

# **Staff Handbook**

## **2015 – 2016**

**The Gill-Montague Regional School District**

*Challenging and supporting every student to  
succeed through strong leadership, excellent  
teaching, and community engagement*

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| The Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ Department of Education has issued specific regulations concerning the use of physical restraint on students at publicly-funded elementary and secondary education programs, found at 603 CMR 46.00 et seq. These regulations apply to all students, including regular education students, collaborative students, and students with disabilities. The Gill-Montague Regional School Committee, the Superintendent of Schools, and all Gill-Montague Regional School administrators are committed to ensuring that the use of physical restraint on Gill-Montague students strictly adheres to these regulations..... | 27 |
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# Welcome Letter

Dear Staff Member,

I would like to welcome you to the Gill-Montague Regional School District. Our mission is to educate the whole child, ensuring that each child in the district is safe, healthy, supported, engaged, and challenged. A key to the success of this mission is our ability to collaborate and to communicate effectively with one another, both within our own buildings and across the district.

As a way of ensuring consistent communication and expectations across the district, we have developed this staff handbook, which outlines expectations and responsibilities of all employees.

We know that laws and regulations sometimes change, and we will do our best to keep this handbook up to date throughout the year. If you note discrepancies or inconsistencies please notify me and we will endeavor to correct them.

I would like to thank you for your continued dedication and commitment to the Gill-Montague Regional School District, our students and their families. I look forward to working with this year, and please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of assistance to you.

Sincerely,

Michael Sullivan, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

## Directory

### Gill-Montague Regional School Committee

|                    |                            |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Sandra Brown       | Chairperson                |
| April Reipold      | Vice-Chairperson           |
| Michael Langknecht | Secretary/ Asst. Treasurer |
| Lesley Cogswell    |                            |
| Joyce Phillips     |                            |
| Marjorie Levenson  |                            |
| Jane Oakes         |                            |
| Valeria Smith      |                            |

### WEB PAGE ADDRESS

[www.gmrtd.org](http://www.gmrtd.org)

### GILL-MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICES

|                   |                                   |              |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Michael Sullivan  | Superintendent of Schools         | 413-863-9324 |
| Robin Hamlett     | Executive Assistant to Supt.      | 413-863-9324 |
| Joanne Blier      | Director of Business & Operations | 413-863-3251 |
| Nancy Parlakulas  | Director of Pupil Services        | 413-863-9311 |
| Donna Fitzpatrick | Director of Teaching and Learning | 413-863-3252 |
| Mistelle Hannah   | Food Service Manager              | 413-863-7315 |
| James Huber       | Facilities/Energy Manager         | 413-863-3261 |
| Tina Mahaney      | Coordinator of Educ. Data Svcs.   | 413-863-7510 |
| William St. Cyr   | Network Manager                   | 413-863-7214 |

### Executive Board of the Gill-Montague Regional Education Association

Karl Dziura, President (Turners Falls High School)

Ron Wood, Vice President (Sheffield Elementary School)

Donna Fowler, Treasurer (Turners Falls High School)

TBA, Secretary

Annmarie Hollowell & Amy Bernard, Officer at Large (Sheffield Elementary School)

Jayne Finn, Unit C Representative

TBA, Building Representative, (Great Falls Middle School)

Laurel Rollins and Eileen Tucker, Building Representatives, (Sheffield Elementary School)

Ron Wood, Building Representative (Hillcrest and Gill Elementary Schools)



# Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Educator Evaluation Performance Standards

### ***Standard I - Curriculum, Planning, and Assessment***

- A. Curriculum and Planning Indicator
  - 1. Subject Matter Knowledge
  - 2. Child and Adolescent Development
  - 3. Rigorous Standards-Based Unit Design
  - 4. Well-Structured Lessons
- B. Assessment Indicator
  - 1. Variety of Assessment Methods
  - 2. Adjustments to Practice
- C. Analysis Indicator
  - 1. Analysis and Conclusions
  - 2. Sharing Conclusions with Colleagues
  - 3. Sharing Conclusions with Students

### ***Standard II – Teaching all Students***

- A. Instruction Indicator
  - 1. Quality of Effort and Work
  - 2. Student Engagement
  - 3. Meeting Diverse Needs
- B. Learning Environment Indicator
  - 1. Safe Learning Environment
  - 2. Collaborative Learning Environment
  - 3. Student Motivation
- C. Cultural Proficiency Indicator
  - 1. Respects Differences
  - 2. Maintains Respectful Environment
- D. Expectations Indicator
  - 1. Clear Expectations
  - 2. High Expectations
  - 3. Access to Knowledge

### ***Standard III – Family and Community Engagement***

- A. Engagement Indicator
  - 1. Parent/Family Engagement
- B. Collaboration Indicator
  - 1. Learning Expectations
  - 2. Curriculum Support
- C.
  - 1. Two-Way Communication
  - 2. Culturally Proficient Communication

### ***Standard IV – Professional Culture***

- A. Reflection Indicator.
  - 1. Reflective Practice
  - 2. Goal Setting

- B. Professional Growth Indicator
  - 1. Professional Learning and Growth
- C. Collaboration Indicator
  - 1. Professional Collaboration
- D. Decision-Making Indicator
  - 1. Decision-Making
- E. Shared Responsibility Indicator
  - 1. Shared Responsibility
- F. Professional Responsibilities Indicator
  - 1. Judgment
  - 2. Reliability and Responsibility

## **NEA Code of Ethics**

### **Preamble**

The National Education Association believes that the education profession consists of one education workforce serving the needs of all students and that the term ‘educator’ includes education support professionals.

The educator, believing in the worth and dignity of each human being, recognizes the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, and the nurture of the democratic principles. Essential to these goals is the protection of freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all. The educator accepts the responsibility to adhere to the highest ethical standards.

The educator recognizes the magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the teaching process. The desire for the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents, and of the members of the community provides the incentive to attain and maintain the highest possible degree of ethical conduct. The Code of Ethics of the Education Profession indicates the aspiration of all educators and provides standards by which to judge conduct.

The remedies specified by the NEA and/or its affiliates for the violation of any provision of this Code shall be exclusive and no such provision shall be enforceable in any form other than the one specifically designated by the NEA or its affiliates.

### **PRINCIPLE I**

#### **Commitment to the Student**

The educator strives to help each student realize his or her potential as a worthy and effective member of society. The educator therefore works to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the student, the educator--

1. Shall not unreasonably restrain the student from independent action in the pursuit of learning.
2. Shall not unreasonably deny the student's access to varying points of view.
3. Shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter relevant to the student's progress.
4. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety.
5. Shall not intentionally expose the student to embarrassment or disparagement.
6. Shall not on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, marital status, political or religious beliefs, family, social or cultural background, or sexual orientation, unfairly--
  - a. Exclude any student from participation in any program
  - b. Deny benefits to any student
  - c. Grant any advantage to any student
7. Shall not use professional relationships with students for private advantage.
8. Shall not disclose information about students obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.

## **PRINCIPLE II**

### **Commitment to the Profession**

The education profession is vested by the public with a trust and responsibility requiring the highest ideals of professional service.

In the belief that the quality of the services of the education profession directly influences the nation and its citizens, the educator shall exert every effort to raise professional standards, to promote a climate that encourages the exercise of professional judgment, to achieve conditions that attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education, and to assist in preventing the practice of the profession by unqualified persons.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the profession, the educator--

1. Shall not in an application for a professional position deliberately make a false statement or fail to disclose a material fact related to competency and qualifications.
2. Shall not misrepresent his/her professional qualifications.

3. Shall not assist any entry into the profession of a person known to be unqualified in respect to character, education, or other relevant attribute.
4. Shall not knowingly make a false statement concerning the qualifications of a candidate for a professional position.
5. Shall not assist a non-educator in the unauthorized practice of teaching.
6. Shall not disclose information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.
7. Shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about a colleague.
8. Shall not accept any gratuity, gift, or favor that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or action.

### **Progressive Discipline**

In instances of faculty or staff misconduct, the employee will be subjected to “progressive discipline,” under which he/she receives a series of increasingly severe penalties prior to being discharged for a particular offense. The purpose of progressive discipline is to correct improper conduct and obtain compliance with established rules of proper employee conduct.

Under normal circumstances, the sequence or severity of penalties under progressive discipline is as follows:

1. Oral counseling (warning).
2. Verbal warning or reprimand (with notation in personnel file).
3. Written warning or reprimand (with notation in personnel file).
4. Suspension or disciplinary layoff.
5. Discharge.

There is no precise mechanical formula or fixed pattern of penalties for every situation. The degree or severity of the disciplinary action for a first instance of misconduct depends upon the nature of the offense. Each instance of misconduct is viewed and judged individually, and the disciplinary measure assigned appropriately.

### **Weingarten Rights**

**Rule 1:** The employee must make a clear request for union representation before or during the interview. The employee cannot be punished for making this request.

**Rule 2:** After the employee makes the request, the employer must choose from among three options. The employer must: grant the request and delay questioning until the union representative arrives and has a chance to consult privately with the employee; deny the request and end the interview immediately; or give the employee a choice of having the interview without representation or ending the interview.

**Rule 3:** If the employer denies the request for union representation, and continues to ask questions, it commits an [unfair labor practice](#) and the employee has a right to refuse to answer. The employer may not discipline the employee for such a refusal.

## **Evaluation**

Teachers and staff evaluations will be carried out with two basic goals in mind. First of all, it is intended that the evaluation process will assist individuals to become more effective in carrying out their assigned tasks and therefore lead to the overall betterment of the education process. Secondly, evaluation is carried out in order to measure and report individual performance.

Procedure: As per negotiated contract.

## **Staff Conduct – School Committee Policy**

All staff members have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with and abide by the laws of the State as these affect their work, the policies of the School Committee, and the regulations designed to implement them.

In the area of personal conduct, the Committee expects that teachers and others will conduct themselves in a manner that not only reflects credit to the school system but also sets forth a model worthy of emulation by students.

All staff members will be expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern.

Essential to the success of ongoing school operations and the instructional program are the following specific responsibilities, which will be required of all personnel:

1. Faithfulness and promptness in attendance at work.
2. Support and enforcement of policies of the Committee and their implementing regulations and school rules in regard to students.
3. Diligence in submitting required reports promptly at the times specified.
4. Care and protection of school property.
5. Concern for and attention to their own and the school system's legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, including the need to ensure that students are under supervision at all times.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37H; 264:1 1; 264:14

## **Facebook & Social Networking Websites**

Policy IJNDD (*This policy is being revised and may be changed in 2015-16*)

The Superintendent and the School Principals will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

1. Improper fraternization with students using Facebook and similar internet sites or social networks, or via cell phone, texting or telephone.
2. Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content.
3. Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol.
4. Examples of inappropriate behavior from other districts, as behavior to avoid.
5. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers and technology.
6. The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

The Superintendent or designees will periodically conduct internet searches to see if teachers have posted inappropriate material on-line. When inappropriate use of computers and websites is discovered, the School Principals and Superintendent will promptly bring that inappropriate use to the attention of the staff member and may consider and apply disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## **Professional Development**

All forms necessary to register for professional development are available on the district website, <http://www.gmrdsd.org>, under “Employees - Professional Development”.

The Professional Development Master Plan is also available on the district website, and highlights the acceptable activities and procedures for staff to receive professional development credit. Please refer to the approved plan for specific procedures and information.

### ***Workshops & Conferences***

Teachers and professional personnel desiring to attend a conference or meeting must obtain a Conference Form. This form should be filled out and returned to the appropriate office three weeks prior to the date of the conference/meeting. In order to be used for district credit and movement on the salary scale, conferences and workshops must be pre-approved by the building principal and the superintendent.

When a member of Unit A attends district-approved professional development during the summer and is not under contract with the district, and the stipend paid does not compensate a member at the typical hourly rate, the difference between the compensation the teaching professional would have earned according to the hourly rate and the amount the stipend pays for will be made up in the form of district credit in the following manner.

The number of hours the teaching professional attends summer professional development will be totaled. Said total will be multiplied by \$30.00. The product of this calculation will have the stipend subtracted from it. The resulting amount will be divided by \$30.00. The result is the number of the uncompensated hours of professional development. For every 15 uncompensated hours, Gill-Montague Regional School District will grant one district credit. Remaining partial credit amounts can be accrued, so that each time a teaching professional accumulates partial district credit up to one whole credit, another district credit will be granted.

For example: a teacher attends 35 hours of training and is paid \$250.  $35 \times \$30 = \$1050$ .  $\$1050 - \$250 = \$800$ .  $\$800 / \$30 = 26.6$ . In this case, the district would grant 1.8 district credits ( $26.6 / 15$ )

Contact the Director of Teaching and Learning for assistance or if you have any questions.

