



Oliver Ames High School

Student-Athlete Handbook

2021-22

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ATHLETIC PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Easton Public Schools Vision Statement:

The Easton Public School System educates children to become motivated, lifelong learners who, as confident and creative individuals, function to their full potential, understand and value differences, and are contributing members of their community able to meet the challenges of a global society.

MIAA Mission Statement:

The mission of the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association is to serve member schools and the maximum number of their students by providing leadership and support for the conduct of interscholastic activities which will enrich the educational experiences of all participants. The MIAA will promote inter scholastic activities that provide lifelong and life-quality learning experiences to students while enhancing their achievement of educational goals.

Sportsmanship Responsibility:

Integrity, fairness, and respect are the principles of good sportsmanship, and these are lifetime values taught through athletics. You are the spokesperson for your school when you attend an athletic event. Your actions are viewed by family and friends, opposing fans, the local community and the media. Your display of good sportsmanship will demonstrate the most positive things about you and your school.

Oliver Ames High School Athletic Program Objectives:

- To provide opportunities for physical, mental and emotional growth.
- To develop confidence and self-esteem.
- To develop and improve time management skills.
- To develop and understand the concepts of individual and team play.
- To develop a sense of commitment, loyalty, cooperation and fairness.
- To learn that good sportsmanship means winning and losing with grace and dignity.
- To learn to make decisions under pressure.
- To foster town pride.

To obtain these objectives, the Oliver Ames administration has based the athletic program on sound principles. The following are most important:

Extensive Offerings: Our program tries to include as many participants as possible. We offer a program that includes many sports, so that a boy or girl will discover a sport or sports in which he/she has both interest and ability. Varsity and junior varsity competition is offered at the high school level.

Trained Personnel: Oliver Ames High attempts at all times to have the most qualified and

well-trained coaches available. Each coach realizes that all sports sponsored by the school are part of the school program. As a result those in charge of such activities must utilize educational principles and educational aims if athletics are to be a worthwhile part of the over-all school program.

Controlled Competition: Life is competition, and the competition starts almost at the moment we were born. Competition is a life-long experience, and positive attitudes toward competition are developed through our athletic programs.

Varsity Sports Offerings:

Baseball (B)	Golf (B)	Softball (G)
Basketball (B&G)	Gymnastics (G)	Swimming/Diving (B&G)
Cheerleading (G)	Ice Hockey (B&G)	Tennis (B&G)
Cross Country (B&G)	Lacrosse (B&G)	Track (Spring/Winter) (B&G)
Field Hockey (G)	Skiing (B&G)	Volleyball (G)
Football (B)	Soccer (B&G)	Wrestling (B)

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY

Oliver Ames High School athletes are bound by MIAA rules for Interscholastic Athletics. Although a coach may have additional rules for his/her athletes playing on his/her team, the following rules apply to all athletes participating in all athletic programs at Oliver Ames High School:

Physical Examination:

Athletes must have a valid physical examination before participation in any sport. No athlete will participate in organized practice or scheduled games until his/her physical has been cleared by the school nurse.

In order for a physical exam to be considered current and valid, it must have been given within 13 months of the date of any athletic involvement, have a “cleared for sports” or similar notation on the form, and must be signed by a doctor. Most doctors’ offices provide suitable physical exam forms. However, if needed, they may be requested from the OA Athletic Department.

Online Registration:

Online registration includes the following components which are all required in order for an athlete to participate: Participation Agreement/Parental Permission, Code of Conduct, Mass. Hazing Law, MIAA Chemical Health Rule, Concussion Training Verification, ImPACT Testing Permission, Transportation Waiver, Medical Questionnaire, Pre-Participation Concussion Form, and Emergency Treatment Permission.

Parents/guardians of each participating athlete must complete the online registration provided by Easton Public Schools before he/she is allowed to tryout. These disclosures, agreements and forms are part of the online registration process and must be completed for each season (Fall, Winter, Spring) of participation.

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Activity Fee:

The Easton School Committee established an Activity Fee for students' participation in the Oliver Ames High School Athletic Program during the school year. The Activity Fee account will provide the supplementary funds required to maintain the athletic programs currently provided and will avoid the necessity of eliminating any sport from the program.

The fee approved by the School Committee for the current school year is \$175 per student per sport (\$250 for Basketball (boys & girls), Football, Ice Hockey and Gymnastics) with a family cap of \$700.00 per year. Fee payment should be made as part of the online registration process via credit or debit card.

Activity fees are due prior to the first contest in a season. Failure to pay by the first contest without making accommodations in writing with the Oliver Ames athletic director will render an athlete ineligible.

A fee waiver is granted to athletes eligible for free or reduced lunch. Neither the athletic director nor the principal have the authority to waive athletic fees for any other reason. Other evidence that a hardship is involved should be brought to the school superintendent's attention.

Students who did not make a team or quit prior to the first contest are eligible to receive an activity fee refund. Students who are on a team roster and quit after the first contest of a season are not eligible for a refund.

Academic Eligibility (MIAA Rule 58):

All athletes must meet all school and MIAA eligibility requirements which include but are not limited to:

58.1 A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the contest (e.g. second quarter marks and not semester grades determine third quarter eligibility) a passing grade, and full credit, in the equivalent of four traditional year long major English courses. A transfer student may not gain academic eligibility if he/she was not, or would not be, eligible at the sending school, unless transfer was necessitated by a move of parents and then eligibility would be determined by receiving schools eligibility standards. (see Rule 57.7.1)

58.2 A student cannot at any time represent a school unless that student is taking courses which would provide Carnegie Units equivalent to four traditional year long major English courses.

58.3 To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have passed and received full credits for the previous academic year the equivalent of four traditional year long major English courses.

58.4 Academic eligibility of all students shall be considered as official and determined on the published date when the report cards for that ranking period are to be issued to the parents of all students within a particular class.

Note: The MIAA academic eligibility standards are designed to ensure that a student is fully enrolled in school and actively engaged in his/her academic life on a consistent basis throughout the school year. When utilizing a 4 x 4 block schedule, a student must pass at least two of the four required 'major' courses (or equivalent) in each academic marking period.

58.5 Incomplete grades may not be counted toward eligibility until they are made up following school policy.

58.6 A student who repeats work upon which he/she has once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility.

58.7 A student cannot count for eligibility any subject taken during the summer, unless that subject was pursued and failed during the immediately preceding academic year.

58.8 All cooperative team athletes must meet the eligibility standards of their own school as well as the host school.

Code of Conduct:

Student-athletes are considered representatives of Easton Public Schools and the Code of Conduct in the Student Handbook will apply to student-athletes as they participate in tryouts, practice, and competition. Participation in EPS athletic programs is a privilege that carries with it serious personal commitment and responsibilities, and can be revoked at any time if school rules are broken.

Discipline:

- Courtesy and obedience must be shown to all staff members, coaches, and officials. Insubordination or insolence will not be tolerated. Any such violation shall result in suspension or dismissal, depending on the seriousness of the violation. If any athlete strikes out against another player, coach or fan through physical violence, uses obscene language, gestures or unsportsmanlike conduct, he or she shall be suspended or dismissed from the team, depending on the seriousness of the act. Such acts during a scheduled game could result in a full-year ban from competition in that sport (MIAA rule).
- Any willful assault, either physically or verbally, on a coach, or a staff member by one of his or her team members out of season will be referred to the school principal for disciplinary action.
- Any athlete suspended from school will not be allowed to practice or compete during the suspension. School suspensions could result in dismissal from the team.
- Conduct embarrassing to the school and community and/or conduct off school grounds and/or during non-school hours that violate team training rules during the season, will result in suspension or dismissal, depending on the severity of the act. Any conviction in a court for such an act will result in immediate dismissal from the team in that season.
- Destruction, vandalism, or theft of personal, athletic, or school property could result in suspension or dismissal from the team, depending on the severity of the act.

- In addition to any disciplinary action, students involved in drug/alcohol situations will be placed on administrative probation. A student on probation is forbidden to attend any school sponsored activities or be on school grounds after school for any reason except for authorized make-up work or detention.
- Decisions for dismissal or suspensions from a sport for infractions of the Athletic code will be made by the head coach, athletic director and principal.

School Discipline - Detention:

An athlete with a school discipline obligation or detention is expected to fulfill the discipline obligation before reporting to practice and/or game. Students cannot expect and should not request discipline action to be postponed or cancelled for any athletic reason. An athlete may be removed from the team for excessive disciplinary problems, but may be reinstated upon sufficient evidence of improvement. It is expected that athletes at Oliver Ames High School will be model citizens both in and out of school.

