

LESTER J. GATES MIDDLE SCHOOL



Student/Family Handbook 2025-2026

Charting a Course for Excellence and Equity

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME	
MISSION STATEMENT OF THE SCITUATE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM	<u>5</u>
SCHOOL COMMITTEE	<u>6</u>
SUPERINTENDENT	<u>6</u>
DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION	<u>6</u>
DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AND FINANCE	<u>6</u>
GATES STAFF	<u>7</u>
MARK YOUR CALENDARS	<u>9</u>
AGENDAS	<u>9</u>
ANNOUNCEMENTS	<u>9</u>
ATTENDANCE	<u>9</u>
AWARDS	<u>9</u>
BULLYING POLICY	<u>10</u>
BUSES	<u>10</u>
COMMUNICATION	<u>10</u>
COMMUNICATION WITH GATES STAFF	<u>11</u>
CORI REQUIREMENTS	<u>11</u>
CORRIDORS	<u>11</u>
DANCE RULES	<u>11</u>
DISCIPLINE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	<u>11</u>
DUE PROCESS	<u>14</u>
DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS	<u>18</u>
DRESS CODE	<u>19</u>
DRUG SEARCH	<u>19</u>
ELECTRONIC DEVICES	<u>19</u>
EQUITY	<u>19</u>
FIELD TRIPS	<u>20</u>
FIRE ALARMS	<u>20</u>
FIRE DRILLS	<u>20</u>

FOOD AND DRINK	<u>20</u>
HARASSMENT	<u>20</u>
HEALTH SERVICES	<u>20</u>
HOMEWORK POLICY	<u>23</u>
HONOR ROLL	<u>23</u>
HUMAN SEXUALITY EDUCATION	<u>23</u>
LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES	<u>23</u>
LOCKDOWNS	<u>24</u>
LOCKERS	<u>24</u>
LOST OR DAMAGED BOOKS	<u>24</u>
LOST AND FOUND	<u>24</u>
LUNCH PROGRAM	<u>24</u>
MARKING SYSTEM	<u>24</u>
NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY	<u>25</u>
OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAM	<u>25</u>
PHYSICAL RESTRAINT	<u>25</u>
PLAGIARISM, CHEATING, AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE	<u>25</u>
PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)	<u>25</u>
SCHOOL COUNCIL	<u>26</u>
SCHOOL COUNSELING	<u>26</u>
SCHOOL HOURS	<u>26</u>
SEARCHES	<u>26</u>
SECTION 504	<u>26</u>
SPECIAL EDUCATION	<u>27</u>
STUDENT ACTIVITIES	<u>28</u>
STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION	<u>28</u>
STUDENT RECORDS	<u>28</u>
SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION POLICY	<u>28</u>
STUDENT RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY	<u>29</u>
SUPPORT TEAM	<u>28</u>
TELEPHONE USE	<u>28</u>

TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS	<u>28</u>
VALUABLES AT SCHOOL	<u>28</u>
VISITORS	<u>28</u>
WEBSITE	<u>28</u>
WELLNESS	<u>28</u>
WORKING CERTIFICATES	<u>28</u>

Welcome

Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to the Gates community. This student/family handbook is designed to acquaint all members of the Gates community with an overview of the policies and procedures of Gates Middle School; it is not intended to include all aspects of governing the school. Please review this so that you will become familiar with the expectations and policies of the Gates Middle School. Our goal is to provide an engaging, positive, and safe experience for all students and families.

Find below the Gates Middle School Core Values:

We, the members of the Gates community, believe in, embrace, and promote our mutual responsibility to:

- **G**enerate academic excellent
- **A**ppreciate each unique spirit
- **T**hink, create, collaborate
- **E**mpower each other
- **S**tand up for a safe, positive learning environment

We invite you to become active members of our community and to contribute in a way that is meaningful to you. Welcome to your middle school experience!

Ryan Beattie, Principal

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE SCITUATE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

Together, WE inspire, support and challenge all learners to reach their unique potential

Scituate Public Schools

School Committee

Dr. Carey Borkoski
Nicole Bradolini
Maria Fenwick
Peter Gates
Janice Lindblom

Superintendent

Mr. William Burkhead

Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Ryan Lynch

Director of Special Education

Dr. Michele Boebert

Director of Business/Finance

Dr. Thomas Raab

The Scituate Public Schools have a commitment to maintaining an educational environment and workplace where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, homeless status or disability are not tolerated and where any form of intimidation, threat, coercion and/or harassment that insults the dignity of others and interferes with their freedom to learn or work is unacceptable.

GATES MIDDLE SCHOOL STAFF

Principal: Ryan Beattie
Assistant Principal: Jill Smith
Administrative Secretary: Sue Lowrance
Secretary: Ann McCarthy

Student Support Staff

School Counselor, Grade 6: Amy Mahoney
School Counselor, Grade 7: Meredith Swanner
School Counselor, Grade 8: Liza DiCosimo
School Psychologist: Cassondra McNamara
School Adjustment Counselor: Lindsay Newton
METCO Director: MarKaveus Barnes
ELL: Nancy Molla
Nurse Leader: Kellie Bell
School Nurse: Karen MacDonald
District Nurse: Marnie Sham

Grade 6

Team A

Math: Kristina Shelley
ELA: Jim O'Sullivan
Social Studies: John Fitzgerald
Science: Anthony Clark

Team B

Math: Alexandra Sparzo
ELA: Brian Hickox
Social Studies: Matt Poirier
Science: Heather Hughes

Grade 7

Team C

Math: Megan Fahey
ELA: Chelsea Townsell
Social Studies: Jen O'Malley
Science: Allison Guinan

Team D

Math: Andy Barlow
ELA: Karen Naylor
Social Studies: Sara Paster
Science: Rebecca Ricker

Grade 8

Team E

Math: Amanda Kent
ELA: Adele McCarthy
Social Studies: Brian Robinson
Science: Kim Woodford

Team F

Math: Adam Culbert
ELA: Matt Mulder
Social Studies: Jay Gillespie
Science: Kathy Wilson

Engineering: Cheryl Riedel
Engineering: Cassidy Conway
Health/Applied Nutrition: Matt Cherner
Health/Applied Nutrition: Amy Heffernan
Health/Applied Nutrition: Erica Loucks
Library Media Specialist: Colleen Simpson
Technology: Helen Murphy
Drama: Amy Lemerande
Math Specialist: Kyle McCarthy
Math Specialist: Caitlyn McGlynn
Math Specialist: Kristen O'Brien
ELA Specialist: Sara DeMatteo
ELA Specialist: Shana Lentini
PE: Amy Sabolis
PE: Trevor Schattgen
PE: James Flynn
Music: Nadia Davis
Music: Laura Counter
Band: Greg Lessard
Art: Amanda Glover
Art: Danielle Mihaley
Art: Tracey Woodford

Special Education, Gr. 6: Maureen Sullivan
Special Education, Gr. 6: Sabrina Daniels
Special Education, Gr. 6: Maggie Gillan
Special Education, Gr. 7: Caitlin Belmarsh
Special Education, Gr. 7: Kate O'Rourke
Special Education, Gr. 8: John Nyberg
Special Education, Gr. 8: Tracy Shepard
Special Education: 6 - 8: Christine Nicolan
Special Education: 6-8: TBD
Special Education: GLC: Heidi Branca
Special Education: LBC: Jen Spinale
Special Education: Therapeutic Learning Program: Siobhan Boudreau
Speech and Language: Meredith Hilditch
Special Education Team Chair 6-12: Julie McGloin

Spanish: Acadia Jewett
Spanish: Gaby Lueck
Spanish: Lisa Mavilia
Spanish: Nicole Clifford
French: Megan Carmody
Mandarin: Su Hong Dang

Paraprofessionals

William Burns
Lori Desreuisseau
Mary Ellen Farmer
Bryan Fox
Maureen Kelly
Michael Lamie
Sandra Liberty
Lexi Critch

Custodians

Tim Whitlock, Senior Custodian
Mitchell DeVincent
Gerald Duffey
Justin Whyte
Patrick Wyman

Cafeteria

Patrick Legare, District Food Services Director
Janice Nelson, Manager
Wendy Murphy
Gary Finnegan

District Calendar for 2025-2026

<https://media.scit.org/media/Default/frf/5/SPS-Calendar-25-26.pdf>

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

◆ Important Dates

Trimester

Trimester 1.....August 27, 2025 - November 26, 2025

Trimester 2.....December 1, 2025 - March 13, 2026

Trimester 3.....March 17, 2026 - Last Day of School

Report Card

Trimester 1.....December 5, 2025

Trimester 2.....March 20, 2026

Trimester 3.....Last Day of School

AGENDAS

Students are provided with a paper agenda at the beginning of the year. Students are responsible for documenting their homework during each class period.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Daily announcements are made during homeroom.

