check from you. This policy has been adopted due to the cost of collecting on bad checks for small amounts.

Bills for money owed to the cafeteria are sent out once each week at all three schools to keep you up to date on student account balances. You may call 978-544-1127 at anytime to inquire about your child's account.

If your child's account reaches a balance that has not been paid **within a two-week period** you will be sent a

letter by mail. This letter will notify you that if payment is not received within one week, or a budget payment has not been arranged with the Food Service Director, your child will not be allowed to charge any further lunches, snacks or ala carte items. They will have to bring a lunch from home until the balance is paid.

Children who bring a cold lunch from home may purchase 8 oz. milk for $.40 per day or 10 oz. for $.60. The cafeteria is now offering 8 oz. lactose free milk for those who are lactose intolerant. The price will be $.40 per day.

Milk, ice cream, cookies and other snacks may be purchased daily. Students should eat their entire lunch before purchasing a treat. If a child is missing recess because of work or behavior no treat may be purchased. Milk may be purchased. All accounts are now automated. If you do not wish your student to purchase à la carte items, please notify the Food Service Department and we will red flag the account so the cashier will know to only allow lunch sale.

When an account has **ANY** outstanding balance, the student is not allowed to purchase any à la carte item (snack, drink or ice cream). If a student comes to the cashier with money to buy à la carte, the money will be accepted but put on the account towards the outstanding balance. If nutritional information is needed about any item, please call 978-544-1127.

Applications for free and reduced price lunch may be obtained at any time during the school year. Parents who think they might qualify should return the form to school with the required information. The school nurse has been designated as the one who determines which children are eligible for free lunch based on Federal Government guidelines. Reduced priced lunches are $.40 per day, $2.00 per week.

Free Breakfast: Based on the expectation of continued grant funding, breakfast will be offered at no cost to any student enrolled in the Orange Elementary Schools.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

In accordance with the guidelines issued by the Board of Education of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts requiring more personal interaction at all levels of education and a more individualized approach to the learning process, the Orange Elementary Schools have implemented a program of continuous progress, which allows a student to proceed at his/her own rate. The students go through each program at their own progress rate with no time limit established for the completion of any level.

Retention is decided on an individual basis. Not all student need to repeat grades. Students may work in different levels of an academic subject while staying in their current grade. For example, a student in the second grade may be working in second grade levels in math, science, and social studies but still be in a first grade reading level if that is best suited for him/her. In return, she/he may work ahead of his/her year.

The Orange Elementary Schools will no longer be accepting requests by parents for their child's next year's placement. The teachers and administration take into consideration the needs of each student and will make all placements.

The Orange Elementary Schools teach an integrated curriculum using a research-based approach. Writing becomes purposeful because it is integrated into the curriculum. Emphasis is placed on the process of learning. The following activities are encouraged:

- Inquiry and exploration, hands-on experience, critical thinking skills
- Using trade books (popular literature and content-based readers)
- Process writing, learning to use resources, cooperative learning, phonics instruction, project learning.

Standard programs that are available in our schools to help meet educational goals include:

Investigations (K-5) & Connected Math (6) 2001

Harcourt, Brace Jovanovich Science Program (1989)
MacMillan Social Studies (1985)
Laidlaw Spelling (1987)& Houghton-Mifflin (2003)
Silver Burdett English (grades 3-6)
SRA Reading, Benchmark Reading, Project Read
Wilson Reading, Edmark Reading, Wiggle Works Reading
Zaner-Bloser, Inc., Penmanship
Houghton-Mifflin Reading (2003) K – 4

Insights Language & Phonics, John Collins Writing Program and Writing Process Programs
Tools of the Mind (for Kindergarten)
Responsive Classroom
Pre- K Classrooms

School property that is lost or destroyed needs to be paid for. We would appreciate your help in seeing that library books are taken care of and returned on time. The School Committee has adopted a materials selection policy, which outlines procedures for selecting library materials. If you have any concerns or questions regarding library materials, please talk to the principal.

