



PILGRIM AREA COLLABORATIVE

Connecting **SCHOOL – HOME – COMMUNITY**

www.pilgrimac.org

Revised June 2021

Policy Manual

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PARENT –STAFF ORGANIZATION

The Parent-Staff Organization of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative is viewed by the Board of Directors as sincerely interested in and staunch supporters of public education for students with special needs.

The purpose of the organization is endorsed by the Board of Directors:

1. to promote the welfare of children and youth in the home, school and community;
2. to raise the standards of home life;
3. to secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth;
4. to bring into close relationship the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the training of the child;
5. to develop between educators and the general public such united efforts, as will secure for every child, the highest advantage in physical, mental and social education.

Staff members shall be encouraged to join the organization and to participate actively in their program.

POLICY ON HEALTH BENEFITS FOR RETIREES

1. This policy shall only be considered effective to the extent that the Board of Directors retains full and complete discretion and control to offer, to cease offering, and/or to alter the offering of any health benefits to otherwise eligible retirees of Pilgrim Area Collaborative. At the October Board Meeting each year, the Board of Directors will vote whether to offer the health benefit plan for retirees for the following fiscal year. This policy does not create a contractual obligation or entitlement for any individual.
2. For the purpose of this policy, retirees shall be defined as individuals who are both eligible for and in fact receive a retirement allowance in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 32 through either the State Retirement System or through the Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System, and who retire directly from Pilgrim Area Collaborative. In addition, eligible retirees must have been enrolled in the group health insurance plan, and at the same level (individual or family), for at least two (2) contract years immediately prior to the date of retirement.
3. Notice of intent to take health insurance in retirement must be given to the Pilgrim Area business office by October 1st of the academic year in which you plan to retire. This notification requirement may be waived by the Board if due to unforeseen circumstances the employee is not able to give one year notice. The retiree will verify such continued eligibility by promptly completing and returning such notarized forms as may be required or requested by the Collaborative. Additionally, each retiree must immediately notify the Collaborative in writing of any change of address. The failure by a retiree to promptly return a requested verification form or to notify the Collaborative of a change in address shall be grounds for the termination of that individual's retiree medical insurance, which will not be reinstated.
4. Retirees, who are otherwise deemed eligible, subject to the discretion of the Board of Directors, shall be entitled to enroll in one of the health benefit plans offered by the Collaborative up to the date the individual becomes eligible for Medicare. Upon reaching the age of Medicare eligibility the retiree must enroll in Medicare immediately and will be eligible to enroll in a Medicare Supplement Plan offered by the Collaborative, provided that the Board of Directors so chooses to offer a Medicare Supplement Plan. Retirees who are not enrolled in Medicare Parts A & B in accordance with the timelines specified in this policy shall not be eligible to receive any benefit from the Collaborative.
5. While this policy is in effect, the Collaborative will pay 50% of the monthly premium on behalf of eligible retirees who enroll in a plan offered by the Collaborative, whether or not the plan is a group plan or a Medicare Supplement Plan, and regardless of whether or not the retiree is enrolled in an individual or family plan. In the event of a retiree's death, the surviving spouse will be eligible for continued coverage in an individual plan with the surviving spouse paying 100% of the premium for the coverage. "Spouse," as used in this policy, means the current spouse at the time of the retiree's death. Additionally, coverage of this spouse will terminate if said spouse remarries. A spouse will be responsible for promptly completing and returning to the Collaborative whatever forms regarding continued eligibility that the Collaborative may require or request.

5. While this policy is in effect, the Collaborative will pay 50% of the monthly premium on behalf of eligible retirees who enroll in a plan offered by the Collaborative, whether or not the plan is a group plan or a Medicare Supplement Plan, and regardless of whether or not the retiree is enrolled in an individual or family plan. In the event of a retiree's death, the surviving spouse will be eligible for continued coverage in an individual plan with the surviving spouse paying 100% of the premium for the coverage. "Spouse," as used in this policy, means the current spouse at the time of the retiree's death. Additionally, coverage of this spouse will terminate if said spouse remarries. A spouse will be responsible for promptly completing and returning to the Collaborative whatever forms regarding continued eligibility that the Collaborative may require or request.

6. In addition to offering a Medicare Supplement Plan, the Collaborative shall endeavor to offer a health benefit plan(s) for those retirees who are eligible under Section 2 of this policy but who are not Medicare-eligible employees. Interested retirees must submit evidence satisfactory to the Collaborative in a timely manner prior to age 65, which establishes that they are not Medicare-eligible.

7. Retirees shall be responsible for making full payment of their share of the premium which will be due to the Pilgrim Area Collaborative on the first day of the month of coverage. Should any enrolled retiree fail to make such a premium payment within thirty (30) days of the due date, he/she shall be considered dropped from the plan and will only be reinstated at the discretion of the Board.

8. Nothing in this policy guarantees, nor should be considered to guarantee, health benefits to any retiree. Further, the Board of Directors, by and through the adoption of this policy, retains full discretion to alter contribution levels and/or to cease the offering of any/all health benefits or plans. However, should the Board of Directors decide to cease or alter the offering of any/all health benefits or plans, coverage of those retirees who have already begun receiving health benefits through this policy shall if possible be maintained at a similar level as when the person first retired.

BUDGET PREPARATION

Together with the Business Manager the Executive Director will prepare a budget annually. In April of the current fiscal year, a summary draft of the budget will be shared with the Budget Subcommittee of the PAC Board of Directors for review and input. At the final two PAC Board of Directors meetings of the current fiscal year, a budget will be presented for vote following the opportunity for two readings.

Subsequent to the June approval, the budget may be amended during the current fiscal year by a majority vote of the Board of Directors present during a scheduled Board meeting.

TUITION/BILLING STRUCTURE

Tuition rates for Pilgrim Area Collaborative programs will be set by the Board of Directors in the approved budget, and may be adjusted in an Amended budget. Any change in tuition subsequent to the approved budget must be brought forward to the Board and approved by a majority vote of the Board members present at that Board meeting.

Annual tuition will be billed in 10 installments, based on a daily rate of 180 days and the days per month for the PAC calendar of the school for each student. The days per month will be set at the beginning of the year for each PAC school calendar, and will not be adjusted for snow days. The annual tuition for graduating seniors will remain the same, however the daily rate will be increased, based on their reduced days required.

Since the tuition is billed ahead of the month attended, credits for students will be issued when the district notifies PAC in writing with the date of a student's withdrawal. Tuition credits will not be applied for students with excused or unexcused absences or hospitalizations. In the case of a student staying with PAC but moving to a new district, the student must be enrolled in the new district before the original district is relieved from financial responsibility.

In accordance with 603 CMR 28.10, (2) (a), 2 if a student with an out of district placement splits time between parents who reside in different towns, the cost of tuition will be billed as a split cost between those towns.

For the Extended School Year program, PAC will bill the district for the entire program and will not reduce summer tuition rates for students who are absent for planned or unplanned family vacations. Should a student attend for one week (four consecutive days) or less of the ESY program, PAC will bill for only one half of the total ESY tuition. As classrooms are staffed for the anticipated number of students, refunds cannot be made for sporadic absences.

FEE SCHEDULES

When school districts contract with the Pilgrim Area Collaborative for staff services, the rate will be subject to a fee schedule voted by the Board of Directors.

RESTRICTED FUNDS

The Board of Directors upon a majority vote may accept monies into a restricted fund. Monies in this fund are from outside sources, and may be expended according to the restricted purpose.

DESIGNATED FUNDS

The Board of Directors upon a majority vote may set aside monies into a designated fund. Monies in this fund may be used solely for the intended purpose.

FUND BALANCE

As of the close of a fiscal year, the Pilgrim Area Collaborative will maintain in its operating fund no more than 25 % of the operating expenses.

If there is an excess of operating expenses at the close of a fiscal year, at a Board of Director's meeting of the new fiscal year, the Board of Directors through a majority vote will determine how those funds will be disbursed.

AUDIT

Each year, the Business Director of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative will arrange for an audit of the Collaborative's financial statements. The audit will be conducted by a Board approved independent auditing firm.

Results of the audit will be presented at a meeting of the Board of Directors annually and be subject to a majority Board vote.

AUTHORIZATION TO SIGN CHECKS

The Treasurer of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative has the authority to sign checks. In the absence of the Treasurer, the Executive Director is authorized to sign checks for the Collaborative.

FUNDRAISING

Groups formed to support the Pilgrim Area Collaborative should operate at their own initiative and responsibility in line with the mission, goals, and curriculum of the Collaborative.

All fundraising efforts must have prior approval of the Executive Director, and also must be in alignment with the mission, goals, and curriculum of the Collaborative.

Classroom teachers may not solicit funds or materials for their classroom.

DONATIONS

The acceptance of any donation to the Pilgrim Area Collaborative made either by an individual or a group is subject to a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

PREPAYMENT OF TUITION AND SERVICES

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative will accept prepayment of up to three months of tuition either for the current fiscal year or for the following fiscal year. *MGL, Chapter 71, Section 71D.*

USE OF BUILDING FACILITIES

It is the policy of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) to welcome the use of the school facilities for purposes directly related to the educational, civic, cultural, recreational and social life of its communities. The Board of Directors recognizes that the primary purpose of school facilities is to implement instructional, extracurricular, and school-sponsored programs and that other usage shall not interfere with these programs. While the Pilgrim Area Collaborative buildings are established for the primary purpose of facilitating the instructional programs for our students, these buildings are available for use after regular school hours and weekends for many types of activities.

The Executive Director will determine the eligibility and approve the use of all Pilgrim Area Collaborative facilities. Programs and activities of users must be of a nature suitable for a public school, must be lawful, and must conform to all of the policies of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative. Member districts will have preference in the use/rental of Pilgrim Area Collaborative facilities with regard to hours or rental and the locations to be rented. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative will not accept any advance payments from any group, organization or institutions in any attempt to circumvent the preference stated above.

The user of the facility will hold the Pilgrim Area Collaborative and its agents and representatives harmless for any problem resulting from use of the premises. The user must have insurance to cover any personal/and/or property claims resulting from the event. The user agrees to indemnify the Collaborative for any damages that result from the use of the facility. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative reserves the right to cancel any facility use agreement whenever such cancellation is advisable and in the best interest of students. The Executive Director is the final arbiter in regard to the fair and equitable implementation of this policy.

REGULATIONS GOVERNING BUILDING USE

1. Individuals or organizations interested in the use of a school facility must complete all documents to process a building request which can be accessible through the PAC website.
2. No individuals or organizations will be able to rent any school facility without completing and filing all relevant documents.
3. Payment for the rental of school facilities must be made in alignment with PAC guidelines.
4. A Certificate of Liability Insurance must be provided at the time an application to rent is submitted. User is responsible for getting the appropriate insurance.
5. Rental of a school facility does not imply automatic access to the school's equipment. Arrangements for the use of school equipment must be made at the time of submitting the application to rent. Use of this equipment request requires the direct supervision of school personnel and the approval of the Executive Director.

6. No one will be admitted to a school building before the arrival of an adult supervisor from the organization, nor will anyone be allowed to remain in the building without such supervision. Program Directors and/or custodians will strictly enforce this regulation. The adult supervisor must be present at all times and is responsible the actions of all participants and spectators.
7. Any damage caused to the school facility or school equipment during the period of the rental will be the direct responsibility of the renter. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative will collect from the renter any monies to repair the damages.
8. Refreshments may be served and consumed in designed areas only and must be approved in advance by the Executive Director. If serving refreshments results in extra custodial time, the renter will be billed accordingly. No alcohol is allowed on school grounds. Failure to abide by these restrictions could result in the loss of the privilege to rent the facility.
9. Renters are only allowed to be in the area specified in their rental agreement. Individuals of the organization are not allowed to roam the school facility during the period of the rental.
10. The renter must at all times be respectful and work with the custodian on duty for the time renting the school facility.
11. All Pilgrim Area Collaborative schools, and grounds are No Smoking facilities.
12. Facilities will not be available for any outside use when there is a conflict with any school activity, including unanticipated, last minute changes.
13. Facilities will not be available for any outside use when scheduling from outside groups creates an undue burden on PAC staff.
14. All building and fire codes must be strictly enforced.
15. On a "No School" day due to inclement weather, there will be no other activities in the school buildings.
16. Any group, organization or institution that falls behind in its rental payments will lose the opportunity to rent space.
17. All groups, organizations, and institutions requesting the use of school facilities are subject, without exception, to the above policy and regulations.

LEGAL References: M.G.L. [71:71](#); [71:71B](#); [272:40A](#)

POLICY APPROVED: 01/27/2016

SOLICITATION IN SCHOOLS

In spirit, the Pilgrim Area Collaborative supports the many worthwhile charitable drives that take place in the community. However, in order to provide students, parents, staff and users of school facilities with some measure of protection from exploitation, the Pilgrim Area Collaborative will place limits on commercial and fund-raising activities in its programs.

The Pilgrim area Collaborative should not give the public the impression of generally endorsing or sanctioning commercial and fund-raising activities. The Executive Director or designee may permit occasional commercial or fund-raising activities related to the objectives of the programs; however no direct solicitation or distribution of information may take place without approval. These activities may not disrupt school routine or cause loss of instructional/school time.

Any organization desiring to distribute flyers or other materials to student/staff or post them within school buildings or programs or on school grounds may do so only with the approval of the Executive Director or designee. After approval, any approved flyer must indicate the event is not school-sponsored, is being distributed as a community service ad must also provide the name of the sponsoring organization, contact names(s) and telephone numbers(s). For purposes of this policy, school sponsored parent groups (e.g. PAC-PSO) and groups representing Pilgrim Area Collaborative employees will be considered "school-sponsored".

UNCLAIMED OR UNCASHED CHECKS

In the event a check that has been issued by the Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) business office has gone unclaimed for a maximum of six (6) months, the Business manager or their appointee will search for the individual and send a written reminder of the unclaimed/uncashed check. The letter will notify individuals/companies that outstanding items will be forwarded to the state if not cashed within three years.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires that abandoned property be turned over when dormant for three years. PAC's Business Manager will review PAC's records each year to determine whether the PAC is in the possession of any unclaimed funds which are reportable under General Law, Chapter 200A and to make an annual report of the findings, according to the Commonwealth's requirements (updates to those requirements can be found at: <http://www.mass.gov/reporting-unclaimed-property>)

In accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 200A § 7A, a due diligence notice will be sent by first-class mail to the last known address for every check of \$100 or more, at least 60 days prior to the filing of reports with the Unclaimed Property Division. The letter will include, but not be limited to, the following information: a. a description of the property, including account number, policy number or other identifying information; b. a statement explaining that state law requires holders of unclaimed property to report and remit such property; and, c. the date that the property will be reported to the Unclaimed Property Division if there is no owner contact.

NO SMOKING POLICY

In the interest of promoting healthy working conditions and protecting the safety of students, faculty and visitors, the Board of Directors of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative has created a Smoke Free Environment for all of the programs. Therefore, the use of marijuana, and tobacco products by staff, students, and visitors is prohibited at all times in all school facilities, school grounds, at all school sponsored activities, including field trips, and on school vans. "Tobacco products" are any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco or nicotine that is intended for human consumption, whether smoked, chewed, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, snorted, sniffed, or ingested by any other means, including, but not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, snuff; or electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes, electronic pens, electronic hookah, liquid nicotine, "e-liquids" or other similar products, regardless of nicotine content, that rely on vaporization or aerosolization. "Tobacco product" includes any component or part of a tobacco product. "Tobacco product" does not include any product that has been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration either as a tobacco use cessation product or for other medical purposes and which is being marketed and sold or prescribed solely for the approved purpose.

In accordance with M.G.L, c. 71, § 2A, it is unlawful for any student enrolled in a public primary or secondary school in the Commonwealth to use tobacco products of any kind on school grounds.

Staff members and students who violate this policy will be referred for further disciplinary action.

This policy shall be promulgated to all staff and students in appropriate handbook(s) and publications.

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

It is the intent and obligation of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative to provide a drug-free, healthful, safe and secure work environment. Employees are expected and required to report to work in appropriate mental and physical condition for work. Employees may not report to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. For the purposes of this policy, alcohol as well as marijuana will be considered a drug(s).

It is the policy of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative that there should be a drug and alcohol free environment for staff, students, and members of the public on the school premises and at school-sponsored events, including, but not limited to, athletic events (games, practices and/or awards/honors events), extra-curricular events, school-sponsored and/or sanctioned trips (whether overnight or day), on school buses or in cars going to or from any place where students are present at school-sponsored and/or school-sanctioned event.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance, alcohol, and prescription drugs not prescribed for the individual, or drug paraphernalia is absolutely prohibited in the Pilgrim Area Collaborative programs. Employees found in violation of such prohibition will be subject to discipline up to and including termination; or require such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state or local health law enforcement, or other appropriate agency. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative at times may have an obligation to notify federal or state agencies relative to such violations.

Employees of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative will promptly report any student, employee, contractor or visitor to the school who is using, possessing, or distributing or displays evidence of using, possessing, or distributing controlled substances, intoxicants, prescription drugs not prescribed for the individual, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, and/or alcoholic beverages. Reports should be made personally to the Program /Coordinator Director.

It is a condition of employment that each employee abides by this policy and notifies the Executive Director of any criminal violation occurring in the workplace within five (5) days of such a conviction.

The Drug Free Workplace Act (U.S.C. 702) requires the Pilgrim Area Collaborative to certify a drug free workplace as a condition of receiving federal grants and contracts.

All employees will be notified of this policy through handbooks or other publications.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Position

The Board of Directors of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative takes the position that all of its employees have the right to work in an environment free from sexual harassment. In addition, sexual harassment violates both state and federal law, and therefore, will not be tolerated.

The Board of Directors will take seriously all complaints of sexual harassment and will investigate, through the designated sexual harassment officer (investigator), each and every complaint thoroughly and as quickly as possible.

While this policy sets forth our goals of promoting a workplace that is free of sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

Definition

Sexual harassment is defined as an unlawful act(s) including unsolicited remarks, gestures or physical contact, display or circulation of written materials or pictures derogatory to either gender, sexual advances and/or requests for sexual favors. In addition, other verbal or physical conduct of asexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct or communication is made a term or condition either explicitly or implicitly to obtain or maintain employment; or
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting such individual's employment; or
3. Such conduct or communications has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's employment or creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or offensive employment environment.

Implicit in the above definition is that sexual innuendos, jokes, comments, pictures or questions are included in the prohibited conduct.

Under these definitions, direct or implied requests by a supervisor for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised job benefits such as favorable reviews, salary increases, promotions, increased benefits, or continued employment constitutes sexual harassment.

While it is not possible to list all circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct which if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending upon the totality of the circumstances including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances - whether they involve physical touching or not;

- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and,
- Discussion of one's sexual activities.

Condoning sexual harassment, also, will not be tolerated. Condoning includes ignoring harassment, or any other act that can be perceived as approving the actions of the harasser.

Also implicit in the definition is that the policy applies equally between the sexes. Finally, implicit in the definition is the fact that the misconduct need not take place at the workplace in order to constitute sexual harassment.

If any employee believes he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, the employee has a right to file a complaint with the Executive Director, Dr. Maureen Gaughan, either verbally or in writing.

If, after investigation, it is determined that inappropriate conduct occurred by an employee, appropriate action will be taken. Such action may range from counseling to termination of employment as well as other forms of disciplinary action deemed appropriate.

In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using our complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short period for filing a claim (EEOC-300 days; MCAD – 300 days).

United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
 John F. Kennedy Building
 475 Government Center
 Boston, MA 02203
 Tel. (800) 669-4000

The Massachusetts Commission against Discrimination (MCAD)
 One Ashburton Place
 Sixth Floor, Room 601
 Boston, MA 02108
 Tel. (617) 994-6000

POLICY ON CRIMINAL OFFENDER RECORD INFORMATION (CORI)

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks are part of a general background check for employment or volunteer work for the Pilgrim Area Collaborative. This policy is applicable to the criminal history screening of prospective and current employees, subcontractors, volunteers and intern applicants. Where Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) and other criminal history checks may be part of a general background check for employment, volunteer or intern work, the following practices and procedures will be followed. The following practices and procedures are part of the Collaborative's CORI policy.

I. CONDUCTING CORI SCREENING

CORI checks will only be conducted as authorized by the Department of Criminal Justice Information Systems (DCJIS) and M.G.L. c. 6, §.172, and only after a CORI Acknowledgement Form has been completed. If a new CORI check is to be made on a subject within a year of his/her signing of the CORI Acknowledgement Form, the subject shall be given seventy two (72) hours notice that a new CORI check will be conducted. If requested, the applicant will be provided a copy of the PAC CORI Policy.

