



*South Coast  
Educational Collaborative*



**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
STUDENT - FAMILY HANDBOOK  
2024-2025**

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**SOUTH COAST EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SERVICES -  
STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK**

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**SOUTH COAST EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE  
SCHOOL SERVICES  
*STUDENT - FAMILY HANDBOOK***

**SOUTH COAST EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE**

Welcome to South Coast Educational Collaborative and its elementary school community. Our primary mission is to provide educational and therapeutic services that complement and strengthen our member and participating school districts and increase educational opportunities for children, families and staff. South Coast Educational Collaborative has played an important role at the cutting edge of educational progress for over thirty years. Its entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to the needs of its member school districts continue to grow and reap rewards for all its participants.

**CORE VALUES**

We, at South Coast Educational Collaborative, believe that:

- All human beings are capable of learning throughout their lives.
- The ultimate goal at South Coast Educational Collaborative is for students to participate and contribute as fully as possible in the communities in which they live.
- The family context and family-school collaboration are essential factors in supporting a child's learning and development.
- The focus of all members of the South Coast Educational Collaborative community is on teaching and learning with continuous improvement of the conditions necessary for optimal teaching and learning to occur.
- Mutual respect and collaboration are expected and infused into all working partnerships.
- Staff productivity, especially team productivity, means exceeding expectations for student learning, increasing team efficiency, and enhancing individual team members' professional growth.

Dr. David R. Heimbecker  
Executive Director

***South Coast Educational Collaborative***  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Mr. Jeffrey Schoonover, Superintendent, ***Chairperson***  
 Somerset Public Schools & Somerset Berkley Regional School District

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 Berkley Community Schools

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 Dartmouth Public Schools

Mr. William M. Runey, Jr., Superintendent  
 Dighton-Rehoboth Regional School District

Dr. Tracy Curley, Superintendent  
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 Freetown-Lakeville Regional School District

Mr. Andrew B. O’Leary, Superintendent  
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Ms. Rebecca Kidwell, Superintendent  
 Seekonk Public Schools

Mr. Scott Holcomb, Superintendent  
 Swansea Public Schools

Mr. John Cabral, Superintendent  
 Taunton Public Schools

Mr. Thomas F. Aubin, Superintendent  
 Westport Community Schools

***LEADERSHIP TEAM***

Dr. David R. Heimbecker, *Executive Director*

Linda Cullen, MS, CCC-SLP	Francis Gallishaw, Jr. MEd	Raymond Steele, MEd
Bethany DeNardo, PT, DPT	David Marr, MEd	Jennifer Prendergast, MEd
Jason Dorrance, MEd	Lisa Martiesian, EdM, MEd	Jason Prozzo, MEd
Jennifer Faria, EdD	Sheena Martin	Evan Salvo, MEd
Lisa Fournier, EdD	Kate Murphy, MA, CAGS	Matthew Ulmschneider, MEd

## **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SERVICES**

### **NORTH SEEKONK SCHOOL**

Kate Murphy / Special Education Administrator  
(508) 399-7801 [kmurphy@scecoll.org](mailto:kmurphy@scecoll.org)

North School, 2 North Street, Seekonk, MA 02771  
Phone: (508) 399-7801 Fax: (508) 399-7802

The North Seekonk K-5 program, located at the North School in Seekonk, provides comprehensive educational and therapeutic services to students with special needs in kindergarten through fifth grade whose social, emotional and/or academic delays and challenges currently preclude successful educational progress in a regular education facility. The mission is to effect growth in these areas through the implementation of specialized counseling, academic education, and positive behavioral supports. These interventions are designed to promote the cognitive, attitudinal, and social growth needed to transition to a less restrictive educational environment.

The North Seekonk K-5 program operates according to either a 205-day or 220-day school calendar, depending on an individual student's needs. Students attend five days per week for six hours per day for 180 days and during Extended School Year, the students attend 4 and one-half days per week for five hours for forty days. Transportation to and from the school is provided by the student's sending school district. The North Seekonk K-5 program has access to school vehicles which are utilized for community experiences.