ATTENDANCE

PHILOSOPHY: The Scituate Public Schools believes that regular and punctual school attendance is critical to academic success and establishing positive lifelong work habits. Despite advances in technology, it is still impossible to adequately replicate the in-class experience for students who are absent from school. Students who are excessively absent are likely to fall behind academically, could experience school failure, and may eventually drop out of school. Parents play a critical role by ensuring their children regularly attend school.

PROCEDURES: Consistent with Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 76, the Scituate School Committee has established [Policy JH](#).

1. If a student will not be attending school, a registered parent or guardian must email or call the school to state the reason for the absence.
2. Early dismissals and tardies should be avoided if possible; to be considered present for the school day, a student in grades 6-12 may not miss more than two class periods. A student may be excluded from school sponsored events if they are absent from school or do not report to school prior to 10:20AM on the day of the event.
3. Parents/caregivers are strongly advised to schedule vacations to coincide with school vacation dates. In the event where families choose to take vacations outside of the scheduled vacation times, parents/guardians must submit a letter to school administration in advance. Teachers are not required to provide work in advance of a planned vacation, nor are they required to provide tutorial assistance to students who have missed class time due to a vacation. It is the family's responsibility to support the student at home to make up missed learning and assignments within a mutually agreed upon timeframe with the family and the student's teachers.
4. Consistent with Massachusetts General Law, when a student has reached five (5) unverified absences in a school year, the principal, or his/her designee, will set up a meeting with the student and his/her parents in order to develop an action plan to improve attendance.
5. When a student is absent 10% or more in a marking period, even if the absences are considered verified, the principal, or his/her designee, may set up a meeting with the student and their parents in order to develop an action plan to improve attendance. As part of this plan, additional documentation may be required to explain excessive absences.

AWARDS and RECOGNITION

END OF THE YEAR AWARDS

At the end of the school year, teams will hold team-based award ceremonies. Awards presented include the following:

Academic Program Awards

These awards recognize students who have demonstrated a consistent commitment to a class through consistent participation, performance, leadership and character and high level of achievement by achieving the highest overall average in that class and on each team. This award is given out for each content area and for each team.

The Outstanding Student Award

This award is presented to the student who has shown outstanding academic performance in all their courses throughout the school year.

MVP Award – Most Valuable Team Player

The teachers give this award to the student(s) who exhibits enthusiastic performance and a willingness to contribute unselfishly to their team throughout the school year.

The Citizenship Award

This award is presented to the student who consistently demonstrates the following attributes: Leadership that directly influences others to be positive, a willingness to render services to others, the highest standards of attitude toward honesty and reliability, cooperation in complying with school regulations, a willingness to uphold scholarship, courtesy in work and action to those in authority and to fellow classmates, the ability to follow as well as lead, a willingness to perform insignificant services as well as those that win acclaim, and a will to do the right thing.

The Peer Mentor Award

This award recognizes those students who go above and beyond the norm by extending themselves towards others while appreciating the unique qualities of their classmates.

Honor Roll*

This award is presented to those students who have achieved Honor Roll status for all three terms during the current school year.

High Honor Roll*

The award is presented to those students who have achieved High Honor Roll for all three terms during the current school year.

The Dolly Devereaux Award

This award is presented to two students in their 8th grade year who have shown tremendous growth in character during their three years at the Gates Intermediate School. These students may have shown growth in one or more of the following areas: academics, attendance, perseverance, and/or character.

The Lester J. Gates Award*

This prestigious award is presented to those students at Gates who have maintained High Honor Roll status (all A's in all courses) for the entirety of their three years at Gates.

* Students who earn Honor Roll, High Honor Roll, and the Gates Award will be recognized after grades have closed and have been verified by Gates teachers and administrators. School administration will share awards related to grades, but grades do not always close prior to the Grade 8 Promotion Ceremony.

Gates Core Values Awards:

The Gates Core Values Awards are an important way to recognize students for being strong students while also contributing positively to the culture at Gates. Students who exhibit the following values are acknowledged by the Gates staff throughout the year:

- Generate academic excellence
- Appreciate each unique spirit
- Think, create, collaborate
- Empower each other
- Stand up for a safe, positive learning environment

The addition or deletion of awards will be a decision made in concert with the School Council, school staff, and building administration.

BICYCLES

Students who ride their bikes to school are expected to practice safe riding habits on their way to and from school. Helmets should be worn at all times. Students are expected to park their bikes in the bike rack as soon as they arrive at school in the morning. They are not to ride around the school property. It is also recommended that students provide a lock for their bikes. As with all students' personal property, the school is not responsible for lost or stolen bicycles.

BULLYING PREVENTION ([POLICY JICFB](#))

Students, who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff.

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. Gates students can anonymously report instances of bullying by completing the [Gates Middle School Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment Reporting Form](#) located on the school's website. Parents/caregivers and members of the community are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible. Members of the school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or their designee.

No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

BUSSES ([POLICY EEA](#))

STUDENT CONDUCT ON BUSES ([POLICY EEAEC](#))

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT ([POLICY JLDBD](#) and [POLICY JLDBD-R](#))

COMMUNICATION

ASPEN

The Gates Staff utilizes ASPEN as our student/parent portal. Each student and parent/guardian is provided with a password to this portal. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to reference their student's ASPEN account regularly to monitor their assignments, progress, and grades. Teachers are expected to minimally

update their ASPEN gradebooks every two weeks. ASPEN is a valuable tool and will help keep open the lines of communication between parents and their children regarding their schooling.

COMMUNICATION WITH GATES STAFF

We encourage you to contact any of your child's teachers, school counselor or administrator. Please email teachers directly or call (781) 545-8760 and use the dial by name directory.

TEAM MEETINGS WITH PARENTS/GUARDIANS

It may be beneficial for teachers, school counselors, support staff, and parents/caregivers to meet together to discuss ideas that will support a student who is having difficulties with learning, behavior, and/or social interactions. Parents/caregivers will be contacted if the need arises. If a parent/caregiver would like to request a team meeting for their student, please call the school and ask for your student's school counselor. They will set up a time to meet with your student's team teachers. Communication between home and school is strongly encouraged.

CONCUSSIONS ([Policy JJIF](#))

CORI REQUIREMENTS ([Policy ADDA](#))

CORRIDORS

Students are expected to proceed in a quiet, respectful manner, keeping to the right while passing between classes. Running, pushing, shoving and yelling are not allowed in the corridors. Misbehavior in the hallway will be subject to disciplinary action.

DANCE RULES

The following rules are to be followed by all students so that our dances are a safe place for everyone:

- ☐ Only students who attend Gates Middle School may attend dances.
- ☐ Dances are held between 7:00-9:00 pm. Students are not allowed to arrive after 7:30 unless they have a signed permission slip from the office.
- ☐ Students may not leave before 9:00 unless a parent or guardian picks them up. A parent/guardian must come into the dance to notify an administrator.
- ☐ All bags must be left at the front door.
- ☐ Appropriate dancing behavior is expected at all times: no inappropriate physical contact (ie: kissing, groping)
- ☐ Students must pay at the door in order to enter the dance.
- ☐ Chaperones are there to enforce the dance rules and to help all students enjoy the dance. Please listen respectfully to their suggestions or requests.

DISCIPLINE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ([School Committee Policy JIC](#))

The atmosphere of a school is a reflection of the attitude of its students and staff toward the school and a function of parental and social attitudes toward education and teachers. It is very important that an atmosphere of order, self-discipline, and mutual respect be encouraged. The administration and staff will work with students to develop the maturity and good judgment to regulate their own behavior and accept the consequences of their decisions and actions.

The Scituate School Committee believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Each Principal shall include prohibited actions in the student handbook or other publication to be made available to students and parents.

Principals and staff shall not use academic punishment of any form as a consequence to inappropriate behaviors/actions by students.

The Principal may, as a disciplinary measure, remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the remainder of this policy, law, or regulation.

The Superintendent shall provide each Principal with a copy of the regulations promulgated by DESE and shall have each Principal sign a document acknowledging receipt thereof, which shall be placed in their personnel file.