II. ACCESS TO CORI

All CORI obtained from the DCJIS is confidential, and access to the information must be limited to those individuals who have a "need to know". This may include, but not be limited to, hiring managers, staff submitting the CORI requests, and staff charged with processing job applications. Pilgrim Area Collaborative must maintain and keep a current list of each individual authorized to have access to, or view, CORI. This list must be updated every six (6) months and is subject to inspection upon request by the DCJIS at any time.

III. CORI TRAINING

An informed review of a criminal record requires training. Accordingly, all personnel authorized to review or access CORI at Pilgrim Area Collaborative will review, and will be thoroughly familiar with, the educational and relevant training materials regarding CORI laws and regulations made available by the DCJIS. Additionally, Pilgrim Area collaborative is an agency required by MGL c. 6, s. 171A to maintain a CORI Policy, all personnel authorized to conduct criminal history background checks and/or to review CORI information will review, and will be thoroughly familiar with, the educational and relevant training materials regarding CORI laws and regulations made available by the DCJIS.

IV. USE OF CRIMINAL HISTORY IN BACKGROUND SCREENING

CORI used for employment purposes shall only be accessed for applicants who are otherwise qualified for the position for which they have applied. Unless otherwise provided by law, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, determinations of suitability based on background checks will be made consistent with this policy and any applicable law or regulations.

V. VERIFYING A SUBJECT'S IDENTITY

If a criminal record is received from the DCJIS, the information is to be closely compared with the information on the CORI Acknowledgement Form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant to ensure the record belongs to the applicant. If the information in the CORI record provided does not exactly match the identification information provided by the applicant, a determination is to be made by an individual authorized to make such determinations based on a comparison of the CORI record and documents provided by the applicant.

VI. INQUIRING ABOUT CRIMINAL HISTORY

In connection with any decision regarding employment or volunteer opportunities, the subject shall be provided with a copy of the criminal history record, whether obtained from the DCJIS or from any other source, prior to questioning the subject about his or her criminal history. The source(s) of the criminal history record is also to be disclosed to the subject.

VII. DETERMINING SUITABILITY

If a determination is made, based on the information as provided in section V of this policy, that the criminal record belongs to the subject, and the subject does not dispute the record's accuracy, then the determination of suitability for the position or license will be made. Unless otherwise provided by law, factors considered in determining suitability may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- (a) Relevance of the record to the position sought;
- (b) The nature of the work to be performed;
- (c) Time since the conviction;
- (d) Age of the candidate at the time of the offense;
- (e) Seriousness and specific circumstances of the offense;
- (f) The number of offenses;
- (g) Whether the applicant has pending charges;
- (h) Any relevant evidence of rehabilitation or lack thereof; and
- (i) Any other relevant information, including information submitted by the candidate or requested by the organization.

The applicant is to be notified of the decision and the basis for it in a timely manner.

VIII. ADVERSE DECISIONS BASED ON CORI

If an authorized official is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of a criminal history background check, the applicant will be notified immediately. The subject shall be provided with a copy of the organization's CORI policy and a copy of the criminal history. The source(s) of the criminal history will also be revealed. The subject will then be provided with an opportunity to dispute the accuracy of the CORI record. Subjects shall also be provided a copy of DCJIS' *Information Concerning the Process for Correcting a Criminal Record*.

STAFF INTERNET POLICY

The Internet is a vast global network which gives people access to a wide variety of information and communication formats. The Internet has tremendous potential for educators who are now able to communicate with one another to share educational materials, strategies and ideas, as well as to access educational research and journals. The Internet's potential for education is limitless as is the potential for abuse.

The purpose of these guidelines for Internet use on any devices used in school is to ensure that all Pilgrim Area Collaborative staff members use this valuable resource appropriately. Access to the Internet by staff is not a right but a privilege which may be revoked at any time for abusive conduct. This abusive conduct will include but will not be limited to the following:

- ◆ the placing of unlawful and/or inappropriate information on a system;
- ◆ accessing or downloading sexually explicit or other materials that may be inappropriate for educational use and or harmful to minors, or the sharing of locations or addresses for this kind of material. Be aware that the transfer of certain kinds of materials is illegal and punishable by fine or jail sentence;
- ◆ the use of abusive or objectionable language in either public or private message;
- ◆ the sending of messages that are likely to result in the loss of the recipients' work or systems;
- ◆ the sending of "chain letters" or "broadcast" messages to lists or individuals;
- ◆ other types of use that could cause congestion of the networks or otherwise interfere with the work of others;
- ◆ use of the Internet that would violate the copyright and/or trademark laws of the United States;
- ◆ using any PAC link to perform any act that may be construed as illegal or unethical, including the use of the link to gain unauthorized access to other systems on the network;
- ◆ overriding or allowing students to override any security systems established on PAC Computers and networks or host schools' computers;
- ◆ sharing or disseminating passwords, codes, access phone numbers, account numbers, or other information that would compromise the privacy or security of another person, system, or network;

- ♦ any use of the Internet that would reflect negatively on the Pilgrim Area Collaborative or would in any way subject the PAC or the individual to a possible criminal or civil action.

The foregoing list is not exhaustive. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative reserves the right to notify any user of other impermissible action regarding the use of the internet, host schools' networks, or computers.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative reserves the right to discipline students and/or employees for abusive conduct involving the Internet, host schools' networks, or computers. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative reserves the right to restrict student access to the Internet, host schools' networks, or computers for abusive conduct.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative makes no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the reliability of the data connection. Nor shall PAC be liable for any loss or corruption of data while using the Internet connection, host schools' network, or PAC-owned computers.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative reserves the right to examine all data, including, but not limited to, e-mail, stored in the machines and/or servers used to conduct PAC business to make sure that all users are in compliance with these regulations. Network storage areas, files and communications may be reviewed by the PAC Administration or designee in order to maintain system integrity and to ensure that users are operating the systems responsibly. PAC makes no guarantee concerning files or information stored on any PAC-owned or operated computer system or network.

At the beginning of each academic year, staff will be presented with a copy of the "Acceptable Use of Internet Policy" and sign acknowledgement of receipt.

ETHICS POLICY

The Board of Directors of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) expects all employees to conduct themselves in a professional manner in their relationships with all students, parents, co-workers, members of the host school, and community.

In addition, all employees, contracted individuals, and volunteers who hold positions with the PAC must abide by the Conflict of Interest law, MGL 268A. This law includes but is not unlimited to the following areas.

Persons affiliated with the PAC **will not**:

- ◆ ask nor accept anything if it is offered in exchange for agreement to perform or not perform an official act;
- ◆ ask nor accept anything (such as a gift) worth \$50 or more;
- ◆ hire, promote, supervise or otherwise participate in the employment of their immediate family or their spouse's family;
- ◆ take any type of official action which will affect the financial interests of their immediate family or their spouse's immediate family;
- ◆ have more than one job with the same municipality or county, or more than one job with the state;
- ◆ disclose confidential information, data, or material which was gained or learned as a public employee;
- ◆ take any action that could create an appearance of impropriety, or could cause an impartial observer to believe their official actions are tainted with bias or favoritism;
- ◆ use their position to obtain unwarranted privileges, or any type of special treatment, for themselves or anyone else;
- ◆ use public resources for political or private purposes.

In compliance with the July 1, 2009 enacted law Chapter 28 of the Acts of 2009, the Pilgrim Area Collaborative will make available to all its employees, contracted individuals, and individuals who hold volunteer positions a summary of the *Conflict of Interest Law for Municipal Employees* by December 28, 2009, and on an annual basis thereafter. All PAC personnel must sign and return a written acknowledgement that he/she has received the summary and return it within 10 days.

In addition on or before April 2, 2010, and every two years thereafter, all PAC related individuals will complete an *Online Training Program* with the Massachusetts Ethics Commission and submit to the PAC office a copy of the *Certificate of Completion*.

PRIVACY POLICY

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) complies with Regulation 210 CMR 17.00 Standards for the Protection of Personal Information of Residents of the Commonwealth (M.G.L. c. 93H).

In this regard PAC will meet or exceed the standards to be met in the safeguarding of personal information contained in both paper and electronic records to (i) ensure the security and confidentiality of such information, (ii) protect against anticipated threats or hazards to the security or integrity of such information, and (iii) protect against unauthorized access to or use of such information in a manner that creates a substantial risk of identity theft or fraud. Methods of safeguarding the privacy of PAC employees are identified in the PAC Comprehensive Information Security Program.

All PAC employees are expected to keep confidential all staff records. Employment records will be contained in a locked file cabinet, and accessed only under the direct supervision of the Executive Director or their designee. Employment records are not allowed to leave the PAC office.

Electronic records for payroll may only be accessed through a Certificate of Digital Access. The only employees at PAC who are authorized access to these electronic records include the Business Director and the Payroll clerk. In the absence of the payroll clerk the Business Director may designate another employee access to electronic records for the purposes of payroll only.

Any PAC employee in violation of the security program rules is subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.

HARASSMENT POLICY

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals at school or at school sponsored events is strictly prohibited. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative requires all employees and students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect for their fellow employees, students and all members of the school community.

DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT

In General: Harassment includes communications such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or others based upon race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

By law, the particular communication or conduct is viewed from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION PROHIBITED

Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. In addition, the Pilgrim Area Collaborative will not tolerate retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of the school.

Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or school committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

INVESTIGATION

If you believe you may have been harassed, or if you witness or learn about the harassment of another individual, you should inform the Program Coordinator/Director as soon as possible. If you do not wish to discuss the issue with him/her, or if s/he does not address the problem; you should inform the Executive Director.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative will promptly investigate every complaint of harassment. If it determines that harassment has occurred, it will take appropriate action to end the harassment and to ensure that it is not repeated.

In certain cases, the harassment of a student may constitute child abuse under Massachusetts law. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative will comply with all legal requirements governing the reporting of suspected cases of child abuse.

CLOSURE OF A COMPLAINT

When an investigation has been completed, school personnel will file a report with the Coordinator for Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act Chapter 622.

POSTING

The Title IV Coordinator and building designees will be appointed yearly and listed in the student and staff handbooks.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, homelessness, or past, present or future membership in the uniformed services of the United States, including the National Guard in admission to, access to, employment in, or treatment in its programs and activities.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative is committed to providing all students and employees with a safe and supportive school environment. Members of the school community are expected to treat each other with mutual respect. It is the policy of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative Board of Directors to oppose and prohibit, without qualification, unlawful discrimination and harassment based on race, age, color, religion, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation or disability. Any unlawful discrimination or harassment of any member or guest of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative is a violation of this policy. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative will act to investigate all complaints and may discipline or take other appropriate action against any member of the school community who is found to have violated this policy.

As stated in Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 76, Section 5, no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

The Coordinator for Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans with Disabilities Act, Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971 is the Executive Director and can be reached at Pilgrim Area Collaborative, 120 Center Street Pembroke, MA 02359; 781-293-6111.

Inquiries regarding the application of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative nondiscrimination policy may be referred to the PAC Coordinator as stated above or the following:

Students

If you believe you have been subjected to harassment or discrimination, you may file a formal complaint with:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Program Quality Assurance Services
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906
Phone: (781) 338-3700
FAX: (781) 338-3710
Email: compliance@doe.mass.edu

The time period for filing a claim is one year from the action.

United States Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights ("OCR")
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109
tel. (617) 289-0111

The time period for filing a claim with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights is 180 days.

Employees

If you believe you have been subjected to harassment or discrimination, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below:

1. United States Equal Employment
Opportunity Commission ("EEOC")
JFK Federal Building, Room 475
Boston, MA 02203
tel. (800) 669-4000

The time period for filing a claim with the EEOC is 180 days.

2. Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination ("MCAD")

Boston Office
One Ashburton Place, Rm. 601
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 994-6000

Springfield Office
436 Dwight Street, Rm. 220
Springfield, MA 01103
(413) 739-2145

The time period for filing a claim with the MCAD is 300 days.

MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS POLICY

No motor vehicle operator shall cause or allow any motor vehicle operated by him or her on school grounds to idle unnecessarily, except for any of the following reasons: traffic congestion; waiting at a school for the purpose of picking up or discharging students; turbo-charged diesel engine cool down or warm up; maintenance of appropriate temperatures for school buses when accepting or discharging passengers not to exceed three minutes in any fifteen minute period or one minute in any fifteen minute period for other motor vehicles; for circumstances involving safety or emergencies, and for servicing or repairing motor vehicles.

The term “school grounds” shall mean in, on or within 100 feet of the real property of the school whether or not it is in session, and shall include any athletic field or facility and any playground used for school purposes or functions which is owned by the municipality or school district, regardless of proximity to a school building, as well as any parking or appurtenant to such school athletic field, facility, or playground.

Legal reference: M.G.L. c.90, § 16B and 540 CMR 27.00.

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

Family Leave

In accordance with the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (hereafter, "FMLA"), the Pilgrim Area Collaborative will grant full and regular part-time employees with at least twelve months of active employment service and who have worked at least 1,250 hours during the twelve month period immediately preceding the date of commencement of the leave requested. Such leaves may be available:

- a. To care for the employee's child within one year of birth, or the initiation of foster care;
- b. To care for a child, spouse, or parent with a serious health condition;
- c. To deal with the employee's own serious health condition if the employee is unable to perform his / her job.

A "serious health condition" is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or psychological condition that involves either inpatient care at a health care facility or continuing treatment by a health care provider.

Eligible employees shall be entitled to up to twelve weeks of leave during the twelve consecutive month period beginning with the commencement of the leave, subject always to compliance with all applicable conditions set forth below. Normally, days and/or weeks of such leave must be taken consecutively.

Eligible employees must provide at least thirty (30) days prior written notice of any request for such leave when the need for such leave is foreseeable such as for the expected birth or placement of a child or planned medical treatment(s). Notice of such leave must be given as soon as practicable if such thirty days' notice is not possible due to the emergency nature of the leave.

Medical Certifications Required:

1. Appropriate medical certification(s) supporting the need for such leave due to a serious health condition of the employee or a spouse, son, daughter or parent (immediate family) must be provided from an appropriate health care provider as a condition of such leave.
2. The administration may require reasonable and periodic reports and/or re-certification of an employee's status or that of an immediate family member as a condition of the continuation of such leave, including the employee's intention to return to employment.
3. Fitness for duty certification(s) indicated that an employee is able to return to work may be required after any FMLA leave, or any other leave(s) taken because of personal illness.
4. Any required medical certification must contain the following:
 - a. The date on which the serious health condition(s) commenced;
 - b. The probable duration of the condition(s);
 - c. The appropriate medical facts within the knowledge of the health care provider regarding the condition(s);
 - d. A statement that the employee is needed to care for the son, daughter, spouse or parent and an estimate of the amount of time to provide the care ; or a statement that the employee is unable to perform the functions of his or her position;

- e. For intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule for planned medical treatment, the dates the treatment is expected and the duration of the treatment.
- f. For intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule because of a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of his or her position, a statement of the medical necessity for, and the expected duration of, the intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule.
- g. For intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule in order to care for a spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition, a statement that the intermittent leave or leave on a reduced schedule is medically necessary for the care of the spouse, son, daughter, or parent, or will assist in their recovery, and the expected duration and schedule of the intermittent leave or reduced leave schedule.
- h. Forms made available by the US. Department of Labor may be utilized for any medical certification requirements.

Health Insurance, Seniority, Other Benefits

1. Health insurance will be continued during any period of approved FMLA leave at the normal employer/employee premium contribution rates, so long as the employee continues to make his/her normal premium contribution in a timely fashion, either through payroll deduction or through a direct payment to the Collaborative. In the event the employee fails to make a required direct payment and yet receives insurance coverage, said amount will be deducted from paychecks upon the employee's return to work.
2. Seniority will not continue to accrue during unpaid FMLA leave, but will continue to accrue during FMLA leave that is paid by virtue of the employee's use of accrued sick leave.
3. Employees shall be required to utilize any paid sick leave to which they may be entitled co-terminously with the period of FMLA provided pursuant to this Article.
4. Employment decisions un-related to the leave status of any employee shall be made as if the employee were not on leave, including but not thereby limiting the generality of the foregoing, decisions regarding reductions in force.

Restoration of Employment, Failure to Fulfill Leave Obligations or Return to Duty

1. An employee returning from an FMLA leave shall be restored to the position he or she held when the leave commenced or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay and other terms and conditions of employment.
2. Employees who fail to adhere to any applicable conditions, recertifications or other requirements of any FMLA leave(s) may be denied a continuation of any such leaves.
3. In the event an employee claims he or she is unable to return to work after an FMLA leave has expired because of the continuation, re-occurrence or onset of a serious health condition of the employee, spouse, son, daughter, or parent, the Administration may require certification of such claims by an appropriate health care provider.
4. Failure to timely respond to any requests concerning the employee's intention to return to work as well as an employee's failure to return to work at the expiration of any leave hereunder may

result in a determination that the employee has abandoned his or her employment, is unable to continue employment because of incapacity and /or has voluntarily resigned.

**FINGERPRINT-BASED CRIMINAL HISTORY RECORD INFORMATION (CHRI) CHECKS
MADE FOR NON-CRIMINAL JUSTICE PURPOSES**

This policy is applicable to any fingerprint-based state and national criminal history record check made for non-criminal justice purposes and requested under applicable federal authority and/or state statute authorizing such checks for licensing or employment purposes. Where such checks are allowable by law, the following practices and procedures will be followed.

I. Requesting CHRI checks

Fingerprint-based CHRI checks will only be conducted as authorized by M.G.L. c. 71, §38R and 42 U.S.C. § 16962, in accordance with all applicable state and federal rules and regulations, and in compliance with M.G.L. c. 6, §§ 167-178 and 803 CMR §§ 2.00, *et seq.* If an applicant or employee is required to submit to a fingerprint-based state and national criminal history record check, he/she shall be informed of this requirement and instructed on how to comply with the law. Such instruction will include information on the procedure for submitting fingerprints. In addition, the applicant or employee will be provided with all information needed to successfully register for a fingerprinting appointment [e.g., Identogo web site address, Provider Identification Number (Provider ID)].

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative will conduct CHRI checks on all staff who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. Volunteer or contractors who in their course of working with PAC may have likelihood of direct and unmonitored contact, duration of potential contact (e.g. chaperones on overnight field trips), ability of requesting entity to limit potential for unmonitored contact (e.g. by means of escorting, physical separation, restrictions on hours of access to school facility) shall also be subject to CHRI checks.

II. Access to CHRI

All CHRI is subject to strict state and federal rules and regulations in addition to Massachusetts CORI laws and regulations. CHRI cannot be shared with any unauthorized entity for any purpose, including subsequent hiring determinations. All receiving entities are subject to audit by the Massachusetts Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS) and the FBI, and failure to comply with such rules and regulations could lead to sanctions. Title 28, U.S.C, § 534, Pub. L. 92-544 and Title 28 C.F.R. 20.33(b) provide that the exchange of records and information is subject to cancellation if dissemination is made outside of the receiving entity or related entities. Furthermore, an entity can be charged criminally for the unauthorized disclosure of CHRI.

III. Storage of CHRI

CHRI shall only be stored for extended periods of time when needed for the integrity and/or utility of an individual's personnel file. Administrative, technical, and physical safeguards, which are in compliance with the most recent [CJIS Security Policy](#), have been implemented to ensure the security and confidentiality of CHRI. Each individual involved in the handling of CHRI is to familiarize himself/herself with these safeguards.

In addition to the above, each individual involved in the handling of CHRI will strictly adhere to the policy on the storage, retention and destruction of CHRI.

IV. Retention and Destruction of CHRI

Federal law prohibits the repurposing or dissemination of CHRI beyond its initial requested purpose. Once an individual's CHRI is received, it will be securely retained in internal agency documents for the following purposes *only*:

- Historical reference and/or comparison with future CHRI requests,
- Dispute of the accuracy of the record
- Evidence for any subsequent proceedings based on information contained in the CHRI.

CHRI will be kept for the above purposes in a locked file cabinet.

When no longer needed, CHRI and any summary of CHRI data must be destroyed by shredding paper copies and/or by deleting all electronic copies from the electronic storage location, including any backup copies or files.

IV. CHRI Training

An informed review of a criminal record requires training. Accordingly, all personnel authorized to receive and/or review CHRI at Pilgrim Area Collaborative will review and become familiar with the educational and relevant training materials regarding SAFIS and CHRI laws and regulations made available by the appropriate agencies, including the DCJIS.