### ***Graduate Coursework***

Teachers and professional personnel taking college graduate courses, who wish the credits to count for district credit on the salary scale or wish to be reimbursed as provided for in the collective bargaining agreement must complete the proper form for pre-approval by the building principal and the superintendent. ***Courses not pre-approved will not be considered for advancement on the salary scale.***

### ***Job Embedded Opportunities***

There are many ways to meet professional development needs that are recognized by the district as valuable opportunities for educational and professional growth. “Job embedded” is defined as activities that may be actively utilized in the classroom that explore accepted methodologies not currently in use or to expand upon those not currently utilized extensively or fully implemented. See the Gill-Montague Professional Development Plan for more information on job embedded professional development opportunities.

## ACADEMIC CALENDAR

### Progress Reports

Student grade and/or progress report cards will be posted to the TeacherPlus Portal minimally once a week.

### Term Start Dates (Elementary)

|                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| First Trimester  | August 31, 2015  |
| Second Trimester | November 2, 2015 |
| Third Trimester  | March 7, 2016    |

### Closing of Grades (Elementary)

|                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| First Trimester  | October 30, 2015 |
| Second Trimester | March 4, 2015    |
| Third Trimester  | June 13, 2016    |

### Grades Due (Elementary)

Grades will be pulled at 7:30 AM on the following dates:

|                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| First Trimester  | November 3, 2015 |
| Second Trimester | March 8, 2015    |
| Third Trimester  | June 14, 2016    |

### Term Start Dates (Secondary)

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| First Semester  | August 31, 2015  |
| Second Semester | November 2, 2015 |
| Third Semester  | January 25, 2016 |
| Fourth Semester | April 4, 2016    |

### Closing of Grades (Secondary)

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| First Semester  | October 30, 2015 |
| Second Semester | January 22, 2016 |
| Third Semester  | April 1, 2016    |
| Fourth Semester | June 13, 2016    |

### Grades Due (Secondary)

Grades will be pulled at 7:30 AM on the following dates:

|                 |                  |
|-----------------|------------------|
| First Semester  | November 3, 2015 |
| Second Semester | January 25, 2016 |
| Third Semester  | April 5, 2016    |
| Fourth Semester | June 14, 2016    |



### ***In-Service and Parent-Teacher Conference Dates***

The following dates have been approved by the School Committee for the early release of students for the purpose of conducting teacher in-service programs and parent-teacher conferences.

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| September 16, 2015 | Early Release / Teacher In-Service         |
| October 7, 2015    | Early Release / Teacher In-Service         |
| November 12 & 13   | Early Release / Parent-Teacher Conferences |
| December 9, 2015   | Early Release / Teacher In-Service         |
| January 13, 2016   | Early Release / Teacher In-Service         |
| January 22, 2016   | Turn-Around Day – no school for students   |
| February 10, 2016  | Early Release / Teacher In-Service         |
| March 17 & 18      | Early Release / Parent-Teacher Conferences |
| April 6, 2016      | Early Release / Teacher In-Service         |
| May 4, 2016        | Early Release / Teacher In-Service         |

# 2015-2016 School Calendar

| August – 1 days |    |    |    |    |
|-----------------|----|----|----|----|
| M               | T  | W  | TH | F  |
| 3               | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |
| 10              | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 17              | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 24              | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 31              |    |    |    |    |

| September – 21 days |    |    |    |    |
|---------------------|----|----|----|----|
| M                   | T  | W  | TH | F  |
|                     | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 7                   | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 14                  | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 21                  | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 28                  | 29 | 30 |    |    |

| October - 21 days |    |    |    |    |
|-------------------|----|----|----|----|
| M                 | T  | W  | TH | F  |
|                   |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| 5                 | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 12                | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 19                | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 26                | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

| November - 18 days |    |    |    |    |
|--------------------|----|----|----|----|
| M                  | T  | W  | TH | F  |
| 2                  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| 9                  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 16                 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 23                 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 30                 |    |    |    |    |

| December - 16 days |    |    |    |    |
|--------------------|----|----|----|----|
| M                  | T  | W  | TH | F  |
|                    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 7                  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 14                 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 21                 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 28                 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |

| January - 18 days |    |    |    |    |
|-------------------|----|----|----|----|
| M                 | T  | W  | TH | F  |
| 4                 | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 11                | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 18                | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 25                | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
|                   |    |    |    |    |

| February - 16 days |    |    |    |    |
|--------------------|----|----|----|----|
| M                  | T  | W  | TH | F  |
| 1                  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 8                  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 15                 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 22                 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 29                 |    |    |    |    |

| March – 23 days |    |    |    |    |
|-----------------|----|----|----|----|
| M               | T  | W  | TH | F  |
|                 | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  |
| 7               | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 |
| 14              | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 21              | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 28              | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |

| April – 16 days |    |    |    |    |
|-----------------|----|----|----|----|
| M               | T  | W  | TH | F  |
|                 |    |    |    | 1  |
| 4               | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 11              | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 18              | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 25              | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |

| May – 21 days |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|
| M             | T  | W  | TH | F  |
| 2             | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| 9             | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 16            | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 23            | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 30            | 31 |    |    |    |

| June – 9 days |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|
| M             | T  | W  | TH | F  |
|               |    | 1  | 2  | 3  |
| 6             | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |
| 13            | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 20            | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 27            | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |

## Start and End Dates

|                           |                                     |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| August 26 <sup>th</sup>   | Staff Begins                        |
| August 31 <sup>st</sup>   | Grades 1-12 <sup>th</sup> First Day |
| September 2 <sup>nd</sup> | PreK-K First Day                    |
| June 3 <sup>th</sup>      | High School Graduation              |
| June 13 <sup>th</sup>     | Students Last Day of School         |
| June 14 <sup>th</sup>     | Staff Last Day                      |

In the event of school cancellations additional days will be added to the calendar.

## In-Service Days

|                            |
|----------------------------|
| September 16 <sup>th</sup> |
| October 7 <sup>th</sup>    |
| December 9 <sup>th</sup>   |
| January 13 <sup>th</sup>   |
| January 22 <sup>nd</sup>   |
| February 10 <sup>th</sup>  |
| April 6 <sup>th</sup>      |
| May 4 <sup>th</sup>        |

## Teacher Prep

June 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>

## Parent/Teacher Conferences

Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>  
March 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>

## Legal Holidays and Vacations

|   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Sept. 7 <sup>th</sup>                           | Labor Day – No School           |
| Oct. 12 <sup>th</sup>                           | Columbus Day – No School        |
| Nov. 11 <sup>th</sup>                           | Veterans' Day – No School       |
| Nov. 25 <sup>th</sup>                           | ½ Day All Schools               |
| Nov. 26 <sup>th</sup> - 27 <sup>th</sup>        | Thanksgiving Recess – No School |
| Dec. 23 <sup>rd</sup> – Jan. 2 <sup>nd</sup>    | December Recess - No School     |
| Jan. 18 <sup>th</sup>                           | Martin Luther King – No School  |
| Feb. 15 <sup>th</sup> – Feb. 19 <sup>th</sup>   | February Recess – No School     |
| April 18 <sup>th</sup> – April 22 <sup>nd</sup> | April Recess – No School        |
| May 30 <sup>th</sup>                            | Memorial Day – No School        |

## Other Holidays and Major Religious Observances

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Sept. 14 <sup>th</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup> | Rosh Hashanah    |
| Sept. 23 <sup>rd</sup>                    | Yom Kippur       |
| Sept. 28 <sup>th</sup>                    | Sukkot           |
| Nov. 11 <sup>th</sup>                     | Diwali           |
| Dec. 7 <sup>th</sup>                      | Chanukah         |
| Dec. 25 <sup>th</sup>                     | Christmas        |
| Dec. 26 <sup>th</sup>                     | Kwanzaa          |
| Feb. 10 <sup>th</sup>                     | Ash Wednesday    |
| March 8 <sup>th</sup>                     | Chinese New Year |
| March 17 <sup>th</sup>                    | Evacuation Day   |
| March 25 <sup>th</sup>                    | Good Friday      |
| March 27 <sup>th</sup>                    | Easter           |
| April 23 <sup>rd</sup>                    | Passover         |
| June 12 <sup>th</sup>                     | Shavuot          |
| June 17 <sup>th</sup>                     | Bunker Hill Day  |

/ = ½ Day

Voted & Approved by SC 4/8/15

## **Emergency Closing Notification**

The decision to close school is made as soon as possible. The school district will notify all staff and students through the Gill-Montague Regional School District one-call system. We will try to notify all staff members no later than 6:30 a.m.

In addition to the one-call notification system, cancellations are usually posted on the following radio and television stations:

|      |             |      |             |
|------|-------------|------|-------------|
| WWLP | Springfield | WGGB | Springfield |
| WHAI | Greenfield  | CBS3 | Springfield |
| WJDF | Orange      |      |             |

## **Working Hours**

### ***Start & End Times***

Employees who are assigned to the middle school and/or high school must report to work ten (10) minutes prior to the start of the students' first class, and remain ten (10) minutes after the students' last class. Currently, this means employees must arrive no later than 7:35 a.m. and remain until 2:35 p.m.

Employees who are assigned to an elementary school must report to work by 8:30 am, and remain ten (10) minutes after the students' last class. Currently, this means employees must remain until 3:25 pm.

In the event of a delayed opening, the start time will be adjusted accordingly.

Teachers in Grades 6-12 (excluding Gill Elementary) shall be available for after school help sessions for those pupils needing additional instruction for at least two (2) afternoons per week.

### ***Preparation Period***

Teachers are free to leave the building during their lunch period. During their preparation period, teachers are expected to be in the school. Preparation periods are for class preparation, collaboration, and meeting with other staff members and parents.

Staff will be allowed to leave the building during their preparation period for a bona fide emergency, personal issue, or for school business. In the event a staff needs to leave the building he/she must notify the Principal or designee.

## **Duties**

Each semester a duty schedule will be developed and provided to faculty and staff. Duties will be assigned in as fair and equitable a manner as possible.

Specific duty rosters and requirements for each building will be provided to staff at the beginning of each school year. The building administration reserves the right to alter the duty schedule or duty assignments as necessary to ensure that proper supervision of students is maintained at all times. The safety of the students is of paramount concern.

## **Teacher Absence**

### ***Directions in case of absence***

- Always have your safety/evacuation folder and any other pertinent manuals on your desk or easily accessible. Note the location of these materials in your lesson plan and emergency folder.
- Whenever possible, teachers should notify the designated substitute scheduler of an anticipated absence on the day preceding the absence.
- Teachers who are absent should, if possible, notify the office by 2:00 p.m. to inform the administration that they intend to be absent the following day.
- In cases where prior notification is not possible, teachers should notify the designated substitute scheduler no later than 6:30 a.m., using the phone number provided.
- In all cases, it is the teacher's responsibility to provide adequate lesson plans for the time they are absent. Lessons can be prepared and left on the desk ahead of time, sent in with another person, emailed, or faxed to the office. All lessons must arrive no later than 7:30 a.m.

### ***Emergency Substitute Folder***

**Prior to the end of the first week of school**, teachers are to submit an emergency substitute folder to the office. This folder is to be used in an emergency when more complete lessons cannot be provided. This folder must contain the following and be updated after each use:

- A copy of the teacher's schedule
- Current class rosters and seating plans
- *Location of safety/emergency folder and pertinent manuals and materials*
- Duty roster when applicable
- Emergency lesson plans including a minimum of one days' lessons. These plans should reflect skills taught or in need of reinforcement in specific class areas.
- Bell schedules (if applicable)
- A description of important classroom routines, time schedules, etc.

## **Homework and Assignments**

### ***Homework***

The Gill-Montague Regional School District supports the belief that meaningful and appropriate homework should be an integral part of every student's educational program. Every student in the Gill-Montague Regional School, therefore, shall be assigned homework on a regular basis in all subjects where it is educationally and developmentally appropriate to do so.

Homework should complement, supplement and reinforce classroom instruction. Skill and work habit development, remediation, skill reinforcement, enrichment, research and make-up work are all types of legitimate areas for homework focus.

### ***Make-Up Work***

When a student has been absent from school (except for truancy) it is recommended that the following procedure be employed:

- The student shall see the teacher to apprise him/her of the work missed.
- The student shall make arrangements with the teacher for extra help.
- The teacher shall allow students to make up time equal to the amount of days absent. If student has an IEP or 504 which allows for extended time, the teacher shall give the student reasonable time to complete all missed work. A definite date should be set.
- The teacher is encouraged inform both Student Services and the student's parents of the student's failure to keep appointments for extra help and/or to complete any or all missed work in the time allowed.

## **Cheating / Plagiarism**

Cheating, including plagiarism, should never be ignored. Those who cheat or plagiarize will, on each occasion, receive a zero for the schoolwork on which they have cheated and may receive additional consequences at the discretion of the administration. The teacher involved will notify the parents of the student(s) and report the incident to the Principal or designee.