HEALTH CURRICULUM

The Orange Elementary Schools in accordance with state mandates and guidelines present all students with a comprehensive diversified health education program. The district is sensitive to the personal nature of specific topics and we welcome all parents to contact the school for a general outline of the health curriculum.

In keeping with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, parents and guardians may request that their children be excused from classes in which the curriculum deals primarily with human sexuality or human sexuality issues. Parents/guardians will be notified when these classes are to occur and will be given an opportunity to review any instructional materials that will be used. Requests to have a child excused from these classes should be made in writing to the school principal. Children excused from these classes will be given alternative assignments.

REPORTING SYSTEM

The reporting system is set up to correspond with this system of learning. There will be parent-teacher conferences in December and April. The parent-teacher conferences are extremely valuable as they provide an opportunity to discuss all facets of the child's progress. The written progress report will give the child a rating according to his/her capacity within the level at which he/she is working. At Fisher Hill School, instead of A, B, C, D, the student will be graded on his/her progress (Excellent, Satisfactory, Finds Task Difficult, and Capable of Doing Better). Checklists and portfolio assessment have become an important part of assessing a student’s progress.

We realize that many parents want to know how their child’s achievement compares with peers. Some parents would definitely prefer an A, B, C, and D. We recognize these points of view and the fact that most students will experience just such a grading system when they enter a secondary school. So, beginning in grade 3, we report the child's progress with a traditional letter grade. However, we also recognize that these scales cannot be a single standard to which each child, regardless of ability, is held accountable. In each case, judgment must be used in reporting performance relative to ability.

ASSESSMENT

At designated times during the school year or as needed, students may be formally assessed depending on their grade level and needs. The following assessments may be used for assessing students:

MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System)
Comprehensive test of Basic Skills (CTBS)
Diagnostic Reading Assessment
Portfolio Assessment
DIBELS
SSIS – PreK/K
GRADE (end of grade 1 – 6)
PTS-3 (Grades 5 & 6)

TITLE I

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (E.S.E.A.) is the largest federal aid to our education program. It was the first and most important federal program assigned to the U.S. Office of Education to recognize that educationally deprived school children may need extra help, or what educators commonly call compensatory education.

Notification to Parents of Teacher Qualifications – Compliance with P. L. 107 – 110, Section 1111 (h)(6)(A). The following page in this handbook is notification to all parents of your right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your children.

The No Child Left Behind Act requires that parents have access to school report cards developed by the department of Education on an annual basis. The information is a general breakdown of district information relating primarily to staff and recent MCAS testing data. This report card is available on the district website www.orange-elem.org.

NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS OF TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS (Compliance with P.L. 107-110, Section 111 1(h)(6)(A)

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

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

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

Orange Elementary Public Schools are committed to providing quality instruction for all students and does so by employing the most qualified individuals to teach and support each student in the classroom. If you would like to receive any of the information listed above regarding your child's teacher, please contact your child's principal.

READING SUPPORT

All 3 schools provide students with extra reading support when needed. This may be in the form of in class 1 – 1, small group support or, at times, pull out support. School personnel will notify parents if their child will be

receiving any special reading services.

SPECIAL NEEDS DEPARTMENT

Children in need of special education services are provided these services under the state law. The Director of Pupil Personnel is charged with overall responsibility of this complex program.
Special Education services do not "label" youngsters who are participants. These children now are receiving much the same services as before but are identified only as receiving those services on the basis of how much of their school day is spent with 1:1 tutorial assistance, small group work or in a separate program. Inclusion settings with typical and identified students are available at each grade level.