BEHAVIORS AND CONSEQUENCES

The atmosphere of a school is a reflection of the attitude of its students and staff toward the school and toward each other. As such, a disciplinary code with appropriate progressive discipline is necessary. With progressive discipline, consequences increase upon repeat occurrences. The administration will exercise discretion in determining disciplinary consequences and will reserve the right to increase or decrease the consequences as appropriate based upon individual circumstances.

TIER 1

Penalty: Minimum of 1 office detention; restitution where applicable

- ❖ Disruptive conduct in class or school building, on school grounds or on school buses
- ❖ Failure to report to a teacher-assigned detention
- ❖ Habitual loitering after school hours
- ❖ Gambling in school or on school grounds
- ❖ Drinks, other than water, outside of the dining commons (unless permitted by a teacher for a special classroom activity)
- ❖ Failure to return and/or pay for lost or damaged books
- ❖ Repeated violation of dress code
- ❖ Failure to report to the office when tardy to school

TIER 2

Penalty: Minimum of 2 office detention up to suspensions; restitution where applicable

- ❖ Repeated violation of rules outlined in Tier 1
- ❖ Disrespectful speech or action done toward any member of the school community in the building or on school grounds
- ❖ Knowingly lying to a staff member or administrator
- ❖ Failure to report to homeroom, class, or lunch
- ❖ Encouraging or arranging fights
- ❖ Throwing food or objects of any kind
- ❖ Forgery
- ❖ Plagiarism of any type
- ❖ Profanity, obscenity, discourtesy or blatant disrespect toward any staff member
- ❖ Damaging school property or other people's personal property
- ❖ Inappropriate physical contact, including horseplay and "fake-fighting"
- ❖ Making and/or throwing snowballs on school property
- ❖ Misrepresentation or failure to give correct identity when asked by school personnel
- ❖ Creating a safety hazard

TIER 3

Penalty: Minimum of 5 office detentions up to suspension; restitution where applicable; referral to Scituate Police Department where applicable

- ❖ Repeated violation of rules outlined in Tier 1 or Tier 2
- ❖ Physical aggression of any nature including, but not limited to fighting
- ❖ Threats of violence, including physical intimidation/aggression
- ❖ Possession of hazardous materials (fireworks, incendiary devices)
- ❖ Chronic defiance or insubordination
- ❖ Harassment, which is speech or conduct that creates, or contributes to the creation of, an intimidating or hostile environment of a student because of their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability
- ❖ Use of hate symbols, hate speech, or other actions or language intended to target another person's or group's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability

- ❖ Bullying / Repeated, targeted behavior that harms a student or students and/or disrupts the school environment
- ❖ Hazing – 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
- ❖ Possession of weapons or facsimile weapons*
- ❖ Using, possessing, or being in the presence of tobacco products and smoking/vaping products, including cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, vaping liquid, vaporizers, or e-cigarettes ([POLICY JICG](#))
- ❖ Initiating a false fire alarm
- ❖ Making a bomb threat call
- ❖ Possession, use, or sale of controlled substances, drugs, alcohol*
- ❖ Drug-related paraphernalia*
- ❖ Stealing
- ❖ Defacing school property
- ❖ Leaving school grounds without permission
- ❖ Any disruptive act that significantly interferes with the educational atmosphere of a classroom or of the building
- ❖ Disruption of any school-sponsored event
- ❖ Spitting at another person
- ❖ Serious violations of the District Acceptable Use Policy

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE* ([POLICY JICH](#))

School policy and state law forbids the use of, possession of, being in the presence of, or sale/distribution of alcoholic beverages and/ or controlled substances. Students in the presence of others who are using, selling, distributing, or in open possession of these substances may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including the full application of this policy. The regulations are in effect during the school day and at all extracurricular and school functions. Violations of these regulations will result in the following sanctions:

• Alcoholic Beverages (Use, possession, in the presence of, sale or distribution)

1st Offense

- Notification of parents.
- Mandatory parent conference.
- Suspension from school for a minimum of five (5) days with a possible recommendation for an additional five (5) days.
- Assessment by school psychologist for counseling.
- Restricted from all school events or co-curricular activities for forty-five (45) school days.
- Student will be required to develop a contract with the building principal or his/her designee to perform twenty-five (25) hours of school-related service beyond the school day. The student will have two weeks to complete the school-related service.
- Students must relinquish any elected or appointed position for the remainder of the year.

2nd Offense

- Notification of parents.
- Mandatory parent conference.
- Suspension from school for a minimum of five (5) days with a recommendation for an additional five (5) days.
- Assessment by school psychologist for counseling.
- Notification of Narcotics Bureau and Police (informally).
- Possible expulsion from school.
- Student will be required to develop a contract with the building principal or his/her designee to perform twenty-five (25) hours of school-related service beyond the school day. The student will have two weeks to complete the school-related service.
- Student will not be allowed to attend or participate in any school events or co-curricular activities for a minimum of sixty (60) school days, or the remainder of the academic year, whichever is longer.
- Students must relinquish any elected or appointed position for the remainder of the year.

• Controlled Substances (Use of, possession of, in the presence of, sale or distribution of a controlled substance)

All Offenses

- Notification of parents.
- Mandatory parent conference.
- Suspension from school for a minimum of five (5) days with a possible recommendation for an additional five (5) days.
- Mandatory expulsion hearing (per Education Reform law).
- Referral for counseling.
- Notification of Narcotics Bureau and Police informally.

- Restricted from all school or co-curricular activities for forty-five (45) school days. Student will be required to develop a contract with the principal or his/her designee to perform twenty-five (25) hours of school-related service beyond the school days. The student will have two weeks to complete the school-related service.
- Student must relinquish any elected or appointed position for the remainder of the year.

POSSESSION OF WEAPONS*

Many items can be classified as weapons if they are used improperly. Possession of a facsimile weapon or weapon contraband (ie. Bullets, spent or unused) also constitutes a violation of school rules and may result in disciplinary action.

- Notification of parents.
- Minimum of five (5) days suspension.
- Mandatory expulsion hearing.
- Referral for counseling.
- Notification of the police.
- Restricted from all school or co-curricular activities for forty-five (45) school days.
- Student will be required to develop a contract with the principal or his/her designee to perform twenty-five (25) hours of school-related service beyond the school days. The student will have two weeks to complete the school-related service.
- Student must relinquish any elected or appointed position for the remainder of the year.

The administration has the final decision in all disciplinary matters.

DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES

Suspensions

The Scituate Public Schools adheres to the Student Discipline Laws and Regulations as set forth in M.G.L. ch. 71, § 37H, 37H½ and 37H¾ and 603 CMR53.00 et seq.

In School Suspension

The principal or the principal's designee shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student with an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal or the principal's designee determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal or principal's designee shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal or principal's designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal or principal's designee shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such a meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal or principal's designee is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

On the day of the suspension, the principal or principal's designee shall also send written notice (by hand-delivery, certified mail, first class mail or email) to the student and parent including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension. The notice shall be in English and the primary language of the home if another language is identified in the home language survey, or by other means, as appropriate.

The decision of the Principal or principal's designee is the final decision for in-school suspensions not exceeding ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year. There is no right to appeal.

The Principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

The Principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the Principal follows the process set forth in regulation and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by law and regulation.

Out of School Suspension Procedures under M.G.L. ch. 71, § 37H¾

Notice for Any Out-of-School Suspension

Prior to suspending a student, the Principal or designee will provide the student and the Parent oral and written notice of the possible suspension, an opportunity for the student to have a hearing and the opportunity of the Parent(s) to participate in the hearing. The notice will be in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English as identified in the home language survey, or by other means of communication where appropriate. The notice will set forth in plain language:

- (a) the disciplinary offense;
- (b) the basis for the charge;
- (c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- (d) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal or his designee concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
- (e) the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- (f) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

- (g) if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal:
 1. the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08(3)(b); and
 2. the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

The principal or designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. Prior to conducting a hearing without the parent present, the principal or designee will document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal or designee is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal or designee has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent.

In cases of misconduct for which a suspension may be imposed under 37H3/4, any principal acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and shall not suspend a student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, and in cases where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving.

Short Term Suspension

A Short-Term Suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. The principal, or designee, may, in their discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Any student facing a potential short-term suspension is entitled to a hearing with the Principal or with the following process:

Principal Hearing - Short-Term Suspension

- (a) The purpose of the hearing with the principal or designee is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal or designee shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts that the principal or designee should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as alternatives to suspension. The principal or designee shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
- (b) Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal or designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.
- (c) The principal or designee shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(1). The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.
- (d) If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

No Right to Appeal

The decision of the Principal or designee is the final decision for short-term out-of-school suspensions not exceeding ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year.