Attendance Requirement for Interscholastic Athletics:

All students must be in attendance at school the entire day in order to participate in a practice or game scheduled for that day. Any student athlete who accrues an unauthorized absence from a class will not be allowed to participate in a practice or game scheduled for that day. Students absent on the day preceding a holiday may not participate on that day or the holiday. Any student absent the day preceding a contest may be ineligible to participate in the contest unless the coach and athletic director/principal agree the absence was excused. Exceptions to the above policies may be granted only by the principal, assistant principal or athletic director. Any student who is absent from school and participates in a contest/practice without the aforementioned authorization shall be suspended from that team for five days. This suspension shall be imposed by the athletic director.

A student that is tardy or misses any part of the school day resulting from not feeling well, being tired, or any illness, regardless of whether or not they have a doctor's note, is NOT eligible to participate in athletics that day. Example: a student comes in late because he/she didn't feel well in the morning, went to an urgent care center and got a doctor's note. That student is not eligible that day.

A student who has a preset doctor's appointment and misses part of the school day is eligible provided he/she meets the following criteria:

- a) The student must be in school as much of the day as possible. He/she must come to school in the morning if the appointment is later and come back to school after the appointment. Consideration will be given based on the location of the doctor's office and travel time.
- b) The student must provide a signed doctor's note approved by the athletic director or principal verifying the visit. The note needs to include either a clearance to participate in athletics, or that it was a well visit (i.e a physical).

The school nurse has eligibility discretion for any student he/she sends home or to the doctor for an issue requiring immediate attention (ex: suspected serious contagious illness like strep,

cellulitis, unidentified rash or any other similar urgent medical issue). The eligibility decision by the school nurse will be based on the following:

- a) Student returns to school that day with minimal school time missed including timely return from home or the doctor visit.
- b) Whether the suspected illness or injury is ruled out by a doctor (ex: strep throat). A doctor's clearance note is required.
- c) Whether the issue treated by the doctor is resolved and does not affect the student's ability to compete. A doctor's clearance note is required.

Attendance at practices and games is mandatory. Unexcused absences will result in disciplinary action up to and including one or more contest suspensions and may result in dismissal from the team. Continual unexcused absences may result in a meeting with parents, athlete, and athletic director, to address the situation. Missing a practice due to school detention is not an excused absence.

It is the Easton Public School Administration's position that a student's association with co-curricular programs is voluntary. The student willingly undertakes certain obligations and commitments that transcend those of the ordinary student. Students are not guaranteed positions in co-curricular activities but rather earn their positions through demonstrated ability, hard work, and competition. Practice and events during vacation periods must be considered part of the whole program as well as part of the competition to earn and maintain membership in the activity. During vacation periods, students may be excused from participation to accompany parents or to participate in family activities, on written request of the student's parent or guardian to the coach or athletic director. Students who miss activities during vacation periods will be required to attend as many practices as they missed before being eligible to resume participation in contests and take the chance of losing their positions to other competitors. However, they will not otherwise be penalized.

Physical Education Attendance:

An athlete excused from physical education class due to illness, may not participate in a practice, scrimmage, or game for that day.

School Suspensions:

Any athlete suspended from school may not practice, play, or be with the team on the days in which he/she is serving the suspension.

Captains:

Team captains who violate any MIAA, OAHS or team rules in or out of season, during school and non-school hours, including summer and school vacations, holidays, or weekends will lose that title indefinitely. The final decision on dismissal will be made by the coach, athletic director and principal and is not subject to appeal.

Any conviction in a court for such an act will result in immediate dismissal from the team in that season.

Any captain may have his or her captaincy revoked at any time for displays of: poor sportsmanship, disrespect or lack of cooperation with coaches, poor work ethic during practice or

games, bad attitude, negative leadership, missing competitions, selfish/boorish behavior and any other behavior not consistent with the leadership expectations of an Oliver Ames High School team captain.

In order to be eligible for selection by teammates as a captain at the end of a season for the next school year, athletes cannot have been suspended or involved in disciplinary matters that would have resulted in a captaincy being removed as described previously in this section

Any violation that may have happened in the distant past but has now just come to light is treated as if the violation just occurred. Accordingly, a violation that occurred in the freshman year but has come to light in the junior year would render that athlete ineligible to be on the captain's ballot or to serve as a captain the following year.

If one or more captains are elected and later deemed ineligible to serve due to rule violations, the replacement of those captains is at the discretion of the coach, athletic director and principal.

Senior Games, Awards and Banquets:

Student-athletes must be in good standing at the time of the senior game, or post season awards/banquet in order to be eligible to attend those events. "Good standing" means a student-athlete is in compliance with all MIAA, OAHHS and team rules.

Additional MIAA Eligibility Rules:

The MIAA has established student eligibility rules pertaining to:

- a. Membership in School (MIAA rule 55)
- b. Transfer Students (including Foreign Exchange Students) (MIAA rule 57)
- c. Time Allowed for Participation After First Entering Grade Nine (MIAA rule 59)
- d. Age (MIAA rule 60)
- e. Graduation (MIAA rule 61)

These rules are followed by Oliver Ames High School when applicable to a student's specific situation. For further information, check the MIAA Handbook found at www.miaa.net.

MIAA Eligibility Rule Waivers

The MIAA has established a due process procedure which provides a full and multifaceted review of all requests to set aside an eligibility requirement for an individual high school student.

- Initially, a student or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) should notify the high school principal of the student's desire to participate in the school's interscholastic athletic program in spite of being ineligible by virtue of an MIAA rule. The principal may then initiate the MIAA "waiver request" process as outlined in the MIAA Handbook.
- The waiver process is defined in Section 85 of the MIAA Handbook which can be downloaded at www.miaa.net.

GENERAL INFORMATION PERTAINING TO ATHLETES

Academic Expectations:

Oliver Ames High School athletes are expected and encouraged to maintain the highest level of academic achievement possible. Extra help sessions and make-up work are expected to be completed as soon as possible. On a practice day, athletes should stay after school to make up work whenever necessary. Students should inform coaches in advance when practice time will be missed due to academic obligations. Once the obligations are completed, athletes are expected to report to practice as soon as possible. If advance notification was not given to the coach, students should ask their teacher for a note explaining their tardiness. Students arriving late to practice due to make-up work or extra help will not suffer an athletic team penalty provided they informed the coach in advance or bring a note from their teacher. On game days, if time allows, students should ask their classroom teacher if make-up work or extra help may be postponed to a practice day. A classroom teacher may or may not grant a postponement.

Daily Commitment:

Athletes should plan to make a daily commitment of two or three hours per day, five or six days a week, to participate in a varsity sport. At the sub-varsity level, some teams may not practice or play on weekends. It is important that a coach be notified if an athlete is not going to be present at a practice or game. All coaches expect team members to be present at all team related activities. Unexcused absences will result in disciplinary action up to and including one or more contest suspensions and may result in dismissal from the team. All athletes are excused from team activities for illness, injury, academic assistance, family emergencies, or religious holiday observation reasons. Prior notification of an absence is expected in most instances.

Tryouts:

Some teams require tryouts and may need to make cuts to manage roster sizes. During the tryout period, the coach will provide an explanation of his/her expectations. It is the athlete's responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that he/she can meet those expectations. Athletes cut from one team are encouraged to try out for other teams that season which may not limit the number of athletes participating. Coaches are to provide athletes with an explanation as to why they did not make the team.

Playing Time:

There are many benefits to be gained by participation in athletics at the high school level. Athletes learn discipline, to perform under stress, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership, and to play within the rules. Although there are many measures of success in the minds of each athlete, perhaps the most emotional is "playing time" during games. The playing time of each participant is the prerogative of the coach of the sport. There is no assurance that each squad member will receive equal playing time nor is there a guarantee that a student will participate in any contest.

If an athlete has a question about the amount of playing time he/she is getting, he/she should be encouraged to discuss it with the coach. Being a member of a team at Oliver Ames High School does not guarantee playing time, but there are some guidelines:

Freshman and Junior Varsity Teams:

These are developmental level teams where athletes learn skills and strategies to prepare them for varsity competition. The coaching staff will play all team members for as much time as is practical. There are many factors that govern an individual's playing time. Some of the most important are: attendance at practice, effort, attitude, commitment, and athletic skill. These are the competition levels for athletes to show their potential and demonstrate to the coaching staff that they are ready for varsity level competition.