"Child in need of special education" is a child who has been determined to need special education in accordance with the provisions of 321.0, or has been referred to a program described in 502.7 (home or hospital program). Such determination or referral shall be based upon a finding that a child, because of temporary or more permanent adjustment difficulties or attributes arising from intellectual, sensory, emotional or physical factors, cerebral dysfunctions, perceptual factors, or other specific learning impairments, or any combination thereof, is unable to progress effectively in a regular education program and requires special education. Pursuant to M.G.L. c7lB, 1, no child shall be determined to be a school age child with special needs solely because the child's behavior violates the school's disciplinary code. Children of ages three and four shall qualify as children in need of special education if, because of temporary or more permanent adjustment difficulties or attributes arising from intellectual, sensory, emotional or physical factors, cerebral dysfunctions, perceptual factors, or other specific learning impairments, or any combination thereof, they would be unable to progress effectively in a developmentally appropriate education program and would require special education.

If you have a child who you feel is in need of special education services but is not receiving them, you are asked to contact either the Director of Pupil Services (544-2542 x 262) or the principal of the building.

A pre-referral team will then begin to discuss potential modifications to the child's educational program. If, after a time, a student is still experiencing difficulty, a referral for an evaluation may be made, with you as the parent becoming a part of the evaluation team.

SECTION 504

Section 504 is a federal statute that prohibits discrimination based on a disability. A person may be considered disabled under the definition of Section 504 if the individual:

- Has a mental illness or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities;
- Has a record of such an impairment; or
- Is regarded as having such impairment.

If a student experiences educational difficulties, a School Based Pupil Study Team meets to discuss the concerns and suggest intervention strategies to help correct the difficulties. If the strategies are unsuccessful, the team can make a referral for evaluation to Section 504, Title 1 or Special Education.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

Orange Elementary Schools is offering three programs designed to foster the language and social development among 3 to 5 year old children. The programs provide in-school services such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and preschool evaluations for children in need of

early intervention and integration into the school based setting.

These programs are funded with federal and state funds as well as tuition fees paid by parents.

The number of children serviced varies from year to year depending on funds available. If you are interested in these programs you need to contact Dr. Jay Conway (544-2542 x 262).

HEALTH SERVICES:

MassHealth MUNICIPAL MEDICAID PROGRAM

The Orange Elementary Schools have entered into an agreement with the Division of Medical Assistance, the agency that administers the MassHealth program in Massachusetts, to help coordinate health care services for students enrolled in MassHealth. This allows us to work directly with each child's doctor, and other medical providers, to meet the child's health care needs.

If your child is a MassHealth member, the Division Of Medical Assistance will give us his/her MassHealth card number and the name of his/her doctor or health care maintenance organization. The school nurse will then contact the child's doctor to tell him/her the name of the school the child attends and the contact person and telephone number at the school so the doctor may contact the school if coordination of health services is needed. Under Massachusetts Law (MGS c112s12G), your child's doctor, as a MassHealth care provider, may contact the school to share medical information about the delivery of health care services to your child.

Any information the Orange Elementary Schools receive from your child's doctor or other health care provider will be kept in a health file separate from his/her regular student record. It will only be accessible to you, as the child's parent or guardian, and school personnel directly involved in the delivery of health care services to your child.

In order for the Orange Elementary Schools to effectively communicate with health care providers, parents will be asked to sign a permission slip. It will allow the school nurse to discuss with the doctor necessary and important medical information, such as the results of health screenings for vision and hearing, the need for certain immunizations, or other health care concerns that may arise. If we have concerns about your child's health, or we believe your child needs further health care services from his / her doctor or health care maintenance organization, we will contact you before we contact or make a referral to your child's doctor, except in cases of emergency.

SCHOOL PHYSICIAN
Parents usually have the family physician give their kindergarten student the required physical examination before entering school. Physical examinations are required before entering the second grade and fifth grade. The School Physician is annually retained by the School Committee as a consultant for handling situations which require expert medical opinion. A good example of this recently was the adoption of an attendance policy for students who are diagnosed as AIDS patients.