### **PROGRAM OF STUDIES**

The North Seekonk K-5 program provides small group and individualized instruction, counseling, and positive behavioral supports, which enhance the learning strands of the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*. Each student, pursuant to his/her IEP, engages in a program of studies that parallels that of South Coast Educational Collaborative's member school districts. Modifications and accommodations are made to allow for student abilities, developmental challenges, and learning styles. A highly structured, low stimulus setting is provided to maximize learning. Active, authentic learning is emphasized through a hands-on, problem-solving approach which heightens motivation and concept development for students who are difficult to engage through traditional methods. Assistive technology is heavily integrated into the curriculum through the daily use of computers, Smart Boards and other devices in the classroom.

### **ACADEMICS**

All students entering the North Seekonk K-5 program undergo assessment in math, reading, and English language arts proficiency before beginning instruction. Using the results of the assessment as a guide, instruction is individualized for each student within the scope of the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks* grade level expectations. Core academic subjects include English language arts, mathematics, history and social sciences, and science and technology/engineering. Physical education, art, and music are also provided.

### **DEEPER LEARNING**

The Collaborative also utilizes the Deeper Learning approach to teaching and learning. Deeper learning allows the teacher to be an activator of student knowledge and for students to engage in choice and take responsibility for their learning where they are engaged in authentic, relevant problems or situations where learning is applied. There are many opportunities for students to process information and ideas as they develop and use literacy and thinking skills. Students are less passive and more engaged in the learning process.

Through deeper learning, teachers are activators of student knowledge allowing students to engage in choice and take responsibility for their learning. The work students are engaged in is authentic and focuses on solving relevant problems or life situations. There are many opportunities for students to process information and ideas as they develop and use literacy and thinking skills. Students are actively engaged in the learning process.

The six global competencies for Deeper Learning are as follows:

<p><b>Character</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learning to learn</li> <li>- Grit, tenacity, perseverance, and resilience</li> <li>- Self-regulation, responsibility, and integrity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communicating effectively in a variety of ways using different modes, including digital</li> <li>- Reflection on and use of the process of learning to improve communication</li> <li>- Learning how to communicate for different audiences.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Citizenship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thinking like global citizens</li> <li>- Considering global issues based on diverse values and worldviews</li> <li>- Genuine interest and ability to solve real-world problems</li> <li>- Compassion, empathy, and concern for others</li> </ul>	<p><b>Creativity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learning about economic and social opportunities</li> <li>- Asking the right inquiry questions</li> <li>- Considering new ideas and solutions</li> <li>- Learning how leadership is used to turn ideas into action</li> </ul>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Working interdependently in teams</li> <li>- Interpersonal and team-related skills</li> <li>- Social, emotional, and intercultural skills</li> <li>- Managing team challenges and dynamics</li> <li>- Learning from and contributing to the learning of others</li> </ul>	<p><b>Critical Thinking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluating information</li> <li>- Making connections and identifying patterns</li> <li>- Problem-solving</li> <li>- Making sense of what you are learning</li> <li>- Experimenting, reflecting, and taking action on ideas for the real world</li> </ul>

**POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)**

Each classroom incorporates the philosophy of Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS). PBIS provides a platform from which all other components of the program naturally grow. The fundamental aspects of PBIS include understanding and recognizing the hierarchy of student needs, development of classroom culture, providing communication which promotes classroom management, shaping students’ identity via positive input, applying positive approaches to discipline, and creating an environment where naturalistic incentives motivate positive choices for each child. Our classrooms also establish clear priorities in the areas of social communication, emotional regulation, and environmental supports to buoy learning partnerships (supports provided in the environment and by learning partners). Our classroom environments allow for a rich collection of data which documents student achievements and provides the basis for making informed changes to programming and teaching strategy. Focus is always placed on the use of modeling, redirection and positive behavioral supports as the teaching strategies which are used to assist students in meeting their goals.

**COUNSELING**

Individual, small group, and crisis counseling are provided to all students. Prominent topics include the development of a healthy sense of self, effective strategies to manage emotions, and healthy relationships. Appropriate expression of feelings and emotions is developed through anger management and conflict resolution training and practice.

**COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES**

Educational and recreational community experiences are provided to enhance knowledge of the world and its people.

Educational and community service plans involving coursework and grades in the four major academic areas may be developed and implemented through these experiences.

**ADDITIONAL SERVICES**

- All related services prescribed by a student’s IEP are provided, including speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, applied behavior analysis, adaptive physical education, vision services, and orientation and mobility.
- Case management services are provided to coordinate therapies, services, and family support.
- Assessment, interpretation, and remediation in the areas of reading, written expressive language and organizational and study skills are provided.