Varsity Teams:

This level of competition has similar factors affecting playing time as the sub-varsity teams. However, there is one additional major factor. The varsity teams compete against opponents at the highest possible level of competition with a greater emphasis on winning. To reach this goal, the most competitive, skilled team members will get the most playing time. It is important to note that teams cannot be successful without committed substitutes or backup players. These athletes have to be ready to step up when needed, and practice hard to help make the teams competitive. They should constantly strive to move up to a starting role. There are many decisions made by the coaching staff during the course of a season. These include which athletes should be starters, who should play what position, and how long each athlete should play. These decisions, often difficult to make, are made only by the coaching staff, and are approached with the best interest of the team as the top priority.

Communication and Conflict Resolution:

Athletic involvement can be highly emotional. From time to time conflicts and issues between a student athlete and his/her coach may arise. It is imperative that conflicts and/or issues be addressed as soon as possible so that it can be resolved promptly. ***The following is the order in which the chain of command should be followed. Every effort should be made to resolve issues at the lowest possible level in the chain of command. In order for this to happen, coaches are to make team members feel they are approachable and reasonable. No punishment will result from a player approaching a coach respectfully regarding an issue or concern.***

1. Student athlete contacts the coach.

Important note: One of the most important teaching and learning opportunities in educational athletics is for young people to learn to address and resolve issues affecting them and to advocate for themselves. Therefore, unless there are extenuating circumstances, parents should ***only*** approach a coach regarding an issue ***after*** the student-athlete has spoken to the coach and attempted to resolve the issue.

2. Parent of an athlete contacts the coach.

Playing time, starting role and/or position are not open for discussion between a parent and coach. Those decisions are made by coaches in their sole discretion based on their judgement and expertise to be in the best interest of the team. Any issues related to the aforementioned are to be resolved between the athlete and coach. Discussions can be

had between the parent and coach about the physical and mental well being of their child, as well as how to improve their child's effort, attitude, commitment, skills, performance or any other factor affecting the athlete's role on the team.

In order for the discussion between a parent and coach to be productive, parents should request an appropriate time to speak to the coach about an issue. It is **not** appropriate to approach a coach to discuss an issue in any of the following situations:

- Either prior to or immediately following a game
 - During a practice session
 - During a time when other teammates are present
 - A time when it is apparent that there will not be sufficient time to allow for a complete discussion
3. Athlete or parent contacts Athletic Director
Contact at this level should only be made after steps 1 & 2 above have been completed in an attempt to resolve the issue. The Athletic Director will inform the coach that this meeting will take place. If the discussion between the parent(s) and Athletic Director does not result in a satisfactory conclusion, then a meeting will be scheduled with the parent(s), student, coach and athletic director in an attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution.
 4. Student and/or parent(s) contacts Principal
Contact at this level should only be requested after steps 1, 2 & 3 above have been completed. The Principal will inform the Athletic Director that this contact has been made.
 5. When conflicts arise which cannot be resolved by the building principal, the conflict will be submitted to the Superintendent and/or the School Committee in a timely fashion for appropriate action.

Changing Sports During a Season:

The Athletic Department discourages changing from one sport to another after a season begins. Athletes will only be allowed to change teams if they are a member in good standing after notifying both coaches involved and receiving permission from the athletic director. However, athletes cut from a team are encouraged to join another team that season, if another sport of that athlete's interest has roster space available.

Appearance:

Appearance while representing the school shall at all times be reasonable and neat. The athletic dress code pertains to both home and away games. Coaches may refuse to take a player to any away game if his/her appearance would dishonor the school.

Equipment and Uniforms:

All athletes are responsible for the equipment (which includes school uniforms), issued to them during the course of the season. Athletes are expected to return all school owned equipment & uniforms immediately at the termination of team membership or at the end of the season, whichever comes first. Athletes failing to turn in all issued equipment, or returning equipment damaged through misuse are responsible to pay to the athletic department an amount equal to the current replacement cost. In the event that the equipment is found and/or returned after the payment, a refund will be made.

1. Parents/Guardians will be notified by the coach and/or the athletic director of collection for payment for equipment not returned.
2. An athlete will be denied participation in any other Oliver Ames High School co-curricular activity until equipment has been returned or paid for.
3. A senior athlete who has failed to return equipment or failed to pay for lost items may have their high school diploma withheld.

Health Insurance:

All athletes must be enrolled in an HMO or health insurance plan. Families may purchase a health insurance policy through the school system. Applications for this coverage are given to each student at the beginning of the school year.

Transportation:

Oliver Ames High School provides transportation to most away games/events. All team members are required to travel to and from all away games/events on transportation provided by the Athletic Department. Exceptions to this policy must be requested in writing to the athletic director by an athlete's parent prior to the event. Under certain circumstances licensed students with written parental permission will be allowed to transport themselves to and/or from away contests. Under no circumstances are students allowed to transport other students to or from away events. Any practice venue will be treated like a home venue for these purposes.

Athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a proper manner on all bus trips. Yelling at passing cars, obscene gestures, unruly conduct, or other forms of inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.

Injuries:

All athletic injuries, even though minor, must be reported to the athletic coach/advisor and athletic trainer. In the case of serious injury, the athletic trainer's judgment with regard to playing condition of a player will be final. No player may continue to play against the athletic trainer's advice.

When a student-athlete has been advised to discontinue participating in practice or a game because of a serious injury, that athlete will not be allowed to resume participation without a signed permission slip from his or her physician.

Nutritional Needs of Athletes:

It is essential that all athletes are educated regarding their nutritional needs and the consequences that may result from poor nutrition and eating disorders. Eating disorders are serious conditions which compromise one's health and wellbeing. Athletes concerned with eating behaviors, need to seek professional medical assistance. The coaches, athletic trainer, guidance counselor, school psychologist, clinical counselor, and school nurse are good resources for counseling and advice.

An athlete who practices or plays in a high school game during the day should eat a nutritional dinner, study to maintain good grades, and go to bed at a reasonable hour. Proper diet and rest are essential for maintaining good academic and athletic performance.

Season Limits:

The fall season must not begin before the MIAA set guidelines. The fall season must end with the completion of the regular season schedule except for the teams or individuals completing participation in MIAA Tournaments.

Winter season will begin on the first Monday after Thanksgiving and conclude on the last scheduled competition unless a team qualifies for the MIAA postseason tournament.

Spring season begins on the third Monday in March and concludes with the last scheduled competition unless a team qualifies for the MIAA postseason tournament.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Sportsmanship is a top priority at Oliver Ames High School. The Athletic Department expects all parties present at an event to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship. Players, coaches, and spectators should treat opponents, game officials, and visiting spectators with respect.

All athletic events are conducted in accordance with the rules and regulations of the MIAA, the NCAA or the National Federation. Any form of baiting or taunting of officials, players or fans will not be tolerated at any Oliver Ames High School athletic event. Likewise, profanity, objectionable cheers, or gestures have no place at an athletic event, be it at Oliver Ames High School or at an away game/event.

Any Oliver Ames student-athlete who engages in the use of inappropriate or unsportsmanlike social media directed toward another person, team, or school is subject to suspension from the team and other possible disciplinary action.

The MIAA reserves the right to warn, censure, place on probation, or suspend up to one calendar year any player, team, coach, game, school official or school determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship. Oliver Ames High School, in turn, reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any athletic event, *home or away*.

Attendance as a Spectator at School Activities:

Students and their guests are expected to maintain high standards of behavior and sportsmanship before, during and after athletic events.

These standards include appropriate use of social media. Students who engage in the use of inappropriate or unsportsmanlike social media directed toward another person, team, or school will be subject to disciplinary action.

Students who violate these standards will have their privilege of attending school activities denied for a period of one month or more. A student's permission to return to school activities may be

conditioned on being accompanied by and sitting with their parent(s)/guardian(s). In addition, the student may be placed on administrative probation for a specified period, and subsequent problems could result in the loss of the privilege of attending all activities for that year.

Oliver Ames Fan Code of Conduct

- Tolerance
- Integrity
- Goodwill
- Enthusiasm
- Respect
- Spirit

Acceptable Fan Behavior

- Be respectful of game officials, players, coaches, opposing fans and facilities
- Recognize outstanding performances on both teams.

Unacceptable Fan Behavior

- Making derogatory chants, songs, or gestures
- Negative cheering and chants directed towards the either team
- Calling out an opponent's name or number
- Calling opponents derogatory nicknames
- Using horns or noise makers of any kind
- Throwing objects into a crowd or at an individual
- Distracting participants, obstructing vision, or directly affecting play

Consequences

In addition to all local ordinances and policies, Oliver Ames school officials may enforce upon unruly fans the following:

1. A warning for the behavior that is considered unsportsmanlike
2. Ejection from the contest
3. Suspension from future Oliver Ames contests, both home and away
4. Report made to the MIAA and/or local police

SCHEDULING

Athletic schedule information can be found on the Athletics page at oliverames.org which contains the following links: [Calendar of Athletic Events](#) and [Athletic Schedules by Team](#). Changes to athletic schedules are communicated via Twitter @oahsigersports.