SCHOOL NURSE
The school nurse is familiar to the students because it is usually this person they see for minor injury on the playground or in school. Besides rendering such services, the school nurse is a very important resource for both parents and school personnel. The school nurse is also very much involved with public relations because of the many sensitive areas that might be involved. For example, the school nurse advises parents when their child(ren) must be excluded for head lice (pediculosis). This is not a pleasant situation. The school nurse is also the person who makes home visits when they are necessary.

The nurse is responsible for all vision and hearing testing, weighing and measuring with follow-up regarding defects or abnormalities needing correction. A special screening is provided for all students in Grade 5 and 6

for the early identification of scoliosis (a spine curvature situation that is often correctable if treated early). We also provide a fluoride rinse program for those students who have received their parent's permission.

The school nurse also keeps the health records up to date so that they provide meaningful data to personnel interested in the student.

Medication: Must be prescribed by a physician and dispensed by the school nurse.

YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH
Students who become ill in school will be cared for until the parent or parent substitute can be notified. In case of accident "First Aid" will be given. "First Aid is the immediate and temporary care given before the services of a physician can be secured". Although the school will provide proper care of children in case of accident or sickness, the responsibility for the treatment of the child by a physician rests with the parents. The school's obligation extends to placing the sick or injured in the care of the parent or parent substitute who will be asked to furnish the transportation of the sick or injured child.

The emergency information provided by the home will be the primary source of information for the action taken. It is very important that the student's parent or guardian fill out an Emergency Information form **completely** for each child in the family and keep it up to date regarding changes in address, phone number, etc. Please include **cell phone and pager numbers**.

REMINDER
All children aged 0-18 are eligible for free or reduced-cost health coverage. MassHealth is available to those who meet the income guidelines, and for those who don't, the Children's Medical Security Plan is available. Information about these plans is available from Healthy Connections at 249-5634. It is important to obtain health coverage before an accident or illness occurs.

COMMON COLDS
The first three days of a cold are the most infectious period. To prevent the spread of germs, the child should be kept at home until his explosive cough, sneezing and watery nasal discharge have begun to wane.

SOILING AND WETTING
Occasionally children do have soiling and wetting accidents. For preschool procedures concerning this issue please refer to the Early Childhood Handbook. In grades K-6, if your child soils or wets, it is expected that you will come and pick him/her up, clean and change him/her and return him/her back to school provided it is before 1:30 in the afternoon. After 1:30, they may remain at home.

IMMUNIZATION (see Admission Requirements pg. 23)

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
Minimum Quarantine for the Following Diseases:
Chicken Pox - One week from the appearance of eruptions and until all lesions are dried.
Scarlet Fever - May return to school 24 hours after start of antibiotic provided therapy will continue for at least 10 days. When returning to school after having one of the above diseases, it would be advisable to have the school nurse check the child.

HEAD LICE (Pediculosis)
Each year we feel it necessary to remind parents of the problem the schools have with Head Lice (Pediculosis). Any child's hair, no matter how many times it is washed, can pick up this common pest from someone else's person or clothing. Unfortunately, the schools are often a place where an infestation can occur because of the large number of children together in one place.

If you find evidence of head lice, please notify the school immediately so that we can have the school nurse check the child's classmates to see if pediculosis has spread. The treatment for head lice is:

1. Check all other members of family for signs.
2. Shampoo hair vigorously for 5 to 15 minutes (depending on amount of hair) with either Kwell Shampoo (RX)*, A-22 Rinse, Pyrinate Liquid Rinse, Cuprex Rinse.
3. Rinse hair thoroughly.
4. Dry with towel.
5. Comb with a fine steel comb to get any remaining nits.
6. Next morning check carefully. If no sign of nits, the child may go to school.
7. Also Be Sure To:
   - Wash all clothing and place in the dryer on a hot setting.
   - Iron clothes with a hot iron.
   - Disinfect any toilet articles such as comb.
   - Air out hats, pillow, etc., and brush thoroughly.
   - Place all stuffed toys in a securely tied plastic bag for 2 weeks.
   - Clean upholstered furniture with appropriate disinfectant

Should you require further information, we recommend you contact your family physician.
*RX preparations listed above are not available at your pharmacy without a prescription; ask your family doctor for a prescription.