V. Determining Suitability

In determining an individual's suitability, the following factors may include, but not necessarily be limited to: the nature and gravity of the crime and the underlying conduct, the time that has passed since the offense, conviction and/or completion of the sentence, nature of the position held or sought, age of the individual at the time of the offense, number of offenses, any relevant evidence of rehabilitation or lack thereof.

A record of the suitability determination will be retained. The following information will be included in the determination:

- a. The name and date of birth of the employee or applicant;
- b. The date on which the school employer received the national criminal history check results; and,
- c. The suitability determination (either "suitable" or "unsuitable").

A copy of an individual's suitability determination documentation must be provided to another school employer, or to the individual, upon request of the individual for whom the school employer conducted a suitability determination.

VI. Relying on Previous Suitability Determination.

Pilgrim Area Collaborative consistent with 603 CMR 51.06, will rely on a suitability determination made by another school employer. Relevant factors might include: date of previous suitability determination, type of organization that conducted the previous determination (public school district, private school), state of residence of subject of suitability determination.)

VII. Adverse Decisions Based on CHRI

If inclined to make an adverse decision based on an individual's CHRI, Pilgrim Area Collaborative will take the following steps prior to making a final adverse determination:

- Provide the individual with a copy of his/her CHRI used in making the adverse decision;
- Provide the individual with a copy of this CHRI Policy;
- Provide the individual the opportunity to complete or challenge the accuracy of his/her CHRI; and
- Provide the individual with information on the process for updating, changing, or correcting CHRI.

A final adverse decision based on an individual's CHRI will not be made until the individual has been afforded a reasonable time (to be determined on a case by case basis) depending on the particular circumstances to correct or complete the CHRI.

VIII. Secondary Dissemination of CHRI

If an individual's CHRI is released to another authorized entity, a record of that dissemination must be made in the secondary dissemination log. The secondary dissemination log is subject to audit by the DCJIS and the FBI.

The following information will be recorded in the log:

1. Subject Name;
2. Subject Date of Birth;
3. Date and Time of the dissemination;
4. Name of the individual to whom the information was provided;
5. Name of the agency for which the requestor works;
6. Contact information for the requestor; and
7. The specific reason for the request.

IX. Reporting to Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Pursuant to M.G.L. ch 71, § 71R and 603 CMR 51.07, if Pilgrim Area Collaborative dismisses, declines to renew the employment of, obtains the resignation of, or declines to hire a licensed educator or an applicant for a Massachusetts educator license because of information discovered through a state or national criminal record check, Pilgrim Area Collaborative shall report such decision or action to the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education in writing within 30 days of the employer action or educator resignation.

The report shall be in a form requested by the Department and shall include the reason for the action or resignation as well as a copy of the criminal record check results. Pilgrim Area Collaborative shall notify the employee or applicant that it has made a report pursuant to 603 CMR 51.07(1) to the Commissioner.

Pursuant to M.G.L. ch 71, § 71R and 603 CMR 51.07, if Pilgrim Area Collaborative discovers information from a state or national criminal record check about a licensed educator or an applicant for a Massachusetts educator license that implicates grounds for license action pursuant to 603 CMR 7.15(8)(a), Pilgrim Area Collaborative shall report to the Commissioner in writing within 30 days of the discovery, regardless of whether Pilgrim Area Collaborative retains or hires the educator as an employee. The report must include

a copy of the criminal record check results. The school employer shall notify the employee or applicant that it has made a report pursuant to 603 CMR 51.07(2) to the Commissioner and shall also send a copy of the criminal record check results to the employee or applicant.

POLICY APPROVED: 06/19/2014

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative to permit an employee to take up to 15 days of domestic violence leave from work in any 12 month period. In order to be eligible for said leave:

- (i.) the employee, or a family member of the employee must be a victim of abusive behavior;
- (ii.) the employee must be using the leave from work to seek or obtain medical attention, counseling, victim services or legal assistance; secure housing; obtain a protective order from court; appear before a grand jury; meet with a district attorney or other law enforcement official; or attend child custody proceedings or address other issues directly related to the abusive behavior against the employee or family member of the employee; and
- (iii.) the employee must not be the perpetrator of the abusive behavior against such employee's family member.

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions shall apply:

“Abuse”, (i) attempting to cause or causing physical harm; (ii) placing another in fear of imminent serious physical harm; (iii) causing another to engage involuntarily in sexual relations by force, threat or duress or engaging or threatening to engage in sexual activity with a dependent child; (iv) engaging in mental abuse, which includes threats, intimidation or acts designed to induce terror; (v) depriving another of medical care, housing, food or other necessities of life; or (vi) restraining the liberty of another.

“Abusive behavior”, (i) any behavior constituting domestic violence, (ii) stalking in violation of section 43 of chapter 265, (iii) sexual assault, which shall include a violation of sections 13B, 13B½, 13B¾, 13F, 13H, 22, 22A, 22B, 22C, 23, 23A, 23B, 24, 24B, 26D, 50 or 51 of chapter 265 or sections 3 or 35A of chapter 272 and (iv) kidnapping in violation of the third paragraph of section 26 of chapter 265.

“Domestic violence”, abuse against an employee or the employee's family member by: (i) a current or former spouse of the employee or the employee's family member; (ii) a person with whom the employee or the employee's family member shares a child in common; (iii) a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the employee or the employee's family member; (iv) a person who is related by blood or marriage to the employee; or (v) a person with whom the employee or employee's family member has or had a dating or engagement relationship.

“Employees”, individuals who perform services for and under the control and direction of an employer for wages or other remuneration.

“Family member”, (i) persons who are married to one another; (ii) persons in a substantive dating or engagement relationship and who reside together; (iii) persons having a child in common regardless of whether they have ever married or resided together; (iv) a parent, step-parent, child, step-child, sibling, grandparent or grandchild; or (v) persons in a guardianship relationship.

An employee shall exhaust all available paid leave prior to requesting or taking domestic violence leave. After the employee's available paid leave is exhausted, any domestic violence leave granted will be unpaid leave.

Except in cases of imminent danger to the health or safety of an employee, advance notice of domestic violence leave shall be required. If such imminent danger exists, the employee shall notify the Executive Director within 3 workdays that the leave was taken. The notification may be communicated to the

Executive Director by the employee, a family member of the employee or the employee's counselor, social worker, health care worker, member of the clergy, shelter worker, legal advocate or other professional who has assisted the employee in addressing the effects of the abusive behavior. If an unscheduled absence occurs, the Executive Director shall not take any negative action against the employee if the employee, within 30 days from the unauthorized absence or within 30 days from the employee's last unauthorized absence in the instance of consecutive days of unauthorized absences, provides any of the documentation found in (1) to (7) below. The Executive Director may require documentation that the employee or employee's family member has been a victim of abusive behavior and that the leave is consistent with clauses (i) to (iii) as above referenced; provided, however, that the Executive Director shall not require an employee to show evidence of an arrest, conviction or other law enforcement documentation for such abusive behavior. The documentation shall be provided to the Executive Director within a reasonable period after it has been requested.

An employee shall satisfy this documentation requirement by providing any one of the following documents to the Executive Director:

- 1) a protective order, order of equitable relief or other documentation issued by a court of competent jurisdiction as a result of abusive behavior against the employee or employee's family member;
- 2) a document under the letterhead of the court, provider or public agency which the employee attended for the purposes of acquiring assistance as it relates to the employee or family member;
- 3) A police report or statement of a victim or witness provided to police documenting the abusive behavior;
- 4) documentation that the perpetrator of the abusive behavior has admitted to sufficient facts to support a finding of guilt; or has been convicted of , or has been adjudicated a juvenile delinquent by reason of any offense constituting abusive behavior;
- 5) medical documentation of treatment as a result of the abusive behavior;
- 6) a sworn statement, signed under the penalties of perjury, provided by a counselor, social worker, health care worker, member of the clergy, shelter worker, legal advocate or other professional who has assisted the employee in addressing the effects of the abusive behavior;
- 7) a sworn statement, signed under the penalties of perjury, from the employee attesting that the employee has been a victim of, or is a family member of a victim of, abusive behavior.

All information related to the employee's leave shall be kept confidential and shall not be disclosed, except to the extent that disclosure is:

- i. requested or consented to, in writing, by the employee;
- ii. ordered to be released by a court of competent jurisdiction;
- iii. otherwise required by applicable federal or state law;
- iv. required in the course of an investigation authorized by law enforcement, including, but not limited to, an investigation by the Attorney General; or
- v. necessary to protect the safety of the employee or others employed at the Pilgrim Area Collaborative.

The Executive Director shall ensure that notice is provided to all employees in the next school year and beyond by appropriately amending the Pilgrim Area Collaborative's employee handbooks, by whatever title they may be known, or by direct notice about the Domestic Violence Law and securing the employees signature acknowledging receipt of the handbook/notice. The Superintendent shall be responsible for notifying all current employees, unless they have been notified through the handbook, of this policy in a manner that he/she deems appropriate.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative shall not coerce, interfere with, restrain or deny the exercise of, or any attempt to exercise, any rights provided herein or to make leave requested or taken contingent upon whether

or not the victim maintains contact with the alleged abuser. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative shall not discharge, or in any other manner discriminate against, an employee for exercising the employee's rights under the law. The taking of domestic violence leave shall not result in the loss of any employment benefit accrued prior to the date of such leave. Upon the employee's return from such leave, he/she shall be entitled to restoration of the employee's original job or to an equivalent position. Definitions of 'abuse', 'abusive behavior', 'domestic violence', 'employees' and 'family members' may be found in the laws referenced below.

Legal Reference: M.G.L. 149:52E; Section 10 Chapter 260 of the Acts of 2014

POLICY APPROVED: 05/07/2015

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative is an equal opportunity employer which subscribes to the fullest extent to the principle of the dignity of all people and of their labors and will take action to ensure that any individual within the collaborative who is responsible for hiring and/or personnel supervision understands that applicants are employed, assigned, and promoted without regard to their race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation (which shall not include persons whose sexual orientation involves minor children as the sex object), age, marital status, disability, genetic information or ancestry, or past, present or future membership in the uniformed military service of the United States, including the National Guard.

The board of directors recognizes the importance of providing advancement opportunity to current employees and it is our intention, whenever practicable, to promote this concept.

LEGAL REFS: Title VI and Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; M.G.L. c. 151B; Age Discrimination in Employment Act.

STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The PAC Board of Directors recognizes that employees have the same fundamental civic responsibilities and privileges as other citizens. Among these are campaigning for an elective public office and holding an elective or appointive office.

In connection with campaigning, an employee will not: use PAC facilities, equipment or supplies and his/her title; discuss his/her campaign with school personnel or students during the working day; use any time during the working day for campaigning purposes. No employee shall use his/her official authority, directly or indirectly, to coerce, attempt to coerce, command, advise or prevent any person or body to pay, lend or contribute anything of value to any party, candidate or political committee. No employee shall use his/her official authority to solicit or accept funds or anything of value for any party, political committee, agency, person or organization for political purposes. Employees are prohibited from wearing a political campaign button while working for the PAC. Under no circumstances, will students be pressured into campaigning for any staff member.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:44

WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION

Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) requires employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of PAC, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations. This policy is not intended to limit or discourage employees in any way from reporting concerns directly to federal or state agencies, courts or law enforcement in compliance with any state or federal laws or regulations which protect whistleblowing. It is the intent of the PAC to comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations, as well as applicable policies and procedures.

“**Whistleblowing**” – (1) reporting a good faith belief or suspicion that the PAC, any business associate of the PAC, or any PAC officer or employee, has violated any applicable federal or state law or regulation; (2) providing truthful information to any state or federal agency, law enforcement agency, public body, legislative body, or court; (3) reporting a good faith belief of violation of ethics guideline or PAC policy; (4) reporting any condition which may jeopardize the health or safety of PAC employees or students, the public health or safety, or may damage the environment; or (5) objecting to, and refusing to participate in, any illegal activity or activity which the employee reasonably believes poses a risk to public health, safety, or the environment.

Reporting Responsibility

This policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns internally so PAC can address and correct inappropriate conduct and actions. It is the responsibility of all board members, operating committee members, employees and volunteers to report concerns about violations of PAC’s code of ethics or suspected violations of law or regulations that govern PAC’s operations.

No Retaliation

It is contrary to the values of PAC for anyone to retaliate against any board member, officer, employee, or volunteer who in good faith reports an ethics violation, or a suspected violation of law, such as a complaint of discrimination, or suspected fraud, or suspected violation of any regulation governing the operations of PAC. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

Reporting Procedure

PAC has an open door policy and suggests that employees share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with their supervisor. If an individual is not comfortable speaking with their supervisor or they are not satisfied with their supervisor’s response, they are encouraged to speak with the Executive Director. Program Coordinator/Directors and managers are required to report complaints or concerns about suspected ethical and legal violations to the Executive Director who has the responsibility to investigate all reported complaints.

While written reports are encouraged, an employee may whistleblow by any medium including orally, by email, by telephone, or in writing. Employees may whistleblow anonymously, but are not required to do so and will be protected from retaliation for whistleblowing.

Should the employee whistleblow anonymously, it is important the employee provide corroborating information. The PAC will make every effort to investigate anonymous complaints, but without corroborating evidence such complaints are often difficult to substantiate. Employees should attempt to provide as much factual information as possible in their whistleblowing report. However, whistleblowers should refrain from conducting their own investigations and instead should report reasonable suspicions in accordance with this policy.

Acting in Good Faith

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

Confidentiality

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation.

Handling of Reported Violations

PAC's Executive Director, or designee, will notify the person who submitted a complaint and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation within five (5) business days. All reports will be promptly investigated and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

To the extent possible, to ensure a full and fair investigation, the reports will remain confidential. The PAC may refer the report to an outside entity for investigation.

To the extent that whistleblowing involves one or more reporting officials, that official will not participate in the investigation or the selection of outside investigators.

If the reporting official determines that the nature of the whistleblowing report requires a report to a government agency or law enforcement, the reporting official will make the appropriate referral.

NEW STAFF ORIENTATION AND ANNUAL IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Pilgrim Area Collaborative provides on-going, in-service training and professional development opportunities for its staff. Orientation programs are held each year. In-Service training includes instruction in the policies and procedures of the program as covered in the Policy Manual. The training is consistent with all state and federal policies and procedures and supports safety and learning, addressing the unique needs of the PAC's student populations.

Program Directors work with the Executive Director in implementing training as outlined in the Annual Training Plan. In-Service training includes and is not limited to:

- Child Abuse Reporting
- CPR & First Aid training
- Medication Administration and Emergency First Aid Procedures
- Emergency/Evacuation Procedures and Runaway Student
- Transportation Safety
- Student Records
- Behavior Management, Suspension and Emergency Termination
- Physical Restraint
- Curriculum Alignment
- Inclusion of Students in MCAS Testing and/or Alternative Assessment
- Civil Rights

New Staff

Program Directors are responsible for reviewing Staff Orientation subject matter with staff hired after orientation programs and assuring that these staff have the opportunity to participate in required training in a timely manner.

Interns and Volunteers

Program Directors are responsible for reviewing staff orientation subject matter with interns and volunteers. Interns and volunteers work under the direct supervision of staff who have been trained in all required areas. No intern or volunteer should be alone with students or have the sole responsibility of supervising students.

Other Professional Development Opportunities

In addition to required training, PAC provides many opportunities for Professional Development, both on-site and by supporting employees in attending outside courses or workshops.

MASSACHUSETTS MANDATORY CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative affirms its responsibility to provide for the safety and well-being of students. This responsibility extends to complying with the Massachusetts Mandatory Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Statute, Chapter 119, Section 51A, which mandates that certain persons in their professional capacity report child abuse and neglect when there is reasonable cause or suspicion to believe that a child under the age of eighteen (18) has been abused or neglected. It is expected then, that when any staff member in his/her professional capacity, has reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years is suffering from the effects of any form of child abuse and neglect, that the staff member will report his/her concerns to the Program Coordinator, appointed yearly and identified in the student and staff handbooks, so that the Pilgrim Area Collaborative's reporting procedure can be implemented.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT POLICY

Student Behavior Support and the Prevention of the Use of Physical Restraint

The Board of Education adopted new regulations on the use of physical restraint in public education programs. The regulations (603 CMR 46.00) are meant to promote safety for all students. Physical restraint shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be used only when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances. Mechanical restraints, medication restraints and seclusion are prohibited in all public education programs. The amended regulations may be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr46.html?section=all> Security. Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) has developed and implemented written restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures consistent with new regulations under 603 CMR 46.00 regarding appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention. PAC's restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures are annually reviewed and provided to program staff and made available to parents of enrolled students.

All program staff who interact directly with students are provided with training regarding the program's restraint prevention and behavior support policy and requirements when restraint is used. Such training occurs within the first month of each school year and, for employees hired after the school year begins, within a month of their employment.

At the beginning of each school year, PAC identifies program staff who are authorized to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. Such staff shall have in-depth training on the use of physical restraint.

The program administers physical restraint on students only in emergency situations of last resort when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm and with extreme caution in order to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint. Only staff who have received the requisite training may administer physical restraint on students, except that all staff may use reasonable force to protect themselves or others from assault or imminent, serious physical harm.

In-Depth Staff Training in the Use of Physical Restraint

At the beginning of each school year, the Executive Director will identify program staff who are authorized to serve as a Collaborative-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. Such staff shall participate in in-depth training in the use of physical restraint. Such in-depth training will be competency-based and be at least seven (7) hours in length with at least one refresher training occurring annually thereafter.

In-depth training in the proper administration of physical restraint shall include, but not be limited to:

- A. Appropriate procedures for preventing the use of physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building and the use of alternatives to restraint;
- B. A description and identification of specific dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may lead to the use of physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted;
- C. The simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;

D. Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints;

E. Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint; and, Instruction regarding the impact of physical restraint on the student and family, recognizing the act of restraint has impact, including but not limited to psychological, physiological, and social-emotional effects

Student Behavior Support

PAC serves students who may, at times, display extremely unsafe behaviors. PAC staff use de-escalation techniques and behavior support strategies to help students remain safe without the use of physical intervention. However, due to the nature of student behavior that can cause an imminent risk of harm to self or to others, it may sometimes be necessary to intervene physically in order to keep students and staff safe. In accordance with state law, it is the goal of PAC to prevent the use of physical restraint (603 CMR 46.00 et seq.)

Staff Training on Behavior Support and Prevention of Use of Restraint

There are a variety of less intrusive intervention alternatives to physical restraint that may be appropriate under most circumstances. These alternative methods should be used prior to physical restraint. Physical restraints should only be used in emergency situations where these less intrusive alternatives have failed or have been deemed inappropriate under the circumstances.

Examples of less intrusive alternatives to physical restraint include, but are not limited to, the following:

Verbal Directives. A verbal directive is communicating what is expected behavior by clearly stating instructions and expectations.

Brief Physical Contact. Physical restraint does not include brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, and providing comfort. Such brief physical contact is an alternative to physical restraint.

Removals. Removals are used only when it is necessary to move a child a few feet in order to hold them to safer position. Removal includes removal of a student from a classroom for in situations where behavior can escalate other students, creating a less safe situation. Removals are only for a short distance, i.e. out of the classroom to the hallway.

Physical Escort. Physical escort is a temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location.

Time-Out. Time-out is a behavioral support strategy in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from program staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Program staff shall always be with the student or immediately available to the student. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out will cease as soon as the student has calmed. The Program Director must approve a time-out of more than thirty (30) minutes based on an individual student's continuing agitation.

The Collaborative provides restraint training to all program staff within the first month of school or within the first month of hire.

Training shall include information on the following:

- A. The role of the student, family, and staff in preventing restraint;
- B. The Collaborative's restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures, including use of time-out as a behavior support strategy distinct from seclusion;
- C. Interventions that may preclude the need for restraint, including de-escalation of problematic behaviors and other alternatives to restraint in emergency circumstances;
- D. When behavior presents an emergency that requires physical restraint, the types of permitted physical restraints and related safety considerations, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when any restraint is used, in particular a restraint of extended duration;
- E. Administering physical restraint in accordance with medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans applicable to an individual student; and
- F. Identification of program staff who have received in-depth training pursuant to 603 CMR 46.03(3) in the use of physical restraint.

Time Out Procedures

If a student demonstrates behavior that is inappropriate and/or disruptive to the learning process, the following interventions will be utilized. Staff will attempt to redirect the student by utilizing:

- Verbal and non-verbal cues
- A time-out option with a prescribed number of minutes in a designated time out area where the student will not have the opportunity to earn any reinforcement.

To return from a time-out the student must:

- Demonstrate de-escalation in disruptive/acting out behavior
- Be able to follow staff direction
- When a time-out is over, the student must immediately be positively redirected back into an acceptable activity. This may be the same activity or something else.