APPENDICES

The following policies and laws are included in, and apply in their entirety, as part of the Oliver Ames Student –Athlete Handbook:

Appendix SAH-1: Student & Coach Eligibility: Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco (MIAA Rule 62); and Serving Chemical Health Suspensions (OAHS Policy)

Appendix SAH-2: Sportsmanship – Athlete, Coach Disqualifications/Suspensions (MIAA Rule 49.3-49.10)

Appendix SAH-3: Taunting (MIAA Rule 48)

Appendix SAH-4: Bona Fide Team Member (MIAA Rule 45)

Appendix SAH-5: Hazing Law (Mass State Law 269 Sections 16-19)

Appendix SAH-6: Concussion and Suspected Head Injury Policy (EPS)

Appendix SAH-7: Policy Prohibiting and Addressing Bullying (EPS)

Appendix SAH-8: Harassment Policy (EPS)

Appendix SAH-1: Chemical Health; Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco (MIAA Rule 62) & Serving Chemical Health Suspensions (OAHS Policy)

As a member of the MIAA, Oliver Ames High School will strictly enforce the following rules:

62.1 From the earliest fall practice date, to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is latest), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product (including e-cigarettes, vape pens and all similar devices); marijuana (including synthetic); steroids; drug paraphernalia or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer,” inhalants (defined as any substance that produces a mind-altering effect when inhaled), and misuse of over-the-counter medications and substances used for the purposes of altering one’s mental state. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student’s own use by his/her doctor.

This MIAA statewide minimum standard is not intended to render “guilt by association”, e.g. many student-athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard. This rule represents only a minimum standard upon which schools may develop more stringent requirements.

If a student in violation of this rule is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury or academics, the penalty will not take effect until that student is able to participate again.

Minimum PENALTIES: (also see Rule 32.8 – Ineligible Students)

First violation: When the principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests (regular season and tournament) totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation.

During the suspension the disqualified student may not be in uniform and his/her attendance at the competition site is determined by the high school principal. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. all fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

Second and subsequent violations: When the principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests (regular season and tournament) totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. all fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season.

If after the second or subsequent violations the student of his/her own volition becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events provided the student was fully engaged in the program throughout that penalty period. The high school principal in collaboration with a Chemical Dependency Program or Treatment Program must certify that student is attending or issue a certificate of completion. If student does not complete program, penalty reverts back to 60% of the season. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. all fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season.

Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year, but serving the penalty could carry over for one year. Or, if the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year. (e.g. A student plays only football: he violates the rule in winter and/or the spring of same academic year: he would serve the penalty [ies] during the fall season of the next academic year). If a student is not an athletic participant for one full year after affirmation of a violation, then the penalty period would close and the student would face no consequence. Prior to any chemical health violation a student's request for and enrollment in a substance abuse treatment shall not in and of itself constitute a violation of the chemical health/alcohol/drugs/tobacco Rule 62.

62.2 During practice or competition, a coach shall not use any tobacco product (penalty: same as students').

62.3 Anabolic androgenic steroid use and performance enhancing drugs (PED's) are of grave concern. Coaches need to send a clear, unequivocal message that unauthorized steroid use and PED's are not acceptable. This discussion should highlight the fact that the penalties for other substance use apply. Short and long-term health effects can also motivate student-athletes to protect their future. Coaches should take a proactive role, learning about steroids, and then providing this information to their athletes.

Steroids can, with proper diet and weight training, increase muscle development; however, as is typical with most "get-rich-quick" schemes, steroid use has serious short and long term consequences.

Normal and equal musculature development can occur without steroid use. Although the natural process takes longer, muscle tone will last longer and does not carry the harmful side effects of steroids.

Most coaches would not promote steroid use intentionally. Total silence by coaches however condones use in some young people's minds. Even though steroids may not be mentioned when it is suggested to an athlete that his/her success is limited only by a lack of weight and/or strength, without a disclaimer the statement can be a motivation to use steroids. The pervasiveness of the drugs that allow for development of increased weight under the aforementioned circumstances is a coercive power that is difficult for young athletes to resist without knowing what the side effects of the drugs may be.

The issue goes beyond protecting the integrity of sport. The use of steroids in sports is cheating. We must oppose the use of steroids for both health and ethical reasons.

OAHS Rule Pertaining to MIAA Rule 62

In spite of the fact that student-athletes are ineligible to participate in contests during Chemical Health suspensions, they are expected to practice with the team during the suspension. Any student-athlete must complete the season in which they are serving any portion of a Chemical Health suspension in order for the suspended contests to count toward the suspension. In other words, if a student athlete quits before the end of a season in which he/she is serving a suspension, none of the contests in that sports season will count toward the suspension.

Student-athletes ineligible under MIAA rule 62 are ***not*** allowed to attend competitions, home or away, during the suspension.

Appendix SAH-2: Sportsmanship – Athlete, Coach Disqualifications/Suspensions (MIAA Rule 49.3 - 49.13)

49.3 Any student-athlete, who is disqualified from a competition, including a jamboree, scrimmage, etc., shall not participate in the next scheduled interscholastic competition that is part of their regular season schedule, or in tournament play. The disqualified student-athlete is ineligible to participate in any contest at the same level of play in that sport until the next contest, or the next two (2) contests in the sports of baseball, ice hockey, and soccer, have been completed. (Note: In the sport of wrestling, the disqualified student-athlete is ineligible to participate in any and all contests during the next scheduled date of competition). Disqualifications in the following sports per specific sport rules: field hockey-Rule 68.3; basketball-five (5) personal fouls; girls' lacrosse (2) yellow cards; ice hockey - six (6) minutes in penalties and game misconduct (Rule 72.16); wrestling-technical disqualification, do not apply to the above prescribed penalties. During the suspension the disqualified student may not be in uniform and his/her attendance at the competition site is determined by the high school principal.

49.3.1 A two (2) game suspension will be given to any student-athlete who is ejected from any contest for the following reasons:

- o Fighting
- o Punching or kicking an opposing player
- o Spitting at someone

49.4 Any coach disqualified by an official from an inter-school competition (including a jamboree, scrimmage, etc.) is ineligible to coach any competition in that sport at the same level (e.g. junior varsity, varsity, etc.) until the next contest, or the next two (2) contests in the sports of baseball, ice hockey, and soccer, has/have been completed. (Note: In the sport of wrestling, the disqualified coach is ineligible to participate in any and all contests during the next scheduled date of competition). During the suspension the disqualified coach may not be present at the competition site. Whenever a coach is disqualified by an official from an inter-school competition, the official shall file a written report of the incident with the coach's principal. The coach also shall file the completed form designated for that purpose. Both reports should be completed and forwarded by the official and coach within 24 hours of the competition. The principal should immediately forward copies of the reports to the athletic director, superintendent, and MIAA executive director. If the game official fails to file his/her report, the coach is still bound by the suspension. An official who fails to complete the form required as a result of an athlete or coach ejection shall be suspended from officiating any MIAA contest in that sport for at least two weeks or until the form is completed and received by the principal of the disqualified athlete or coach.

49.5 A student or coach ruled out of a contest (pre-season, scrimmage, jamboree/play-day, regular season or MIAA Tournament) twice in the same season shall be suspended from further participation in that sport and in all sports during that season for a year from the date of his/her second disqualification. A senior and/or a student in his/her last year of eligibility, who has a second disqualification at any point in the season, will be penalized during the next season in which he/she is a participant. (Exception: See soccer rule 78.2.6 and 78.2.7).

49.5.1 A coach who is twice disqualified in a season must officially enroll in the Coaches' Education course or recognized MIAA certified program before returning from suspension. The course must be completed before the start of the next season for that sport (also see Rule 49.11).

49.6 A student or coach who physically assaults an official shall be expelled from the activity immediately and banned from further participation or coaching in all sports for one year from the date of the offense.

49.7 Any student in any sport who willfully, flagrantly, or maliciously attempts to injure an opponent shall be removed from the contest immediately and shall be ineligible in all sports for one year from the date of the incident. ("Fighting" does not apply to this section unless warranted in the judgment of the game official.)

49.8 Fighting and unsportsmanlike conduct penalties will be within the authority of the official at all times at the contest site. The official's authority extends to pre and post-game oversight.