## **Other Teacher Responsibilities**

### ***Insubordination***

The legal definition of insubordination is: "Refusal to obey some order which a supervisor is entitled to give and have obeyed. The term imports a willful or intentional disregard of the lawful and reasonable instructions of the employer."

All faculty and staff members, when directed by an administrator, are expected to comply with the directive. Refusal to do so will be considered insubordination. Should a faculty or staff member believe that the request is in violation of the collective bargaining agreement, they should do as directed and then follow up with an association officer.

### ***Phone Calls / Cell Phones***

Phones in the classrooms (if available) are programmed to send any incoming calls from outside the school directly to voice mail. Any emergency calls to a faculty or staff member must be made through the office and forwarded to the classroom. Only emergency calls will be forwarded. Teachers who have cell phones are expected to keep them on silent/vibrate during the school day and to limit their use during class time to emergencies.

### ***Professional Attire***

As professional educators, we want to be treated as professionals by the public, parents, and our students. That being said, it is important that we conduct ourselves with professionalism in all aspects of our professional lives. Part of that professionalism is displayed through our demeanor – how we act and what we say – and part of that is displayed through our appearance – how we dress and what we wear.

Members of the community entrust their children to us and look to us at times for help and guidance. We should instill confidence in them that we are indeed professionals with proper credentials and demeanor to address their concerns.

As such, educators in the Gill-Montague Regional School District are encouraged not to wear t-shirts, sweatshirts, or jeans (dress jeans would be an exception) unless an activity, in which you are involved, such as an outdoor field trip, specifically requires more casual attire.

### ***Grades***

Your grading process must be explained to the students in your classes at the beginning of each semester or if changes are instituted throughout the school year. Teachers are expected to correct and grade assignments in a timely manner and to keep grades current in Grade Quick. This is essential if Edline is to be useful to students and parents.

### ***Teacher Gradebook Portal***

1. Each course syllabus (at middle and high school level) is to be posted on the teacher's portal page. If curriculum maps are complete, they are to be posted as well.
2. Grades from all teachers are to be posted minimally once per week, even if no new grades have been added. Each posting should be labeled with the date of posting.
3. At the middle and high school levels, daily lesson plans are to be posted prior to the lesson being taught. Teachers may use either the Excel or Word template. Lesson plans are to be placed in the electronic lesson plan folder for each course.

4. Daily homework assignments are to be placed in the “assignment” folder for each course at the middle and high school levels and for each classroom teacher at the elementary level. Each assignment is to be dated and longer assignments must include due dates.

### ***Standards Based Classrooms***

1. The following will be clearly posted each day:
  - a. The agenda for the class
  - b. The lesson’s daily objective(s) in student-friendly language
  - c. Physically post homework assignment in class.
2. Exemplars of student work or teacher-created exemplars are to be displayed so that students know what good work looks like.
3. Questioning is to be such that answers require higher order thinking. Simple one-word answers and simple recall are not sufficient for this. Developing good questions is part of a sound lesson planning process.

### ***Field Trips / Educational Trips***

Staff desiring to take students on a field trip must complete an Educational Field Trip Form and provide it to the appropriate personnel as stated on the form. **The form should be filled out, signed by the school nurse, and returned to the office at least three weeks prior to the date of the field trip.** Please note that all out-of-state field trips will require School Committee approval, so please plan accordingly.

### ***Administration of Internal Medications***

At no time are students to have pills on their person during the school day nor is staff to administer any medications, including over the counter drugs such as Motrin, Ibuprofen, Aspirin, cough drops, etc. All medication must be delivered directly to the school nurse by a parent or guardian. The nurse has a Health Policy book on file in her office to answer any health questions.

### ***Schedule B Positions***

There are many Schedule B positions available to teachers and staff members each year. These positions will be posted annually and may be posted separately if vacancies occur during the school year. These positions are one-year appointments that must be applied for annually. No staff member is guaranteed employment in a Schedule B position.

Each spring, the central office will post the available Schedule B positions for the upcoming year. Applications are to be submitted to the building principal responsible for the position. In some cases, where people decide they want to split the position between two people and share the compensation and responsibilities they may do so.

### ***Cafeteria Charges***

Staff members should not charge meals in the cafeteria. We understand that everyone forgets to bring a lunch from time to time, or that there is something being offered in the cafeteria that sounds really good but we forgot to bring money that day to purchase a lunch. While we want to work with everyone, it becomes very difficult – and sometimes embarrassing – to track who owes how much. Please be aware that the food services staff has been directed to not accept staff charges for any meals offered through the cafeteria. Please plan accordingly.

### **Care of School Property**

Teachers are responsible for instructing and frequently reminding students of the proper care and use of the school building, grounds, furniture and materials.

Teachers are specifically responsible for proper student care and use of those materials, items of equipment, and furniture under their immediate control.

Teachers are responsible for stopping and reporting all acts of vandalism that occur in the building or on the grounds.

Teachers must maintain accurate book and equipment sign out procedures and report any losses to the principal's office.

### ***Book Distribution***

Prior to issuing textbooks to students, teachers should check that:

- The book is properly stamped with the school stamp (located in the high school office)
- The book is properly numbered
- The number is properly recorded

Teachers are responsible for instructing the students in the proper care and use of textbooks and require the student to use a book cover of some type.

On issuing a textbook to the student ***at the high school***, the teacher must:

- Record the appropriate information on the book receipt.
- On the student signature line(s) provided, the student is to affix his name in ink.
- The teacher shall keep both copies of the book receipt until the book is returned, at which point he/she will sign the receipt and give the paper copy to the student.
- Students are to be made aware that the copy of the receipt is their proof that the book was returned.



### ***Lost Books and Equipment***

Teachers are responsible for instructing students in the proper procedure to follow in the event they lose a book or equipment.

Students are responsible for any books and/or equipment they have been issued, including library books.

Books found by custodians during the summer will be stored in the principal's office. At the beginning of the year, teachers should check their books against the list of books lost the previous school year. If "found", the books should be crossed off the "lost book" list and the appropriate office should be notified so that monies paid can be refunded.

Book inventories and both copies of book receipts (at the high school only) are to be turned into the office as part of the end-of-year checkout process.

### ***Food and Snacks in the Classroom***

Eating in classrooms is not allowed unless it is properly supervised and is part of a classroom routine or celebration.

Cooking of any kind is not allowed in the classroom. In the middle/high school, the Consumer Science Lab (located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor) may be reserved for baking and cooking.

### ***Housekeeping***

At the end of each day teachers should:

- Power down their computers by going to the Start button at the bottom left of the screen and selecting "Shut Down". Then let Windows shut down on its own. During the shutdown process the computer will automatically install new patches and other appropriate updates.
- Turn off the computer monitor to save additional energy.
- Close and secure all windows.
- Close blinds.
- Turn off lights.
- Close and lock doors. Teachers should lock their classrooms during the day whenever they are not present.
- Check area or room for any damage to the building, furniture and equipment. If found, please notify the office or a custodian prior to departure.
- Clean chalkboard/whiteboard or have it prepared for next day.
- See that furniture is positioned in an orderly fashion for the next day or placed so that the custodial staff may better clean the room.
- In rooms or areas where there are separate chairs, see that the students carefully place the chairs on the desks/tables or stack them neatly prior to dismissal.

## **Physical Examinations / Health Requirements**

All new personnel in the school system shall have a physical examination by a physician of their choice and submit evidence of said examination to the School District office prior to commencing employment.

Employees may also be required to submit a physician's certificate subsequent to long-term illnesses in accordance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Gill-Montague Education Association (GMEA) and the Gill-Montague Regional School Committee (GMRSC) and/or GMRSC policy.

## **Student Welfare**

### ***Supervision of Students***

School personnel assigned supervision are expected to act as reasonably prudent adults in providing for the safety of the students in their charge.

In keeping with this prudence, no teacher or other staff member will leave his/her assigned group unsupervised unless an arrangement to provide coverage has been made to take care of an emergency.

During school hours or while engaging in school-sponsored activities, students will be released only into the custody of parents or other adults authorized in writing by a parent or guardian.

### ***Student Safety***

Instruction in courses and activities such as industrial arts, science, homemaking, physical education, health, and safety will include and emphasize accident prevention.

Safety instruction will precede the use of materials and equipment by students in applicable units of work, and instructors will teach and enforce all safety rules set up for the particular courses. These include the wearing of protective eye devices in appropriate activities.

## **Physical Restraint Policy**

*(to be updated Fall 2015)*

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Department of Education has issued specific regulations concerning the use of physical restraint on students at publicly-funded elementary and secondary education programs, found at 603 CMR [46.00](#) et seq. These regulations apply to all students, including regular education students, collaborative students, and students with disabilities. The Gill-Montague Regional School Committee, the Superintendent of Schools, and all Gill-Montague Regional School administrators are committed to ensuring that the use of physical restraint on Gill-Montague students strictly adheres to these regulations.

Pursuant to the regulations, school personnel will use physical restraint only after other less intrusive methods of de-escalation have been attempted or considered:

1. To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student or member of the school district from imminent, serious physical harm; and
2. To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as the result of the use of physical restraint.

In accordance with state and federal law, nothing in the regulations precludes school personnel from implementing physical restraint contained in an agreed-upon Behavioral Intervention Plan. A Behavioral Intervention Plan is the result of a Functional Behavioral Assessment and may be found in an Individual Educational Program, Section 504/Accommodational Plan, or on its own. A Behavioral Intervention Plan informed written consent by the student's parent/legal guardian.

### **Physical Restraint Procedures**

It should be noted that nothing in the regulations precludes a teacher or other staff member from using reasonable force to protect students, themselves, or other persons from assault or imminent, serious physical harm.

#### Definitions:

1. Physical restraint may be defined as "the use of bodily force to limit a student's freedom of movement."
2. Extended restraint may be defined as a physical restraint which lasts for more than twenty (20) minutes.
3. Physical escort may be defined as "touching or holding a student without the use of force for the purpose of directing the student." Physical escort is not physical restraint.

4. Types of restraints can include, but are not limited to, the use of a mechanical device to restrict movement of the entire body or portions thereof; placing a student in seclusion without access to school staff; or the administration of medication. The use of seclusion restraint is prohibited in the Gill-Montague Regional Schools. The use of "time-outs" where a staff member is present or accessible by the student does not constitute seclusion restraint. The type of physical restraint used is dependent upon the special training of staff members in specific kinds of such restraints. Chemical restraint may not be used without the explicit authorization of a physician and a signed release from the parent/guardian approving its use.

#### Staff Training:

All administrators, faculty and other program staff will receive annual training regarding this policy. Training will include the use of interventions to de-escalate problem behavior in order to avoid the use of restraints, the types of restraints and related safety issues for each; employing physical restraint in accordance with known medical or psychological limitations and/or behavioral intervention plans for individual students; and the staff member(s) who have received in-depth training with whom they may consult as needed.

Additional in-depth training for designated staff members will include:

1. Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint; de-escalation of problem behaviors; relationship building; and the use of alternatives to restraint;
2. Description and identification of dangerous behaviors by a student which may indicate the need for physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations to determine whether restraint is warranted;
3. Simulated experiences in administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effects upon the person restrained, including the monitoring of physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance.
4. Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and the investigation of injuries and complaints; and
5. Demonstrations by participants showing that they are proficient in administering physical restraint.

Faculty and staff will review any behavior plans pertaining to special techniques to be use with identified students.

#### When Physical Restraints is Used:

- Physical restraint may be used when non-physical interventions have been attempted without success or when it is apparent that they would not be effective. It may only be used when a student's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to self and/or others or when otherwise outlined in a Behavioral Intervention Plan.

- Physical restraint is limited to the use of such reasonable force as may be necessary to protect a student or other persons from assault or imminent, serious physical harm.
- Unless specifically indicated in an agreed-upon Behavioral Intervention Plan, physical restraint may not be used as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats which do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm.  
Physical restraint may never be used as a means of punishment.
- A school staff member who uses a physical restraint on a student must use the safest method available which is most appropriate to the situation at hand, and the method for which that staff member has been trained. Staff shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations and/or behavior intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint upon an individual student.
- No physical restraint may be used which prevents a student from speaking or breathing, and must be used in such a way as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during the restraint, the student demonstrates significant physical distress, the restraint shall be removed immediately.
- A physical restraint must be discontinued as soon as possible when it has been determined that a student no longer poses a risk of harm to self or others.
- Following the use of a physical restraint, the building Principal or a designated program staff member will meet with the student to address the behavior which prompted the restraint, and will also review the incident with the staff members who were involved and determine whether follow-up is needed for students who may have witnessed the incident.
- Physical restraint regulations do not prohibit any individual from reporting a crime committed by a student to local law enforcement or other state agencies. Law enforcement officers, school security staff, or judicial authorities are not prohibited by this regulation from the exercise of their responsibilities, which may include the physical detainment of a student or other person alleged to have committed a crime or who poses a security risk. In addition, an individual who is a mandated reporter under M.G.L., c. [119, s. 51A](#) is not prohibited by this policy from complying with their responsibility to report neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency.