Long Term Suspension

A Long-Term Suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. The principal or designee, in their discretion, may allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in M.G.L. § 71, § 37H, or in M.G.L. § 71, § 37H½, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension under M.G.L. ch. 71, § 37H ¾ shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed. Any student facing a potential long-term suspension is entitled to a hearing with the Principal or designee with the following process

Principal Hearing - Long-Term Suspension

- (a) The purpose of the hearing with the principal or designee is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal or designee shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as alternatives to suspension. The principal or designee shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
- (b) In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following additional rights:
 1. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;

2. The right to produce witnesses on the student's behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
 3. The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
 4. The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made, and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
- (c) The principal or designee shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
- (d) Based on the evidence, the principal or designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal or designee shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal or designee decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:
1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
 2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
 3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
 4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school;
 5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English as determined by the home language survey, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:
 - a) the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.
- (e) If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the suspension takes effect.

Emergency Removal

- A Principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the Principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The Principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal including a description of the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Principal shall: Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters required in the notice as referenced in the applicable regulation; Provide written notice to the student and parent as required above; Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal that complies with applicable regulations, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Principal, student, and parent; Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of applicable law and regulation. A Principal shall also ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation prior to removal.

Superintendent's Appeal Hearing under M.G.L. ch. 71, § 37H ^{3/4}

1. A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.
2. The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in their discretion, for good cause.
3. The superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the superintendent shall grant the extension.
4. The superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if they have made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.
5. The superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request.
6. The superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
7. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension.
8. The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(3) (c) 1 through 5. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's

decision.

9. The decision of the superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district, with regard to the suspension.

Exclusion/Expulsion under M.G.L. ch. 71, § 37H

In accordance with M.G.L. ch. 71, § 37H, a student may be suspended or expelled from school under the following circumstances:

- a. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun, a knife, or their facsimile, or anything used in the commission of assault and battery; or a controlled substance as defined in § 94 C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- b. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- c. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at a hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).
- d. Any student who has been expelled (removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than 90 school days, indefinitely, or permanently) from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of the student's appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
- e. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan.
- f. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this section shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of their removal.
- g. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this statute for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and made academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

Felony Complaint or Conviction under M.G.L. ch. 71, § 37H½

Pursuant to M.G.L. ch. 71, § 37H½, the following procedures shall be implemented for students charged with or convicted of a felony:

- a. Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of their right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent. The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of their request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the suspension.
- b. Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a detrimental effect of the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of their right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.
- c. The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of their request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.
- d. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this section shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of their removal.
- e. Any student who is suspended or expelled pursuant to this statute for more than ten (10) consecutive days shall have the opportunity to receive education services and made academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

Academic Progress

Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of their removal from the classroom or school. The Principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide Education Service Plan.

The Principal shall develop a school-wide Education Service Plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The Plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under the law.

The Principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Reporting

The school district shall collect and annually report data to the DESE regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals, access to education services, and such other information as may be required by the DESE.

The Principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status in accordance with law and regulation.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:37H ½; 71:37H ¾; 76:17; 603 CMR 53.00

SCITUATE EDUCATION SERVICE PLAN

In accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Sections 37H, 37H½, and 37H¾, Scituate Public Schools must provide opportunities for students to earn credit and make up assignments, tests, papers, and other schoolwork as needed to make academic progress during the period of an in-school suspension, short-term suspension (10 days or less), long-term suspension (10 days or more), or expulsion. Any student who is expelled or long-term suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days may select one of the following education service options for the duration of the school suspension:

Access to tutoring services:

Students choosing this option are expected to attend tutoring sessions at a designated public site identified by Scituate where qualified Scituate personnel or contracted providers as assigned by Scituate will assist students with their self-directed academic work. The academic work will be consistent with the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under M.G.L. c. 69, §§1D and 1F. Student's tutoring schedule is by appointment and prepared weekly; however, based upon the availability of qualified tutors, tutoring services may only be available before or after school hours.

Access to online education:

Students choosing this option are enrolled in an online platform. Work hours are flexible but daily attendance during the school week is imperative in order to ensure success in the virtual program. The academic work will be consistent with the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under M.G.L. c. 69, §§1D and 1F.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as prescribed in this handbook. State and federal special education laws prescribe additional requirements concerning the discipline of students with special needs. Anytime school personnel seek to remove a student from the student's current educational placement for more than ten (10) school days in any school year, this constitutes a "change of placement." A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under the IDEA, the federal special education law. The student's Team will convene to determine whether the student's misconduct that led to the change in placement was a manifestation of the student's disability. These include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ If the misconduct was a manifestation, the school will conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavior intervention plan, provided that the school did not already conduct such an assessment before the behavior that resulted in the discipline.
- ❖ If such an assessment was already conducted, the behavior intervention plan will be reviewed and modified as necessary. Additionally, if the behavior was a manifestation, the student will return to the placement from which the student was removed, unless the school and the parent agree otherwise.
- ❖ If the behavior was not a manifestation, the school may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to the extent they would be applied to a student not eligible for special education, except that a student eligible for special education who is removed from his/her current educational placement is entitled to continue receiving educational services to enable the student to continue to participate in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to continue to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student's IEP.

In special circumstances, the school may move students to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days without regard to whether the behavior that led to the removal was a manifestation of the student's disability. These special circumstances are when:

- a student carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency; knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency
- a student has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency.

Copies of disability law requirements regarding discipline are available in the Special Education Office.

Similar procedures apply to students with plans under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1993.

DRESS CODE

Gates Middle School has a dress code that is meant to emphasize the importance of personal dress and appearance that encourages a safe and positive learning environment for all. The following guidelines are meant to encourage that environment:

- Students should dress comfortably for school while wearing clothing that is well-suited for a school environment.
- Clothing will cover torso, midriff and backside, and have sleeves or straps.
- Head and face will be uncovered. Appropriate headgear may be worn for warmth and protection outdoors, and inside for religious reasons or special circumstances.
- Clothing, drawings, and accessories that display or promote negative messages are not permitted. Those negative messages could include drug, weapon, alcohol, gang, or tobacco-related information, obscenities, put-downs, stereotypes, sexual innuendo, or offensive words or graphics.

Gates encourages all students to be proud of who they are and to express themselves appropriately. Violations of the dress code will require a change of clothing. Special circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Students who are dressed inappropriately for school will be requested to change their clothing. Parents may be called and requested to bring in appropriate attire for their children. Health regulations require that shoes must be worn at all times in a public building. Students who violate the dress code for the first time will be asked to call their parents to bring in appropriate clothing. **The final decision regarding a particular student's dress lies with the administration.**

DRUG SEARCH

Gates Middle School will periodically conduct a search of the school, including lockers and desks, for drugs and contraband. Student possessions will be searched when there is reason to believe the student is violating or has violated the law or school rules. When appropriate, the police and the use of trained animals may be used to conduct such a search. Students found intentionally interfering with a search may be subject to disciplinary action.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES ([Policy IJNDB](#))

Scituate Public Schools is a 1:1 district, and students are expected to bring their fully-charged device with them to school each day. All students must adhere to the Student Responsible Use of Technology Policy ([Policy IJNDB](#)).

Gates Statement on Using Devices in Pro-Social Ways: Gates Middle School is a community committed to students' positive academic and social development. As a community, we want to see technology used in ways that facilitates both academic success and the creation of a safe, welcoming, positive social environment.

Cell Phones: Cell phones may not be used in school between 7:45 am and 2:31 pm and must be kept at home or in student lockers. Students who violate this policy will receive consequences which include having their phone taken away for the day. Students in the school before or after those times may use their phones responsibly, provided that they do so in accordance with the district's Student Appropriate Use of Technology policy. If a teacher requests that students with phones bring them to class for a specific project, students will be allowed to use them only during class time and only for that specific class. Students without phones will be provided with alternative means for completing those projects.

Consequences for Violations of the Cell Phones:

When a teacher observes a student in violation of the cell phone protocols, a teacher will (1) confiscate the phone, (2) notify the student's parents of the infraction, and (3) return the phone to the student at the end of the day.

When a teacher observes a student in violation of the cell phone protocol for a second or subsequent time, teachers will confiscate the phone and turn it into the main office. When a student's phone is confiscated and turned into the office for the first time, the phone will be held in the office cellphone holder, the student's parents will receive an email about the violation, and the phone will be returned to the student at the end of the day.

When a student's phone is confiscated and turned into the office for the second or subsequent times, an administrator will issue additional consequences and develop a plan so that the student's cell phone will not interfere with the student's academic and social success at school.