49.9 Some of the reasons that an official may disqualify a student or coach from a contest that would lead to a game disqualification are:

49.9.1 Fighting

49.9.2 Flagrant unsportsmanlike conduct which is defined but not limited to violent action toward a player, official, or spectator, the use of foul or abusive language, taunting, trash talk, and the like.

49.10 If a coach or student is ruled out of the last contest, or the next to last (in some sports) contest, of the season, the penalty carries over to the following year in that same sport season. However, if a team is playing in tournament competition, it is considered an extension of the sport season. A senior and/or a student in his/her last year of eligibility who is disqualified from the last contest, or the next to last contest, of the season will be penalized at the start of the next season in which he/she is a participant.

49.11 Any coach who is disqualified from an MIAA interscholastic athletic contest or had three (3) student-athlete disqualifications during his/her sport season will be required to attend a Sportsmanship Compliance meeting before being eligible to coach interscholastic events the following year in that sport or before coaching any other sport at any MIAA member school.

49.11.1 Any coach who fulfills the Sportsmanship Compliance meeting requirement stated in rule 49.11 and is then suspended from another MIAA interscholastic athletic contest, either in the same sport or a different sport, or had three (3) student-athlete disqualifications during his/her sport season, will be required to officially enroll in the Coaches' Education course or a recognized MIAA certified program. The course must be completed before the start of the next season for any sport that the coach is eligible.

49.11.2 Any third and subsequent coach contest disqualification (over his/her coaching career) will result in the school principal, athletic director and coach being required to meet with the MIAA Sportsmanship Committee on the coach's eligibility.

49.12 In addition to being in violation of Massachusetts General Laws, hazing is a most flagrant example of lack of respect for both self and others. Massachusetts General Law Chapter 269, section 17-19 was enacted in 1988. The law requires that secondary schools provide all school groups (e.g. athletic teams) a copy of the law. [Click here to access the "hazing law"](#).

49.13 Any student-athlete who is disqualified (see Rule 49.3) from any interscholastic contest must complete the National Federation Sportsmanship on-line course – "Sportsmanship", before reestablishing eligibility. This course is free.

Appendix SAH-3: Taunting (MIAA Rule 48)

48.1 Taunting includes any actions or comments by coaches, players, or spectators which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others, whether or not the deeds or words are vulgar or racist. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates, or threatens based on race, gender, ethnic origin or background, and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs, or personal characteristics. Examples of taunting include but are not limited to: "trash talk", defined as verbal communication of a personal nature directed by a competitor to an opponent by ridiculing his/her skills, efforts, sexual orientation, or lack of success, which is likely to provoke an altercation or physical response; and physical intimidation outside the spirit of the game, including "in the face" confrontation by one player to another, standing over/straddling a tackled or fallen player, etc.

48.2 Athletic participants may wear sun glare black only under their eyes.

48.3 In all sports, officials are to consider taunting a flagrant unsportsmanlike offense that disqualifies the offending bench personnel or contestant from that contest/day of competition. In addition, the offender shall be subject to all existing MIAA Disqualification Rules. A review of the MIAA taunting policy and a warning shall be given to both teams by game officials prior to each contest.

48.4 At all MIAA contest sites and tournament venues, contest management may give spectators one warning for taunting. Thereafter, spectators who taunt players, coaches, game officials, or other spectators should be ejected.

Appendix SAH-4: Bona Fide Team Rule (MIAA Rule 45)

A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for, and actively participates in, all high school team sessions (e.g. practices, tryouts, competitions). Bona fide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to participate in a non-school athletic activity/event in any sport recognized by the MIAA. Students cannot be given special treatment (late arrival, early dismissal, etc.) for non-school athletic programs. Saturday and Sunday practices ONLY may be excluded from this rule and no waiver is required. (* This is the MIAA Bona Fide Team policy pertaining to weekend practices. See OAHS policy in the section below.)

First Offense: Student-athlete is suspended for one (1) contest and shall not participate in the next scheduled interscholastic competition that is part of their regular season schedule or in tournament play. Second Offense: Student-athlete is suspended for an additional 25% of the season, and is ineligible for tournament play immediately upon confirmation of the violation. See Rule 98 for additional tournament restriction and Rule 88 for waiver guidelines.

45.1 A student-athlete must be a Team Member for 50% of the regular season schedule for that sport to participate in any MIAA Tournament competition (team member: any student-athlete who attends practices or games for his/her sport teams – e.g. Freshman basketball player moved to JV and then Varsity).

45.2 If ineligible, cannot be in uniform. Attendance at event to be determined by High School Principal

OAHS Rules Pertaining to MIAA Rule 45

* Although the MIAA does not require a waiver for missing Saturday or Sunday practices, OAHS policy ***does*** require it. Student-athletes who miss a Saturday or Sunday practice during the season must submit the MIAA waiver form and supporting documentation to the OA athletic director at least one week in advance of the missed practice(s). The waiver request will be reviewed and approved or denied by the principal and athletic director. Parents should be forewarned that the OA administration is generally opposed to waivers of this sort due to the disruptive effect they have on teams during the season.

Student-athletes ineligible under MIAA Rule 45.2 are not allowed to attend competitions, home or away, during the suspension.

Appendix SAH-5: Hazing Law (Mass State Law 269 Sections 16-19)

269.17 – Hazing; Organizing or Participating, Hazing Defined.

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

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

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

269. 19 – Failure to Report Hazing

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as

reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

269.19 – Copy of sections 17-19; issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; report

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

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

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

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

Appendix SAH-6: Concussion and Suspected Head Injury Policy (EPS)

The Easton Public School District has adopted this policy to address the identification and proper handling of suspected head injury for students in grades 6-12 who are participating in school-sponsored extracurricular athletic activities in accordance with Mass. Gen. L. c. 111, Section 222 and accompanying regulations (105 CMR 201. et seq.) (“Regulations”). Affirmation of an Interim Policy was provided to the Department of Public Health on school letterhead in January 2012, with affirmation of the Final Policy to be provided by March 1, 2012. Review and affirmation of the Policy will again be provided no later than September 30, 2013, and bi-annually thereafter.

I. Definitions

The definitions of terms used in this policy are those set forth in the Regulations at 105 CMR 201.005. The following are selected for reprinting here:

Coach means an employee or volunteer responsible for organizing and supervising student athletes to teach them the fundamental skills of Extracurricular Athletic Activities. The term coach includes both head coaches and assistant coaches (and per the definition of Extracurricular Athletic Activity below, marching band directors).

Concussion means a complex disturbance in the brain function due to direct or indirect trauma to the head, related to neurometabolic dysfunction, rather than structural injury.

Extracurricular Athletic Activity means an organized school sponsored athletic activity generally occurring outside of school instructional hours under the director of coach, athletic director or band leader. (Among the examples listed in the definition are cheerleading and marching band. Thus, any reference to Extracurricular Athletic Activities in this policy includes the Oliver Ames High School Marching Band)

Head Injury means a direct or indirect trauma to the head including a concussion or traumatic brain injury.

Second impact syndrome means a potentially lethal condition that can occur when a person sustains a head injury prior to the complete healing of a previous brain injury causing deregulation of cerebral blood flow with subsequent vascular engorgement.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) means a complex pathophysiological process affecting the brain, induced by traumatic biomechanical forces. TBI may be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face, neck or elsewhere on the body with an impulsive force transmitted to the head. TBI includes, but is not limited to, a concussion.

II. Roles and Responsibilities

Athletic Director (“AD”)

The athletic director shall be responsible for the general implementation of this policy and any accompanying procedures. These responsibilities include:

1. Supporting and enforcing protocols, documentation, training and reporting requirements.
2. Supervising, reviewing and properly distributing all documentation received.
3. Reviewing the policy every two years and recommending changes and/or updates to the school committee for adoption.
4. Reviewing and recommending updated training programs and student/ parent handbooks at least once every two years.
5. Coordinating outreach to parents who have not provided required *Pre-Participation Forms* and documentation.

School Nurse and other School Based Staff

As reflected throughout this policy, various members of the school staff play an important role in implementation of this policy. The school nurse's role is particularly important, involving responsibilities for:

1. Reviewing or having the school physician review completed *Pre-Participation Head Injury/Concussion Reporting for Extracurricular Activities Forms* ("*Pre-Participation Forms*") indicating a history of head injury that have been forwarded to her by the athletic director or athletic trainer.
2. Communicating with athletic trainers regarding a student's history of head injury.
3. Following up with parents and students as needed prior to the student's participation in Extracurricular Athletic Activities.
4. Reviewing *Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form* which a coach or athletic trainer submits as a result of a head injury that has occurred during an extracurricular athletic activity or that a parent submits as a result of head injury that has occurred outside of an extracurricular athletic activity but that takes place during the extracurricular activity season, with follow-up reporting requirements outlined herein.
5. Organizing and storing concussion related medical documents in the health office.