### Reporting Requirements:

- A staff member who administers a restraint shall verbally inform the building Principal or his/her designee as soon as practical that day and by written report no later than the next school day.
- The building Principal or his/her designee shall verbally inform the student's parent/guardian of the use of physical restraint as soon as practical and by written report no later than three (3) school days following such use.

- The report must include:
  - a. The names and job titles or staff who administered the restraint and the person(s) who observed it.
  - b. The date and time the restraint was used, the time it began and ended, and the name of the administrator who was verbally informed.
  - c. A description of the activity of the restrained student and other students and staff in the vicinity immediately preceding the use of the restraint; the behavior which prompted it; the efforts made to de-escalate; alternatives which were attempted first; and the jurisdiction for resorting to physical restraint.
  - d. A description of the restraint used and the reasons why; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how it ended; and documentation of injury, if any, to the student or staff and any medical care provided.
  - e. For extended restraints, a description of the alternatives which were attempted first; the outcome of those efforts; and the jurisdiction for administering an extended restraint.
  - f. Information regarding any further action(s) taken by school staff, including any disciplinary actions taken toward the student.
  - g. Information regarding opportunities for the student's parent/guardian to discuss the restraint and related matters with the building Principal or his/her designee, as well as their right to file a grievance.

The building Principal or his/her designee shall maintain an ongoing record of all reported instances of the use of physical restraint which shall be made available to the Department of Education. A copy of the ongoing record of all reported instances shall be forwarded to the Student Services Supervisor by January 31st and June 30th of each school year.

When a restraint has resulted in a serious injury to the student or program staff member involved, or when an extended restraint has been administered, a written report must be submitted to the Department of Education within five (5) school days of the date of the restraint. School building administration must, at this time, also provide the Department of Education with a copy of the ongoing record of restraints for the thirty (30) day period preceding the date of the reported restraint. The Department will notify the school district of any required actions, if warranted, within thirty (30) calendar days of the receipt of the report.

Copies of all correspondence to the Department of Education shall be forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools and Student Services Supervisor.

Nothing contained herein shall relieve staff reporting requirements when a personal injury occurs within the scope of employment.

Individual Waiver of Reporting Requirements:

A school district may seek a parent/guardian's consent to waive the reporting requirements for restraints which do not result in injury or extended restraint. Such a waiver should only be sought for students who present behaviors which may require the frequent use of restraints. The parent/guardian must provide informed, written consent to the waiver, which shall specify the reporting requirements which are being waived. The informed, written consent will be kept in the student's file, along with specific information regarding when and how the parent/guardian will be informed of the administration of restraints on their child.

Students with Disabilities:

Restraints which are administered to students pursuant to their Individualized Education Programs, Section 504 Accommodation Plans, or other plans developed in accordance with state and federal law, and which has been agreed upon by both the school and the parent/guardian, shall be deemed to meet the requirements of 603 CMR [46.00](#). The limitations on chemical, mechanical, and seclusion restraints as specified above continue to apply to students with disabilities, as do the above reporting requirements.

Grievance Procedure

The Gill-Montague Regional School District has established an internal procedure in order to provide for prompt and equitable resolutions of complaints regarding the administration of physical restraints.

Definitions:

A "Grievance" is a complaint made pursuant to, and arising out of, the Gill-Montague Regional School Districts obligations to comply with state regulations regarding the use of physical restraints.

An "Aggrieved Party" is a person or persons making the complaint.

Purpose:

The purpose of this grievance procedure is to secure prompt and equitable solutions to grievances which may, from time to time, arise pursuant to 603 CMR [46.00](#).

General:

No aggrieved party will be subject to coercion, intimidation, interference, or discrimination for registering a complaint or for assisting in the investigation of any alleged complaint within the context of this grievance procedure.

All documents, communications, and records dealing with the filing of a grievance will be kept confidential to the full extent provided by law.

Forms for filing grievances will be provided upon request by building Principals or the Student Services Supervisor, Gill-Montague Regional School District, 35 Crocker Avenue, Turners Falls, MA. 01376.

Procedure:

- The aggrieved party should complete the Grievance Form and return it to the building Principal or his/her designee at the school building in which the alleged grievance occurred. The complaint should be filed within fifteen (15) days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation. Assistance will be provided, upon request, to enable an individual to complete the Grievance Form and pursue the grievance process.
- Within (10) school days after receiving the grievance, the building Principal or his/her designee shall meet with the aggrieved party in an effort to resolve the grievance. This investigation into the complaint is contemplated to be thorough, but informal, in nature. All interested persons and their representatives, if any, shall be afforded an opportunity to be heard and to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. If the grievance is not resolved, it will be forwarded to the Student Services Supervisor.
- Within thirty (30) school days of receipt of an unresolved grievance, the Student Services Supervisor will conduct a hearing to determine what, if any, action shall be taken in response to the grievance. The hearing shall be held at a time and place mutually convenient to all parties. The hearing procedure will follow appropriate due process procedures including:
  - the opportunity for the aggrieved party to present the grievance in any suitable manner;
  - the right of the aggrieved party to an impartial hearing officer;
  - the right of the aggrieved party to be represented by counsel or an advocate at the aggrieved party's expense;
- the right of the aggrieved party to a prompt decision.

Parents/legal guardians should provide advance notice to the Student Services Supervisor that they will be represented by counsel or an advocate at the grievance hearing. Failure to provide such notice will likely result in a postponement of the hearing.

- A written determination of the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution, if any, shall be issued by the Student Services Supervisor and forwarded to the complainant no later than fifteen (15) working days after the hearing. The determination of the validity of the complaint and the description of the resolution will be provided in an alternate format, upon request, if needed for effective communication.
- The complainant can request a reconsideration of the case in instances where he or she is dissatisfied with the resolution. The request for reconsideration should be made within fifteen (15) working days following receipt of the written



determination to the Superintendent of the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

- The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution for the complaint filed hereunder shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of an ADA, Section 504 or other complaint with the responsible federal department or agency. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.
- These rules shall be construed to protect the substantive rights of the interested persons to meet appropriate due process standards and to assure that the Gill-Montague Regional School District comply with 603 CMR [46.00](#).
- Copies of all resolutions and findings made under this procedure shall be filed with the Superintendent's office of the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

## Report of Physical Restraint

To be completed by restrainer(s) and Principal/Designee

Student \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Parent \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

| Restrainer(s) | Job Title(s) |
|---------------|--------------|
| _____         | _____        |
| _____         | _____        |
| _____         | _____        |
| _____         | _____        |

| Observers of Restraint | Title |
|------------------------|-------|
| _____                  | _____ |
| _____                  | _____ |
| _____                  | _____ |

| Date of Restraint | Time Began | Time Ended |
|-------------------|------------|------------|
| _____             | _____      | _____      |

1. Name of Administrator verbally informed \_\_\_\_\_

2. Activity of restrained student and others in vicinity immediately preceding use of the restraint

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Behavior which prompted restraint \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Efforts made to de-escalate physical restraint \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Justification for resorting to physical restraint \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Description of restraint/reason why \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Student's behaviors during and reactions to restraint \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. How restraint ended \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Injury to student or staff \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(A) Medical care provided, if any \_\_\_\_\_

(B) DOE sent written notification of serious injury: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

10. Extended Restraints

(A) Description of alternatives first attempted \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(B) Outcome of these efforts

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(C) DOE sent written notification of extended restraint

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

11. Further actions by school, including disciplinary action toward student

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. Parent/Guardian provided opportunity to discuss restraint with Principal/designee

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

13. Parent/Guardian informed of the right to file a grievance

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

14. Principal/Designee verbally informed parent/guardian of restraint

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

15. Principal sent written report to parent/guardian

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Principal  
Restrainer  
Restrainer

## **Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect**

### Reporting to Authorities

Any school official or employee shall report any suspected child abuse or neglect as required by M.G.L. c.119, §51A. In accordance with the law and departmental regulations, the District shall establish the necessary regulations and procedures to comply with the intent of the law consistent with the District's responsibility to the students, parents, District personnel, and the community.

### Responsibility for Reporting

Individuals having a mandated responsibility for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect according to M.G.L. c.119, §51 A-G, include the following personnel: principal, assistant principal, school nurse, physician, student services counselor, specialist or teacher. The law provides that any such person (mandated reporter) so required to make such oral and written reports, and fails to do so, shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand (\$1000) dollars.

### Reporting Procedure

A report of all cases of suspected abuse or neglect will be made to the administration who will convene a meeting of the Building Team within 24 hours. Each school building shall have a Building Team comprised of the following personnel:

- Administration
- Person making referral
- School Nurse
- Counselor(s)
- School Psychologist
- Others as deemed appropriate by the standing team

Reports will be made to:

**The Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (D.C.F.) Telephone:  
413-775-5000 (Greenfield Office)**

## **Anti-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment Policy and Grievance Procedure**

The Gill-Montague Regional School District is committed to maintaining and promoting an educational environment free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment. The civil rights of all school community members are guaranteed by law, and the protection of those rights is of utmost importance and priority to the District. Discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, genetic information or testing, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age or disability (hereinafter “membership in a protected class”) will not be tolerated. Retaliation against any student or other individual who has complained of discrimination, including harassment, or individuals who have cooperated with an investigation of such a complaint, is also unlawful and will not be tolerated. The District will promptly investigate, remedy any harm, seek to prevent recurrence of such conduct, and will also develop procedures to accomplish this end. This policy applies to conduct directed toward persons associated with the educational community by all other persons associated with the educational community including, but not limited to, students, District employees, the School Committee, school volunteers, and independent contractors.

### **I. What Is Discrimination, including Harassment?**

- A. **Discrimination:** Treating persons differently, or interfering with or preventing them from enjoying the advantages or privileges afforded to others because of their membership in a protected class.
  
- B. **Harassment:** Oral, written, graphic, electronic, or physical conduct relating to a person’s actual or perceived membership in a protected class that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit that person’s ability to participate in the District’s programs or activities by creating a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive educational environment.

Harassing conduct based on a person’s protected status may include, but is not limited to:

- Degrading, demeaning, insulting, or abusive verbal or written statements;
- Taking personal belongings, taunting, teasing, name-calling, or spreading rumors;
- Drawing or writing graffiti, slogans, visual displays, or symbols on school or another’s property;
- Telling degrading or offensive jokes;
- Unwanted physical contact of any kind;
- Physical violence, threats of bodily harm, physical intimidation, or stalking;

Threatening letter, emails, instant messages, or websites that come within the scope of the District's disciplinary authority;  
Defacing, damaging, or destroying school or another's property.

## **II. Responsibilities of all Persons Associated with Educational Community**

Each member of the educational community is personally responsible for ensuring that his/her conduct does not in any way harass or discriminate against any other person that he/she has contact with in the performance of his/her duties or studies or while acting as a member of the school community. In addition, each member of the educational community is required to fully cooperate in any investigation of alleged discrimination, including harassment. Further, District employees are obligated to intervene and stop any discrimination, including harassment they witness and to immediately report to the appropriate party instances of discrimination, including harassment that are reported to them or of which they otherwise learn.

## **III. Designated Officials for Addressing Discrimination and Harassment Complaints**

The Civil Rights Coordinator(s) are responsible for receiving reports and complaints of violations of this Policy. Individuals may file a report or complaint of discrimination, including harassment, with the Civil Rights Coordinator(s). If the complaint involves allegations of discrimination based on disability, the person filing the complainant also has the option to file his/her complaint with the building level 504 coordinator. A report or complaint of a violation involving the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) should be filed with the Superintendent. A report or complaint of violation involving the Superintendent should be filed with the Committee.

The Civil Rights Coordinator:

Michael Sullivan, 35 Crocker Avenue, Turners Falls, MA 01376, 413-863-9324,  
[michael.sullivan@gmrds.org](mailto:michael.sullivan@gmrds.org)

Title IX Coordinator:

Nancy Parlakulas, 35 Crocker Avenue, Turners Falls, MA 01376, 413-863-4001,  
[nancy.parlakulas@gmrds.org](mailto:nancy.parlakulas@gmrds.org)

Section 504/Title II Coordinator:

Donna Fitzpatrick, 35 Crocker Avenue, Turners Falls, MA 01376, 413-863-3252,  
[d.fitzpatrick@gmrds.org](mailto:d.fitzpatrick@gmrds.org)

#### **IV. Procedure for Reporting Discrimination and Harassment**

The following complaint procedure has been established to ensure prompt and effective investigation into allegations of discrimination, including harassment.