EQUITY IN THE SCITUATE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Federal law prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin (**Title VI** of the Civil Rights Act of 1964); sex (**Title IX** of the Education Amendments of 1972); or disability (Section **504** of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990) in educational programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Pursuant to this, the Scituate Public School System, parents, students, and other interested parties provide the following information for use.

Contact Information

Ryan Lynch, Assistant Superintendent

District Equity Coordinator (781) 545-8759 x 23313

606 Chief Justice Cushing Highway, Scituate, MA 02066

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT ([POLICY JRA](#))

FIELD TRIPS

There will be a time when classes, clubs, teams, or other groups will be taking field trips or making visits to other schools to represent Scituate Public Schools in activities. Transportation will be a school bus or commercial transportation, and all students will travel with the group unless there are specific arrangements made in advance through the office of the Principal. Since students will be representing Scituate, it is expected that they will act and dress appropriately for the occasion and in accordance with Gates Middle School's Discipline Policy. In the case of field trips taken during the school day, students will be given a special form to be signed by their teachers and parents. The Administration and/or the student's teacher(s) have the right to approve or restrict a student from participating in a field trip (including overseas trips) based upon that student's tardy, attendance, and behavioral records. It is the student's responsibility to arrange for any class work that may be missed. Students are encouraged to obtain work in advance whenever possible.

FIRE ALARMS (PULLING OF)

Pulling fire alarms and arson are violations of state laws. If students set a fire or pull an alarm, the school will file a court complaint against them in addition to imposing a suspension of up to ten days. If a second offense is committed, the school administration will recommend that the student be expelled from school.

FIRE DRILLS

Safety is the most important issue in any school. The school is required by state law to conduct fire drills. Exit from the building or to the assigned indoor location should be rapid and quiet. Listen for instructions after you are outside or in your assigned evacuation space. Students must remain with their assigned evacuation teacher throughout the drill/evacuation. Students are not allowed to use cell phones or other communication devices during the drill/evacuations. Students who do not follow instructions during a fire drill will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

FOOD AND DRINK

No food or drink (other than water) should be in the hallways and classrooms or removed from the cafeteria. Students may keep water with them throughout the day. Other beverages, such as sport drinks, coffee, hot chocolate, etc. are permitted in the cafeteria only, not in the classrooms.

HARASSMENT ([POLICY AC](#))([POLICY AC-R](#))([POLICY ACA](#))([POLICY ACAB](#))([POLICY ACAB-R](#))([POLICY ACE](#))

If any Scituate Public Schools student or employee believes, in good faith, that they have been subjected to sexual harassment or any other form of harassment or discrimination described in the policies above, the individual has a right to file a complaint with the Scituate Public Schools through the Assistant Superintendent. This may be done verbally or in writing. Teachers or other staff members who observe incidents of harassment involving students should report such incidents immediately to the student's Principal or Assistant Principal. Administrators aware of harassment involving any employee should report such incidents to the Assistant Superintendent. If you wish to file a complaint, you may do so by contacting your immediate supervisor or the Assistant Superintendent in the case of employees; and your teacher, Principal, Assistant Principal or Assistant Superintendent in the case of students.

HAZING ([POLICY JICFA-E](#))

HEALTH SERVICES

HEALTH INFORMATION

School Physician: Katie McBrine, MD 781-545-9225

School Nurses: Karen MacDonald, MSN RN NCSN, Maryanne Sham, BSN RN CCRN

IMMUNIZATIONS

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has strict immunization guidelines that we must adhere to.

Requirements apply to all students including individuals from another country attending or visiting classes or educational programs as part of an academic visitation or exchange program. Requirements apply to all students, even if over 18 years of age.

Mandatory school immunizations are as follows, with more details [here](#)

Grades Kindergarten – 6

DTaP/Tdap	5 doses; 4 doses are acceptable if the fourth dose is given on or after the 4th birthday. DT is only acceptable with a letter stating a medical contraindication to DTaP
Polio	4 doses; fourth dose must be given on or after the 4th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose, or a fifth dose is required. 3 doses are acceptable if the third dose is given on or after the 4th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose
Hepatitis B	3 doses; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable

MMR	2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1 st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
Varicella	2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1 st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; a reliable history of chickenpox* or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable

Grades 7 – 12

In ungraded classrooms, Grade 7 requirements apply to all students ≥12 years.

Tdap	1 dose; and history of DTaP primary series or age appropriate catch-up vaccination. Tdap given at ≥7 years may be counted, but a dose at age 11–12 is recommended if Tdap was given earlier as part of a catch-up schedule. Td or Tdap should be given if it has been ≥10 years since last Tdap
Polio	4 doses; fourth dose must be given on or after the 4 th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose, or a fifth dose is required. 3 doses are acceptable if the third dose is given on or after the 4 th birthday and ≥6 months after the previous dose
Hepatitis B	3 doses; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable. 2 doses of Heplisav-B given on or after 18 years of age are acceptable
MMR	2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1 st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
Varicella	2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1 st birthday and second dose must be given ≥28 days after first dose; a reliable history of chickenpox* or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
Meningococcal Grade 7–10	1 dose; this dose must be given on or after the 10 th birthday. Meningococcal conjugate vaccine, MenACWY (formerly MCV4) and MenABCWY, fulfill this requirement; monovalent meningococcal B (MenB) vaccine is not required and does not meet this requirement
Meningococcal Grade 11–12 ✦ ✦	2 doses; second dose MenACWY (formerly MCV4) must be given on or after the 16 th birthday and ≥ 8 weeks after the previous dose; 1 dose is acceptable if it was given on or after the 16 th birthday. Meningococcal conjugate vaccine, MenACWY (MCV4) and MenABCWY, fulfill this requirement; monovalent meningococcal B (MenB) vaccine is not required and does not meet this requirement

Prescription medication to be administered during the school day - Prescription medication *must be delivered to the school by a parent or guardian*. Students are not allowed to carry prescription medication to school, with the exception of inhalers and epinephrine pens. A written prescriber's order and a written parent consent form must accompany the medication. Medications must be in the original container and be labeled with the child's name, medication name, dose, directions, and prescribing physician's name. Per the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, no prescription medication shall be administered without all of the above being present. Medication consent forms are available on the school website, and in the health office. We are not allowed to store prescription medication in the school over the summer. Therefore, it must be picked up by the last day of school or it will be discarded. (please see School Committee [Policy JLCD](#))

Non-prescription medication to be administered during school hours:

Annually, non-prescription medication consent forms are sent to families to be completed. This includes permission for medications such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Benedryl, etc. Please be advised that the only medications that will be administered to your child are those that are designated by the parent/guardian on the form. **Medications will not be administered without this consent form.** The form is updated on an annual basis only, so please inform the nurse if at any time during the school year you would like to make any changes to it.

METERED-DOSE (ASTHMA) INHALERS

Middle school students will be allowed to have possession of their own inhalers provided the physician's order and parent/caregiver consent forms have been completed and indicate that (a) the parent and physician agree that the student should retain custody of the asthma inhaler and warrants that the student has been instructed in the safe and proper use of the inhaler and that (b) the student demonstrates proper use of inhaler (c) parent holds the school department harmless from any incident involving the availability of ultimate use of the asthma inhaler. It is recommended that an extra inhaler be kept in the health office for emergency purposes. In the event that school personnel become aware that an asthma inhaler is being improperly utilized, the inhaler will be placed in the custody of the nurse or principal, and parents will be notified immediately. Final decisions of self administration is determined by the School Nurse.

HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS

It is School Committee policy that home injuries are not to be treated by the school nurse.

School nurses do not treat injuries that occur outside of school.

HEALTH UPDATES

In order to provide the best care possible for your child during school hours, please inform the nurse of any health concerns your child may have, including any changes in their health that may arise during the school year. Communication between home and school is vital to your child's well-being.

Please inform the school nurse of any health considerations your child may have. This includes student medications, allergies, asthma, diabetes, vision or hearing difficulties or any information that would be helpful for us to provide the best care possible for your student. Please inform the nurse immediately if your child has any food/insect/other allergy in order to provide the safest possible environment at school. The information received will be shared with pertinent staff members to develop an emergency care plan to better accommodate your student.

Updated medical forms, especially immunization records, are always appreciated if your child has a physical exam during the school year. Healthcare professionals will provide families with a copy of immunizations and physicals when requested..