Athletic Trainer

The athletic trainer also has specific responsibilities, including but not limited to:

1. Reviewing all *Pre-Participation Forms* and forwarding to the athletic director and school nurse those forms that indicate a history of head injury and to identify students who are at greater risk for repeated head injuries.
2. Identify students with head injuries or suspected conditions that occur in practice or competition and removing them from play.
3. Notifies the school nurse of concussions that occur during the sports seasons.

Coaches

As reflected in this policy, coaches also have a key role in its implementation. In addition to their other responsibilities listed herein, all coaches are required to:

1. Instruct students in form, technique and skills that minimize athletic-related head injury and are required to discourage and prohibit students from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that endangers the health and safety of a student, including using a helmet or any other equipment as a weapon.
2. Identify athletes with head injuries or suspected concussions that occur in practice or competition, remove them from play and report any such incidents to the athletic trainer or AD.
3. If any concussion symptoms recur after return to play, remove the athlete from play and report the incident to the athletic trainer or AD.

Students

In addition to their other responsibilities listed herein, all students are required to:

1. Adhere to skills and instructions designed to minimize athletic related injuries. Students who engage in unreasonably dangerous behavior while participating in Extracurricular Athletic Activities may be excluded from the privilege of further participation and, further, may be subject to disciplinary consequences in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct.

III. Training

The following personnel, both those employed and those serving in a volunteer capacity, shall be required to participate in an annual training approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) in the prevention and recognition of a sports-related head injury, including second impact syndrome: coaches (as noted above, this term includes marching band directors), certified athletic trainers, school physicians, school nurses, athletic directors and game officials. In addition, students who wish to participate in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity and their parents shall be required to participate in such training annually.

Annual Concussion Training: Required Concussion Training for school staff, parents/guardians and student athletes must be approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). Training courses are available online, free of charge, and require only about 20 minutes to complete. The courses approved by the Mass. DPH are listed at the following link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training/index.html>

MDPH approved concussion training materials are also available at the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association website at:

http://www.miaa.net/contentm/easy_pages/view.php?sid=38&page_id=98

or in the Athletics section at the Oliver Ames High School website at:

<http://www.oliverames.org>

Individuals who are required to participate in the training must submit documentation or attest to their completion of the training in writing on an annual basis to the athletic director.

IV. Prerequisites Related to Head Injuries for Student Participation in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity

Prior to a student beginning (or continuing) participation in any Extracurricular Athletic Activity, whether involving tryouts, practices, contests, or performances, the following must take place;

1. Parents and students must certify to the athletic director in writing or online that they have completed the training requirements described in Section III above. Once submitted, the certification is valid for one school year.
2. Prior to a student's participation in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity, the parent and student must provide to the athletic director a completed *Pre-Participation Form*. The information required in the *Pre-Participation Form* may be collected online and shall include:
 - a. A comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history, any history regarding head, face or cervical spine injury and/or any history of co-existent concussion injuries; and
 - b. Signatures of both the parent and the student;
3. During the season of participation if a student sustains a head injury outside of the extracurricular activity, his/her parent is required to complete and submit a *Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form* to the athletic director.
4. The athletic director will provide to the coach copies of, or access online to, the *Pre-Participation Forms* and a summary of all *Reports of Head Injury During Sports Season* for each student member of that coach's team. In addition, the athletic director will forward the *Pre-Participation Forms* indicating a history of head injury and all *Reports of Head Injury During Sports Season* to the school nurse, who will consult with the student's primary care physician and/or school physician, as needed, and athletic staff regarding whether the student will be allowed to begin (or continue) to participate and if so, whether limitations may apply.
5. In order to better manage concussions sustained by our student-athletes, the district will utilize a software tool called ImPACT (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing). ImPACT is a computerized neuropsychological exam utilized in many professional, collegiate, and high school sports programs across the country to successfully diagnose and manage concussions. If an athlete is believed to have suffered a head injury during competition, ImPACT is used to help determine when the injury has fully healed. This non-invasive test takes about 30-45 minutes to complete. Essentially, the ImPACT test is a physical of the brain that tracks information such as memory, reaction time, processing speed, and concentration. It is not an "IQ" test. There is no charge to the student/athlete for ImPACT testing.

Students must take a "baseline" ImPACT test prior to first participating in any of the activities listed below beginning at the Middle School level and then every two years thereafter prior to the beginning of the sports season in which they are participating.

Baseball	Ice Hockey (Boys & Girls)
Basketball (Boys & Girls)	Lacrosse (Boys & Girls)
Cheerleading	Skiing (Boys & Girls)
Field Hockey	Soccer (Boys & Girls)
Football	Softball
Gymnastics	Wrestling

Parents of students participating in Extracurricular Athletic Activities other than the contact and collision sports listed above will have the option of having their child participate in the IMPACT test. The test will be administered for these students upon the parent's submission of a written request to the Athletic Director.

In the event a parent and/or student has not provided the documentation set forth above to the athletic director in a timely manner, or has not taken the IMPACT test as required the student will be ineligible to begin (or continue if applicable) participation in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity until all documentation has been received and reviewed by appropriate school personnel.

V. Removal Due to Head Injury and Protocols for Re-entry

Any student who sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, during participation in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity shall be removed from the activity immediately and may not return to the activity that day even if the condition seems to resolve itself. If there is an athletic trainer on site, the coach must immediately report the suspected injury to the trainer or on-site school nurse for a medical assessment. The coach is responsible, with assistance from the athletic trainer or school nurse if available, for notifying the student's parents and contacting EMS for emergency service and transport to a local hospital if in their reasonable judgment such intervention is appropriate.

In all circumstances, the coach or athletic trainer must complete a *Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form* and follow all Reporting Requirements outlined below in Section VII.

Any student removed from an Extracurricular Athletic Activity due to suspected head injury must provide a *Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form* completed by a licensed medical professional (defined as any of the following: physician, nurse practitioner in consultation with a physician, certified athletic trainer in consultation with a physician, or neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery) to the athletic director prior to the student's return to normal physical activities (including physical education class). The athletic director will consult with the school nurse in reviewing such forms if appropriate. In the event a student exhibits symptoms of head injury following return to participation, the coach will immediately remove the student from the activity and will inform the athletic trainer, school nurse and/or the parents in order to initiate further consultation.

VI. Graduated Reentry Plan and Medical Clearance following Diagnosis of Concussion

In the event the student has been diagnosed with a concussion, the student may not resume full participation in Extracurricular Athletic Activities until he/she has participated in a graduated

re-entry plan and provided a completed *Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form* to the athletic director, school nurse or athletic trainer. If a concussion is suspected or diagnosed, the student may be required, by the treating physician or athletic trainer, to re-take the ImpACT test, which will be made available to the student's treating physician, and used to help assess when it is safe and appropriate for the injured student-athlete to return to activity.

The injured athlete must be completely symptom-free at rest before beginning a graduated return to play process to extracurricular athletic activities. Also, the student must be symptom free at rest, during exertion, and with cognitive activity in order to complete the graduated re-entry plan and be medically cleared to play.

In addition, school personnel, including but not limited to teachers, school nurse, and certified athletic trainer, along with parents shall develop a written graduated entry plan for return to academics and other school based activities, including Extracurricular Athletic Activities. Accommodations, may include, as appropriate: provision for physical or cognitive rest; graduated return to classroom studies; estimated time intervals for resuming activities; assessments by the school nurse; periodic medical assessment by a licensed medical professional (physician, nurse practitioner in consultation with a physician, certified athletic trainer in consultation with a physician, or neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery) until the student is authorized to full classroom and extracurricular activities. The school physician and/or student's physician may be consulted as appropriate in devising the graduated entry plan.

VII. Additional Communication and Reporting

The Athletic Director shall disseminate to each coach copies of the completed *Pre-Participation Form* for each member of that coach's team or student group. The information required in this Form may be provided to coaches online. The Athletic Director shall ensure that the nurse receives a copy of *Pre-participation Forms* indicating a history of head injury and reviews any forms that indicate a history of head injury, with review by the school physician and certified athletic trainer if appropriate. The athletic director shall also ensure proper dissemination and review of any *Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Forms*.

All coaches are required to report any circumstances in which the student under their supervision was removed from participation for suspected head injury, suspected concussion, or loss of consciousness and the nature of the suspected injury to the student's parent in person or by telephone as soon as is practical, and at the latest, immediately after the competition or practice, with written confirmation to the parent by paper or electronic format by the coach; or athletic trainer, athletic director or school nurse as appropriate, no later than the end of the next business day. The coach must also notify the athletic director and athletic trainer of the removal from play and the nature of the suspected injury no later than the end of the next business day. The coach is responsible for ensuring that a *Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form* has been completed and provided to the athletic director or athletic trainer.