A person who believes that he or she had been discriminated against, including being harassed may, to the extent that they feel comfortable, immediately:

1. confront the harasser(s) or person believed to be discriminating against him/her;
2. state the conduct that he/she objects to;
3. indicate that he/she finds such conduct offensive, intimidating and/or embarrassing;
4. insist that the person(s) engaging in the conduct stop the conduct immediately; and/or
5. report the conduct immediately to the Civil Rights Coordinator(s);

If the individual with the concern is not comfortable with such a confrontation, or feels that such a confrontation is unsafe and/or otherwise inappropriate, he/she should instead report the situation to the Civil Rights Coordinator(s). Reports/complaints are to be filed within ninety (90) days after the conduct complained of occurred or within the time the individual reasonably becomes aware of the conduct. (Note: this filing period may be extended for good cause.) The report can be written or oral and should consist of the following:

1. the specific conduct objected to,
2. the date(s) and time(s) such conduct took place,
3. the name(s) of the alleged harasser(s) or person believed to be discriminating against them,
4. the location(s) where the conduct occurred,
5. the name(s) of any witness(es),
6. action sought to remedy the situation, and
7. any other details or information requested by the designated official.

In addition, the person should provide the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) with any documentation (emails, notes, pictures, etc.) or other information in support of the allegation of discrimination, including harassment.

#### **V. Investigation of Complaints**

Upon receipt of a report or complaint, the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) should conduct a prompt investigation. The investigation must allow for the complainant, the subject of the complaint, the alleged harasser, and any other appropriate party to provide information, including witnesses or other evidence, relevant to the consideration and resolution of the complaint. The Civil Rights Coordinator(s) will also endeavor to promptly interview and

obtain detailed written statements from potential witnesses. If further documentation or information is necessary, the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) will notify the appropriate party, asking that the information be provided within ten (10) school/working days.

The District will take interim steps, as necessary, to ensure the safety and well-being of the complainant while the investigation is being conducted. Interim measures are available even if the complainant does not file or continue to pursue a complaint. The Civil Rights Coordinator(s) shall notify the complainant of specific types of interim measures available, which may include measures to avoid contact with the alleged harasser, allowing employees to change work situations as appropriate, or prohibiting an alleged harasser from having any contact with the complainant pending the results of the District's investigation. At any time, a complainant may request either orally or in writing to the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) that specific interim measures be taken pending the outcome of the investigation.

A written determination regarding the complaint and any resolution will be provided by the Civil Rights Coordinator(s) to the complainant within thirty (30) school/working days of the complaint. The determination of whether the District's antidiscrimination policy has been violated will be based upon a preponderance of the evidence standard.

The complainant may request reconsideration of the determination and/or resolution of a complaint by notifying the Superintendent in writing or verbally within seven (7) school/working days of receipt of the written determination of the Civil Rights Coordinators. The Superintendent or his/her designee will respond to such request within (30) thirty school/working days of receipt of the request for reconsideration; his/her decision is final.

If a violation is found to have occurred, the District will take steps to prevent recurrence of the violation and correct its discriminatory effect on the person(s) affected. Such steps may include appropriate disciplinary action, counseling, development of a safety plan and other remedies, as appropriate.

## **VI. Consequences of Violating Policy - Discipline & Discharge**

Any employee who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the contractual provisions governing his/her employment. In appropriate circumstances, the District may also refer the matter to law enforcement officials for possible prosecution.

Any student who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action which may range from detention, suspension from schools, or expulsion from school. (Note: students with disabilities will be subject to the applicable disciplinary procedures set forth in the Students' Rights and Responsibilities District handbook, which adhere to Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973.) In appropriate circumstances, the District may also refer the matter to law enforcement officials for possible prosecution.



## **VII. Confidentiality**

Investigations of discrimination, including harassment complaints shall be conducted in such a manner as to disclose information only to those with a need to know or those who may have information pertinent to the investigation. Please note, some level of disclosure may be necessary in the course of conducting interviews in connection with investigation of any complaint under this policy. The District shall endeavor to keep such information as confidential as it can without compromising the thoroughness of the investigation

## **VIII. State and Federal Authorities**

In addition to the process described above, the complainant may, at any time, file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights, Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, or other appropriate federal or state agency charged with enforcement of state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination, including harassment based on membership in a protected class.

U.S. Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights  
5 Post Office Square  
8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02109-3921  
Telephone: (617) 289-0111 <http://www.ed.gov>

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination  
436 Dwight St., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Rm. 220  
Springfield, MA 01103  
Telephone: (413) 739-2145

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)  
John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
475 Government Center  
Boston, MA 02203  
Telephone: (800) 669-4000 <http://www.eeoc.gov/>

# Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

## Reporting by Staff

School officials and employees are required to report any suspected incidents of bullying as required by M.G.L. c.71, §370(e). Staff members are to report any suspected acts of bullying to their building administrator, who in turn is responsible for conducting an investigation and notifying the Superintendent of Schools. Reports may also be made directly to the Superintendent of Schools if appropriate or desired.

A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

## Reporting by Students, Parents, Guardians or Others

The Gill-Montague Regional School District expects students, parents or guardians, or others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, ***but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.*** Students, parents or guardians, or others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee.

At the elementary level, students will be encouraged to discuss incidents of bullying with their classroom teachers, adjustment counselors, a trusted adult staff member, or with the principal or designee. Oral reports will be reduced to writing by the adult listener as necessary.

At the middle and high school levels, students will be encouraged to report incidents of bullying through all means available, including the online reporting form found on the district website as well as the Safety Tip Line. Students will be encouraged to reach out to a trusted teacher or other adult staff member, a guidance counselor, or the principal or designee.

## Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation

We pledge to take each alleged incident of bullying seriously and will conduct a thorough investigation following the same process and procedure for all reported incidents in the Gill-Montague Regional School District.

Disciplinary action taken will be consistent with the policies and guidelines established by the Gill-Montague Regional School District as indicated by district policy and student/staff handbooks. Parents, students, staff and community members need to be aware, however,

that disciplinary action will not be taken against any alleged aggressor based *solely* on an anonymous report.

## **Safety**

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after investigation, as necessary.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

The principal or designee will make an immediate assessment regarding the safety of all individual students involved. If the incident reported involves off-campus bullying or cyberbullying, a determination will be made if there is an immediate threat to any students involved. If there is a positive determination, a report will be made immediately to the Montague Police Department. Further actions will be coordinated with our School Liaison.

If the incident involves on-campus bullying or cyberbullying, a determination will be made if there is an immediate threat of violence to any students involved. If there is a positive determination, a report will be made immediately to the Montague Police Department. Further actions will be coordinated with our School Liaison.

After the determination that an act of bullying or retaliation has occurred and after appropriate discipline has been enforced, the principal or designee will develop a Safety/Conduct Plan with the students involved. The parents or guardians will be involved in the development of the plan. Teachers and other appropriate staff members will be notified of the incident, the parties involved, and their roles in the incident along with the provisions of the Safety/Conduct Plan.

## **Obligations to Notify Others**

### **Notice to Parents or Guardians.**

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or

designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00, and will occur in writing either through email or written letter as well as via telephone. Every effort will be made to contact the parent or guardian in person, so it is imperative that parents or guardians maintain up-to-date contact information with the school district

#### Notice to Another School or District.

If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00

#### Notice to Law Enforcement.

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the Montague Police Department. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements between the Gill-Montague Regional School District and the Montague Police Department. Also, if the incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the Montague Police Department if he/she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the School Liaison assigned by the Montague Police Department and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

#### Investigation

The principal or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and

address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process.

Often parents wish to know exactly what will happen to an aggressor during the investigation and/or disciplinary phase, and this is a natural reaction. However, educators in the United States must obey the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This act strongly affects schools and disciplinary procedures against minor age students. One effect is this act is to make school records (including disciplinary records) a private matter. This means that the school district is *prohibited* from sharing any information in a student's record – including disciplinary information – to third parties without parental consent.

Massachusetts General Law similarly prohibits the dissemination of any student record information to third parties without parental consent (MGL 603 CMR 23.07[4]). The result of this is that school officials may not divulge how they have disciplined a student, even the parents of the target in the incident. School officials must obey state and federal laws which mandate that they keep student records confidential and private.

The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with district policies and procedures for investigations, and have been outlined on the Bullying Incident Reporting Form.

### **Determinations**

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will: (i) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and (ii) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations (FERPA and M.G.L. 603 CMR 23.07). Because of the legal requirements regarding the

confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian regarding the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be made aware of in order to report violations.

***Gill-Montague Regional School District  
Incident Reporting Form***

**Bullying**     **Sexual Harassment (Title IX Violation)**     **Civil Rights Violation**

**1. Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

**2. Check whether you are the:**     **Target of the behavior**     **Reporter (not the target)**

**3. Check whether you are a:**     **Student**     **Staff member (specify role)** \_\_\_\_\_  
 **Parent**     **Administrator**     **Other (specify)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your contact information/telephone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**4. If student, state your school:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**5. If staff member, state your school or work site:** \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Information about the Incident:**

**Name of Target (s) (of behavior):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Aggressor (s)** (Person (s) who engaged in the behavior): \_\_\_\_\_

**Date(s) of Incident(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time When Incident(s) Occurred:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location of Incident(s)** (Be as specific as possible): \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Witnesses** (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ Student Staff Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ Student Staff Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ Student Staff Other \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used). Please attach additional pages if necessary.**

**9. Signature of Person Filing this Report:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Note: Reports may be filed anonymously.)

**GILL-MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
INVESTIGATION REPORT**

1. **Investigator(s):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Position(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Interviews:**

|  |                    |                    |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed aggressor | <b>Name:</b> _____ | <b>Date:</b> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed target    | <b>Name:</b> _____ | <b>Date:</b> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed witnesses | <b>Name:</b> _____ | <b>Date:</b> _____ |
| <b>Name:</b> _____                             |                    | <b>Date:</b> _____ |

**3. List of Documents and Tangible Evidence Reviewed:**

**4. Findings of Fact:**

List Key Undisputed and Disputed facts regarding dates, times, site of incident, party names, ages, grade, protected group status, behaviors and language used, severity, duration, context.

1. Is the student on an IEP?  Yes  No

2. Any prior documented Incidents by the aggressor?  Yes  No

If yes, have incidents involved target or target group previously?  Yes  No

3. Any related prior incidents involving the alleged perpetrator and/or complainant?  Yes  No  
*(including patterns of behavior, locations, context, nature, scope, frequency, duration)*

**4. School's response**

(Please use additional paper and attach to this document as needed)

**CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION**

1. What Happened? (date, time, site, who involved, age, group status, what each person said and did, incident chronology, words used, severity, duration, context including related incidents)

(attach summary)

*Complaint substantiated: Yes* \_\_\_\_\_ *No* \_\_\_\_\_ *Other* \_\_\_\_\_

2. *Interfered with or limited ability of "victim/target" to participate in or benefit from services, activities or privileges of school?*

*Yes* \_\_\_\_\_ *No* \_\_\_\_\_

3. *Created hostile, humiliating, intimidating or offensive educational environment for "victim(s)" / "target (s)"?*

*Yes* \_\_\_\_\_ *No* \_\_\_\_\_

4 *Other conduct/disciplinary Conduct Code Violations?*



**GILL-MONTAGUE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
INVESTIGATION REPORT (continued)**

**RESOLUTION OF THE COMPLAINT:** Finding of Bullying or Retaliation: \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no

**1. Contacts:**

- Target's parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_  Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 District Equity Coordinator (DEC) Date: \_\_\_\_\_  Law Enforcement Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Recommended Actions/Safety Planning (\_\_\_\_ ATTACHED SAFETY PLAN FORM):**

**Disciplinary and Corrective Action (Perpetrator):**

**Corrective and Remedial Action (Victim/Target):**

**Remedial Action for School Community**

**Follow-up with Target:** scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ **Initial and date when completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Follow-up with Aggressor:** scheduled for \_\_\_\_\_ **Initial and date when completed:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

**ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY**

**Report forwarded to Principal: Date** \_\_\_\_\_  
(If principal was not the investigator)

**Report forwarded to Superintendent:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Findings of Fact Made by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Determination Made by:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Gill-Montague Regional School District Safety/Conduct Plan***

***This form is to be confidentially maintained in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g (FERPA). The Safety/Conduct Plan is to be filed in the disciplinary record and incident entered into AdminPlus.***

Directions: After the determination that an act of bullying or harassment has occurred and after appropriate discipline has been enforced, the Principal or Designee develops a safety/conduct plan with the student. The parent/guardian is involved in the development of the plan. Teachers/Teams are notified of the incident, parties involved and their roles in the incident. **Please check the appropriate box.**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Safety Plan for Student Target</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Conduct Plan for Student Aggressor</b> |
|--|--|

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Check-in Person: \_\_\_\_\_

**Frequency and duration will not be less than two (2) times per week for a period of four (4) weeks**

Number of times WEEKLY: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of WEEKS: \_\_\_\_\_ Plan Duration: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_.