HEALTH & WELLNESS SCREENINGS

School nurses and other trained staff will provide Massachusetts-mandated health and wellness screenings. The types of screenings and their schedules are set by the Massachusetts School Health Unit / Department of Public Health. Screenings include height, weight, vision, hearing, postural, BMI (body mass index), and SBIRT (screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment- for high school and middle school students only). Complete information on these screenings may be found [here](#). Your school nurse will send detailed communication home prior to any screenings. If you wish to opt your student out of these screenings, or if your healthcare provider has already screened them, a written request must be sent to school.

ABSENCES/DISMISSALS

Understandably, families do not want class absences. However, when your student is ill, please keep them home. If you student has any of the following symptoms, please keep them home:

- o Fever (100F or higher), chills, shaking chills
- o Cough (not due to other known causes, such as a chronic cough)
- o Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- o New loss of taste or smell
- o Muscle aches or body aches
- o Sore throat (when in combination with other symptoms)
- o Headache (when in combination with other symptoms)
- o Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- o Fatigue (when in combination with other symptoms)
- o Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies and when in combination with other symptoms)

In the event that your student becomes ill during the day, a parent or guardian will be contacted to pick up the student. With parental permission, the student may be dismissed to another family member or friend, provided proper identification is shown. If the school is unable to reach the parent, the emergency contact will be called to pick up the student.

HEALTH SERVICES: ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION ([POLICY JLCD](#))**HOME INSTRUCTION**

Scituate Public Schools continues to respect the right of parents to educate their children at home. Home instruction is subject to the prior approval of the Superintendent following specific procedures. Further information may be obtained from the Office of the Assistant Superintendent.

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION ([POLICY IHBF](#))**HOMELESS STUDENTS: EDUCATION OF ([POLICY JFABD](#))**

HOMEWORK

The term "homework" refers to an assignment to be prepared during a period of supervised study in class or outside of class. The purposes of homework are to improve the learning processes, to aid in the mastery of skills, and to create and stimulate interest on the part of the student. Homework is a learning activity which should increase in complexity with the maturity of the student. With increased maturity, learning should become an independent activity. This should be established through consistent assignments which encourage students to investigate for themselves and to work independently as well as with others.

Homework is an extension of the student's daily instructional program and is assigned in order to meet the following educational goals and activities:

- To positively and meaningfully review, reinforce, and refine the skills and concepts that are taught in the classroom.
- To pursue independent or enrichment studies of the classroom curriculum.
- To develop in each student a sense of responsibility and accountability.
- Homework assignments should not include skills or concepts that have not been taught previously.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

- Homework should be assigned in increasing amounts from grades one through twelve. It is recommended that the total time for all subjects fall within the following time guideline: Grades 6-8: An average of less than two hours per night.
- Homework should be evaluated for completion, accuracy and content. Homework assignments that have been evaluated should be included when determining a student's quarterly grade average. The homework component should not exceed the following guideline: Grades 6-8: No more than 25%.
- Students and parents should be made aware of each teacher's grading philosophy during the first few weeks of each school year.
- Homework assignments missed through absenteeism due to illness, family emergencies, and vacations taken during school time must be made up. It must be understood that extra help and make up sessions do not take the place of being present for the regular daily instruction.
- Parental involvement in the homework process is strongly encouraged. It is recommended that parents provide a setting conducive to doing homework and a definite time period during which homework must be done. Parents can also act as a resource person to their children when requested. By assuming this role, parents are able to check their child's progress and the quality of their homework assignments.
- It is recognized that long-term assignments increase a student's homework load over and above the normal time recommendations. Therefore, teachers should make every effort to avoid concurrent long-term assignments. If this is not possible, due dates for the assignments should be staggered.

HONOR ROLL

High Honors – Students must receive A's in all academic and exploratory subjects (Music, Health/Wellness, Art, Engineering, Technology, Physical Education, Band and Chorus).

Honor Roll – Students must receive A's or B's in all academic subjects and exploratory subjects (Music, Health/Wellness, Art, Engineering, Technology, Physical Education, Band and Chorus).

HUMAN SEXUALITY EDUCATION ([POLICY IHAMA](#))

LIBRARY MEDIA COLLECTION

The library collection is an essential component of the learning experience for students at Gates Middle School. The use of resources is critical to providing the best possible education. The collection thrives due to the support of the administration and the utilization and cooperation of the staff. Books are organized by genre, can be found throughout the shelves of the building and the community can find information such as description and location through our Destiny online catalog. Destiny can be accessed as a guest or login through firstnamelastname and password (student pin code).

The objectives of the *Gates Library Collection* are to provide:

- Opportunities for students to browse, explore, and utilize all resources available.
- Opportunities for staff to incorporate resources for instruction into the curriculum
- Assistance to students in completing resource-based learning assignments and activities
- Resources for teachers to supplement their instruction and curriculum

Books may be kept for a period of two weeks after which time they should renew or return the item. If a book is lost or damaged, patrons will be billed an amount equal to the replacement cost of the book.

The Gates Library Media Specialist ensures equitable access to information and resources both at school and online. The school Library Media Specialist can assist teachers and students in the effective use of technology while providing information tools, resources, data, and supportive systems that increase teaching and learning opportunities.

As both the manager of the library collection and a teacher librarian, the Library Media Specialist also incorporates a student-centered approach designed to help all students develop skills including thinking critically, utilizing information to solve complex problems, working collaboratively, communicating effectively, and developing lifelong skills for accessing and assessing information.

LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES ([POLICY EFAB](#))

The Scituate Public Schools will work in cooperation with parent/guardians, students and physicians to minimize risks and to provide a safe educational environment for all students. Any student with a diagnosis by a physician that the child is at high risk of a life threatening allergic reaction and/or a medication order containing indications for the administration of epinephrine will be included in this policy. The focus of allergy management will be

prevention, education, awareness, communication and emergency response. This policy and protocol will assist students to optimize full participation in educational programs and school-sponsored activities. Procedures shall be in place at school to address food allergy issues in the classrooms and gym, food services/cafeteria, for art, science and mathematics projects, crafts, outdoor activity areas, school buses and vans, field trips and before and after school activities and school sponsored events. The complete Life Threatening Allergy policy can be found on the district website.

“LOCKDOWN” and “SHELTER-IN-PLACE” ORDERS

The school will periodically conduct a “Lockdown” drill or issue a “Shelter-in-Place” order. Students are expected to follow instructions of teachers and administration. Students must remain with their classroom teachers throughout the lockdown or stay-in-place order. Students are not allowed to use cell phones or other communication devices during lockdown or shelter-in-place order. Students who do not follow instructions during a lockdown or stay-in-place order may be subject to disciplinary action.

LOCKERS

Each student will be assigned a locker for storing backpacks, coats, hats, books, cell phones, iPods and other electronic devices as well as other personal belongings. Students will be issued a locker to use for the year. Students are expected to keep their lockers closed and secure at all times. If a locker is left unlocked, the school cannot be responsible for the items. Lockers are school property and school administration reserves the right to conduct locker searches for legal, health or safety reasons. Students who vandalize lockers will be subject to disciplinary action. Students are not allowed to keep their belongings in other students’ lockers or on top of their lockers. Students found violating this rule will be subject to disciplinary action. The need to go to a locker does not excuse a student for being tardy to class.

LOST OR DAMAGED BOOK

Lost or damaged books must be paid for by the end of the year. Students' parents will be notified of outstanding bills. Report cards may be held until obligations are fulfilled.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found articles are put on the tables in the main entrance vestibule. Items remaining in the lost and found will be donated throughout the school year.

LUNCH PROGRAM ([POLICY EFC](#))

A class "A" Federal Lunch is served daily in the cafeteria. For the 2023-2024 school year, one Class A Lunch is available free of charge to all students. Students may bring their own lunches if they wish. All food is to be eaten in the dining commons at lunchtime. Students should report to the dining commons immediately after the bell rings for the start of lunch. **Students are expected to follow these dining commons rules:**

- ❖ Talk quietly to students at your table.
- ❖ Stay seated at your table except for when disposing of trash.
- ❖ Ask permission from a teacher or administrator if you need to leave the cafeteria for any reason.
- ❖ Do not cut in the lunch line.
- ❖ Do not ask or pressure other students for food or money.
- ❖ Do not use another student’s account for lunch charges.
- ❖ Make sure you check under the tables and remove any trash or food that may have been spilled. Dustpans and brushes are available.
- ❖ **Violation of cafeteria rules may result in the assignment of a new table, lunch detentions, office detentions, community service or removal from the cafeteria for a period of time.**

MARKING SYSTEM

Student grades at Gates Middle School are reported as letter grades on report cards. Each letter grade represents a range of numerical grades as follows:

A+	97 and above
A	93.0 - 96.9
A-	90.0 - 92.9
B+	87.0 - 89.9
B	83.0 - 86.9
B-	80.0 - 82.9
C+	77.0 - 79.9
C	73.0 - 76.9
C-	70.0 - 72.9
D+	67.0 - 69.9
D	63.0 - 66.9
D-	60.0 - 62.9
F	59.4 and below
P	Pass
I	Incomplete *

*Under normal circumstances, incomplete grades must be made up within five school days of the issuance of the report cards.