The school nurse shall inform the principal and guidance counselor of the injury so that an appropriate academic accommodation plan can be initiated as needed.

The school nurse and/or athletic trainer may require that a student suspected of having a concussion be evaluated by a duly licensed medical professional (defined as any of the following: physician, nurse practitioner in consultation with a physician, or neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery) after the injury. Documentation regarding the results of the head injury evaluation from the duly licensed medical professional will then be required by the school nurse or athletic trainer. This information will be reviewed by the school nurse, guidance counselor, and/or athletic trainer and utilized to help coordinate the student's recovery program. Written documentation regarding student concussions will be maintained in the student health records.

VIII. Maintenance of Records and Confidentiality

Copies of all documentation received by the school department under this policy will be maintained for a minimum of three years. Such documentation includes verification of training completion and *Pre-Participation Forms* that indicate head injury/concussion history, which may be submitted and stored online by the athletic director. The school nurse shall maintain copies of, *Reports of Head Injury During Sports Season, Post Sports Related Head Injury and Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms*, and any Graduated Re-entry Plans that may be necessary.

Medical information received by the district in implementing this policy is part of the student health record and may be disclosed only as authorized by the laws governing student records. Generally, authorized school personnel who work *directly* with the student in an instructive (academic or athletic), administrative, or diagnostic capacity will have access to the information on a need to know basis. Authorized school personnel should be instructed not to disclose the information to others. Notwithstanding these limitations, there may be times when school officials may or must disclose health or related information to others in order to protect a student's health or safety.

IX. Notification of Policy Information to Parents and Students

The Athletic Director in consultation with the Principal shall disseminate to parents and students on annual basis information regarding this policy, including but not limited to:

1. Prerequisites for students to participate in Extracurricular Athletic Activities, including opportunities for students and parents to fulfill their obligations to participate in training under this policy;
2. Requirements for parents to report to the athletic director a head injury occurring outside of school;
3. Procedures for notifying parents of a student's removal from play due to head injury;
4. Protocols for medical clearance prior to return to participation;
5. Contact information for key personnel.

In addition, information regarding this policy is available in the Oliver Ames High School Student Handbook. The Student Handbook is available at: <http://www.oliverames.org/>

School staff will work with parents of limited English proficiency to facilitate effective notice of this policy and effective communication regarding suspected head injury. In the event an interpreter is needed, parents and/or staff should contact the Principal's office.

X. Consequences

The Easton Public Schools takes the safety of student athletes seriously. All members of the school staff are expected to follow the policies and protocols set forth herein and in Massachusetts law to support the health and safety of students who participate in Extracurricular Athletic Activities. The underlying philosophy of these policies is "when in doubt, sit them out". Failure to comply with the letter or spirit of these policies could result in progressive discipline for staff and/or forfeiture of games. If students or parents have concerns that the policies are being violated, they should contact the Superintendent or Principal.

Parents are also expected to do their part in supporting the health and safety of students by ensuring that all documentation required by this policy is submitted in a timely manner. Each student must also adhere to the rules of safe play as instructed by their coaches. Students must also immediately inform a coach or other adult in the event the student believes he/she may have been injured during an activity. No student will be permitted to participate in an Extracurricular Athletic Activity unless the student and his/her parents have complied with their obligations under this policy.

Cross Ref: Mass. Gen. L. ch. 111, Section 222
 105 CMR 201.000 et seq.
 603 CMR 23.07 (access to student records)
 Student Handbook Policies

Forms: *Pre-Participation Head Injury/ Concussion Reporting For Extracurricular Activities Form Link:*
<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/com-health/injury/preparticipation-reporting-form.pdf>
 Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medial Clearance and Authorization Form Link:
<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/com-health/injury/posthead-injury-clearance-form.pdf>
 Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form Link:
<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/com-health/injury/in-season-report-form.pdf>

Adoption Date: March 1, 2012
Revision: September 20, 2018

Appendix SAH-7: Policy Prohibiting and Addressing Bullying (EPS)

I. EASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

The Easton Public Schools district is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyber-bullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process. The district takes specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community. We provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to identify, prevent, report, and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

We recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. The school or district will identify specific steps it will take to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

The Easton Public Schools does not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. We investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end such behavior and restore a safe environment. We support this commitment in all respects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

II. INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION PLAN

A. Prohibition against Bullying and Retaliation:

Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying, are prohibited:

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

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

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

B. Definitions:

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

Bullying - (defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O) the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

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

Cyber-bullying - bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. (See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying)

Hostile environment - (defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O) a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

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

Staff - includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, paraprofessionals, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, lunch/playground aides, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff and substitutes.

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

Bystander - a student who witnesses or becomes aware of an incident or the results of an incident of bullying or cyber-bullying.

C. Leadership:

Leadership at all levels plays a critical role in developing and implementing Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans in the context of other whole school and community efforts to promote positive school climate. Teachers have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. Leadership is provided at the building level by principals and assistant principals, an adjustment counselor, psychologists, nurses, and guidance counselors. Leadership is provided at the district level by the health educator, adjustment counselors, school resource officer and the assistant superintendent. This leadership is responsible for setting priorities and for staying up-to-date with current research on ways to prevent and effectively respond to bullying. It is also the responsibility of leaders to involve representatives from the greater school and local community in developing and implementing the Plan.

1. Public involvement in developing the Plan: The Easton Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan was developed in a public forum as a sub committee to the school committee and in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, administrators, community representatives, and parents. The first reading of this plan by school committee took place on November 4th, 2010 followed by a period of public comment prior to the second and final reading and adoption. District wide notification via phone took place on Monday, November 8th and the plan was posted on the district website the next day.
2. Assessing needs and resources: This Plan is the district's blueprint for enhancing capacity to identify, prevent, report and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. As part of the planning process, school leaders, with input from families and staff, assess the adequacy of current programs; review current policies and procedures; review available data on bullying and behavioral incidents; and assess available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services. Based on these findings, the district continually revises or develops policies and procedures; establishes partnerships with community agencies, including law enforcement, and sets priorities.

At least once every four years beginning with 2015/16 school year, the district will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary-developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our schools. Additionally, the school or district will annually report bullying incident data to the Department.

3. Planning and oversight:

Responsibilities of the Assistant Superintendent include:

- Review and update the Plan each year
- Communicate to all stakeholders
- Create a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors
- Plan for ongoing professional development
- Implement the curricula that the school or district will use
- Develop new or revising current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy
- Develop amendments for student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct based on school committee policy

Responsibilities of the district professional support staff:

- Lead the parent or family engagement efforts and draft parent information materials
- Provide professional development for teachers, administrators and parents
- Ensure the sustainability of programs and ongoing curriculum renewal

Responsibilities of the principal or his/her designee include:

- Receive reports on student interaction incidents
- Investigate alleged bullying in a timely manner and make a determination of the finding
- Develop a safety plan where appropriate and communicate the results of the investigation to stakeholders
- Document and track student interaction incidents

Responsibilities of the Superintendent and School Committee

- Receive reports of alleged bullying by a principal or superintendent or other central office staff
- The Superintendent or designee will take appropriate actions in accordance with this Plan including providing for the safety of the target when the principal or central office staff is the alleged aggressor.
- The School Committee or designee will take appropriate actions in accordance with this Plan including providing for the safety of the target when the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor.

The Principal, Superintendent and School Committee, each in his/her/its respective role as defined above, is hereinafter referred to as the “Administrator.”

D. Procedures for Reporting Bullying or Retaliation:

1. Reporting bullying or retaliation: Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the Administrator or designee any possible instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports to the

Administrator may be made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, and may be made anonymously. The school or district makes a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form (See appendix A), voicemail, and email.

At the beginning of each school year, the school or district provides the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the Administrator or designee, is incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school or district website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

- a. Reporting by Staff: A staff member must report immediately to the Administrator or designee when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the Administrator 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. Staff members at the middle and high school level must record a “student interaction incident” through X2 Student Operating System along with the following commentary: “the incident has been resolved at the classroom level and parents have been contacted” or “please follow up”. The Administrator or designee will then investigate further where appropriate, and the district’s Incident Reporting Form will be completed. Where an incident of bullying is substantiated, a copy of the completed form must be forwarded to the attention of the assistant superintendent. This method of documenting the reporting of incidents allows the district to develop a tracking system for both aggressors and targets and ensure timely investigation of any alleged incidents. The Incident Reporting Form provides for uniformity throughout the investigation process.
- b. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others: The school or district expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the Administrator or designee. Parents can report bullying through multiple sources. Reports can be made to the classroom teacher, guidance counselor, nurse or administrator in person, by phone or in writing or email. 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 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 Administrator or designee. Students may verbally report bullying through a guidance counselor, an adjustment counselor, a teacher, a staff member, an administrator, a nurse or through a parent.