For more than three (3) objectives/strategies, attach additional sheets. When objectives/strategies seeking outside counseling/assistance, provide a list of qualified agencies. As Progress Reports are completed they should be attached to the Action Plan.

| <b>Objective / Strategy #1</b>   |      |  |        |
|--|------|--|--------|
| Implementer:   |      |  |        |
| Steps:   |      |  |        |
|  |      |  |        |
| Progress Reports Dates   | One: | Two:   | Three: |
| Teachers/Teams Notified <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO         |      | Copy to Parent/Guardian <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |        |
| Objective Met <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If No, follow up: |      |  |        |
| Implementer Signature:   |      |  | Date:  |

## Gill-Montague Regional School District Safety/Conduct Plan

*This form is to be confidentially maintained in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g (FERPA). The Safety/Conduct Plan is to be filed in the disciplinary record and incident entered into AdminPlus.*

|  |      |  |        |
|--|------|--|--------|
| <b>Objective / Strategy #2</b>   |      |  |        |
| Implementer:   |      |  |        |
| Steps:   |      |  |        |
|  |      |  |        |
|  |      |  |        |
| Progress Reports Dates   | One: | Two:   | Three: |
| Teachers/Teams Notified <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO         |      | Copy to Parent/Guardian <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |        |
| Objective Met <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If No, follow up: |      |  |        |
|  |      |  |        |
| Implementer Signature:   |      | Date:  |        |

|  |      |  |        |
|--|------|--|--------|
| <b>Objective / Strategy #3</b>   |      |  |        |
| Implementer:   |      |  |        |
| Steps:   |      |  |        |
|  |      |  |        |
|  |      |  |        |
| Progress Reports Dates   | One: | Two:   | Three: |
| Teachers/Teams Notified <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO         |      | Copy to Parent/Guardian <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO |        |
| Objective Met <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If No, follow up: |      |  |        |
|  |      |  |        |
| Implementer Signature:   |      | Date:  |        |

**Parent Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting/Contact with Parents (date):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Follow-up:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting/Contact with Parents (date):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Follow-up:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting/Contact with Parents (date):** \_\_\_\_\_ **Follow-up:** \_\_\_\_\_

## 504 Plans and Individual Education Plans (IEP)

Student 504 plans and Individual Education Plans (IEP) are legal documents and provide the teacher with information about a student's specific educational, emotional, and/or physical difficulties and needs. Both contain accommodations designed to ensure that the student has fair and adequate access to the curriculum of the school. **Teachers are required to provide the classroom accommodations called for in these documents.**

### *Section 504*

The guidance personnel and/or the building principal at each school oversee the Section 504 process, including setting up initial meetings, arranging review meetings, and developing the 504 Plan. These meetings require the presence of at least one of the student's teachers. When you are requested to attend a 504 meeting, you are expected to do so. If coverage is needed for your classroom, notify the appropriate substitute coordinator.

If you are one of the 504 student's teachers, the 504 Coordinator may request information from you in order to prepare for a meeting. In such cases, you are expected to provide that information to the coordinator in a timely manner.

Prior to the beginning of each semester, or when a new student with a 504 Plan is assigned to your class, the coordinator will provide you with a copy of the student's 504 Plan, including the necessary accommodations. If you have questions, you should begin by addressing them to the coordinator.

### *Individual Education Plan (IEP)*

The IEP is a special education plan that is developed by the TEAM. Each building is assigned a TEAM Chairperson. It is the responsibility of the TEAM Chairperson to arrange and organize special education meetings. These meetings require the presence of at least one of the student's teachers. When you are requested to attend an IEP meeting, you are expected to do so. If coverage is needed for your classroom, notify the appropriate substitute coordinator.

If you are one of the special education student's teachers, the TEAM Chairperson may request information from you in order to prepare for a meeting. In such cases, you are expected to provide that information to the chairperson in a timely manner.

The special education teacher assigned to that particular student will provide you with information about any special education students in your classes, including the accommodations that must be made for that student. In some cases, you may have a special education paraprofessional assigned to a class that has special education needs in it. You may even be assigned to co-teach a class with the special education teacher.

## **Student Support Team**

### ***Composition of the Team***

The Student Support Teams at each school are composed of administration, adjustment counselors, guidance counselors, TEAM chair person, school nurse, and peer mediation coordinator (if available). The team meets weekly to review referrals, discuss student plans, and update one another on student progress.

### ***Team Purpose***

The Student Support Team reviews referrals, decides on the course of action for each referred student, provides interventions for the teacher, and refers the student for testing when necessary. Each referred student is assigned a liaison from the team to act as a point person. The liaison communicates with the student's teachers, parents, specialists, and outside agencies if necessary.

### ***Prior to Referral***

Before you decide to refer a student to the SST, is it important that you document the interventions that you have used in the classroom that have not been effective. You must list these on the referral form so that the SST knows what has been done up to the point of referral.

### ***Referral Process***

- Start by obtaining a referral from the Guidance or Principal's office.
- Complete as much of the form as possible. Some parts of the form may not be appropriate for every situation. It is important that you be as clear and concise as possible on the form so that the SST has as much information as possible with which to work.
- Turn the completed form into Guidance or to the Principal.

Typically the referral you turn in will be dealt with at the next SST meeting. If necessary, the referring teacher may be asked to attend the meeting as well. At the meeting, a plan of action will be developed which will include interventions that the team feels might be helpful in the classroom. The liaison will disseminate any information to the student's teacher(s).

## **Network Acceptable Use Policy – Technology (IJNDB-R)**

### ***Introduction***

This document is a joint effort of the greater Franklin County public schools, drafted and approved by the school superintendents and technology coordinators for the purpose of guiding appropriate use of technology in education. The electronic resources at the public schools in greater Franklin County are provided by and in consonance with their mission to:

- Improve education for all students through access to unique resources and partnerships;
  - Improve learning and teaching through research, teacher training, collaboration and distribution of successful education practices, methods, and materials.
- In addition, we seek to ensure a healthy and appropriate use of Internet resources by making provisions for:
- Prevention of access by minors to inappropriate material on the Internet
  - The safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications:
  - Prevention of unauthorized access, including “hacking” and other unlawful activities;
  - Prevention of unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors, and
  - The design of measures to restrict minors’ access to harmful materials.

Our electronic resources—including, but not limited to, computers and Internet access—allow users access to local, national, and international sources of information and collaboration vital to intellectual inquiry and democracy, and are intended solely for educational purposes. Every user has the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of every other user in our school communities and on the Internet. All users are to conduct themselves in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner, in accordance with both school and district policies, rules, regulations and guidelines and the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the United States.

The potential exists, outside the school/district network, for users to access inappropriate material. A user may intentionally or innocently access material inconsistent with our educational purpose. While violations of school/district policy are cause for concern, we maintain the educational advantages of using the web outweigh the disadvantages. It is the burden of parents and guardians to establish standards of use for electronic media that are consistent with school/district policy, and to support compliance with school and district policies. We respect each family's decision whether their child should or should not have access to the Internet. Students will be given an account on the network and access to the Internet unless a parent or legal guardian submits a letter requesting that access not be allowed for their child.

The following sections explain district policies for acceptable use of the schools’ and districts’ computer systems and networks. Use of our computer networks and the Internet

are revocable privileges dependent upon compliance with school/district policy. A user's failure to comply with policy shall result in limited network and Internet access, suspension of access, and/or other disciplinary action.

### ***General Provisions***

Greater Franklin County schools have established certain protocols to ensure the safety of our school communities, the security of computer networks, and compliance with applicable law. All users should be aware of the following standard practices:

#### **A. Network and Internet monitoring**

The district has systems in place that monitor and record all Internet usage. Our security systems are capable of recording each web site visit, chat, newsgroup, e-mail message, and file transfer into and out of our internal networks for each user. The technology staff and school administrators reserve the right to monitor Internet traffic and other usage of electronic resources which may include tracking destination URLs of individual users. Users should have no expectation of privacy when browsing the web, sending or receiving e-mail, or using other electronic resources.

#### **B. Filtering**

In accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), passed by the U.S. Legislature in January 2001 (Public Law 106-554), our schools shall employ filtering software to block access to inappropriate content on all computers with Internet access. Our schools and districts certify that a policy of Internet safety and technology protection measures shall be enforced. Users are restricted from accessing visual depictions of subject matter that is obscene, pornographic, child pornographic or harmful to minors. In compliance with CIPA our schools and districts shall, in furtherance of this policy of Internet safety, monitor the online activities of minors.

Users should be aware that filtering software will not block ALL inappropriate web sites. Users shall report all inappropriate sites not blocked by filters to a technology administrator for appropriate action. Filtering software may be disabled for users 18 and over by a technology administrator for legitimate research purposes.

Our schools and districts cannot be held responsible for misuse of material downloaded from any online service, or for inappropriate or sexually explicit material being obtained through the network.

### ***User-specific provisions***

#### **A. All users**

Students, staff and faculty shall not:

1. Use the network to access and/or transmit material in violation of any U.S. or Commonwealth law, including copyrighted material.
2. Access, download, display, transmit, produce, generate, copy or propagate any material that is obscene or pornographic material; advocates illegal acts; contains ethnic slurs, or racial epithets; or discriminates on the basis of gender, color, national origin, sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity, handicap or age.

3. Degrade, damage or disrupt equipment or system performance.
4. Gain unauthorized access to network resources.
5. Permit or authorize any other person to use their name or login password.
6. Use an account of any other person or vandalize another user's data.
7. Waste electronic storage space by saving unnecessary files or programs.
  8. Download, install, load or use programs without written permission of the technology administrator.
9. Use the Internet for personal commercial purposes or for political lobbying.
10. Use inappropriate, offensive, foul or abusive language.
11. Harass or annoy any other party with obscene, libelous, threatening or anonymous messages, objectionable information, images or language.
12. Forward chain letters
13. Forward e-mail messages of broad interest—including virus alerts and jokes—to the entire school community (see number 5 below).
14. Knowingly make use of pirated software or violate software licensing agreements.
15. Engage in the practice of "hacking" or knowingly engage in any other illegal activity involving a school's network.; or
16. Engage in any other misuse of technology

Students, staff and faculty must:

1. Use the Internet and other electronic resources only for legitimate educational purposes.
2. Respect commonly accepted practices of Internet etiquette including, but not limited to, use of appropriate language.
3. Be aware of potential security risks at all times and take all reasonable steps to minimize risks by, at minimum, logging off the network when a computer is unattended and reporting all unauthorized use of one's account to a technology administrator.
4. Avoid bulk e-mailing
5. Forward all e-mails of broad interest, such as virus alerts, to a technology administrator for appropriate distribution to the entire school community.
6. Treat all computer areas and equipment with the utmost care and respect.
7. Respect the right of privacy of students and staff.
8. Abide by district and school policy and regulations.

## **B. Students**

Students may access the Internet only with adult supervision, and must notify a teacher or technology administrator immediately if they come across inappropriate content. In addition, students may not use the Internet to give out personal information (such as a home address, telephone number, or picture) about themselves or other students. Student use of electronic resources is restricted to teacher-approved projects and research.



## ***Electronic Communication***

School and district resources for electronic communication shall be used for educational purposes. Incidental and occasional personal use of electronic mail may occur when such use does not generate a direct cost for the district, but such messages will be treated no differently from other messages on the network. Prohibited electronic communications include, but are not limited to:

1. Use of electronic communications to send copies of documents in violation of copyright laws.
2. Use of electronic communication systems to send messages, access to which are restricted by laws and regulations.
3. Use of electronic communications to intimidate others or to interfere with the ability of others to conduct school/district business.
4. Constructing electronic communications so they appear to be from someone else.
5. Obtaining access to the files or communications of others for the purpose of satisfying idle curiosity, with no substantial school/district business purpose.
6. Any other electronic communication in violation of district or school policies.

## ***Software***

### **A. Supported Software**

Software upon which the district has standardized will be given priority in terms of installation, troubleshooting and training. A list of standardized and supported software, and other software owned by the district, will be updated from time to time and made available for viewing at a location designated by the superintendent, principal, or technology administrator.

### **B. Other Software**

Installation, troubleshooting and training for all other software used by faculty, staff and students will be supported as time permits. Software to be used in the curriculum or in a lab environment should be purchased in “lab packs” of sufficient quantities to account for the greatest number of simultaneous users or as site licenses, and must be owned by the school/district. Single copies of software are considered evaluation copies and will not be supported, installed on multiple computers, or made available from the network to multiple computers.

### **C. Unsupported Software/Media**

Software and electronic media which makes the computers and network harder to maintain and support, and which offers little or no benefit over comparable software, will not be supported. Neither staff nor students should install unsupported software, including downloaded freeware or shareware, on school computers. A current list of software known to be incompatible with the school’s/district’s network or having issues such as a propensity for spreading viruses will be maintained by technology administrators and forwarded to school administrators (or their designees) when requested.