Students who have been infested will be excluded from school <u>until all nits</u> (dead or alive) and eggs are removed following treatment. The school nurse will examine each child before he/she returns to class.

AIDS/ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME

A. All children diagnosed as having AIDS, or with clinical evidence of infection with AIDS associated virus (HTLV III) and receiving medical attention, are able to attend regular classes.

1. If a child has cutaneous (skin) eruptions or weeping lesions that cannot be covered, he/she should not be in school.

2. If the child exhibits inappropriate behavior, which increases the likelihood of transmission (I.E.: biting or frequent incontinence), he/she should not be in school.

3. Children diagnosed with AIDS, or with clinical evidence of infection with the AIDS associated virus (HTLV III), who are too ill to attend school, should have an appropriate alternative education plan.

4. Siblings of children diagnosed as having AIDS, or with clinical evidence of infection with the AIDS associated virus (HTLV III), are able to attend school without any further restrictions.

B. The child's personal physician is the primary manager of the child diagnosed as having AIDS, or with clinical evidence of infection with the AIDS associated virus (HTLV III). Management includes acting as the "gate keeper" for the child's attendance at school in accordance with the policy outlined above.

1. The child's personal physician, after consultation with the family, is responsible for reporting cases of AIDS to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Division of Communicable Disease. The school superintendent will be notified and will provide assistance in identifying those educational or health care agents with an absolute need to know.

2. Only persons with an absolute need to know should have medical knowledge of a particular student. In

individual situations, the superintendent might notify one or more of the following: Principal, School Nurse, Teacher, and Counselor

3. Notification should be by a process that would maximally assist patient confidentiality. Ideally, this process should be direct person-to-person contact.

4. If school authorities believe that a child diagnosed as having AIDS or with clinical evidence of infection with the AIDS associated virus (HTLV III) has evidence of conditions described in #1, then the school authorities can dismiss the child from the class and request authorization from the child's personal physician so that class attendance is within compliance with the school policy.

5. If school authorities and the child's personal physician are in conflict, then the case should be referred to the Department of Public Health for review by an appointed physician who would determine the permissibility of attendance.

C. Since the child diagnosed as having AIDS or with clinical evidence of infection with the AIDS associated virus (HTLV III) has a somewhat greater risk of encountering infections in the school setting, the child should be excluded from school if there is an outbreak of a threatening communicable disease such as chicken pox or measles until he/she is properly treated by a physician (possibly with hyperimmune gamma globulin) and/or the outbreak has no longer become a threat to the child.

STUDENT RECORDS
603 CMR 23.00: Department of Education Student Records

In September 1995, the Commonwealth issued regulations consistent with the Education Reform Act and federal law, which were promulgated to insure parent and student's rights of confidentiality, inspection amendment, and destruction of student records. Basically these regulations are:

- Provides specific rights to students who are either 14 or are entering ninth grade whichever occurs first.
- Below that age the rights are the parents.
- Between the age of 14-18 both the student and parent can exercise the rights.
- Beyond age 18, the student has these rights alone but, if the student wishes to expressly deny the parent's rights, he/she must do so in writing.

The student's records are now open to the parent or student in entirety and access by others to the record is severely limited. The record or parts of it may be challenged and/or amended. There is also an elaborate appeals procedure should the parent or student object to content within the record.

If a student seeks or intends to transfer to another school, the authorized school personnel of that school may have access to such student’s record without the consent of the eligible student or parent.

Copies of 603 CMR 23.00 regarding parent and student rights are available from the schools at the parent’s request.

As of 1998, Massachusetts Law (General Laws, Ch. 71, Section 34H) specifies detailed procedures that govern access to student records by parents who do not have physical custody of their children. For more information, please contact the school principal.