E. Responding to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation:

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Administrator or designee takes 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 limiting access to the target. The Administrator or designee takes additional steps to promote safety and a review process during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The Administrator or designee implements 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. A developmentally appropriate student review plan is developed on an individual basis for the aggressor, the target or the bystander as needed.

1. Clear procedures for restoring a sense of safety for a target or aggressor and assessing need for protection

- Assure the parents/guardians as to the adherence to district-wide procedures for responding to reports of bullying
- Hold a meeting with the students, his/her parents/guardians, classroom teacher and Administrator
- Create an action plan
- Empower the target to be responsible for reporting any further incidents
- Encourage the parents/guardians to report any somatic changes
- Recommend participation in school social group if deemed necessary
- Develop a check-in and follow up plan
- Adjust schedule where necessary
- Notify faculty/bus drivers/cafeteria workers/School Resource Officer/Substitute Teachers

2. Obligations to Notify Others

- a. Notice to parents or guardians: Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Administrator or designee must 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 Administrator or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.
- b. Notice to Another School or District: If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the Administrator or designee first informed of the incident must promptly notify by telephone the Administrator or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school

may take appropriate action. All communications must be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

- c. **Notice to Law Enforcement:** At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the Administrator or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Administrator notifies the local law enforcement agency. Notice must be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the Administrator or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

In making this determination, the Administrator must, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer and other individuals the Administrator or designee deems appropriate.

F. Investigation:

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

During the investigation the Administrator or designee must, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The Administrator or designee reminds the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the Administrator or designee, other staff members as determined by the Administrator or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. Given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the Administrator or designee maintains confidentiality during the investigative process. The Administrator or designee maintains a confidential written record of the investigation.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation are consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the Administrator or designee consults with legal counsel about the investigation.

G. Determinations:

The Administrator or designee makes a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Administrator or designee takes steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The Administrator

or designee: 1) determines what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determines what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the Administrator or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or student 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 Administrator or designee must promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the student 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. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records and personnel records, the Administrator or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations. Notice must be consistent the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 such that an Administrator may not disclose information from a student record of a target or aggressor to a parent unless the information is about the parent's own child.

The principal or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information are also available at the Superintendent's office.

H. Responses to Bullying:

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building for students: Easton Public Schools provides an extensive list of evidence based social competency skill building programs (see Appendix B). We have recently updated the Open Circle program to include bullying prevention, are expanding the Steps to Respect program to grades 3 and 4 and introducing the Second Step Program for all students in grades 6, 7, 8.
2. Implement specific bullying prevention approaches for students: Bullying prevention curricula are evidence based, in accordance with current research, and emphasize the following approaches:
 - using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
 - empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
 - helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber-bullying, including

- the underlying power imbalance;
 - emphasizing cyber-safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
 - enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; and
 - engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.
3. Apply teaching approaches for students that support bullying prevention efforts: The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:
- set clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
 - create safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students;
 - use appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
 - use positive behavioral supports;
 - encourage adults to develop positive relationships with students;
 - model, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
 - use positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
 - use the Internet safely; and
 - support students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.
4. Provide a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior for students: Skill-building approaches that the Administrator or designee may consider include:
- offer individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curriculum;
 - provide relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
 - implement a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals;
 - meet with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
 - adopt behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
 - make a referral for evaluation.
5. Take Disciplinary Action: If the Administrator or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action is determined on the basis of facts found by the Administrator or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s)

involved, and in the case of students the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline for students must be consistent with the Plan and with the school's or district's code of conduct as defined in the student handbook. Discipline for staff must be consistent with expectations for conduct and due process rights associated with the position.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline.

If the Administrator or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

6. Promote Safety for the Target and Others

The Administrator or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others. Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the Administrator or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the Administrator or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

I. Training and professional development:

Ongoing professional development is provided yearly for all staff, including but not limited to, educators, administrators, paraprofessionals, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, lunch/playground aides, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff and substitutes. All teachers are provided with information regarding their requirement to report potential incidents of bullying on the first day of school.

1. Annual staff training on the Plan: Annual training for all school staff on the Plan includes staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the Administrator or designee must follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula offered at all grades throughout the school or district. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years.
2. Ongoing professional development: The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development enhances the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of school-wide and district-wide professional development is informed by research and will include information on:

- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
- research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying; and
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.
- distinguishing between acceptable managerial behaviors designed to correct misconduct, instill accountability in the school setting, etc., and bullying behaviors.

Professional development addresses ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This includes a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development.

Written notice to staff. The school or district provides all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties, in the school or district employee handbook and the code of conduct.

J. Access to resources and services:

In order to enhance the school's or district's capacity to prevent, intervene early, and respond effectively to bullying, the following resources are made available to address the social emotional needs of the targets and aggressors:

- Referral to school based services
- Referral to outside agencies (available through school based professionals)
- Behavior Plans
- Social skills groups

A list of available resources is included in our plan (See Appendix B)

K. Students with disabilities:

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

L. Collaboration with families:

Resources for families and communication with them are essential aspects of effective collaboration. Our Plan includes provisions for informing and educating parents or guardians about the bullying prevention and intervention curricula used by the school district or school including: (i) how parents and guardians can reinforce the curricula at home and support the school or district plan; (ii) the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) online safety and cyber-bullying. Parents and guardians will be notified in writing each year about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The school and district post the Plan and related information on their respective websites.

Appendix SAH-8: Harassment Policy (EPS)

The Easton Public Schools is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. Consistent with our Policy Prohibiting and Addressing Bullying, Easton Public Schools specifically prohibits all conduct that creates and intimidating, hostile environment for others. However, such conduct based upon the protected classifications described above requires particular attention.

A. Definitions: Harassment: Includes communications such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct which offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability, when such communication or conduct is sufficiently serious to deny or limit the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from their educational programs or school sponsored events. By law, the particular communication or conduct is viewed from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive. Sexual Harassment: Includes not only the types of conduct listed above that is based upon gender, but can also include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

B. Harassment and Retaliation Prohibited: Harassment in the school environment is unlawful and is absolutely prohibited. This includes harassment of or by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. In addition, retaliation against any individual who has filed a complaint of harassment or who cooperates in an investigation of possible harassment is unlawful and is prohibited. Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or school committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

C. Reporting and Investigating Incidents of Harassment: If you believe that you may have been harassed, or if you witness or learn about the harassment of another individual, you should inform the principal, his/her designee, or a guidance counselor as soon as possible. If you do not wish to discuss the issue with him/.her, or if he/she does not address the problem in an effective manner, you should inform the Superintendent or his designee. His office is located at 50 Oliver Street, North Easton, MA 02356. The telephone number is 508-230-3200 Ext. 4. The Easton Public School will promptly investigate every complaint of harassment. Confidentiality will be maintained in the investigative process, to the extent consistent with the school department's need to address the alleged conduct. If the Easton Public Schools determine that harassment or retaliation has occurred, appropriate steps will be taken to end the conduct and to ensure that it is not repeated, which may range from counseling to discipline, including suspension or expulsion. The Easton Public Schools will further take steps to ensure that the targeted student is not restricted in his/her participation in the school department's educational programs. In certain cases, harassment of a student may constitute child abuse under Massachusetts law. The Easton Public School will comply with all legal requirements governing the reporting of suspected cases of child abuse. When an investigation has been completed, school personnel will inform the complainant of the results and file a report with the Assistant Superintendent. Nothing in this policy is intended to restrict the Easton Public School's authority to address conduct that is inappropriate for a school setting, whether or not it meets the definition of harassment.

STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES The Easton Public Schools urges all individuals in the school community to bring any concerns or complaints of harassment to the attention of school personnel so that they can address the issue as appropriate. The federal agency responsible for enforcing laws prohibiting harassment for students is the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 33 Arch Street, Boston, MA 02110, t. 617-289-0111 (TTY: 1-877-521- 2172). The state agencies responsible for enforcing such laws are the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-5023 t. 781-338-3000 (TTY: 1-800-439- 0183) or the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination at One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108 t, 617-994-6000 (TTY: 617-994-6196).