When used appropriately, time-outs can be a highly effective, evidence-based intervention for managing challenging behavior. The purpose is to temporarily separate a child from the learning activity, giving him/her time to calm down, and, if developmentally appropriate, time to reflect on his/her behavior. Time-outs may be implemented either by student choice (e.g. as a coping strategy) or by direction from staff for the purpose of calming. There are several types of time-out, and each classroom establishes their own guidelines. If possible, time-outs are utilized in order of least to most restrictive, in accordance with DESE guidelines:

- Inclusionary Time-Out involves temporarily removing a student from the learning activity but they remain in the classroom. The student may be able to either observe the activity, but not actively participate in it, or may be directed to move to another part of the classroom where the student does not see others.
- Exclusionary Time-Outs take place in an area immediately outside of the classroom.

For students in need of minimal stimulation and a safe area, an exclusionary time-out takes place in the Time-Out area. This area is free from distractions and objects to keep the student safe. If the Time Out area has a door, the door has a window so the staff can remain visible to the student at all times. There are no locks on any Time-Out doors. Staff members fill out the Time-Out/Safe Space Log documenting the reason for Time-Out and the length of the time-out. A staff member will accompany students in the Time-Out/Safe Space. The length of time-outs is typically one minute for each year of age. De-escalation strategies will be implemented continuously by program staff while a student is in time-out to help them calm.

- If an exclusionary time-out lasts longer than 30 minutes, staff will obtain permission from an administrator to continue the time-out.

When a time-out of any type is over, the student must immediately be positively redirected back into an acceptable activity. This may be the same activity or something else. If possible, the antecedents of the behavior that caused the time-out will be removed.

Behavioral Programming

Behavior support is an important aspect of PAC's programs with the goal of maximizing the growth and development of each student. As such, it is a highly individualized endeavor. The variety and complexity of students' behavioral and response issues require a range of techniques. The long-term goal is to increase the internalization of control by the student. An important component of developing strategies for behavior intervention is an understanding of the function the behavior serves. Arrangement of the physical environment and classroom structure is an important management strategy. The placement of desks, availability of materials, length of work times, difficulty of tasks, establishment of predictable routines, and preparation of the child for changes in routine are all essential elements to managing student behavior successfully. The development and presentation of interesting and stimulating curriculum motivates students and is often the most successful management strategy.

Positive Reinforcement

PAC emphasizes praise and positive feedback for all students as well as formal reinforcement schedules as appropriate. Staff takes the student's level of functioning into consideration when developing reinforcement schedules and using a variety of behavioral techniques, target and define specific behavior(s). The goal of most programs is to continue the process until the student can display the identified behavior without external reinforcement.

Mild Restrictive Behavior Support Procedures

When a student disrupts the learning of others, behavior support techniques may be utilized to assist the student in regaining control. Yelling, hitting, kicking, biting of self or others, or situations where a student's safety is in jeopardy are examples of instances when immediate intervention must occur. Recognizing cues and providing appropriate interventions based on documented behavioral patterns to prevent further escalation are critical elements in successful behavioral intervention. When a student's escalated behavior poses a potential risk to themselves or others in the environment, staff members will periodically scan the immediate environment to ensure that materials which could be potentially harmful are kept out of reach (e.g. scissors, staplers, heavy projectiles, etc.).

Staff will restrict the student's access to materials which could pose a safety risk. Additionally, staff make every effort to bring students on all scheduled field trips and community outings. However, when a student's safety is jeopardized by escalated behaviors, staff may restrict their access to part or all of a field trip or community outing. This determination is made by the student's teacher in conjunction with the program behaviorist and clinician.

Meals are never withheld as a form of punishment or behavioral intervention. If a student is in crisis and requires an emergency physical restraint procedure which occurs during a scheduled mealtime, staff will offer the student access to the meal when the child has calmed following the restraint and no longer poses an imminent risk to themselves or others.

Physical Restraint Policy

PAC's policy of physical restraint is, in fact, a policy to prevent the use of physical restraint. Restraint prevention and behavior support policy and procedures are annually reviewed and provided to program staff and made available to parents of enrolled students.

Use of Physical Interventions

Any PAC staff member who provides direct services to students must have completed CPI: Nonviolent Crisis Prevention and Intervention or PMT: Physical and Psychological Management Training. In addition, behavioral consultation is available to all staff on an ongoing basis to provide suggestions, resources, and intervention if necessary, during potential crises. The techniques and procedures outlined in CPI and PMT guide all crisis intervention decisions.

PAC staff physically intervene during a crisis only if, in their judgment, an individual's behavior is creating a situation that is more dangerous than the danger of using physical intervention.

Physical restraint shall mean direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does **not** include brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

Physical escort shall mean a temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location.

In the event that physical restraint and/or physical escort is required to protect the safety of the school community members, PAC has enacted the following procedures to ensure the proper use of restraint and to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of restraint.

Physical restraint is an **EMERGENCY measure of LAST RESORT** and may only be used in the following circumstances:

- When a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others, **AND**
- The student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful, **AND**
- Less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances

Physical restraint is **prohibited** in the following circumstances:

- As a means of discipline or punishment;
- When the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;
- As a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a public education program rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm. However, if the property destruction or the refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive could escalate into, or could itself lead to serious, imminent harm to the student or to others, physical restraint may be appropriate; or
- As a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.

Physical restraint in a public education program shall be limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

- Only public education program personnel who have received training pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(2) or 603 CMR 46.04(3) shall administer physical restraint on students. Whenever possible, the administration of a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the

restraint. The training requirements contained in 603 CMR 46.00 shall not preclude a teacher, employee or agent of a public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

- A person administering a physical restraint shall use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm.
- A person administering physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation subject to the safety requirements set forth in 603 CMR 46.05(5). Floor restraints, including prone restraints otherwise permitted under 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), shall be prohibited unless the staff members administering the restraint have received in-depth training according to the requirements of 603 CMR 46.043(3) and, in the judgment of the trained staff members, such method is required to provide safety for the student or others present.
- **All physical restraint must be terminated as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others, or the student indicates that he or she cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress, such as having difficulty breathing, or sustained or prolonged crying or coughing.**
- No restraint shall be administered in such a way that the student is prevented from breathing or speaking. During the administration of a restraint, a staff member shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin temperature and color, and respiration.
- Restraint shall be administered in such a way to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during a physical restraint, the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress including, but not limited to, difficulty breathing, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance.
- If a student is restrained for a period longer than 30 minutes, program staff shall obtain the approval of the Program Director. The approval shall be based upon the student's continued agitation during the restraint justifying the need for continued restraint.
- Program staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavioral intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student.
- After the release of a student from a restraint, the public education program shall review the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint, review the incident with the staff person(s) who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed, and consider whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.
- The staff member who administered such a restraint shall verbally inform the Program Director of the restraint as soon as possible and by written report no later than the next school working day.
- The Program Director shall verbally inform the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) of such restraint within twenty-four hours, and by written report postmarked no later than three school working days following the use of such restraint with opportunity for the parent or student to respond orally or in writing to the use of the restraint.
- The Program Director will, on a weekly and monthly basis, engage in the review of data and the subsequent action planning focused on the avoidance of the use of restraints with regard to student(s) who have had multiple documented incidents.
- The Program Director will maintain data regarding the use of physical restraint and will report that data to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as directed.

The following is a list of guidelines that, while not exhaustive of all considerations, are a part of each decision to physically intervene:

1. The individual's behavior poses an immediate risk to themselves or others.
2. The individual has not positively responded to other de-escalation techniques including, but not limited to:
 - empathic listening and validation of feelings

- neutral redirection to other tasks the student can be successful with
- planned ignoring
- switching staff members involved in the crisis
- providing alternate choices with positive outcomes
- removing triggers in the environment for the individual in crisis
- setting clear, reasonable limits
- respecting the individual's dignity in crisis by moving the rest of the group or offering a separate location
- offering and employing sensory strategies

Once the decision to intervene physically has been made, PAC staff will adhere to the following guidelines:

- All physical interventions are designed to protect, not punish, individuals in crisis.
- A minimum amount of force will be employed to safely manage the situation.
- Medication restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint unless permitted pursuant to 603 CMR 46.03(1) (b), seclusion, and the use of physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00 are prohibited within the Pilgrim Area Collaborative.
- Unless unavoidable, staff will not physically intervene without the support of at least one additional staff member.
- All physical intervention techniques employed are approved CPI & PMT Guidelines
- All physical interventions that are initiated due to significant safety concerns will be documented through Incident and/or Restraint Reports.
- Any student, or staff member, involved in a physical intervention is provided with the option for medical evaluation and/or treatment. Parents or guardians are notified in any case of any student restraint.

Training includes information on PAC's restraint policy (2-minute fixed time release), interventions that may preclude the need for restraint, including de-escalation of problematic behaviors, and the types of restraints and related safety considerations.

- Extended restraint: A physical restraint more than thirty (30) minutes in duration which requires express permission from the Executive Director or his/her designee in order to continue. Extended restraints increase the risk of injury and require additional written documentation.
- Physical escort: Touching or holding a student without the use of force for the purpose of directing the student.
- Physical restraint: The use of bodily force to limit a student's freedom of movement.
- Restraint - Other: Limiting the physical freedom of an individual student by mechanical means or seclusion in a limited space or location, or temporarily controlling the behavior of a student by chemical means. The use of chemical, prone, seclusion, or mechanical restraints are prohibited. The definitions are as follows:
- Mechanical Restraint: The use of a physical device to restrict the movement of a student or the movement or normal function of a portion of his or her body. A protective or stabilizing device ordered by a physician will not be considered mechanical restraint.
- Seclusion Restraint: Physically confining a student alone in a room or limited space without access to school staff. The use of "time out" procedures during which a staff member remains accessible to the student will not be considered "seclusion restraint." Time-out is a behavioral support strategy developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1) in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.

- **Chemical restraint:** The administration of medication for the purpose of restraint. This is not in use for PAC students but in case entering students have experienced this type of procedure, staff need to be aware of it.

Utilizing physical restraint is always conducted in accordance with known medical or psychological limitations. PAC programs do not employ any forms of mechanical, seclusion, or chemical restraint. Some students, under specific circumstances that are approved by a physician and parents or guardians in writing, are administered PRN medications on a voluntary basis to aid in behavior regulation. No student is ever forcibly given medication as a means of controlling behavior.

Staff administering physical restraint will discontinue such restraint as soon as possible. PAC implements a 2-minute fixed time release procedure for restraints whenever possible, unless the release would compromise the student's safety. Staff will obtain permission from an administrator to continue the restraint beyond 2 minutes. If, due to unusual circumstances, a restraint continues for more than thirty (30) minutes, staff will inform the Executive Director or his/her designee prior to the 30 minute limit to obtain express permission to continue the restraint for safety reasons.

Restraint Notification and Documentation Procedure

If a PAC student is restrained as part of a behavioral intervention the Executive Director or his/her designee must be notified at the time of the restraint and the parent will be verbally notified within 24 hours.

Any restraint exceeding PAC's 2 minute fixed time release procedure requires administrative approval to continue. If a restraint is implemented for 2 minutes, and approval to continue the restraint cannot be obtained, staff must notify an administrator immediately following the conclusion of the restraint and provide information regarding the need to continue the restraint beyond 2 minutes and the circumstances that prevented obtaining prior approval. Additionally, any restraint exceeding 30 minutes requires additional approval from the Executive Director or his/her designee to continue.

The staff member(s) who administered the restraint will complete a written report using PAC's Physical Restraint Report template and submit to the Executive Director or his/her designee no later than the next school day. A completed Restraint Report must be mailed to the parents or guardians of any student who is restrained within 3 school working days of the incident. In addition, the LEA/Sending District must be sent a copy of any Restraint Report involving students they have placed at a PAC program. Restraint Report mailings will be completed by the Program Director. If written communication is customarily provided to a parent or guardian in a language other than English, the written restraint report will be provided to the parent or guardian in that language.

The written report will include:

- The names and job titles of the staff who administered the restraint, and observers, if any; the date of the restraint; the time the restraint began and ended; and the name of the administrator who was verbally informed following the restraint.
- A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff in the same room or vicinity were engaged immediately preceding the use of physical restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to de-escalate the situation; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint.
- A description of the administration of the restraint including the holds used and reasons such holds were necessary; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how the restraint ended; and documentation of injury to the student and/or staff, if any, during the restraint and any medical care provided.

- For extended restraints, the written report will describe the alternatives to extended restraint that were attempted, the outcome of those efforts and the justification for administering the extended restraint.
- Information regarding any further action(s) the program has taken or may take, including any disciplinary sanctions that may be imposed on the student.
- Information regarding opportunities for the student's parents or guardians to discuss with school officials the administration of the restraint, any disciplinary sanctions that may be imposed on the student and/or any other related matter.

Program staff will also upload restraint information into the program's master restraint log.

- Following any restraint, the parent or student involved must be offered the opportunity to provide written or oral feedback. Any comment or communication regarding the restraint made by the student must be documented and attached to the Restraint Report.
- When a restraint has resulted in an injury to a student or program staff member, the program will provide a copy of the written report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education within three (3) school days of the administration of the restraint. The program will also provide the Department with a copy of the record of physical restraints maintained by the program administrator for the thirty-day period prior to the date of the reported restraint. The Department will determine if additional action on the part of the school is warranted and, if so, will notify the school of any required actions within thirty calendar days of receipt of the required written report(s).
- PAC's restraint procedures require the Collaborative to maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint, which will be made available for review by the Department of Elementary and Secondary upon request.

The Collaborative's Program Directors, Restraint Trainers, Nurses, Counselors and Program Behaviorist comprise the members of Collaborative's Crisis Team. The Crisis Team can call for a review of a specific incident, or a specific student, at their discretion. In addition to any requested review sessions, the Crisis Team will meet weekly to conduct an individual student review for any student who has been physically restrained more than once in a week. The review must address all components pursuant to 603 CMR 46.06(5), including current treatment plans and behavioral intervention strategies being utilized, and outcomes of the meeting shared with the LEA/Sending District Liaison was not in attendance. The Crisis Team will also conduct a monthly review pursuant to 603 CMR 46.06(6) to examine all restraint data within the month and address any quality assurance issues. The Crisis Team will document all reviews on individual cases.

Complaints

No parent or guardian will be denied the right to bring their complaints regarding restraint, behavioral interventions, or other concerns to the PAC Board of Directors. Parents/guardians will be referred through the proper administrative channels for resolution before investigation or action by the Board of Directors. PAC believes that complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the PAC Board. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline, learning materials, or related matters as follows: Teacher/Therapist, Program Director, Executive Director, and Chairperson of the PAC Board of Directors.

Complaints involving restraints or behavioral interventions must be submitted in writing and include all pertinent specific information, including the desired action or outcome.

Seclusion

Seclusion is defined as physically confining a student alone in a room or limited space without access to school staff. The use of seclusion is prohibited in public education programs and is **PROHIBITED** at all PAC Programs.

Hold Procedures

All staff who directly serve students are provided with training in CPI/PMT Training. Members of PAC staff attain instructor certification and are available for technical assistance, re-training/re-certification, refresher courses, and training of new hires.

The following protocol is used in considering the use of physical restraint:

- When a child's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others, staff will place the child in a hold. Holds only occur when non-physical interventions have not been effective and when holds are necessary to ensure the safety of children and staff.
- Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of punishment or solely as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm.
- When children are being held, an administrator must be notified within 15 minutes. In the event a hold lasts longer than 2 minutes, the administrator will be updated on the status of the student every 15 minutes thereafter.
- Whenever possible, a hold shall be witnessed by an adult who is not participating in the hold.
- When children in a hold do not settle quickly, staff is strongly encouraged to consider switching off with each other after a short period, e.g. 10 minutes, to maintain the safety of the child and to avoid staff injury. Switching staff during holds also allows the child to interact with staff not originally involved in the incident that led to the hold and, as a result, may be better able to help the child settle.

During the use of a hold, a staff member shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin color, respiration, and consciousness:

- If the child begins to vomit, has a bloody nose, or loses consciousness, staff must immediately end the hold and tend to the child.
- If a student complains of pain, injury, or considerable distress, staff members are to acknowledge that the student's complaint has been heard and are to readjust their hold on the student.
- The student is routinely checked for any injury that may have occurred during the hold. If available, the student is assessed by the school nurse, and, in the event the school nurse is not available, the staff will refer to their own training in CPR & First Aid in assessing the student's health status.
- If a child attempts to bang his or her head during a hold in such a way as to injure him/herself, staff will hold the child's head as lightly as possible (as taught in training) to prevent the child from getting hurt. Staff let go of the child's head as soon as he/she has stopped trying to bang it on the ground.
- Staff DO NOT put a pillow or any material that could hinder the child's breathing under his or her head.
- Once a child has settled and is being safe with his/her body, staff will begin to end the hold as taught in the training. Once a child is no longer in the hold and is sitting quietly, staff will give the child an opportunity to use the bathroom, wash their face, get a drink, etc.
- Staff will inform the parent/guardian verbally or in writing by the end of the day that their child was involved in a hold and will notify the school nurse following the restraint.

All staff that are involved in a hold MUST complete the following forms and notifications immediately after the incident:

- PAC Behavioral Incident Report (all holds)
- Record the Incident Report in the Incident Report Log
- Physical Restraint Report for all holds
- DESE notification for any injury to student or staff resulting from a hold

The staff that initiated the hold writes the incident report and all other staff that assisted review the report, add any necessary information and sign it. Staff will clearly document any follow-up that occurred:

- The child's condition following the hold
- Was the child injured
- Did the child see the nurse
- Who was notified
- All incident reports are given to and reviewed by the Executive Director within 24 hours of the incident.

Escort Procedures:

Staff must utilize de-escalation techniques and behavior support strategies to help students remain safe without the use of physical intervention. Staff should use their judgment to choose the safest option possible when intervening in a crisis situation. If it is possible to do safely, staff should "wait out" a student having difficulty. However, certain behaviors may require staff to intervene physically in order to keep students and staff safe. In those cases, these guidelines apply:

- Staff should not use physical escorts unless a student is engaging in unsafe behavior;
- Escorts are to be done consistent with training;
- Once the student has reached the destination, staff should let go of their arm;
- If a student is physically struggling or refuses to move, staff should not attempt to escort them and should wait until it is safe to do so;
- If the student becomes unsafe, the staff may then need to place the student in a therapeutic hold or remove them a few feet if it is not safe to hold them where they are;
- Staff should never carry students and should never attempt to physically escort a student who is struggling;
- Staff should never physically move a student up or down any stairs/steps;
- Staff may only place students in holds when they are at imminent risk of hurting themselves or others, and only as a last resort.

Staff always remain with the student causing the disruption. The expectation for all students in the Safe Space is to regroup and then work on class assignments or activities with the support of the staff assigned to the student. If students are not settled enough to complete the activity or task they were engaged in prior to the disruptive behavior, the expectation for the student is to work with staff to identify strategies to become settled so that he or she can become re-engaged in the task or activity. Trips to the Safe Space are documented by staff on a running record and are summarized in Quarterly Progress Reports and IEP meetings. Data are analyzed by the staff on an ongoing basis as it provides opportunities for program improvements and refinement of work with students.

Students in the Safe Space will continue to be educated and will receive assistance as they require to ensure that they are continuing to receive the service delivery indicated in their IEP. To this end, teachers, clinicians, and support staff will work individually with the student to provide access to and support with academic activities they are missing during the class periods.

Food is never withheld from students. If the student has not regrouped sufficiently to participate in instructional activities, regularly scheduled schoolwork, related services, or clinical services, food is delivered to the student in the Safe Space.

The following is a list of guidelines that are a part of each decision to separate a student physically:

1. The individual's behavior poses a notable disruption to the activity in progress or to others, or the student has an approved Behavior Intervention Plan with specific protocols and procedures regarding separation.
2. The individual has not positively responded to other distraction or de-escalation strategies including, but not limited to:
 - empathic listening and validation of feelings
 - plan to ignore
 - switching staff members involved in the activity
 - providing alternative activity or settings with positive outcomes
 - removing triggers in the activity for the individual being disruptive
 - setting clear, reasonable limits involving the activity
 - protecting student's dignity by providing the disruptive individual separate space or reverse evacuating
 - offering and employing sensory strategies related to the activity or task

Student Separation Procedures

All PAC staff working directly with students have the authority and training to implement student separation from their group or activity. However, any intervention that results in a student being involuntarily separated from their group or activity for more than thirty minutes must be approved by the Program Director and must be documented in an Incident Report.

Students who are involuntarily separated from their group or activity will always be observed and must have at least one staff member accessible to them at all times.