MOSQUITO SPRAYING

The Town of Scituate does spray school grounds for the control of mosquitoes on occasions. The school community will be notified of mosquito spraying via postings to the Scituate Public Schools website.

NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

Election to the National Junior Honor Society is an important honor. The Satuit Chapter of the society was granted a charter in 1962. Students who are selected to be members are expected to demonstrate the five pillars of NJHS: scholarship, citizenship, service, leadership and character. **Qualifications for membership in the National Junior Honor Society are as follows:**

- ❖ A student must be a member of *Gates Middle School* for a period equivalent to two marking periods before the selection process.
- ❖ A student must have a cumulative scholastic average of at least 3.80 for grade 6, a cumulative scholastic average of at least 3.80 for grade 7, and a 3.80 cumulative scholastic average of at least 3.80 for the first two trimesters of grade eight.
- ❖ A student who meets the academic requirements will be evaluated by the Faculty Council on the basis of service, leadership, character and citizenship. Students must be in good standing with attendance and discipline.
- ❖ Students who meet the academic requirements and are voted in by the Faculty Council must maintain the 3.80 average through term three in grade eight to be inducted.

A *National Junior Honor Society* induction ceremony is held annually in May or June. Students must continue to uphold the standards listed above. Violation of any tenets of the society may be cause for dismissal from the society.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAM

Every year, the sixth graders may participate in the Outdoor Education Program. The purpose of the program is two-fold: to increase the students' awareness of the natural world and to provide students with a chance to live together in an environment where they will learn to appreciate friends' abilities and talents more than they normally would within a regular school setting. Every year, a fundraiser is held to reduce the per pupil cost. The Gates PTO and school staff give generously of their time and energy to make this program an annual success.

PHYSICAL EXAM OF STUDENTS ([POLICY JLCA](#))

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT ([POLICY JKAA](#))

PLAGIARISM, CHEATING, AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Cheating undermines the basic relationship of trust between a student and a teacher. It prevents the proper evaluation of a student's work, it detracts from the achievement of all students in the class, and it is one of the most serious offenses a student can commit. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work. By placing their name on schoolwork, students certify the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements.

Cheating includes (but is not limited to):

- The unauthorized use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The use of AI is permitted only with explicit teacher permission. Any other use of AI is not permitted.
- Sharing or learning of specific questions on an exercise before it is given.
- Submitting another's work or ideas as one's own. This includes all forms of plagiarism such as copying from another student's work, copying from books, or copying from any internet source, to include AI.
- The inappropriate accessing of information or resources during an assessment

Procedure for handling potential cheating or plagiarism

- If a teacher suspects potential cheating or plagiarism, the teacher will share the work in question with the Department Chair. The Department Chair will consult with the Assistant Principal to gather any relevant information.
- The next step is for the teacher and student to meet. The teacher should share their concerns with the student and gather more information from the student. The student should be prepared to share their learning process, including but not limited to drafts of their work, sources for their ideas, steps as part of a longer process, evidence from a lab procedure, etc. The teacher will promptly inform the parents/caregiver about the meeting.
- The teacher should then consult with the Department Chair to share new information and determine if the student work in question meets the criteria for cheating.
- Once a determination is made, the teacher will notify the student and parents/caregivers. If a determination of cheating is made, the student will earn a failing grade and will be referred to the office for disciplinary action. In addition, all participants or future participants in the National Honor Society will be subject to all NHS rules regarding cheating.

PROMOTION POLICY

In order to be considered for promotion to the next grade, a student must pass both ELA and Math. In addition, they must also pass at least one other major subject; major subjects include English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and World Language. Students who fail English, Mathematics, or more than one other major subject must successfully make up these courses. Private tutoring may take the place of summer school with the written permission of the principal. All costs for summer school and/or private tutoring are the student's responsibility.

A promotion review committee composed of administrators and counselors will discuss those students who have not met the promotion requirements. Students considered to be poor candidates for retention for a variety of reasons may be recommended for promotion to the next grade if it is in their best interest.

For more information on summer school options, please contact the School Counseling Department.

P.T.O.

The P.T.O. at Gates Middle School is committed to fostering and encouraging excellence and equity in the educational environment by promoting communication among students, teachers, parents/guardians and administrators. Members of the Gates P.T.O. volunteer their time and energy to raise funds, host events, and research opportunities for improving education at the middle-school level through events that directly involve and benefit the entire Gates community. Through the cultural enrichment program, student and staff teaming events, parent/teacher socials, the teacher support program, and others, the Gates P.T.O. provides a tremendous opportunity for all parents/guardians, students, teachers, and administrators to work toward creating a valuable partnership in education.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The **Gates School Council** is a representative school building-based committee composed of the principal, parents, teachers, school committee representatives and community members. Council meetings are held bimonthly. Parents, caregivers, staff, and students are encouraged to attend these meetings. The Gates School Council develops a *School Improvement Plan* each year.

SCHOOL COUNSELING

Every student will be assigned a School Counselor who will work with students in an entire grade for three years. This "looping" practice allows for counselors to build positive relationships with their students and their families. School counselors are available to assist students in the process of successfully navigating their middle school years. Students are encouraged to meet with their counselors about any problem or issue that is interfering with their ability to succeed academically or socially. School counselors design programs to meet the needs of all their students; these activities focus on career exploration, positive peer relationship development, and study skills. Counselors also meet with those students individually who need assistance with a variety of issues including, but not limited to: improving peer relationships, managing increasing independence and taking responsibility for their own learning. Counselors may also make referrals to a school psychologist, social worker and/or outside agencies as necessary. Private and vocational school applications are processed through the School Counseling Department as well. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's counselor with any concerns.

SCHOOL HOURS

Gates Middle School hours for the 2025-2026 school year are 8:00-2:31. On half days schools will dismiss at 10:30 (no lunch); on early release days, dismissal will be at 11:35AM.

SEARCHES ([POLICY JIH](#))

Lockers, lab tables, desks and other equipment and facilities are the property of the school and are subject to search at any time for any reason. When appropriate, the police and the use of trained animals may be used to conduct such a search. A student's person, personal belongings and automobile/bicycle/other form of transportation are subject to search when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is in possession of contraband, drugs, weapons or, if there is reason to believe there is an immediate physical threat to the school and/or students, or if there is reason to believe that the student has violated or is violating the law or school rules.

SECTION 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is an Act which prohibits discrimination against persons with a handicap in any programs receiving federal financial assistance. The Act defines a person with a handicap as anyone who:

1. Has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities which include functions such as:
 - Caring for one's self
 - Performing manual tasks
 - Walking
 - Seeing
 - Hearing
 - Speaking
 - Breathing
 - Learning
 - Eating
 - Sleeping
 - Standing
 - Lifting
 - Reading
 - Concentrating
 - Thinking
 - Communicating

- Working
 - Bending
 - Operation of major bodily function
2. Has record of such an impairment
 3. Is regarded as having such an impairment

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the Scituate Public Schools recognize a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a handicap will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices in the school system.

The school district has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational services. If the parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, he/she has a right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

SECTION 504/BEHAVIOR

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as prescribed in this handbook. Additional requirements concerning the discipline of a student on a section 504 Plan are as follows:

When it is known that a student on a Section 504 Plan is likely to be excluded from his/her program for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the Section 504 Team will convene to determine whether the student's misconduct that leads to the change in placement is a manifestation of the student's disability.

If the conduct was a manifestation, the school may conduct or review a functional behavior assessment and implement a behavior intervention plan. If such an assessment was already conducted, the behavior intervention plan will be reviewed and modified as necessary. Additionally, if the behavior was a manifestation, the student will return to the placement from which he/she was removed unless the school and parent agree otherwise.

If the behavior was not a manifestation, the school may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to the extent they would be applied to a student not eligible for Section 504.