#### D. Software Download Requirement

If an individual would like specific software downloaded and made available, they must contact a technology administrator and obtain permission.

### ***Web Page Policies***

#### **A. General Guidelines for Staff and Students**

##### **1. Posting**

All web pages produced by faculty or staff that reference or depict the school/district are assumed to be school or district owned educational resources, created for the sole purpose of education, and shall be posted on a school maintained web site, with the exception of school-authorized sites whose purpose is to simplify the process by which a page/site is posted. All student web sites/pages must be approved by authorized school personnel for posting prior to being posted.

##### **2. Disclaimers**

If a home page is housed on a school/district server, but has links to sites/pages which are not housed on a school/district server, the user must include the following disclaimer:

*"The Gill-Montague Regional School District is not responsible for any content which is not hosted on our servers."*

Any school-related web page produced by staff but not housed on the school web site must be posted to an authorized site and must include the following disclaimer:

*"The contents of this site/page express the views of the author(s) only and do not necessarily express the views of The Gill-Montague Regional School District."*

The school/district is not responsible for content on school-related web sites not housed on our site or on another authorized site.

##### **3. Photographs of Students**

The use of photographs of students on any web page is at the discretion of individual schools and districts. In all cases, however, a signed release form from a parent or legal guardian must be on file at the school before a student's photo can be placed on a web page. In no case shall individual students be identified by name. The list of students will be produced by the office staff.

##### **4. Content**

Do not advertise, endorse or link to any product or organization whose primary function is not to disseminate educational content (e.g., commercial enterprises or political groups). Certain fundraising information and links may be allowed, such as "shopforschool.com" or "marketday.com" and certain exceptions may be made by the administration for commercial entities who have significantly contributed to the school

community (e.g., Verizon or Microsoft). These company links are allowed at the discretion of appropriate school administrators; please see school and district specific provisions at the end of this document for more information. In all cases, exceptions may be made when links to commercial or political groups are provided for legitimate educational purposes—for instance, links to the sites of political parties for civics courses, or links to commercial entities for media literacy courses.

Proof your content and use a spell checker before posting. As an educational institution with a potentially broad audience, it is incumbent upon us to have grammatically correct content. Viewers often have high expectations and we must maintain a high level of accountability to our community.

## **5. Copyright Issues**

Make certain that your use of copyrighted material conforms to the “fair use” text (<http://www.benedict.com/basic/fairuse/fairtest.htm>) and that all copyrighted material on your sit is appropriately credited.

## **B. Design Guidelines**

### **1. Title**

Make sure your page has a title. This is what appears in the browser’s title bar.

### **2. Fonts**

Use common fonts (e.g., Times New Roman, Courier, and Palatino) and always view your page in both Netscape Navigator and Internet Explorer before posting.

### **3. Graphics**

When using graphics, make sure that the file extension is either .gif or .jpeg. Try to keep the size of any graphic file to less than 50 KB, as many people are accessing our site from home with slow modems. (You can check the size of a file on a PC by right-clicking and selecting “Properties”. On a Mac, select the file and then select “Get Info” from the File menu).

### **4. Links**

Check all links. Keep in mind that web sites come and go at an alarming rate and frustrated users will stop visiting your page if they consistently find links that are out of date.

### **5. Updating**

Update time-sensitive information in a timely fashion. It does not look very good to have a banner wishing viewers a Happy New Year in April!

## **6. Accessibility**

Make sure your sites are Bobby-compliant. Bobby is a free service provided by the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) to help web page authors identify and repair significant barriers to access by individuals with disabilities. You can check your page at <http://www.cast.org/bobby>.

### ***District-Specific Guidelines***

#### Social Networking

All electronic communication between school personnel and students, including email, web postings and social networks, will be appropriate, professional and for educational purposes only. Improper fraternization with students using Facebook and similar internet sites or social networks, or via cell phone, texting or telephone.

## **Drug-Free/Alcohol-Free Workplace Policy**

This is to formally state the Gill-Montague Regional School District's policy regarding the work-related effects of drug and/or alcohol use, and the unlawful possession of controlled substances, while on school department business and/or premises. Our policy is as follows:

It is our intent and obligation to provide a drug-free/alcohol-free, healthful, safe and secure work environment. No employee shall report to work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

Employees are expected and required to report to work on time and in appropriate mental and physical condition for work.

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or the use of alcohol, on school department premises or while conducting school department business off school department premises is absolutely prohibited. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and may have legal consequences. (Discipline will be taken in accordance with existing collective bargaining contracts and/or personnel policy practices.)

The school district recognizes substance use and abuse as a potential health, safety and security problem. Employees needing help in dealing with such problems are encouraged to use the Employee Assistance Program and health insurance plans as appropriate. Confidentiality in this regard will be strictly observed. Conscientious efforts to seek such help will not jeopardize any employee's job and will not be noted in any personnel record. Should an employee choose to inform his/her supervisor of his/her intent to use the EAP, arrangements for the initial visit to the EAP and for subsequent additional services may be made with the supervisor and shall be consistent with existing personnel regulations, by-laws and/or collective bargaining agreements of the organization.

Employees must, as a condition of employment, abide by the terms of the above policy and report any conviction under a criminal drug statute for violations occurring on or off school department premises while conducting school department business. A report of a conviction must be made within five (5) days after the conviction. (This requirement is mandated by the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988.)

***Gill-Montague Regional School District  
Drug Free/Alcohol Free Workplace Policy  
Employee Assistance Program***

The Committee will authorize the use of accumulated paid sick leave, if any, for any employee's necessary absence from work while participating in an approved treatment facility plan under this Employee Assistance Program.

Consultation with the school district physician would be available. Review by the school physician of an approved rehabilitation plan would be required. Employees are encouraged to consult their own physician.

Employees who are plan subscribers are encouraged to access health insurance benefits provided for drug and alcohol treatment. The school district will maintain a listing of treatment facilities that might be helpful to an employee in considering a program of assistance.

The district will provide a one-time financial commitment of \$2,000 per employee for a treatment plan for employees who either have no health insurance benefits or who have used up all such benefits.

## **Appendix A: New Teacher Mentoring Program**

*A district-wide plan  
for strengthening teaching and learning  
in the Gill-Montague Regional District*

**2005 - 2006**

January 10, 2006

Approved

Gill-Montague Regional School Committee

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## Acknowledgements

Thank you to the members of the original Gill-Montague School District New Teacher Mentoring Program Planning Committee (2005-2006) for their role in developing the original proposal for the Gill-Montague Public Schools:

|                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Betsy Burnham      | (Teacher/Elementary) |
| Kelly Chase        | (Teacher/SPED)       |
| Mike Mead          | (Teacher-Secondary)  |
| Kris Boyle         | (GMRSC)              |
| Mike Langknecht    | (GMRSC)              |
| Joyce Phillips     | (GMRSC)              |
| Nancy Daniel-Green | (GMEA/President)     |
| Vicki Valley       | (GMEA)               |
| Mary Kociela       | (GMRSC/Chair)        |
| Sue Gee            | (Superintendent)     |

## Mission Statement

*The mission of the GMRSD mentoring program is to increase student learning and achievement with the development and retention of highly qualified teachers.*

### Goals:

- Welcome new teachers and teachers new to our district into the professional learning community and help them transition smoothly and effectively into their new positions.
- Create a network of experienced teachers to provide ongoing personal and professional assistance.
- Promote personal and professional well-being
- Establish confidential, collegial relationships that will support all faculty over time
- Provide multiple opportunities for professional development
- Satisfy the requirement of certification

## The Mentoring Plan of the Gill-Montague Regional School District

The Gill-Montague Regional School District has for many years provided support for new teachers through mostly informal teacher-to-teacher networks. As we anticipate continuing change in our educator workforce due to retirements and growth, it becomes important to develop a more formal approach to helping new teachers successfully integrate into the district and community.

In the majority of states in the country, school districts are expected to provide a mentoring program for teachers

and administrators in their first year of practice. These programs provide the structure that maximizes beginning teacher learning in the context of classroom experience. New teachers become more competent sooner with support from veteran teachers and schools are more likely to retain these well-trained educators. Even more importantly, a growing body of research indicates that student achievement improves in schools in which veteran teachers are engaged in providing professional support for their new colleagues.

The Gill-Montague Regional School District has formed a committee to develop a comprehensive mentoring plan for the district. The comprehensive mentoring program takes a multifaceted approach that includes several interrelated components:

- A mentor-new teacher pairing program
- Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for all members of the school community regarding supporting and retaining new teachers
- Training for mentors on their role in supporting new teachers
- Workshops that support new teachers for quality classroom teaching
- Training for administrators on their unique role of building collegial school cultures that support professional growth
- Orientation for new teachers that is responsive to their needs
- Ongoing assessment of the effectiveness of the program
- A district-wide planning and monitoring process

### **Needs of the New Teacher**

The Gill-Montague Regional District recognizes that new and beginning teachers need assistance in learning about the goals, expectations, beliefs, and standards of the community.

#### **Welcome into the School and the District**

- To feel welcome and have a sense of belonging and identity
- To understand the history and demographics of the community
- To become familiar with the resources of Gill-Montague and surrounding towns

#### **The Basic Provisions**

- To have materials and equipment for effective instruction
- To have help with “nuts and bolts” of forms, paperwork, and equipment
- To have contact information for key personnel
- To know emergency procedures

#### **Expectations for Classroom Practice**

- To understand what to teach (i.e., the curriculum) and to learn effective instructional approaches (i.e., how to teach)
- To learn how to plan lessons and re-plan lessons effectively for maximum student learning and achievement
- To learn how to pace curriculum and instruction
- To develop effective classroom management

- To learn how to handle struggling students
- To understand the district's teachers' proficiency standards
- To understand district policies including discipline, homework, testing, etc.
- To receive specific professional development regarding school district curriculum and instructional priorities

### **Parent Communication and Involvement**

- To learn how to communicate proactively and effectively with parents
- To know district policies, procedures, and approaches to conferences, report cards, open houses, and other parent interactions

### **Professional Growth and Professional Relationships**

- To have professional development opportunities
- To know the district's professional development expectations
- To understand the role of the GMEA
- To have opportunities to observe teachers in their classrooms
- To develop effective time management skills in and out of the classroom

### **Staff Evaluation**

- To understand the principal's expectations
- To know the district's supervision and evaluation process for new teachers

## **Qualities of Effective Mentors**

- Excellent role model
- Enthusiastic about teaching, learning, children, and about teaching as a profession
- Confidential, trustworthy, non-judgmental, and honest
- Effective, clear and concise communicator, skilled in giving positive constructive feedback
- Knowledgeable about curriculum content, instruction, and classroom management
- Collegial, encouraging, open, and flexible
- Knowledgeable about the formal and informal aspects of the school and the district

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the Mentor Coordinator**

### **Awareness and communication**

- To be knowledgeable about the goals of the program and all of its requirements
- To be committed to the success of the program

### **Leadership and Support**

- To provide personal and professional instructional support to mentors and protégés
- To maintain a confidential relationship with mentors and protégés
- To design and conduct a mentor/protégé training prior to the start of school
- To design and conduct an administrative training/meeting prior to the start of school
- To schedule and meet with the mentors and protégés prior to the opening day of school, in November, January/February, and in early May
- To provide information to the JLMC on a regular, or as needed, basis
- To create and keep agendas/minutes for all meetings
- To analyze feedback from protégés, mentors, and administrators
- To mentor experienced teachers who are new to the district and conduct regularly scheduled meetings throughout the school year

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- To design and implement an evaluation process for all aspects of the mentoring program
- To participate in the school district's on-going assessment of the new teacher mentoring program
- To gather and analyze data to measure the effectiveness of the mentoring program
- To anticipate and plan for the needs of the mentoring program in the upcoming school year

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the Mentors**

### **Awareness and communication**

- To be knowledgeable about the goals of the program and all of its requirements
- To be committed to the success of the program

### **Leadership and Support**

- To provide personal and professional instructional support
- To maintain a confidential relationship with the new teacher
- To make time for frequent contact with new teachers in order to understand and help fulfill their needs
- To conference/meet regularly with protégés (no less than twice a week during the first month of school and a minimum of two formal conferences per month for the remainder of the year)
- To provide information and direction about school policies, practices, curriculum and instructional resources
- To be an active listener
- To maintain a log and any required narratives to be shared with the coordinator
- To attend conferences, workshops, and training programs as suggested
- To schedule ongoing check-ins and monitoring of the program with mentors and/or protégés

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- To participate in the school district's on-going assessment of the new teacher mentoring program
- To convene quarterly group meetings to review how the program is going
- To implement standard district survey for mentors and protégés

- To review mentoring logs and provide feedback.
- To schedule informal meetings, as needed, to brainstorm and to spot check program effectiveness

### **Observation**

The goal of observation is to give data to the incoming teacher that will enable him/her to improve student learning. In Gill-Montague, incoming teachers and mentors are encouraged to observe each other regularly. This mutually beneficial activity forms the heart of a professional relationship as teachers work together to reflect on and refine their practice, upgrade skills and broaden understanding of content while building trust and collegiality. There are four basic components of the observation/conference:

- The two teachers have a pre-conference to clarify their goals and objectives, decide on evidence of student achievement and determine data gathering procedures. For example, the incoming teacher wants feedback on how to lead more effective discussions.
- The observation takes place as the observer gathers information and evidence.
- The post-conference provides the opportunity to share impressions and data that support those impressions. The mentor will give information that is asked for without trying to overwhelm the incoming teacher with data. The mentor may foster reflection with questions such as “Does the data help you?” or “What surprised you?” or “How can you use this data to improve student achievement in your class?”
- The final stage applies new understandings to each teacher’s practice and allows reflection on the process itself. Activities are tailored to meet the expressed goal of the observations. For example, sharing materials, planning lessons to improve student learning, and discussing strategies to reach particular students.