Documentation must be completed regarding students who are involuntarily separated from their group or activity in an alternate space where their ability to leave the space is restricted that includes, at a minimum, length of time, reasons for the intervention, who approved the procedure, and who monitored the student during the time out separation. PAC maintains a Safe Space log that contains information covering these minimum requirements; however, additional documentation may be required.

Safe Spaces are never locked, nor do they have the capacity to lock. Any room or space used for separation must be physically safe and appropriate to the student population. PAC students are always allowed to separate themselves voluntarily from their group or activity provided their separation does not result in safety concerns. In fact, students are encouraged to request a break when appropriate to assist in problem solving or seeking support. These breaks are not viewed as punitive, take place in an identified area of the classroom and are supervised directly by a licensed professional or a paraprofessional under the direction of a licensed professional.

Critical Incident Documentation

A Critical Incident Report (IR) should be completed:

- Any time a student is injured as the result of their own intentional or dangerous behavior; not the result of an accidental incident.
- Any time a student or staff member is injured as a result of student behavior.
- Any time a student is restrained.
- Any time a student's behavior results in staff directed, involuntary separation from their group or activity for a period of thirty minutes or more. An IR is not necessary for students who choose to be away from their group for more than thirty minutes if their behavior is typical of their current performance.

- Any time a student runs, or attempts to run, away from their group out of the school or in the community. An IR is not necessary for students who typically run or wander from their group in the building provided their behavior does not result in significant risk to self or others.
- Any time a student engages in sexually intrusive or aggressive behavior towards another student.
- Any time a student makes a disclosure that indicates the potential of serious harm to themselves or others.
- Any time that a student engages in property destruction that presents the risk of significant harm to self or others.
- Any time a student engages in self-injurious behavior that causes, or has the potential to cause, significant harm to them, or is atypical of their current baseline behavior.
- Any behavior that is highly unusual for a student that has the potential to result in harm to self or others, or significantly impacts their ability to participate in their scheduled activities.

PAC staff members are mandated reporters. Any injury that staff members have “reasonable cause” to believe resulted from abuse or neglect must be documented with an Accident Report and a formal report (51A) must be made to the following agencies:

- For students under the age of 18, the Department of Children and Families (DCF).
- Any 51A filing will also be reported to DESE using a Form 2.

Student Disrobing Procedures

In the event a student undresses him/herself at inappropriate times the following procedure should be followed to protect the staff and the dignity and privacy of the student:

- Program staff will see that there are two staff persons attending to the student.
- When staffing permits, staff attending to the student should be of the same gender as the student. If two staff members of the student’s gender are unavailable, all attempts should be made to have one staff member of the same gender present.
- Staff should redress the student as soon as possible. If the student is either unable to do so or non-compliant, the staff should allow a reasonable time for the student to calm down before redressing begins (making sure the student is provided privacy).
- Staff will complete the Behavioral Incident Report and contact the parents to notify them of the occurrence.
- If it is determined that the incident is not an isolated event and it is instead a developed behavior, the program staff will contact the LEA/Sending District and the student’s parents to convene a Team meeting. At this meeting, the Team will develop a behavioral plan that addresses the student’s behaviors and reach agreement on the actions the student’s family would like the staff to take in regard to redressing or any other related matter. This should occur not later than after the second undressing incident.

Toileting Procedures

During the Intake Interview with a prospective student’s family, the student’s current toileting needs are discussed and documented. Students’ toileting plans are written into their IEP. Classroom staff implements IEP goals, and document progress in the Quarterly Reports. A new goal may be developed at a future IEP meeting if toileting needs change. Students who are incontinent shall have a written individualized toileting plan incorporating the following:

- Schedule of diapering
- Toilet training plan

- Procedure for handling soiled clothing and diapers
- Personal privacy

The Team develops a specific schedule with individualized procedures:

- Staff model effective communication of the need to toilet, e.g. photo, objects that are displayed in the classroom and restrooms, and/or specific verbalization.
- Staff escorts the student to the bathroom, following a set of specific steps, which may be reinforced with a toileting board (set of pictures depicting the steps to be followed).
- Student toilets to the extent possible independently, while the staff member waits outside the bathroom door or staff assist with each step of the process with the long-range goal to fade physical and verbal prompts.
- Personal care items are kept for each student with a change of clothing if needed.
- Soiled clothing items are placed in plastic bags, tied, and sent home each day.
- Staff instructs and supervises hand-washing procedures.
- Students are rewarded for appropriate attempts.

Diapering Requirements:

- Based on information given by parents/guardians during the Intake Interview, staff implements a regular diapering schedule for the student.
- Staff brings the student to the designated changing area and/or bathroom. A changing table is provided in an enclosed area for students who are not able to stand up in a bathroom during toileting.
- Families are responsible for providing diapers/briefs and wipes
- Soiled diapers/briefs are bagged in plastic and disposed of in a covered trash barrel. Trash is removed from the building every day. All disposables are similarly bagged and placed in a covered trash container.

Clothing Requirements:

- Families should provide extra clothing for use when a student becomes soiled or wet.
- Soiled clothing items are placed in plastic bags and sent home each day.

Procedure for Parent/Guardian or Student with Complaints Regarding Education & Care

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

HARASSMENT POLICY

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals at school or at school sponsored events is strictly prohibited. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative requires all employees and students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect for their fellow employees, students and all members of the school community.

DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT

In General: Harassment includes communications such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or others based upon race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

By law, the particular communication or conduct is viewed from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION PROHIBITED

Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. In addition, the Pilgrim Area Collaborative will not tolerate retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of the school.

Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or school committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

INVESTIGATION

If you believe you may have been harassed, or if you witness or learn about the harassment of another individual, you should inform the Program Coordinator/Director as soon as possible. If you do not wish to discuss the issue with him/her, or if s/he does not address the problem; you should inform the Executive Director.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative will promptly investigate every complaint of harassment. If it determines that harassment has occurred, it will take appropriate action to end the harassment and to ensure that it is not repeated.

In certain cases, the harassment of a student may constitute child abuse under Massachusetts law. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative will comply with all legal requirements governing the reporting of suspected cases of child abuse.

CLOSURE OF A COMPLAINT

When an investigation has been completed, school personnel will file a report with the Coordinator for Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act Chapter 622.

POSTING

The Title IV Coordinator and building designees will be appointed yearly and listed in the student and staff handbooks.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Position

The Board of Directors of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative takes the position that all of its employees have the right to work in an environment free from sexual harassment. In addition, sexual harassment violates both state and federal law, and therefore, will not be tolerated.

The Board of Directors will take seriously all complaints of sexual harassment and will investigate, through the designated sexual harassment officer (investigator), each and every complaint thoroughly and as quickly as possible.

While this policy sets forth our goals of promoting a workplace that is free of sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

Definition

Sexual harassment is defined as an unlawful act(s) including unsolicited remarks, gestures or physical contact, display or circulation of written materials or pictures derogatory to either gender, sexual advances and/or requests for sexual favors. In addition, other verbal or physical conduct of asexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:

1. submission to such conduct or communication is made a term or condition either explicitly or implicitly to obtain or maintain employment; or
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting such individual's employment; or
3. such conduct or communications has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's employment or creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or offensive employment environment.

Implicit in the above definition is that sexual innuendos, jokes, comments, pictures or questions are included in the prohibited conduct.

Under these definitions, direct or implied requests by a supervisor for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised job benefits such as favorable reviews, salary increases, promotions, increased benefits, or continued employment constitutes sexual harassment.

While it is not possible to list all circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct which if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending upon the totality of the circumstances including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances - whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;

- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and,
- Discussion of one's sexual activities.

Condoning sexual harassment, also, will not be tolerated. Condoning includes ignoring harassment, or any other act that can be perceived as approving the actions of the harasser.

Also implicit in the definition is that the policy applies equally between the sexes. Finally, implicit in the definition is the fact that the misconduct need not take place at the workplace in order to constitute sexual harassment.

If any employee believes he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, the employee has a right to file a complaint with the Executive Director, Dr. Maureen Gaughan, either verbally or in writing.

If, after investigation, it is determined that inappropriate conduct occurred by an employee, appropriate action will be taken. Such action may range from counseling to termination of employment as well as other forms of disciplinary action deemed appropriate.

In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using our complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short period for filing a claim (EEOC-300 days; MCAD – 300 days).

United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
John F. Kennedy Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
Tel. (800) 669-4000

The Massachusetts Commission against Discrimination (MCAD)
One Ashburton Place
Sixth Floor, Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
Tel. (617) 994-6000

STUDENT RECORDS POLICY

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative recognizes that the official student record is maintained by the sending district(s)/LEA responsible for the student's placement in the PAC. All requests for records should be sent to the sending district(s)/LEA. Whenever a student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from the PAC, the Collaborative will return any and all documents from that student's temporary record to the sending district(s)/responsible LEA.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative adheres to all of the requirements of the student records regulations, located at 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

Notice is hereby that PAC will return any documents from the student's temporary record in its possession to the sending school district(s) /responsible LEA immediately upon the student's transfer, graduation, or withdrawal from the Collaborative. When the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from school, and if the eligible student or the parent/guardian want a copy of the temporary record, they must request in writing, from both the Collaborative and the sending school district(s)/responsible LEA, that the documents be provided to them, in whole or in part, at the time of the transfer/graduation/withdrawal. In addition, the Collaborative hereby provides notice that it shall destroy any documents from the student's temporary record which remain in the Collaborative's possession within seven (7) years of the student transfer, graduation or withdrawal from the Collaborative. Additional notice of the return of the temporary record to the sending school district(s)/responsible LEA, and of the destruction of the temporary record within seven (7) years, shall be made to the student and/or parent at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L., c. 71, §34D; 603 CMR 23.00.

POLICY APPROVED: 05/06/2010
POLICY AMMENDED: 11/30/2016

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, homelessness, or past, present or future membership in the uniformed services of the United States, including the National Guard in admission to, access to, employment in, or treatment in its programs and activities.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative is committed to providing all students and employees with a safe and supportive school environment. Members of the school community are expected to treat each other with mutual respect. It is the policy of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative Board of Directors to oppose and prohibit, without qualification, unlawful discrimination and harassment based on race, age, color, religion, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation or disability. Any unlawful discrimination or harassment of any member or guest of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative is a violation of this policy. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative will act to investigate all complaints and may discipline or take other appropriate action against any member of the school community who is found to have violated this policy.

As stated in Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 76, Section 5, no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

The Coordinator for Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans with Disabilities Act, Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971 is the Executive Director and can be reached at Pilgrim Area Collaborative, 42 Industrial Park Road, Plymouth, MA 02360; 781-293-6111.

Inquiries regarding the application of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative nondiscrimination policy may be referred to the PAC Coordinator as stated above or the following:

Students

If you believe you have been subjected to harassment or discrimination, you may file a formal complaint with:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Program Quality Assurance Services
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906
Phone: (781) 338-3700
FAX: (781) 338-3710
Email: compliance@doe.mass.edu

The time period for filing a claim is one year from the action.

United States Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights("OCR")
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109
tel. (617) 289-0111

The time period for filing a claim with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights is 180 days.

Employees

If you believe you have been subjected to harassment or discrimination, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below:

1. United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC")
JFK Federal Building, Room 475
Boston, MA 02203
tel. (800) 669-4000

The time period for filing a claim with the EEOC is 180 days.

2. Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination ("MCAD")

Boston Office
One Ashburton Place, Rm. 601
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 994-6000

Springfield Office
436 Dwight Street, Rm. 220
Springfield, MA 01103
(413) 739-2145

The time period for filing a claim with the MCAD is 300 days.

MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

No motor vehicle operator shall cause or allow any motor vehicle operated by him or her on school grounds to idle unnecessarily, except for any of the following reasons: traffic congestion; waiting at a school for the purpose of picking up or discharging students; turbo-charged diesel engine cool down or warm up; maintenance of appropriate temperatures for school buses when accepting or discharging passengers not to exceed three minutes in any fifteen minute period or one minute in any fifteen minute period for other motor vehicles; for circumstances involving safety or emergencies, and for servicing or repairing motor vehicles.

The term “school grounds” shall mean in, on or within 100 feet of the real property of the school whether or not it is in session, and shall include any athletic field or facility and any playground used for school purposes or functions which is owned by the municipality or school district, regardless of proximity to a school building, as well as any parking or appurtenant to such school athletic field, facility, or playground.

Legal reference: M.G.L. c.90, § 16B and 540 CMR 27.00.

NO SMOKING POLICY

In the interest of promoting healthy working conditions and protecting the safety of students, faculty and visitors, the Board of Directors of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative has created a Smoke Free Environment for all of the programs. Therefore, the use of marijuana, and tobacco products by staff, students, and visitors is prohibited at all times in all school facilities, school grounds, at all school sponsored activities, including field trips, and on school vans. "Tobacco products" are any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco or nicotine that is intended for human consumption, whether smoked, chewed, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, snorted, sniffed, or ingested by any other means, including, but not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, snuff; or electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes, electronic pens, electronic hookah, liquid nicotine, "e-liquids" or other similar products, regardless of nicotine content, that rely on vaporization or aerosolization. "Tobacco product" includes any component or part of a tobacco product. "Tobacco product" does not include any product that has been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration either as a tobacco use cessation product or for other medical purposes and which is being marketed and sold or prescribed solely for the approved purpose.

In accordance with M.G.L, c. 71, § 2A, it is unlawful for any student enrolled in a public primary or secondary school in the Commonwealth to use tobacco products of any kind on school grounds.

Staff members and students who violate this policy will be referred for further disciplinary action.

This policy shall be promulgated to all staff and students in appropriate handbooks and publications.

POLICY APPROVED: 05/06/2010
POLICY REVISED: 05/25/2016, 02/01/2018, 11/01/2018

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance at school is mandated in State Law and is recognized as beneficial for all students. The Board of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative recognizes that regular and punctual attendance is essential for success in school. It also believes that satisfactory attendance is a shared responsibility of the school, the parents, and the students.

ABSENCE REGULATIONS

1. When absence from school becomes necessary, parents should notify the school as soon as possible.
2. Students are required to provide a brief written explanation from their parent or guardian giving the reason for any absence from school.
3. Notes are due to the student's homeroom/classroom teacher on the day of return after an absence. Absences not adequately documented within three (3) days of returning to school will be recorded as trancies.
4. No student who has been absent from school is to participate or attend any school activity, function, or athletic event during the day or evening of his/her absence.
5. In accordance with provisions of the mandated attendance law, and IDEA, continued absence from school is subject to further actions by the Collaborative.
6. Excused absences include those related to a documented illness, important appointments, or court appearances.

For students of Pilgrim Academy:

For students attending high school programs, attendance impacts course credit. A student with more than five (5) unexcused absences during the marking term will not receive credit for that term. Upon the third unexcused absence, a letter will be sent to the student's home and to the sending school district noting the risk of loss of credit. Secondary students will conform to guidelines in the Pilgrim Academy handbook.

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H Pilgrim Area Collaborative staff will notify the parent or guardian of a student who has at least 5 days in which the student has missed 2 or more periods unexcused in a school year or who has missed 5 or more school days unexcused in a school year. The Program Coordinators will make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent or guardian of a student who has 5 or more unexcused absences to develop action steps for student attendance.

DISMISSALS

It is the belief of the Board of Directors that students should maintain regular and consistent school attendance. Early dismissal from school can occur only when a note stating the reason for the dismissal, and signed by a parent/guardian, is provided. Reasons for dismissal are confined to medical, legal, or emergency matters. Dismissal due to illness will be handled by the school nurse. *It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the transportation company that their child no longer needs an afternoon pick up.* Written permission from the parent/guardian is necessary if a student is to be transported by anyone other than the parent/guardian or the regular transportation vehicle. All school work missed due to an early dismissal must be made up.

TARDINESS

A parent/guardian must call prior to the start of school if their child is going to be tardy. If a student arrives unexcused later than 1 ½ hours after the start of school, the student will be considered absent for the day. Parents/guardians must accompany their child into the school/classroom to sign them in once tardy, unless other arrangements were previously made. *It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the transportation company that the student does not need a morning pick up and to inform them that the student will still need transportation at dismissal time.* All schoolwork missed due to tardiness must be made up.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

PROGRAM COORDINATOR/DIRECTOR'S DISCRETION

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, the Program Coordinator/Director, or his/her designee, shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense. The Program Coordinator/Director shall consider ways to reengage the student in learning and shall attempt to avoid long term suspension as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. These alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

PROCEDURES FOR SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION

(Exclusion of a student from school premises and regular classroom activities for a specified period of not more than ten school days.)

The Program Coordinator/Director, or his/her designee, may suspend students on a short-term basis. Unless a student poses a danger to persons or property, substantially and materially disrupts the order of school, possesses a firearm, controlled substance, or assaults a school staff member, the student will receive the following prior to a short-term suspension:

1. Oral and written notice of the charges in English and the primary language of the home if other than English. This notice shall include:
 - i. The disciplinary offense;
 - ii. The basis for the charge;
 - iii. The potential consequences, including the potential length of the suspension;
 - iv. The opportunity to have a hearing with the Program Coordinator/Director and the parent concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident;
 - v. The date, time, and location of the hearing;
 - vi. The right of the parent and student to interpreter services at the hearing; and
 - vii. If the student may be placed on a long-term suspension following the hearing with the Program Coordinator/Director:
 1. The rights set forth under the "Procedures for Long-Term Suspension"; and
 2. The right to appeal the Program Coordinator/Director's decision to the Executive Director.
2. At the hearing, if the student and/or parent elects to attend, the student shall have the opportunity to present his/her version of the relevant facts and any mitigating circumstances. The Program Coordinator/Director shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct the hearing without the parent, the Program Coordinator/Director must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The Program Coordinator/Director is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the Program Coordinator/Director sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.
3. Based on the available information, the Program Coordinator/Director shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offenses and what remedy shall be imposed. The Program Coordinator/Director shall notice the student and parent in writing of his/her decision, the reasons for it, and, if applicable, the type and duration of the suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and other academic work.
4. If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Program Coordinator/Director shall send a copy of the written determination to the Executive Director and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the suspension takes effect.

PROCEDURES FOR EMERGENCY REMOVAL

If the student's continued presence poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the Program Coordinator/Director's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption, the Program Coordinator/Director shall temporarily remove the student from the school. This temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) days following the day of the emergency removal and the Executive Director shall be immediately notified of the removal. Additionally, the Program Coordinator/Director shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the emergency removal, and the other information required in a suspension notification. The suspension notice shall be provided in writing to the student and parent. The opportunity for a hearing with the Program Coordinator/Director shall occur within two (2) school days, unless otherwise extended by the school and parent. A decision regarding the student's continued suspension or other removal shall be rendered the same day as the hearing and written notice shall be provided the following school day. This written notice shall include all the information required based on the type of discipline imposed (short-term suspension, in-school suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion).

The Program Coordinator/Director may also remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on a student's misconduct. This type of removal is not subject to the procedures for suspension and expulsion outlined in this policy.

PROCEDURES FOR AN IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

An in-school suspension may be used as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary events. An in-school suspension means the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in one school year.

If the Program Coordinator/Director chooses this alternative, the Program Coordinator/Director shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for that charge and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charge and explain the circumstances surrounding the charge. If an in-school suspension is issued, the Program Coordinator/Director shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the offense, and the length of the in-school suspension.

The Program Coordinator/Director shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. This meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension, if possible, or as soon as possible thereafter. The Program Coordinator/Director shall also send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to the above described meeting, if such meeting has not already occurred.

PROCEDURES FOR LONG-TERM SUSPENSION

(Exclusion of a student from school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten school days.)

The Program Coordinator/Director, or his/her designee, may issue long-term suspensions at the building level. The Program Coordinator/Director may also issue expulsions for the offenses set forth in M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and §37H½.