Additional information concerning Section 504 including the right to receive an evaluation, the procedural protections afforded to parents and students, a more detailed description of the special rules relating to suspension and expulsion, and access to Section 504 records may be obtained from the **District Section 504 Coordinator**:

Ms. Tammy Rundle
Scituate Public Schools
606 Chief Justice Cushing Highway Scituate, MA 02066
781-545-8750

SECURITY CAMERAS ([POLICY ECABB](#))

SPECIAL EDUCATION/IDEA: 603 CMR 28.00 (Formerly known as Chapter 766)

The provisions of state and federal special education law (MGL Chapter 71B and 603 CMR 28.00, formally Chapter 766 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or "IDEA") are designed to help eligible students between the ages of 3 and 22 years of age who have not yet received a high school diploma and who are not making effective progress in regular education due to the existence of a qualifying disability.

The purpose of special education is to help children who have qualifying disabilities make effective progress in school in the least restrictive setting. In accordance with the provisions of the state and federal special education laws, after receiving parental permission, an evaluation is conducted to determine whether a child has a special need that requires special education and, if so, what form will that special education take. The following questions must be answered as part of that evaluation:

- Does the student have one or more documented disabilities?
- Is the student not making effective progress in school as a result of the disability or disabilities
- Does the student require special education (specialized instruction) in order to make effective progress?

Those services are described in an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for that student. Additional information may be obtained from the Director of Special Education.

SPECIAL EDUCATION/BEHAVIOR

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as prescribed in this handbook. State and Federal Laws require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation team to have special needs and whose program is described in an Individual Education Plan (IEP). State and federal special education laws prescribe additional requirements concerning the discipline of a student with special needs.

When it is known that a student with special needs is likely to be excluded from his/her program for more than 10 cumulative days (or less than 10 if there is a pattern), in a school year, the TEAM will convene to determine whether the student's misconduct that leads to the change in placement is a manifestation of the student's disability.

- If the misconduct was a manifestation, the school may conduct or review a functional behavior assessment and implement a behavior intervention plan. If such an assessment was already conducted, the behavior intervention plan will be reviewed and modified as necessary. Additionally, if the behavior

was a manifestation, the student will return to the placement from which he/she was removed unless the school and the parent agree otherwise or special circumstances exist.

- If the Behavior was not a manifestation, the school may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to the extent they would be applied to a student not eligible for special education, except that a student eligible for special education, who is removed from his/her current educational placement, is entitled to continue receiving educational services to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to make progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student's IEP.

In special circumstances, the school may move students to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 days without regard to whether the behavior that led to the removal was a manifestation of the student's disability. These special circumstances are:

- A student carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency
- A student knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency
- A student has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency.
- Additional information concerning special education including the right to receive an evaluation, the procedural protections afforded to parents and students, a more detailed description of the special rules relating to suspension and expulsion, and access to special education records may be obtained from the Director of Special Education.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

The Gates Community believes that involvement in student activities has many advantages for middle school students. Through their active participation in clubs and organizations, students become connected to their school and their peers. Clubs may be added or deleted based upon interest, supervision, and funding.

STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION

The Scituate Public Schools may release directory information without the consent of the eligible student or parent, provided that the school gives public notice of the types of information it may release and allows eligible students and parents a reasonable time after this notice to request that this information not be released without the prior consent of the eligible student or parent.

The Scituate Public Schools designates the following items as Directory Information: student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans. The Scituate Public Schools may disclose any of these items without prior written consent, unless the School Principal is notified in writing to the contrary by October 1st of each school year.

STUDENT RECORDS ([POLICY JRA](#))

STUDENT RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology plays a vital role in education, enhancing learning, communication, and collaboration. As part of our commitment to providing a safe and productive digital learning environment, all students are expected to use school technology responsibly, ethically, and in accordance with district policies.

These guidelines define expectations for using school-issued devices, internet access, and digital resources. Students are expected to take care of their devices, protect their personal information, and use technology and the internet in a safe, respectful, and responsible way. Adhering to these rules ensures a safe learning environment.

However, failure to comply with school district policies and expectations, may result in restricted access or other consequences in accordance with Student Handbook and district technology policies.

[IJNDB - STUDENT RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY](#)

[IJNDBA - INAPPROPRIATE USE](#)

1:1 Chromebook Initiative K-12

Scituate Public Schools is a 1:1 Chromebook district. Students in grades K–4 are each assigned a Chromebook that is stored in a classroom charging cart and only sent home at the discretion of the teacher. Students in grades 5–12 participate in a take-home 1:1 Chromebook program. These devices are not stored in classrooms or carts and must be brought to school fully charged each day and taken home at the end of the day.

This model supports equitable access to learning both during and outside of school hours. Personal devices from home are not allowed, as school-issued Chromebooks are configured for compatibility with district systems and online safety. All students are expected to follow the 1:1 Device Care & Responsibility Guidelines and the Loaner Chromebook Guidelines: Acceptable Care & Use to ensure the longevity and reliability of these essential learning tools.

Google Workspace for Education

As a Google district, Scituate Public Schools integrates Google Workspace for Education and Google Core Services directly into classroom instruction to enhance teaching and learning. Students in grades K–12 are provided with a Google Workspace for Education account, giving them access to essential tools that support their academic growth and digital literacy.

In the classroom, these tools are used daily for a variety of learning activities—students collaborate on group projects in Google Docs and Slides, submit assignments and receive feedback through Google Classroom, organize tasks and schedules using Google Calendar, and (in grades 6–12) communicate with teachers via Gmail. These platforms promote real-time collaboration, creativity, and the development of 21st-century skills in a secure, school-managed environment.

Students have access to services such as:

- Google Drive, Docs, Slides, and Sheets
- Gmail (grades 6–12)
- Google Classroom, Keep and Calendar

All tools and services are carefully vetted by district staff to ensure they align with K–12 educational best practices and comply with the district’s technology policies and acceptable use guidelines. We take student privacy and online safety seriously, using filtering, monitoring, and access restrictions where appropriate. The district also reserves the right to restrict access if student use does not comply with district policies.

Importantly, for all K–12 users, Google Workspace for Education does not use any personally identifiable information (or information linked to Google Accounts) to target ads.

SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION POLICY ([POLICY JICH](#))

The purpose of the Scituate Public Schools Substance Misuse Prevention Policy is to ensure that our entire school community is aware of the district’s comprehensive, evidenced-based approach to prevent the use of substances, and intervene early to support students and families considered at risk.

School staff plays a key role in identifying and referring students with substance use related problems and working with their families. Educators and school counseling personnel will work in collaboration with substance use counseling professionals and mental health specialists to meet the needs of those students most at risk. Collaboration between schools and community behavioral health providers address student-specific issues, including interventions such as small group, individual supports, and school re-entry plans. These efforts support school staff including consultation on general, as well as student-specific, challenges and plans for school and community provider responses when necessary. District involvement with the community prevention coalition, Scituate FACTS, South Shore Health System’s Youth Health Connection, and the Plymouth County Suicide Prevention Coalition, provide these critical networks.

SUPPORT TEAM

The Support Team is a team of educators, with varied backgrounds, who have been trained in a proactive and systematic problem solving approach to address the needs of our students. These teams are focused on creating, monitoring, and refining individualized instructional and behavioral interventions to students in the regular education setting. All teacher teams, including specials teachers, special education teachers, and world language teachers, meet bi-weekly to plan and track interventions. This data is used as part of the Support Team process. More information regarding the Support Team may be obtained by contacting the Principal or Assistant Principal.

TELEPHONE USE

Students are welcome to use the student telephone in the main office if they need to contact a parent/caregiver during school hours.

TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOLS ([POLICY JICG](#))

Massachusetts State law 37H prohibits the use of any tobacco products on school grounds by any individual. The Scituate Public Schools enforce this law.

VALUABLES AT SCHOOL

Students should not carry large amounts of money or other valuable articles to school. If an exception arises, leave the money or article in the office for safekeeping until the end of the day.

VISITORS ([POLICY KI](#))

All visitors must enter the building through the front entrance on First Parish Road. Visitors must buzz in and identify themselves for admittance and sign in at the front office and sign out when leaving the building. Teachers who are expecting visitors will meet them in the office and escort them to their destination.

WEBSITE

Click on to the Gates website for the staff directory, PTO news, virtual backpack forms, daily announcements, school council updates, bus information, teacher pages, program of studies, student handbook, school calendar and more! [Gates Middle School Website](#)

WELLNESS ([POLICY ADE](#))

WORKING CERTIFICATES

In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, every individual from fourteen to eighteen years of age who engages in work must have a working certificate. All individuals applying for a working certificate must present a birth certificate. Validated school records may be used for students of Scituate High School. A working certificate may be obtained from the Gates Middle School Main Office.