A Reminder: These mutual observations fall under the confidentiality guidelines. Neither mentor nor incoming teacher may discuss classroom visits with other educators.

### **Confidentiality**

- Confidentiality in the mentor-incoming teacher relationship is essential. Since Gill-Montague seeks to create professional relationships between mentors and incoming teachers, we must agree about how mentors will respect the incoming teachers’ need to grow and learn in a safe environment, while becoming part of a professional learning community.

In general, mentors will not discuss the new teachers’ performance with anyone, including school and district administrators, except under the following conditions:

1. A mentor will be able to discuss, in confidence and with the incoming teacher’s knowledge and approval, any aspect of the new teacher’s performance with other members of the mentoring team.
2. A mentor, with the incoming teacher’s knowledge, may discuss the incoming teacher’s performance with appropriate administrators if, in the mentor’s professional judgment, the academic growth and development, social well-being, or physical safety of the students is at risk.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the New and Beginning Teachers**

### **Awareness and communication**

- To be knowledgeable about the goals of the program and all of its requirements
- To know that they are ultimately accountable for their own growth and success

### **Leadership and Support**

- To play an active role in the mentoring program by:
  - Participating in the mentoring program during the first three years of teaching in Gill-Montague Regional School District observing experienced teachers
  - Conferencing/meeting regularly with mentors (no less than twice a week during the first month of school and a minimum of two formal conferences per month for the remainder of the year)
  - Keeping a log and a reflective journal
  - Being an active listener
  - Observing experienced teachers
  - Maintaining a confidential relationship with mentors
  - Seeking assistance as needed
  - Attending conferences, workshops, and training programs as suggested

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- To participate in the school district's on-going assessment of the new teacher mentoring program

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the Superintendent and Central Office**

### **Awareness and communication**

- To develop, have approved and communicate the formal program plan
- To provide strong public support for the program
- To create and sustain a vision for the district which incorporates the plan into the district's goals and enhances a collaborative spirit for improving instruction

### **Leadership and Support**

- To support the mentor coordinator
- To convene the Joint Management-Labor committee during the school year
- To convene district-wide network meetings with mentors
- To support the recruitment of teacher mentors
- To provide financial support in the operation budget and/or grant funds to sustain all aspects of the program

- To be a visible supporter of the program to the entire learning community
- To provide visible recognition to the program's participants and to celebrate the achievements of the program
- To monitor contractual compliance

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- To develop and implement an annual district-wide assessment of the program
- To be involved in the assessment of the quantitative benefits of the program
- To prepare and disseminate an annual end-of-year report to the Joint Management-Labor Committee and the Gill-Montague Regional School Committee on the evaluation of the program

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the Principals**

### **Awareness and communication**

- To attend and participate in mentor training program with mentors
- To facilitate public relations/communication programs related to mentoring program
- To encourage experienced teachers to participate in mentoring program
- To coordinate orientation activities for mentoring
- To introduce mentoring program during new teacher interview process
- To be informed annually and to give feedback regarding efficacy of the program

### **Leadership and Support**

- To promote and explain the program
- To establish collegial environment and effective communication
- To participate in the selection of / matching of mentors to protégés
- To maintain separation between the mentor program and teacher evaluation process
- To establish reasonable mentor-protégé working conditions
- To collaborate with other administrators and leadership staff

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the School Committee**

### **Awareness and Communication**

- To be knowledgeable about the program
- To receive and review reports from the district JMLC committee as appropriate
- To be informed annually, at a minimum, about the program

### **Leadership and Support**

- To adopt the formal plan for new teachers and teachers new to the district

- To promote the program as an important component of attracting and keeping highly qualified teachers
- To approve adequate funding for the program
- To maintain an open and supportive dialogue with the Gill-Montague communities and school district regarding the program

## **Roles and Responsibilities of The Gill-Montague Education Association**

### **Awareness and Communication**

- To be knowledgeable about the program and to encourage veteran teachers to become knowledgeable about the program
- Welcome and be supportive of new teachers

### **Leadership and Support**

- To provide a leadership role in supporting the program
- To facilitate negotiations regarding added benefits for mentor teachers and to assist with contractual compliance
- To recognize that teachers represent the future of the association
- Participate on the JMLC committee for the mentoring program
- Enhance community support for mentoring program
- Encourage veteran teachers to participate as mentors
- Promote collegiality in the district

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

- To consistently have GMEA representative(s) on the district JMLC committee
- To participate in the assessment of the program
- Share with the administration issues and problems as needed

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the Other Staff in the Building**

### **Awareness and Communication**

- To welcome and support beginning teachers.
- To provide information about school policies, procedures, and resources.
- To introduce themselves and explain their roles.

### **Leadership and Support**

- Encourage and support new teachers by:



- being friendly
- sharing supplies
- being a curriculum resource
- respecting confidentiality
- providing a positive climate
- supporting the mentoring program a being a role model for professionalism
- Consider being a mentor in a subsequent year

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

- To participate in the school district’s on-going assessment of the new teacher mentoring program

## **Roles and Responsibilities of the Joint Labor-Management Committee**

### **Awareness and Communication**

- To advise the Superintendent regarding all aspects of the program
- To continuously promote the mission of the program
- To assist with the on-going public relations aspect of the program

### **Leadership and Support**

- To review the program’s on-going progress and make recommendations for improvement
- To develop and disseminate appropriate communications to the learning community

### **Monitoring and Program Evaluation**

- To participate in the establishment of the program evaluation criteria and an annual program assessment instrument
- To review and analyze the evaluation data as collected
- To assess the effectiveness of the program

## **Recommendations for the Mentor Selection and Matching Process**

### **Who is a “New Teacher?”**

The Gill-Montague Regional School District will match a mentor to all teachers who are new to teaching or new to the district.

### **Ratio for Matches**

Mentors are paired with no more than one new teacher, except in special instances. Teams of teachers may collaborate to mentor one or more new teachers.

**Criteria for selection as a mentor include:**

- Possess a Massachusetts license and a Masters Degree or have been teaching prior to 1993
- Have achieved professional status as a teacher
- Receive excellent teacher evaluations

**Expectations for Mentors:**

- Advisor: Provide information; hold ongoing discussion and feedback meetings; provide access to resources; guide professional growth of the protégé
- Coach: Provide opportunities to observe model lessons; provide opportunities to analyze performance and reflect on performance; offer ideas and resources for data collection and self-assessment
- Consultant: Collaborate with other mentors to share strategies around mentoring; work with protégés on various aspects of teaching; work with protégés on professional goals and implementation plans; suggest areas for protégé's professional growth
- Sponsor/Advocate/Colleague: Encourage protégés to actively participate in networking; highlight their successes

**Requirements for Mentors**

- Meet with the protégé frequently in the first month of school and engage in at least two formal conferences each month for the remainder of the school year (see page 21)
- Maintain a log of meetings and classroom visitations with the protégé
- Attend mentor training
- Participate in the district and building orientation programs
- Participate in building and district-wide meetings for mentors
- Maintain a confidential relationship

**Preferred Criteria for Matching Mentors and New Teachers**

- Certified to teach in the content area of the new teacher
- Teach currently or recently at the same or similar grade levels
- Proximity of classrooms
- Compatible school schedules
- Mentor matches will be for one to three years, as approved by the principal(s) with input from the mentor-protégé pair.

**Suggested Process for Matching**

- Central office will post the opportunity for teachers to become mentors. The posting will include an application form for interested teachers
- Criteria for matching will be determined by the building principals, who will incorporate the criteria suggested in this Plan
- Matches between mentors and new teachers will be made by building principals for their buildings
- A “no fault bail out” option will be available to mentors-protégés who would like to take advantage of it

## Orientation for New Teachers

The orientation for new teachers will have district and school site components.

- Prior to the school year, the district will hold a formal, comprehensive orientation
- Additional time will be scheduled throughout the school year.

Orientation topics will include the following:

- School District and Community Awareness
  - Community tour and map of community
  - School district tour
- New teacher mentoring program review
  - Core activities, roles and responsibilities, mentor selection and assignment, confidentiality, informal and formal training programs, mentor support, release time for observations and conferencing, keeping log of activities
- District information
  - policies and procedures
  - job description
  - school district calendar
  - personnel contract
  - district handbooks
  - district improvement plans
  - school district telephone directory
  - professional development and expectations
  - important school and child-related laws
  - regulations and procedures related to compensatory services
  - payroll and insurance
  - technology support
  - teacher-parent interpersonal relationships
  - list of important teacher resources
  - socialization events
  - welcoming folder with local newspapers, name tags, etc.
- School site information
  - personnel handbooks
  - student-parent handbooks and school directory
  - substitute calling procedures
  - school site calendar
  - school site procedures
  - school improvement plan and safer schools plan
  - school schedules and assignments
  - recommended network for assistance
  - state curriculum frameworks and school curriculum
  - school council information
  - teacher evaluation process
  - welcoming activities including socialization events, name tags, etc.
- GMEA welcome and information
  - Membership/Contacts
  - Contract
  - Procedures

**Mentoring Program Training**  
**The Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the following:**

| <b>New Mentors</b>   | <b>New Teachers</b>  | <b>Administrators</b>  |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Required training on mentoring new teachers for first year mentors.<br/> Topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs and stages of growth for new teachers</li> <li>• Qualities, roles and responsibilities of the effective mentor</li> <li>• The specifics of the mentor program communication skills</li> <li>• Reflective practice and conferencing skills</li> <li>• Differentiated styles of mentoring</li> <li>• The conferencing protocol</li> </ul>   | <p>Required training for new teachers includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of twenty-six (26) hours per school year conferencing/meeting with your mentor</li> <li>• No less than two meetings per week for the first month of school and a minimum of two meetings per month during the remainder of the school year</li> <li>• Group discussion sessions are required for two afternoons per year, at 1.5 hours each session</li> <li>• A log/reflective journal is required.</li> </ul> | <p>Required training on mentoring New teachers (First Year) Topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The administrator’s role in supporting new teachers</li> <li>• Mentoring in the context of building a professional school community and a culture of continuous learning for the students and the adults in the school</li> </ul> <p>-----</p> <p>Advanced administrator training on the administrator’s role to effectively support mentors will be scheduled as needed or requested</p> |
| <b>All Mentors</b>   | <b>Second Year Teachers</b>  |  |
| <p>Required minimum of forty (40) hours per school year. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of two – 30 minute meetings each week for the first month</li> <li>• Followed by two meetings each month for the rest of the school year.</li> <li>• Nine (9) hours are allotted for report writing</li> <li>• Six (6) hours for training and group meetings.</li> <li>• Required group discussion sessions for two afternoons per year, at 1.5 hours each session, with all new teachers and mentors.</li> </ul> | <p>Must complete 50 hours of “mentored experience”. Ten hours will be provided through district training/PD not directly from mentor.</p>  |  |

## **Finding Time For Mentors and New Teachers**

The following recommendations are presented for creating opportunities for mentors and beginning teachers to engage in conferences and classroom visitations:

- Identify substitute coverage through “dedicated substitutes” for the classrooms of mentors and beginning teachers for short periods of time on a weekly or monthly basis
- Provide administrative coverage for mentors and new teachers to facilitate conferencing and classroom visitations
- Recruit volunteers, such as recently retired teachers, who could come into the schools to support the mentoring program
- Schedule new teachers and mentors with common planning times and with opposing times for observations
- Release mentors from some duties to enable them to spend more time with their beginning teachers
- Use school days, after school, and summer as opportunities for mentors and their protégés to meet and, as scheduled, for beginning teacher and mentor training

## **Compensation and Support for Mentors and New Teachers**

The Gill Montague Regional School provides the following stipends and support for its mentors and new teachers:

- Stipends per Schedule B according to the GMEA agreement.
- Release time with substitute coverage on a pre-approved basis;
- PDPs under D.O.E. regulations