1. In the event of a long-term suspension or expulsion, the student will be provided oral and written notice of the charges in English and the primary language of the home if other than English. This notice shall include:
 - i. The disciplinary offense;
 - ii. The basis for the charge;
 - iii. The potential consequences, including the potential length of the suspension;
 - iv. The opportunity to have a hearing with the Program Coordinator/Director and the parent concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident;
 - v. The date, time, and location of the hearing;
 - vi. The right of the parent and student to interpreter services at the hearing;
 - vii. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
 - viii. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
 - ix. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
 - x. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; and
 - xi. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording provided to the student or parent upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
2. The Program Coordinator/Director shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct the hearing without the parent, the Program Coordinator/Director must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The Program Coordinator/Director is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the Program Coordinator/Director sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.
3. In advance of the hearing, the student shall have the right to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Program Coordinator/Director may rely in making a determination to suspend the student.
4. The student shall also have the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person at the choice and expense of the student/parent.
5. At the hearing, if the student and/or parent elects to attend, the student shall have the opportunity to present his/her version of the relevant facts and any mitigating circumstances. The student shall also have the right to produce witnesses and the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school. The student may request that the hearing be audio recorded by the Program Coordinator/Director and may request a copy of the recording. All parties must be made aware that the hearing is recorded in advance of the hearing.
6. The parent, if present, shall have the opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and other information, including mitigating circumstances, which the Program Coordinator/Director should consider in determining consequences for the student.
7. The Program Coordinator/Director shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offences and what consequences shall be imposed. The Program Coordinator/Director shall notice the student and parent in writing of his/her decision, including the following information:
 - i. The disciplinary offence, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants in the hearing;
 - ii. The key facts and conclusions reached by the Program Coordinator/Director;

- iii. The length and effective date of the suspension and the date of return to school;
- iv. The notice the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the suspension;
- v. The student's right to appeal the Program Coordinator/Director's decision to the Executive Director or his/her designee if a long-term suspension has been imposed. This notice of appeal shall include the process for appealing the decision, which requires the parent or student to file a written notice of appeal with the Executive Director within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension.
 - a. The Executive Director shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless an extension is mutually agreed to.
 - b. The Executive Director shall make a good-faith effort to include the parent in the hearing.
 - c. The hearing shall be conducted to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and, if so, what the consequence shall be. The hearing shall be audio recorded and a copy of the recording shall be provided to the student or parent upon request.
 - d. All the same rights as are afforded in the above long-term suspension Program Coordinator/Director's hearing shall apply to the student in a Executive Director's hearing.
 - e. The Executive Director shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. If the Executive Director determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Executive Director may impose the same or lesser consequence than the Program Coordinator/Director.
 - f. The decision of the Executive Director shall be the final decision of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative.
- vi. If the student is in grades K-3, the Program Coordinator/Director shall send a copy of the written determination to the Executive Director and explain the reasons for the suspension before the suspension takes effect.

EXPULSION

Expulsion is the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) days, indefinitely, or permanently. Conduct that may lead to expulsion includes but is not limited to possession of a dangerous weapon, assault on school personnel, possession of a controlled substance, and certain criminal convictions and charges. Procedures associated with expulsion are set forth under the "Termination of a Student" section of the handbook.

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURAL PROTECTIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

In general, special education students may be excluded from their programs for up to ten school days per school year just as any other student. However, when the Collaborative seeks to exclude a special education student from his/her program for more than ten school days in the school year, the student's special education Team must first determine whether the student's behavior was caused by, or was directly and substantially related to his/her disability or whether the conduct in question was the direct result of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative's failure to implement the student's IEP (a "manifestation determination"). If the Team determines that the behavior was a manifestation of his/her disability or was caused by a failure to implement the IEP, it must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop a behavior plan (or review and modify an existing plan, if necessary), and return the student to his/her current program, unless the student's parents and the district agree to a change in placement.

If the Team determines the behavior was not caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student's disability or failure to implement the IEP, the school may discipline the student according to the school's code of student conduct, except that during the period of suspension or expulsion, the Pilgrim Area Collaborative must continue to provide the student with a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and, if appropriate, conduct a functional behavior assessment and provide intervention services and modifications to prevent the conduct from recurring. If the conduct involves weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury, a special education student may be removed to an interim alternative educational placement for up to 45 school days regardless of the behavior's relationship to his/her disability.

Additional information regarding the procedural protections for students with disabilities can be obtained from the Main Office.

POSSESSION OF WEAPONS OR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES
ASSAULT OF EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL

Massachusetts General Law Ch. 71, §37H authorizes the Program Coordinator/Director to expel students as follows:

1. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter Ninety-Four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the program or the Pilgrim Area Collaborative by the Program Coordinator/Director.
2. Any student who assaults a Program Coordinator/Director, teacher, paraprofessional, nurse, therapist, counselor, 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 program or the Pilgrim Area Collaborative by the Program Coordinator/Director.
3. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (1) or (2) 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 Program Coordinator/Director.
After said hearing, a Program Coordinator/Director may, at his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Program Coordinator/Director to have violated either paragraph (1) or (2).
4. Any student who has been expelled from the Pilgrim Area Collaborative pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Executive Director. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Executive Director of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Executive Director. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
5. Districts and Collaboratives shall report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the Commissioner. The department of elementary and secondary education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.
6. Under the regulations promulgated by the Department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the Commissioner

shall investigate and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

A copy of this law may be obtained in the main office.

**SUSPENSION/EXPULSION BASED UPON A FELONY CHARGE/CONVICTION M.G.L. c. 71,
§ 37H½**

Issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the Program Coordinator/Director of a program may suspend a student for a period of time determined appropriate by the Program Coordinator/Director if the Program Coordinator/Director determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Executive Director.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the Executive Director. The student shall notify the Executive Director in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Executive Director shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Executive Director shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Program Coordinator/Director or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Executive Director shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative with regard to the suspension.

The Program Coordinator/Director may expel a student who has been convicted, adjudicated, or admitted guilt with respect to a felony or felony delinquency, if the Program Coordinator/Director determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Executive Director.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Executive Director. The student shall notify the Executive Director, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The Executive Director shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Executive Director shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Program Coordinator/Director, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Executive Director shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative with regard to the expulsion.

A copy of this law may be obtained in the main office.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS

DURING SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSION

Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, test, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom. The Program Coordinator/Director shall inform the student and parent of such opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Any student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through a school-wide education service plan. This plan will be developed by the Program Coordinator/Director and shall describe the services that the Pilgrim Area Collaborative will make available to students who are expelled or suspended for ten (10) or more consecutive days. The plan will include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging the services.

LEGAL AUTHORITY:

M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H
M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ½
M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾
M.G.L. c. 76, § 21
603 CMR 53.00

POLICY APPROVED: 11/04/2010
POLICY REVISED: 05/07/2015, 06/07/2018

POLICY ON STUDENT DRESS

Students are expected to maintain appropriate dress and follow the requirements of the host school in terms of dress. Students should consider the following:

1. Any form of dress that becomes a safety hazard in the classroom, is detrimental to the learning process, or causes a disruption or disorder will not be suitable for school.
2. The following blouses or shirts should not be worn in the classrooms during the school day: bare midriff, see through, bare back, halter tops, low cut blouses, tube tops, muscle shirts, spaghetti strap blouses.
3. All pants should be “waist appropriate”. Undergarments should not be visible.
4. All skirts and shorts should be appropriate in length. Undergarments should not be visible.
5. Shoes with wheels are not permitted at any time as they are a safety hazard.

Students will have the opportunity to correct the offensive appearance or attire before being disciplined. Building administrators shall have within their authority the right to determine inappropriate dress, and to discipline students for repeated infractions.

POLICY APPROVED: 11/04/2010
POLICY REVISED: 02/01/2018

POLICY PROHIBITING BULLYING

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) is committed to providing our students equal educational opportunities, and a safe learning environment where students are free from bullying and cyber-bullying and the effects thereof.

Acts of bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited:

- (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the school district; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district and;
- (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school district, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or infringes on the rights of the target at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying also is prohibited.

A. Definitions

Aggressor is a student or staff member who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c.71, s. 370, is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional, of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property;
- (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying may include conduct such as physical intimidation or assault, including intimidating an individual into taking an action against his/her will; oral or written threats; teasing; putdowns; name-calling; stalking; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations; and social isolation.

Cyber-bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c 71, s. 370 is bullying through the use of technology or any

electronic communication, which shall include, but not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying also includes:

- (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person;
- (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or Messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated above in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying; and
- (iii) the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated above in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying may include conduct such as sending derogatory, harassing or threatening email messages, instant messages, or text messages; creating websites that ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate others; and posting on websites or disseminating embarrassing or inappropriate pictures or images of others.

Hostile Environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, s. 370, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

B. Bullying and Retaliation Are Prohibited and Will Lead to Discipline

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative absolutely prohibits bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation as defined above. Students who engage in bullying or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action; however, disciplinary action taken must balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The range of disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to, one or more of the following: verbal warnings, written warnings, reprimands, short-term or long-term suspensions, or expulsions from school as determined by PAC administration in collaboration with host school administration as warranted, and subject to applicable procedural requirements. Nothing in this policy is intended to prevent PAC administration from taking disciplinary action against a student for conduct that does not meet the definition of bullying or cyber-bullying, as defined above, but nevertheless is inappropriate for the school environment.

C. Reporting Obligations

Reporting by Staff: A member of PAC or host school staff, including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional, shall immediately report any instance of bullying or retaliation s/he has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or designee.

Reporting by Students, Parents/Guardians, and Others: The Pilgrim Area Collaborative expects students, parents/guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the program coordinator/director or designee. An individual may make an anonymous report of bullying or retaliation; however, no disciplinary action may be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. A student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Reporting to Parents/Guardians: The program coordinator/director or designee must promptly notify the parent/guardian of the alleged target and the alleged aggressor of a report of bullying or retaliation and of the school's procedures for investigating the report. If the alleged target and alleged aggressor attend different schools, the program coordinator/director receiving the report shall inform the principal of the other student's school, who shall notify the student's parents of the report and procedures.

Reporting to Local Law Enforcement: At any point after receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, or during or after an investigation, if the PAC program coordinator/director or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that the incident may involve criminal conduct, the PAC program coordinator/director or designee will notify the local law enforcement agency.

In addition, if an incident of bullying or retaliation occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in a local school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school, the Executive Director of the PAC or designee will notify local law enforcement if s/he believes that criminal charges may be pursued.

Reporting to Administrator of Another School District or School: If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school and the Pilgrim Area Collaborative is the first to be Informed of the bullying or retaliation, then the Executive Director of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative or designee must, consistent with state and federal law, promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school district or school so that both may take appropriate action.

D. Investigation

The program coordinator/director or designee in collaboration with host school administration as warranted shall investigate promptly a report of bullying or retaliation, considering all the circumstances at hand, including the nature of the allegations and the ages of the students involved. The following are general guidelines for responding to a report of bullying or retaliation. The guidelines will be adapted as necessary to respond appropriately to the complaint.

Pre-Investigation: Even before fully investigating allegations of bullying or retaliation, Collaborative personnel in collaboration with host school administration will consider whether there is a need to take immediate steps to support the alleged target and/or protect the alleged target from further potential incidents of concern. In taking any such action, however, the rights of both the alleged target and alleged aggressor must be considered.

Written statement of the complaint: The investigator will seek to determine the basis of the complaint, gathering information from the complainant, including such matters as: what specifically happened, who committed the alleged acts, who was present or may have information about the events, when the events occurred (date, time of day), and where the events occurred.

It is helpful to have these facts in writing. If age appropriate, the complainant may be asked to put the complaint in writing and to sign and date it. If the complainant cannot or chooses not to write a complaint, the investigator will record the allegations, read them to the complainant to confirm accuracy, and ask the complainant to sign the document. If the complainant cannot or chooses not to sign, the investigator may sign and date the document her/himself.

Interviews: Once the allegations of the complainant are established, the investigator will gather other evidence, which often involves interviews of the alleged aggressor and/or other witnesses. If appropriate, the investigator should remind the alleged aggressor and witnesses that retaliation against persons whom they believe might have reported the incidents or cooperated with the investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Confidentiality: The confidentiality of the complainant and the other witnesses will be maintained to the extent practicable given the Collaborative's obligation to investigate and address the matter.

E. Determination

Collaborative personnel must weigh all of the evidence objectively to determine whether the alleged events occurred and, if they did, whether the events constitute bullying or retaliation. The determination must be based upon all of the facts and circumstances and the perspective of a reasonable person. When applied to children, the "reasonable person" standard is generally "that of a reasonable person of like age, intelligence, and experience under like circumstances." See *Ellison v. Brady*, 924 F.2d 872 (9th Cir. 1991).

If bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Collaborative will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. As with the investigation, the response will be individually tailored to all of the circumstances, including the nature of the conduct and the age of the students involved. In addition to taking disciplinary action, the following are examples of steps that maybe taken to prevent the recurrence of bullying or retaliation:

- (i) Holding parent conferences;
- (ii) Transferring student's classroom or school;
- (iii) Limiting or denying student access to a part, or area, of a school;
- (iv) Enhancing adult supervision on school premises;
- (v) Excluding from participation in school-sponsored or school-related functions, after-school programs, and/or extracurricular activities;
- (vi) Providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students. Adjustment counselors and others in the school setting who have been trained in working with students on interpersonal issues may helpful in providing such programs.
- (vii) Personalized Action Plan and directives for future conduct, including providing the target with a process for reporting any concerns about future conduct immediately.

It is critical to involve the student in creating an action plan that involves a reporting process that works for that student.

- (i) Arranging for communication between the parties, if appropriate, to assist them in resolving issues

which have arisen between them. (Such an approach will be used cautiously since communication can sometimes exacerbate, rather than alleviate, the target's concerns and since the conduct often involves an imbalance of power.)

(ii) Providing counseling (or other appropriate services) or referral to such services for the target and/or the aggressor and/or for appropriate family members of said students.

F. Closing the Complaint and Possible Follow-Up

Collaborative staff will promptly provide notice to the parent/guardian of a target and an aggressor about whether the complaint was substantiated and, if substantiated, what action is being taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation. Specific information about disciplinary action taken generally will not be released to the target's parents or guardians unless it involves a "stay away" or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

If appropriate, within a reasonable time period following closure of the complaint, the leadership staff or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been any recurrence of the prohibited conduct.

The Collaborative will retain a report of the complaint, containing the name of the complainant, the date of the complaint, investigator, school, a brief statement of the nature of the complaint, the outcome of the investigation, and the action taken.

HAZING CONDUCT

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) forbids hazing in any form. Should an alleged instance of hazing occur, the provision of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 269, Sections 17-19 shall be adhered to. In addition the Executive Director or his/her designee and the Police Department shall immediately be notified of the circumstances of the complaint and the action taken.

Any student who has engaged in hazing shall be subject to the disciplinary actions. Any employee who has engaged in hazing shall be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action.

According to Chapter 269, Section 17, the Crime of Hazing is described as follows: "Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both."

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

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

Chapter 269, Section 18 - Duty to Report Hazing

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

Chapter 269, Section 19 - Statement of Compliance and Discipline Policy Requirement

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

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

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

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

ADMINISTERING OF STUDENT MEDICATION

A certified nurse is assigned to each of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) classrooms. The primary responsibilities of the PAC nurse is to monitor and supervise the storage and administration of prescribed drugs and medications and to provide health related services to support the well-being and safety of students and staff in PAC programs.

Unless otherwise approved, the PAC nurse shall be responsible for the management and distribution of all medications to students in the PAC in accordance with the regulations of 105 CMR 210.000 and MGL Chapter 94C. Exceptions would include the possession and self-administration of any prescribed medications for asthma, related respiratory diseases, cystic fibrosis and diabetes as specified in MGL Chapter 71. Section 54B.

Under normal circumstances, students may not carry medication in school unless they have received specific approval to do so through a required written permission request from their doctor and their parents/guardians that is kept on file with the PAC nurse.

All other medications must be kept by the nurse and will only be dispensed by the PAC nurse. In order for a PAC nurse to administer any medication (prescription or over the counter), it is required that a written Physician's Medication Order and a Parental Medication Consent be presented before any medication will be administered in school. All orders and permissions for medication must be renewed each school year. Parents/guardians or responsible adult must bring medications to school and leave them with a responsible adult.

While every effort will be made to obtain a nurse or PAC staff member trained in medication administration during field trips and short term special school events, the Board of Directors recognizes that the PAC nurse may delegate the administration of prescription medication to a responsible adult. In such cases the parent/guardian must give written consent and the PAC nurse must instruct the responsible adult on how to administer the medication to the child. Additionally, approval to delegate administration and distribution of medications may only be given on a limited basis to unlicensed personnel who have been granted this authority by the Board of Directors and provided the PAC is registered with the Division of Food and Drugs of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health/School Health Unit.

WEAPONS POLICY

It is the policy of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) to maintain a positive, safe, secure learning and working environment. In striving to attain such an environment, the PAC takes the position of no tolerance for weapons in our schools, except as specifically stated below. All weapons or instruments that have the appearance of a weapon are prohibited within all school environments and the school zone, except for educational purposes as authorized in advance by the building principal or program coordinator/director. School environments include, but are not limited to, district-owned buildings; leased or rented facilities; school-sponsored activities; field trips; school vehicles and school buses, rented or owned; and school bus stops. Students found to be in possession of a weapon in any area defined in this policy before, during, or after school may be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action. The disciplinary action may include expulsion for possession of a dangerous weapon.

Possession

Students and non-students, including employees and other adults, are forbidden to knowingly or voluntarily possess, store in any area or in any vehicle subject to one's control, handle, transmit, or use any instrument that is considered a weapon or a "look-alike" weapon in any of the school environments listed above.

Student Reporting

Students who see or become aware of a weapon must not touch it nor remain in the presence of a person or group if a weapon is present. Students must notify an adult immediately for the safety of all concerned.

Definition of Weapons

"Dangerous Weapon" means any firearm whether loaded or unloaded; any chemical, substance, device, or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or death; or any device or instrument that is used to threaten, strike terror, or cause bodily harm or death.

The following objects are included in this definition:

- a. All firearms, whether loaded or unloaded, etc., or similar devices.
- b. Other guns of all types including pellet, BB, stun, look-alike, and non-functioning guns that could be used to threaten others, or similar devices.
- c. Knives, switchblades or automatically opening blades, daggers, swords, razors, machetes, or similar devices.
- d. Artificial knuckles or other objects designed to be worn over the fist or knuckles, or any other similar devices.
- e. Blackjacks, brass knuckles, clubs, nun-chucks, throwing stars, etc.
- f. Explosives--including fireworks, bombs, or any other pyrotechnics device.
- g. Poisons, chemicals, or substances capable of causing bodily harm.
- h. Bow and arrows, sling-shots, or any other propelling devices.
- i. Any other device or instrument used to intimidate, threaten or inflict harm.

This list is not exhaustive.

Violation by Students

The PAC Administration and/or staff will:

- a. Confiscate the weapon (if it can be done safely) and turn it over to the police.
- b. Notify the Executive Director, host school Principal or their designees.
- c. Notify police.
- d. Notify parent/guardian.
- e. Notify district attorney.
- f. Hold an Administrative hearing with student and parent which will:
 - i. Inform the student of the policy provision that has been violated.
 - ii. Confront the student with the evidence.
 - iii. Provide an opportunity for the student to respond to the allegations.
- g. Expel or exclude student consistent with Ch. 71, Section 37H or 37H 1/2.

Violation by Others--Including PAC Employees

The PAC Administration and/or staff will:

- a. Immediately notify police.
- b. Employees will also be subject to investigation and application of relevant policies and disciplinary procedures.

Administrative Discretion Regarding Possession

A student who finds a weapon on the way to school, on school property, or in the school building and takes the weapon immediately to a responsible staff member shall not be considered in possession of a weapon.

Authorized Instructional and Work-Related Equipment and Tools

This policy is not meant to interfere with instruction or use of appropriate equipment and tools by employees and students. Such equipment, when properly used and stored, shall not be considered a weapon for purposes of this policy. However, when authorized instructional and work equipment and tools are used in a potentially dangerous or threatening manner, the guidelines and consequences of this policy will automatically take effect.

Exceptions

This policy, pursuant to Massachusetts Statutes, provides for the following exceptions:

- a. Licensed peace officers, military personnel, or students participating in military training, who are performing official duties.
- b. School District-approved firearm safety courses or activities conducted on school property.
- c. School District-approved possession and use of dangerous weapons by a ceremonial color guard.
- d. School District-approved possession and use of starter guns for high school athletic contests.

Students with Disabilities

All Chapter 766 and other State and Federal laws related to students with disabilities will be followed.

SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS

School lockers, desks, furniture, computers/media storage, and any other storage locations are the property of the school and may be searched at any time either with or without cause. Students should have no expectation of privacy regarding school-assigned lockers, desks, furniture, computers/media storage, and any other storage locations within the school. The personal property of the student or the student's person may be searched when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a school rule or a law has been or is being violated. This authority may be exercised as needed in the interest of safeguarding children, their own and school property. Nevertheless, exercise of that authority by school officials places unusual demands upon their judgment so as to protect each child's constitutional rights to personal privacy and protection from coercion and to act in the best interest of all students and the schools.

Searches by school officials of students' automobiles or the student will be conducted in a way that protects the students' rights consistent with the responsibility of the PAC to provide an atmosphere conducive to the educational process.

Students should have no expectation of privacy for bags or backpacks left unattended. School personnel will search unattended items to determine ownership and/or to assess danger/threat.

The PAC has legal custody of students during the school day and during hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to make an effort to protect each student's rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials. Therefore:

1. When law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the Program Coordinator/Director or his/her designee will be present when possible. An effort will be made to contact the student's parent or guardian and have them present.
2. A student may not be released to the custody of any person other than his/her parents/legal guardian, unless placed under arrest by legal authority.
3. In accordance with student record regulations, PAC will not disclose student record information to the police without a court order, lawfully issued subpoena, or written consent of the student and/or parent. However, PAC may disclose student record information to appropriate parties in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.
4. If custody and/or arrest are involved, the Program Coordinator will request that all procedural safeguards, as prescribed by law, be observed by the law enforcement officials.

POLICY APPROVED: 02/03/2011
POLICY REVISED: 02/01/2018

BICYCLES AND AUTOMOBILES

If a student rides a bicycle to school, it should be parked in the designated school area for that purpose and securely locked. Pilgrim Area Collaborative does not take responsibility for bicycles which may be lost, stolen, or damaged on school property.

High school students with driver's licenses who drive to school may park in designated student parking spaces during the school day. Furthermore, students who drive to school and park on school property are required to adhere to all guidelines and rules established by the PAC administration. These guidelines and rules are published in the student handbook.

The ability to park on school property is a privilege which may be revoked by PAC administration in the event established rules and guidelines are not followed. Additionally, administration shall have the authority to search student vehicles parked on school property if the situation arises where there is a reasonable suspicion of possession of any illegal substance or associated paraphernalia.

The PAC does not take responsibility for student vehicles which may be lost, stolen, or damaged while parked on school property.

INOCULATION OF STUDENTS

Public school students attending the Pilgrim Area Collaborative programs will be required to present a physician's certificate attesting to successful immunization against all diseases as stipulated in M.G.L. Ch. 76, Sect. 15 and as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Public Health. These diseases include: diphtheria, tetanus, measles, pertussis, and poliomyelitis, and such other communicable disease which may be specified by the Department of Public Health.

An exception to these requirements will be made on receipt of written statement from a doctor that he has personally examined the child and that immunization would not be in the best interest of the child; or from the student's parent or guardian stating that vaccination or immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the student or parent. Additionally, in accordance with Federal law, a homeless student shall not be required to present proof of immunization as a prerequisite for attending school.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

If a Pilgrim Area Collaborative nurse has determined that a student has a communicable disease that would impact the welfare and safety of other students, the nurse may make the decision to exclude the student from school until such time as the illness is no longer transferable to other students or staff.

When a student is absent from school as the result of contracting a communicable disease, i.e. chicken pox, measles, etc., the student is required to submit a physician's note upon returning to school specifying that danger of contagion has passed.

FIELD TRIP POLICY

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative recognizes the value and importance of field trips and student travel as an extension of the classroom learning environment. Such experiences enrich student learning and provide opportunities for active engagement and broaden the perspectives of those who participate.

Teachers and other school staff are prohibited from soliciting for a privately run trip through the Collaborative. Field trips and student travel are expected to be related to the program of student and an extension of the approved district curricula.

In order to insure the safety of students involved in field trips, all chaperones are required to submit to a CORI check, and be subject to the approval of the Executive Director.

In order to insure the quality of the field trip experience, its relationship to the curriculum and student safety, the following procedures are to be followed:

1. Teachers planning the trip shall submit a field trip request form to the Executive Director thirty (30) days in advance of the anticipated trip explaining the full details of the field trip and providing a rationale for how the trips enhances and enriches the district curriculum and student learning.
2. All logistical details involving transportation shall be arranged by the teacher with approval from the Executive Director or designee in accordance with transportation provider contracts.
3. Student /Parent permission forms must be completed prior to the date of the field trip.
4. Students may be excluded from field trips by the Executive Director or designee if the student has unexcused absences or has been engaged in conduct which raises concern for the health and safety of the student or others.

GRADING POLICY

Those PAC students who attend the MS/HS Pilgrim Academy program at our Plymouth location receive progress reports at midterm and subject grades on the report card four times yearly. Copies are mailed to the student's home and to the sending school district. A copy is also sent home with the students. Additional supports are available in the program for any student who is not meeting academic requirements.

Students attending classes in the remainder of the Collaborative programs are assigned grades in accordance with their Individual Educational Plan.

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HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICY

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. The PAC supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. Programs contribute to the basic health status of children by facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity. Improved health optimizes student performance.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative will:

- A. Provide a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors.
 - a. The school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned with healthy lifestyle goals to positively influence a student's understanding and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity.
- B. Support and promote proper dietary habits contributing to students' health status and academic performance.
 - a. Nutrition education will be promoted in PAC programs with the support and guidance of PAC nurses. Principles of the USDA My Plate will be used as the nutritional guideline.
 - b. Students and their families will be encouraged to bring into school healthy choices for snack and lunch.
 - c. Opportunities to sample new and healthy food options will be provided periodically.
- C. Provide opportunities for students to engage in physical activity.
 - a. Students who are able to participate in physical education activities through the host school will be included in those classes.
 - b. Individual PAC programs will provide individual physical activity opportunities in accordance with students' abilities.
- D. Maintain a Wellness Advisory Committee to develop guidance, and to serve as a resource to PAC programs.
 - a. PAC will develop and maintain a committee composed of teachers, nurses, therapists, paraprofessionals, parents, and administrators.
 - b. The committee will convene at a minimum of once per year to provide evaluation and updates of progress of the wellness policy.
 - c. The Wellness Committee will consider staff as well as student health and wellness.

SCHOOL BUILDING SECURITY AND SAFETY OF STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) will take every possible precaution to protect the safety of all students, employees, visitors and others present at school activities or at school-sponsored events. The Executive Director will have overall responsibility for the safety program of PAC. It will be the responsibility of the Executive Director to see that appropriate staff members are kept informed of current state and local requirements relating to fire prevention, civil defense, sanitation, public health, and occupational safety.

Pilgrim Area Collaborative programs that are housed within public school settings will follow the emergency response protocol of the respective host school. The following plan is in direct reference to the Pilgrim Academy program housed in a substantially separate school building location.

1.0 EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- 1.1 Pilgrim Area Collaborative (PAC) must be prepared to respond to an emergency situation or crisis in a well-organized manner in order to maximize the use of all resources. The Executive Director or his/her designee will develop a medical Emergency Response Plan, and a Multi-Hazard Evacuation Plan. These plans will provide a structure and direction to assist key administrative members of the school to effectively and efficiently respond to any condition that might cause a major disruption to normal operating procedures.
- 1.2 The Pilgrim Academy will identify a Crisis Response Team whose members will receive training in emergency management procedures.
- 1.3 If a critical incident occurs, response and recovery will be a coordinated effort between the PAC and fire and police departments.
- 1.4 The Executive Director, or his/her designee, will implement the emergency response plan for a small-scale or large-scale emergency.

2.0 EMERGENCY DEFINITIONS

SMALL-SCALE EMERGENCIES

A small-scale emergency affecting normal operation of the Pilgrim Academy can be effectively handled by the Pilgrim Academy Program Director, or a member of the Pilgrim Academy Crisis Response Team (CRT). Examples of a *Small-Scale Emergency* are death of student or staff off campus, threat of violence, minor fire, bus accident with no injuries, or incident involving minor injuries to students.

LARGE-SCALE EMERGENCIES

A large-scale emergency affecting normal operation of the Pilgrim Academy, and as a result, requires additional resources to assist the Pilgrim Academy Program Director and the Crisis Response Team (CRT). Examples of a *Large-Scale Emergency* are incidents involving a fatality at a school, bomb threat or detonation of a bomb, fire, civil disturbance, large chemical spill, or natural or man-made disasters.

3.0 SECURITY

For security purposes all visitors report to the school reception desk upon entering and leaving the building and sign a guest log showing arrival and departure times. Teachers are encouraged to ask

visitors if they have registered with reception if any individual has no visible display of doing so (i.e., visitor's badge, volunteer badge).

4.0 SAFETY TRAINING

The practice of safety will also be considered a facet of the instructional program. Training will be given in accident prevention as well as fire prevention and emergency procedures.

The Emergency Response Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis, along with the Multi Hazard Evacuation Plan.

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TEACHING ABOUT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUGS

In accordance with state and federal law, Pilgrim Area Collaborative shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, evidence-based alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention education programs in grades K-12.

The alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention program shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use, with emphasis on nonuse by school-age children. The program also shall include information about effective techniques and skill development for delaying and abstaining from using, as well as skills for addressing peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs. The curriculum implemented with be commensurate with the age and ability level of the students.

The objectives of this program, as stated below, are rooted in the belief that prevention requires education, and that the most important aspect of the policies and guidelines of the District should be the education of children and youth on healthy decision-making:

- To prevent, delay, and/or reduce alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among children and youth.
- To increase students' understanding of the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.
- To teach students self-management skills, social skills, negotiation skills, and refusal skills that will help them to make healthy decisions and avoid alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

M.G.L. 71:1 ;71:96

STUDENT INTERNET POLICY

The Internet is a vast global network which gives people access to a wide variety of information and communication formats. The Internet has tremendous potential for educators who are now able to communicate with one another to share educational materials, strategies and ideas, as well as to access educational research and journals. The Internet's potential for education is limitless as is the potential for abuse.

The purpose of these guidelines for Internet use is to ensure that all Pilgrim Area Collaborative students use this valuable resource appropriately. Access to the Internet by students is not a right but a privilege which may be revoked at any time for abusive conduct. This abusive conduct will include but will not be limited to the following:

- ◆ the placing of unlawful and/or inappropriate information on a system;
- ◆ accessing or downloading sexually explicit or other materials that may be inappropriate for educational use and or harmful to minors, or the sharing of locations or addresses for this kind of material. Be aware that the transfer of certain kinds of materials is illegal and punishable by fine or jail sentence;
- ◆ the use of abusive or objectionable language in either public or private message;
- ◆ the sending of messages that are likely to result in the loss of the recipients' work or systems;
- ◆ the sending of "chain letters" or "broadcast" messages to lists or individuals;
- ◆ other types of use that could cause congestion of the networks or otherwise interfere with the work of others;
- ◆ use of the Internet that would violate the copyright and/or trademark laws of the United States;
- ◆ using any PAC link to perform any act that may be construed as illegal or unethical, including the use of the link to gain unauthorized access to other systems on the network;
- ◆ overriding or allowing students to override any security systems established on PAC Computers and networks or host schools' computers;
- ◆ sharing or disseminating passwords, codes, access phone numbers, account numbers, or other information that would compromise the privacy or security of another person, system, or network;
- ◆ any use of the Internet that would reflect negatively on the Pilgrim Area Collaborative or would in any way subject the PAC or the individual to a possible criminal or civil action.

The foregoing list is not exhaustive. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative reserves the right to notify any user of other impermissible action regarding the use of the internet, host schools' networks, or computers.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative reserves the right to discipline students and/or employees for abusive conduct involving the Internet, host schools' networks, or computers. The Pilgrim Area Collaborative reserves the right to restrict student access to the Internet, host schools' networks, or computers for abusive conduct.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative makes no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the reliability of the data connection. Nor shall PAC be liable for any loss or corruption of data while using the Internet connection, host schools' network, or PAC-owned computers.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative reserves the right to examine all data, including, but not limited to, e-mail, stored in the machines and/or servers used to conduct PAC business to make sure that all users are in compliance with these regulations. Network storage areas, files and communications may be reviewed by the PAC Administration or designee in order to maintain system integrity and to ensure that users are operating the systems responsibly. PAC makes no guarantee concerning files or information stored on any PAC-owned or operated computer system or network.

At the beginning of each academic year, students will be presented with a copy of the “Acceptable Use of Internet Policy” and sign acknowledgement of receipt.

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Revised & Approved: 8 June 2016

Revised & Approved: 21 May 2012

Board of Directors Approved: 6 May 2010

PREGNANT STUDENTS

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative wishes to preserve educational opportunities for those students who may become pregnant and/or take on parenting responsibilities.

Pregnant students are permitted to remain in regular classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant students throughout their pregnancy, and after giving birth are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as before the leave.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative does not require a pregnant student to obtain the certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue in school.

Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible; that health counseling services, as well as instruction, are offered; that return to school after leave is encouraged; and that every opportunity to complete high school is provided.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:84
Title IX: 20 U.S.C. § 1681
34 CFR § 106.40(b)

POLICY ON PARENTAL CONSENT

The PAC will work with its member school districts to ensure that consent for emergency medical care and medication administration are obtained from students' parents or guardians on an annual basis. Additionally, the PAC will not engage in any research or experimentation with respect to students without obtaining consent from a parent/guardian. The PAC also will not use any student's or family's name, photograph, or videotape, for fund raising, publicity, or any other purpose, without obtaining consent from a parent/guardian. Students over fourteen will also be required to provide their consent to research, experimentation, and use of their names and/ or their images; unless the PAC or member school district has written documentation indicating that the student is not capable of providing consent. Any consent forms obtained by the PAC will be shared with the responsible school district.

Furthermore, the PAC will obtain parent/guardian consent prior to requiring any student to submit to any surveys, analyses, or evaluations that reveal information concerning: political beliefs of the student or student's family; mental or psychological problems concerning the student or student's family; sex behavior or attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of others with whom the student has close family relationships; legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers; religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or income, other than as required by law to determine eligibility for school programs or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

No consent will be required for data collection or observation by parents/guardians, PAC staff, member school district staff, DESE staff, or other authorized state or federal monitoring personnel, when the data collection is being used to evaluate or document services provided by the PAC. Parent/guardian consent is also not required for verbal screenings for substance use pursuant to Policy # 5025.

The PAC will work with its member school districts to ensure that parents/guardians are notified on an annual basis prior to student enrollment in any curriculum primarily involving human sexual education or human sexuality issues. Parents/guardians shall have the right to exempt their children from any portion of the curriculum through written notification sent to the PAC and the principal of their member school district.

LEGAL AUTHORITY: 603 CMR 18.05
 M. G. L. c. 71, § 32A
 20 U.S.C. § 1232(h)

POLICY APPROVED: 06/07/2018

SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS

Pilgrim Area Collaborative programs are responsible for providing appropriate supervision of students at all times while they are engaged in any school-related activity on or off school grounds.

Supervision of students during the school day varies from program to program based upon the needs of the students enrolled in the program. Each program develops and implements a staffing plan for the supervision of students. This plan includes but is not limited to:

- Description of the duties and responsibilities of such staff;
- A plan describing how the school will provide services in the absence of assigned staff due to illness, position vacancy, emergencies, or other unexpected circumstances;
- A justification of the staff to student ratio requested by the school, including the ages, capabilities, behavioral and educational needs of the students, and other information as may be required due to the respective goals of individual students and/or programs.

The following general procedures apply to all PAC programs, with other guidelines specific to each program.

- Students are met at the start of the school day by school staff and monitored as they enter the building.
- While in their classrooms, students are supervised by teachers and classroom assistants and ratios of staff to students is determined by educational needs as detailed in the student's IEP.
- When a student leaves the classroom, staff insures that an available staff member monitors, receives, and/or supervises the student while outside the classroom.
- Students are accompanied or monitored by staff when moving throughout the building.
- During lunch, student to staff ratio is maintained in accordance with that determined appropriate for instruction in the classroom.
- While off-grounds all students are accompanied by PAC staff at all times with a student-to staff ratio that is consistent with the needs of the students for managing safety.
- Students are dismissed from school upon the arrival of their approved transportation and students are monitored in the hallway, and outside by staff until they enter their approved transportation vehicles.

CHANGE OF STUDENT'S LEGAL STATUS

If there is a change in the legal status or guardianship of a student, staff will:

- Request and obtain a copy of official court documents.
- Enter official court documents into the Student Record, including restraining orders or other legal judgments.
- Notify the appropriate staff involved in the care and education of the student.

Contact with non-custodial individual:

- In the event that a non-custodial individual attempts to violate a court order and attempts access to a student, the Program Director is to be notified immediately.
- In the event that a non-custodial individual refuses to leave school property, local law enforcement authorities are to be notified immediately.
- Following any such event, a written report will be forwarded to the Executive Director within 24 hours.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT AND REQUIRED NOTIFICATIONS

Upon admission, and annually thereafter, each PAC program will work with the Local Educational Agency (LEA) to obtain the following consents from parents/guardians:

- Emergency Medical
- Medication Administration (when applicable)
- Photo and Videos for possible distribution on PAC website/social media accounts

When applicable, the program will work with the LEA to obtain consents to Conduct Research, Experimentation, Fundraising, Publicity and Observation.

The Program will provide proper notification to parents/guardians concerning curriculum that primarily involves human education or human sexuality issues. Parents/guardians will be afforded the flexibility to exempt their children from any portion of said curriculum through written notification to the school principal. No child so exempted shall be penalized by reason of such exemption.

When the participation or consent of the parent/guardian is required and the parent/guardian fails or refuses to participate, PAC, in conjunction with the LEA, shall make and document multiple efforts to contact the parent/guardian. Such efforts may include:

- Letters
- Written notices sent by certified mail
- Electronic mail (e-mail)
- Telephone calls or TTY communications to the home
- Home visits at such time as the parent/guardian is likely to be home.
- Efforts may include seeking assistance from a community service agency to secure parental/guardianship participation. PAC and the LEA shall ensure that its efforts to involve the parent/guardian and gain parental/guardian consent meet a reasonable measured standard. All efforts attempted are to be documented in the student's record.

It is the responsibility of the LEA to determine if the parent's/guardian's failure or refusal to consent will result in a denial of a free appropriate public education to the student, and has the authority to seek resolution of the dispute through the procedures provided in Options for Dispute Resolution (Section 28.08) of Special Education regulations.

STUDENT SEPARATION RESULTING FROM BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

When used appropriately, time-out can be an effective behavioral support strategy. The purpose of a time out is to temporarily remove a child from positive reinforcement or full participation in the classroom for the purpose of calming. Exclusionary time-out (i.e. removing a child from the classroom) should only be used when the student is displaying behaviors that present or potentially present an unsafe or overly disruptive situation in the classroom.

During an exclusionary time-out, the student must be continuously observed by staff members. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Exclusionary time-out must cease as soon as the student has calmed. For any exclusionary time-out that may last longer than 30 minutes, staff must consult with a counselor or behavior specialist and seek approval from the Program Director.

Seclusion restraint is defined (by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and for the purposes of PAC's behavioral management guidelines), as "the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving." The use of seclusion restraint is prohibited in all PAC programs.

The Program Director is responsible for assuring that any time a student is removed from his/her classroom appropriate documentation and notifications take place.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A STUDENT COUNCIL

In accordance with the guidelines established under the Education Act of 1998, the rules for the establishment of a student council will have regard to the following basic principles:

- The student council shall promote the interests of the school and the involvement of students in the affairs of the school, in co-operation with the board of management, parents and teachers.
- The council should, as far as is practicable, be representative of each class or year group in the school.
- The board of management shall at all times retain the right to dissolve a council or remove a council member, in accordance with these guidelines.

It should also be noted that the guidelines state that a student council should not through its activities interfere with, or detract from, the authority of school management or the teaching staff of the school. It is not a function of a student council to discuss or comment on matters relating to the employment or professional affairs of the principal, teachers and other staff of the school, or to become involved in any issues that fall within their professional competence.

In accordance with the guidelines, the establishment of a Student Council at Pilgrim Area Collaborative should cover the following issues:

1. Establishing the student council
2. Size and composition of the student council
3. Nominations and Elections
4. First Meeting
5. Constitution and/or By-laws
6. Procedure for filling a vacancy in the council
7. Removal of a Member
8. Dissolution of the student council

SCHOOL VISITATION POLICY

It is the policy of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative that all visits to PAC classrooms shall be scheduled in advance, either with the classroom teacher or with the Program Coordinator. This policy applies to PAC parents, college students, consultants, advocates, or other teachers, or any other visitors. The purpose of this policy is to minimize the interruptions and distractions for students and educators while the class is in session.

1. The Program Coordinator or designee shall contact the parent(s) for initial scheduling conversation within five (5) days of receipt of the parents' request.
2. "The observation law states that districts may not condition or restrict program observations except when necessary to protect:
 - a. The safety of children in the program during the observation;
 - b. The integrity of the program during the observation; and,
 - c. Children in the program from disclosure by an observer of confidential or personally identifiable information he or she may obtain while observing the program." M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3.
3. The Program Coordinator will work with the classroom teacher and the observer to set up the specifics of the observation (including, but not limited to, scheduling and placement of the observer in the classroom).
4. The number, frequency, and duration of observation periods will be determined on an individual student basis and typically are between one to four hours. "However, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education recommends that district policies and practices specify that the duration and extent of observations will be determined on an individual basis. Districts should avoid rigid adherence to defined time limits regardless of the student's needs and settings to be observed. The complexities of the child's needs, as well as the program or programs to be observed, should determine what the observation will entail and what amount of time is needed to complete it. Discussion between school staff and the parent or designee is a good starting point for resolving the issue."
5. The start and end time of observation periods and a schedule of observation periods will be stated in advance. In order to minimize classroom or student disruption, the length of individual observation periods may be limited.
6. If the observer is not the parent, the parent must sign a release for the individual to observe.
7. The number of observers at any one time may be limited.
8. The observer will be informed that he/she is not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom. If his/her presence presents a problem, he/she will be asked to leave. This notice is particularly important, since the presence of parents can influence both the performance of their child(ren) and those of others.
9. The observer will be asked to submit his/her report of the observation in advance of any follow-up TEAM meeting.
10. The observer will be informed that he/she is there to evaluate the appropriateness of a specific educational program to meet the needs of an individual child. He/she is not there to evaluate a teacher's ability to perform his or her contractual job duties.
11. The observer will be instructed regarding the disclosure of confidential or personally identifiable information relating to the student or other children. Staff must be mindful of removing materials which may be part of students' records from plain view. In the event that removal is not possible the observer may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.
12. A PAC representative also will observe at the same time.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71B§ 3.

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2009-2, dated January 8, 2009

SERVICE ANIMALS

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative is committed to providing a high quality educational program to all students in a safe and healthy environment.

No animal shall be brought to school without prior permission of the Program Coordinator and where applicable, the host school principal.

All Program Coordinators, in consultation with the health services providers, shall utilize the Department of Public Health publication "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and review student health records to determine which animals may be allowed in the school building. The decision of the Program Coordinator in conjunction with the host school principal, where indicated, shall be final.

I. Educational Program

Use of animals to achieve specific curriculum objectives may be allowed by the Program Coordinator/host school principal provided student health and safety is not jeopardized, and the individual requesting that the animal be brought to school is responsible for adhering to the "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and any other conditions established by the Program Coordinator/host school principal to protect the health and well-being of students.

II. Student Health

The health and well-being of students is the Pilgrim Area Collaborative's highest priority. Animals may cause an allergic reaction or otherwise impair the health of students. No animals may be brought to school or kept in the school, classroom, office or common area that may negatively impact the health of any student who must utilize that area. Animals that cause an allergic reaction or impair the health of students shall be removed from the school immediately so that no student shall have his/her health impaired and each student shall have full access to available educational opportunities.

III. Animals Prohibited from School

Rabies is a growing problem and any fur-bearing animal is susceptible to this very serious fatal disease. Infected animals can transmit this disease to students and staff. Based on the Massachusetts Departments of Health and Education recommendations the following animals are prohibited from programs within the Pilgrim Area Collaborative.

Wild Animals and Domestic Stray Animals - Because of the high incidence of rabies in bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes and other wild carnivores, these animals should not be permitted in school buildings under any circumstances (including dead animals).

Fur-Bearing Animals (pet dogs,* cats, wolf-hybrids, ferrets, etc.) - These animals may pose a risk for transmitting rabies, as well as parasites, fleas, other diseases and injuries.

Bats - Bats pose a high risk for transmitting rabies. Bat houses should not be installed on school grounds and bats should not be brought into the school building.

Poisonous Animals - Spiders, venomous insects and poisonous snakes, reptiles and lizards are prohibited for safety reasons.

****Exception: Guide, Hearing and Other Service Dogs or Law Enforcement Dogs*** - These animals may be allowed in school or on school grounds with proof of current rabies vaccination.

Exceptions may be made with the prior approval of the Executive Director.

IV. Service Animals (Guide or Assistance Dogs)

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative does not permit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including those who require the assistance of a service animal. The Collaborative will comply with Massachusetts law concerning the rights of persons with guide or assistance dogs and with federal law and will permit such animals on school premises and on school transportation.

For purposes of this policy, a “service animal includes any dog that has been individually trained to do the work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.” The regulations further state that “a public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with the disability.”

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that individuals with disabilities cannot perform themselves. Service animals are not pets. There are several kinds of service animals that assist individuals with disabilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, animals that:

- assist individuals who are blind or have severe sight impairments as “seeing eye dogs” or “guide dogs;”
- alert individuals with hearing impairments to sounds;
- pull wheelchairs or carry and pick-up items for individuals with mobility impairments; and assist mobility-impaired individuals with balance.

The Pilgrim Area Collaborative shall not assume or take custody or control of, or responsibility for, any service animal or the care or feeding thereof. The owner or person having custody and control of the animal shall be liable for any damage to persons, premises, property, or facilities caused by the service animal, including, but not limited to, clean up, stain removal, etc.

If, in the opinion of the Program Coordinator/host school principal or authorized designee, any service animal is not in the control of its handler, or if it is not housebroken, the service animal may be excluded from the school or program. The service animal can also be excluded if it presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school. The parent or guardian of the student having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the service animal from the Collaborative program immediately.

If any student or staff member assigned to the classroom in which a service animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the animal, the person having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by the Program Coordinator/host school principal or designee and an alternative plan will be developed with appropriate Collaborative staff. Such plan could include the reassignment of the person having custody and control of the animal to a different classroom. This will also apply if an individual on school transportation suffers an allergic reaction. In this case, an alternate plan will be developed in coordination with appropriate school, Pilgrim Area Collaborative, and transportation staff including the involvement of the parents/guardian of the student.

When a student will be accompanied by a service animal at school facilities on a regular basis, such staff member or such student’s parent or guardian, as well as the animal’s owner and any other person who will have custody and control of the animal will be required to sign a document stating that they have read and understood the foregoing.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The Board of Directors will develop policies and put them in writing so that they may serve as guides for the discretionary action of those to whom it delegates authority.

The formulation and adoption of these written policies will constitute the basic method by which the Board of Directors will exercise its leadership in providing for the successful and efficient functioning of the Collaborative.

The policies of the Board of Directors are framed, and are meant to be interpreted, in terms of state law, regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and other regulatory agencies of the various levels of government.

POLICY ADOPTION

Adoption of new policies or changing existing policies is the responsibility of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative Board of Directors. Policies will be adopted and/or amended only by affirmative vote of the majority of the members of the Board when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting.

The Policy Subcommittee is charged with reviewing, researching and recommending all policies and policy revisions to be considered by the Board of Directors. Individual board members, other standing committees, the Executive Director, or other interested parties should submit policy suggestions, along with any pertinent supporting documentation to the policy sub-committee.

To permit time for study of new policies or amendments to policies and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to react, proposed policies or amendments will be presented as an agenda item to the Board of Directors in the following sequence:

1. First reading of proposed policy or policies: recommendation of the Executive Director; report from any advisory committee assigned responsibility in the area; Board discussion and directions for any redrafting.

For policy revisions which are clerical in nature, the Board of Directors has the discretion to waive the Second Reading of the policy and vote to approve a policy with only one reading. For all other new policies or policy changes that are substantive in nature, the following must occur.

2. At a subsequent meeting, at least two weeks after the first meeting, the policy shall be placed on the agenda for the second reading and action. Amendments to the policy at the action stage will not require repetition of the sequence. If a main motion to approve the policy is not passed at such a meeting by a majority vote of the Board of Directors, the process for that policy is ended, unless further consideration of the policy is tabled to a specified date.

The Board of Directors may dispense with the above sequence to meet emergency conditions.

Policies will be effective immediately unless a different date is set by the Board of Directors. A delay may be necessary in some instances to ensure that affected persons have an opportunity to become familiar with the requirements of the new policy prior to its implementation.

RESCINDING an EXISTING POLICY

The Executive Director or the Policy Subcommittee can recommend rescinding a policy for one of the following reasons:

1. A higher legal authority has deemed it illegal or unnecessary. Such a policy removal may be approved by a single action item.
2. Its content has been included in another policy. The deletion will be considered with the corresponding revision. Such policy removal may be approved by a single action item.

3. It no longer reflects the desired course of action. Such a policy deletion must follow the steps for policy adoption described above, under “Policy Adoption or Revision.”

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REVIEW OF REGULATIONS

It is expected that the Executive Director and administrative staff will implement the policies of the PAC Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors may review the regulations developed by the Executive Director for the Collaborative whenever they appear inconsistent with policy, goals, or objectives of the Collaborative, but it will revise or veto such regulations only when, in the Board's judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the Board.

The Board will not officially approve regulations except as required by state law or in cases when strong community attitudes, or possible student or staff reaction make it necessary or advisable for a regulation to have advance Board approval.

Rules Pertaining to Staff & Student Conduct

Under Massachusetts law, the Executive Director is required to publish "rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of students and staff which have been adopted." Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes, shall be filed with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for information purposes only. Standards of conduct will be included in staff and student handbooks.

These handbooks will be reviewed and approved annually by the Board of Directors.

Legal Ref: M.G.L. 71:37H

POLICY DISSEMINATION

The Executive Director is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies adopted by the Board and the regulations needed to put them into effect.

Accessibility is to extend at least to all employees of the Collaborative, to members of the Board, and insofar as conveniently possible, to all persons in the community. A policy concerning a particular group or groups in the Collaborative will be distributed to those groups prior to the policy's effective date.

All policy manuals distributed to anyone will remain the property of the Board and will be considered as "on loan" to anyone, or any organization, in whose possession they might be at any time. They are subject to recall at any time deemed necessary for purposes of updating.

The Board of Directors policy manual will be considered a public record and will be available for inspection in print at the Executive Director's Office and in electronic form.

ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY ABSENCE

When action must be taken within the Collaborative where the Board of Directors has provided no guides for administrative action, the Executive Director will have the power to act.

His/her decisions, however, will be subject to review by the Board at its next regular meeting. It will be the duty of the Director to inform the Board promptly of such action and the need for policy.

POLICY APPROVED: 06/23/2011

POLICY REVIEW AND EVALUATION

In an effort to keep its written policies up to date so that they can be used consistently as a basis for Board action and Administrative decision, the Board will review its policies on a regular basis.

The Executive Director is given the continuing commission of calling the Board's attention to all policies that are out of date or, for other reasons, appear to need revision.

POLICY APPROVED: 06/23/2011

TREASURER

In accordance with G.L. chapter 40, section 4E, the Pilgrim Area Collaborative Board of Directors shall appoint a treasurer to report directly to the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall be responsible for all the duties and functions referenced in Chapter 40, section 4E as well as the regulations promulgated under that section.

The Treasurer shall be evaluated by the PAC Board of Directors on an annual basis using an evaluation instrument approved by the Board. The evaluation will be conducted in March during an open meeting of the Board of Directors. The chairperson shall compile input from the Board and complete a written evaluative summary.

POLICY APPROVED: 06/23/2011
POLICY AMMENDED: 05/05/2013

WARRANTS

It is the policy of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative that the Board appointed Treasurer shall oversee all receipts and disbursements of funds without further appropriation in accordance with M.G. L. Chapter 40, section 4E. Expenditures shall be itemized and documented in the form of a warrant on a biweekly (every other week) basis. Each warrant will be signed by the Treasurer and one representative of the Board of Directors. All warrants will be made available for expenditure itemization viewing at each Board meeting, or at the individual request of any Board representative. During the open session of the meeting the warrants' summaries will be reviewed and acknowledged by the PAC Board of Directors.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

It is the role of the Executive Director of the Pilgrim Area Collaborative to have oversight of the job descriptions of all Collaborative employees. The creation and amendment to any and all job descriptions shall be reviewed by the Personnel subcommittee of the PAC Board of Directors. All final copies of job descriptions shall be presented to the Board of Directors for their information.

OFFICERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

At the first Board meeting of the new fiscal year the Board of Directors will elect from its membership a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson, and a Secretary.

The Chairperson of the PAC Board has the same powers as any other member to vote upon all measures coming before it, to offer resolutions and to discuss questions. He/she will perform those duties that are consistent with his/her office and those required by law, state regulations, and this Board.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the Chairperson will:

1. Sign the instruments, acts and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Board.
2. Consult with the Executive Director in the planning of the Board's agendas.
3. Confer with the Executive Director on crucial matters that may occur between Board meetings.
4. Appoint subcommittees, subject to Board approval.
5. Call special meetings of the Board as necessary.
6. Be the public spokesman for the Board at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.
7. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Board meetings.

As presiding officer at all meetings the Chairperson will:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time.
2. Announce the business to come before the Board in its proper order.
3. Enforce the Board's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of meetings.
4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference.
5. Explain the effect of a motion would be if this is not clear to members.
6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Board.
7. Answer all parliamentary inquiries.
8. Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof.

The Vice-Chairperson of the Board will act in the absence of the chairperson as presiding officer of the Board and will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to her/him.

The Secretary will keep or cause to be kept an accurate journal of all Board meetings, will comply with state law and Board policy regarding notification of meetings; and will render such reports as may be required by the state or member towns.

During the course of a school year, should any Board officers leave the PAC Board of Directors, thus causing a vacancy in the role, the Board may elect to vote to replace the position at the next scheduled Board meeting.

POLICY APPROVED: 02/06/2016
POLICY AMMENDED: 06/07/2018

SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board has the following subcommittees, Budget, Policy, and Personnel. It may further authorize the establishment of special subcommittees for special assignments and to make recommendations for Board action.

1. The subcommittees will be established through action of the Board.
2. The subcommittee may make recommendations for Board action, but it may not act for the Board.
3. The Executive Director will be an ex-officio member of all subcommittees.
4. A special subcommittee will be dissolved by the Board upon completion of its assignment, or it may be dissolved by a vote of the Board at any time.

BOARD ATTORNEY

The Board may retain an attorney or law firm to provide legal services. A decision to seek legal advice or assistance on behalf of the PAC will be made by the Board and/or the Executive Director. The Executive Director may also take such action at the direction of the Board.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

All meetings of the PAC Board of Directors are open to attendance by the "public and media representatives. However, the Board has the right to convene in a closed executive session when it meets the following procedural conditions imposed by law:

1. The Board will first convene in an open session for which due notice has been given.
2. The Chairperson (or, in his/her absence, the presiding member) will state the purpose for the executive session.
3. A majority of the members must vote to enter the executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.
4. The Chairperson or presiding member will state before entering the executive session whether the Board will reconvene in an open session after the executive session.

The law puts specific limitations on the purposes for which executive sessions may be convened. The Board may enter executive session only to deliberate:

1. The reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than the professional competence, of a single individual, or the discipline or dismissal, including the hearing of charges against, a member of the committee, a school department employee or student, or other individual. The individual has certain rights enumerated in the law including requiring the Board to hold an open session should the individual so request.
2. Strategy with respect to non-union negotiations or collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect.
3. The deployment of security personnel or devices.
4. Allegations of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints.
5. Transactions of real estate, if an open meeting might be detrimental to the negotiating position of the Board or another party.
6. And to comply with the provisions of any general or specific law or federal grant-in-aid requirements.
7. To consider and interview applicants for employment by a preliminary screening committee (The only position that the Board would be involved in that might qualify would be for the position of Executive Director). This exemption only applies if it can be determined that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants. This shall not apply to applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening.
8. To meet or confer with a mediator with respect to any litigation or public business.
9. To discuss trade secrets or confidential competitively-sensitive or other proprietary information conducted by a governmental body as an energy supplier.

(In the first case listed, an open meeting will be held if the individual involved so requests.)

Accurate records of the proceedings conducted in executive session will be kept and may remain secret, only so long as their publication would defeat the purpose of the session. The Board will review executive session minutes for possible declassification at least once each year. All votes taken in executive session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions.

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The Board Chairperson and the Executive Director will review executive session minutes for possible declassification on, at least, an annual basis and, if necessary, will consult with legal counsel. The Board Chairperson will bring minutes recommended for declassification to the Board for a vote either as part of a consent agenda or for individual action. In either case, there shall be an announcement of the declassification of minutes. When a specific set of executive session minutes, not yet declassified, is requested by a member of the public, the Board shall render a decision on declassification at its next meeting or within 30 days after the request, whichever occurs first.

AGENDA FORMAT, PREPARATION AND DISSEMINATION

The Executive Director, conferring with the Chairman of the PAC Board, will arrange the order of items on meeting agendas so that the Board can accomplish its business as expeditiously as possible. The particular order may vary from meeting to meeting in keeping with the business at hand.

The Board will follow the order of business established by the agenda except as it votes to rearrange the order for the convenience of visitors, individuals appearing before the Board, or to expedite business.

Items of business may be suggested by any Board member, staff member, or citizen. The inclusion of such items, however, will be at the discretion of the Chairman. A staff member who wishes to have a topic scheduled on the agenda should submit his/her request through the Director.

The agenda will also provide for time when any citizen who wishes may speak briefly before the Board.

The Board will follow the order of business set up by the agenda unless the order is altered by a vote of the members present. Items of business not on the agenda may be discussed and acted upon in emergency circumstances if a majority of the Board agrees to consider them.

The agenda, together with supporting materials, will be distributed to Board members at least four days prior to the meeting to permit them to give items of business careful consideration. Such materials will be available for public review at the scheduled meeting.

RULES OF ORDER

The most current revision of Roberts Rules of Order will govern the proceedings of the Board, except when those rules are in conflict with the Board's approved policies and regulations.

In accordance with Robert's Rules, the Board may suspend parliamentary rules of order by a two-thirds vote.

VOTING METHOD

All action items will be voted upon and the ayes and nays as well as abstentions, will be recorded in the minutes. If the vote is unanimous only that fact need be recorded.

All actions will require a majority vote of the members present and voting; except as when state law, Robert's Rules of Order (most current revision), or policies of this Board require a larger majority.

A two-thirds' vote will be required to suspend parliamentary rules of order.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

In order to provide for full and open communication between the public and the Board, the Board authorizes several avenues for the exchange of information, ideas, and opinions. All of the following operate within the framework of the Board's scheduled meetings:

1. Written correspondence may be directed to the Board through the Director for consideration at a meeting.
2. At the beginning of each regular meeting of the Board, there will be a period of up to 20 minutes set aside for public participation. Citizens may address the Board on items of school business.
3. A citizen who wishes to have an item placed on the agenda will present the request in writing to the Director. To be considered the request must be received ten (10) calendar days before the Board meeting.

All meetings of the Board will be presided over by the Chairman with the purpose of conducting the business of the Board in a responsible and expeditious manner. The chairman will have the authority to regulate and limit public participation within the provisions of this policy. The Board may determine to limit or alter this authority by majority vote. However, by law, no person shall address a public meeting of a governmental body without permission of the presiding officer at such meeting, and all persons shall, at the request of such presiding officer, be silent.

SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

The operation of any section or sections of Board policies not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a two-thirds vote of Board members present at any regular or special meeting.

POLICY APPROVED: 04/03/2014

BOARD-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

The Board wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the PAC staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Executive Director.

Staff Communication to the Board:

All communications or reports to the Board or any of its subcommittees from any member of the PAC staff will be submitted through the Executive Director. This procedure does not deny the right of any employee to appeal to the Board from administrative decisions on important matters, provided that the Executive Director has been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Board's policy on complaints. Staff members are also reminded that Board meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe firsthand the Board's deliberations on problems of staff concern.

Board Communications to staff:

All official communications, policies, and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Executive Director. The Executive Director will develop appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the Board's problems, concerns and actions.

Visits to PAC:

Individual Board members interested in visiting the PAC will inform the Executive Director of such visits. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in PAC affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Board members will be carried out only under Board authorization.

NEW BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATION

The Board and Executive Director will assist each newly appointed member to understand the Board's functions, policies and procedures. Each newly appointed member will be given a copy of the Board's policy manual and selected materials, including the Annual Report, the Collaborative Agreement, the Strategic Plan, as well as student handbooks.

All new Board members are required to complete the mandatory D.E.S.E. training for Collaborative Board members, and provide to PAC the certificate of completion. Additionally, they are required to annually read and sign off acknowledging roles and responsibilities regarding Open meeting law; as well as read and sign off acknowledging roles and responsibilities regarding Ethics and take the mandatory Ethics online training; all of which are required to be submitted to PAC as well.

BOARD LEGISLATIVE ROLE

The Board will keep itself informed of pending legislation and actively communicate its concerns and make its position known to elected representatives at both the state and national level.

POLICY APPROVED: 04/03/2014