## **SCEC at the PALMER RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**Palmer River Elementary School  
326 Winthrop Street, Rehoboth, MA 02769  
508-252-4269**

Lisa Martiesian, EdM, MEd ~ Associate Executive Director,  
Administrator of District-based Elementary Programs  
[lmartiesian@scecoll.org](mailto:lmartiesian@scecoll.org)  
774-991-5268

## **SCEC at the BERKLEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL**

**Berkley Community School  
59 South Main Street, Berkley, MA  
508-386-0982**

Francis Gallishaw, Jr. MEd Special Education Administrator  
[fgallishaw@scecoll.org](mailto:fgallishaw@scecoll.org)  
508-922-1401  
Lauren Horton, EdS  
Coordinator of State Assessments/Teacher Leader  
[lhorton@scecoll.org](mailto:lhorton@scecoll.org)  
774-301-2331

The elementary classrooms at Palmer River Elementary School (Rehoboth) and Berkley Community School offer comprehensive educational and therapeutic services for students ages six to twelve who present with diverse needs. Our mission is to provide students with the academic, social, emotional, and therapeutic supports necessary to prepare them for inclusion opportunities in their community schools. Students in these classrooms have demonstrated needs in language development, cognition, sensory integration, and social/emotional/behavioral functioning which often arise from diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and/or neuro-motor deficits. Educators incorporate research-based best practices with supports provided by continual professional development, technical assistance, and a network of expert consultants.

Students in SCEC's Palmer River Elementary and Berkley Community School classrooms attend five days per week, six hours per day, for 180 days per year. During the Extended School Year program, the students attend four and one-half days per week, five hours per day for forty (40) days. Transportation to and from these classrooms is provided by the student's public school district.

### **CURRICULUM COMPONENTS**

- Language-based curriculum using an experiential learning model.
- Curriculum aligned with the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*, including the Common Core Curriculum.
- Family support.
- Development of social and emotional skills.
- Development of fine- and gross-motor skills.
- Use of sensory strategies to support self-regulation.
- Related services as recommended by the IEP Team.
- Community-based experiences.

### **CURRICULUM**

The curriculum is highly modified to meet the needs of the students. While aligned with the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*, the elementary curriculum emphasizes individual students' learning styles, modes of communication, social-emotional functioning, and mobility. Students participate in functional educational experiences in English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, sensory integration, socialization, life skills, and physical education. Art and music are embedded throughout the core curriculum. Physical therapy, occupational therapy, orientation and mobility, speech-language therapy, and vision therapy are provided in accordance with the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Augmentative communication devices are used as appropriate, to enhance receptive and expressive language skills. Technology is integrated into the curriculum through the daily use of computers, Smart Boards and other assistive devices



in the classroom.

All students participate in a program of positive behavioral supports to encourage self-regulation and promote social-emotional development. Opportunities for integration into the general education setting are explored using a strengths-based approach. The student’s IEP Team determines which inclusion opportunities are most beneficial to a student based on their individual strengths and interests. Small and highly structured classes incorporate sufficient flexibility within the routine to accommodate fluctuations in students’ levels of tolerance and engagement. The language-based curriculum focuses on stimulating language development throughout the school day using experiential learning models. Students have access to a core curriculum linked to the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*. Curriculum modifications are made to promote student success based on their abilities and learning styles.

**DEEPER LEARNING**

The Collaborative also utilizes the Deeper Learning approach to teaching and learning. Deeper learning allows the teacher to be an activator of student knowledge and for students to engage in choice and take responsibility for their learning where they are engaged in authentic, relevant problems or situations where learning is applied. There are many opportunities for students to process information and ideas as they develop and use literacy and thinking skills. Students are less passive and more engaged in the learning process.

Through deeper learning teachers are activators of student knowledge allowing students to engage in choice and take responsibility for their learning. The work students are engaged in is authentic and focuses on solving relevant problems or life situations. There are many opportunities for students to process information and ideas as they develop and use literacy and thinking skills. Students are actively engaged in the learning process.

The six global competencies for Deeper Learning are as follows:

<p><b>Character</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learning to learn</li> <li>- Grit, tenacity, perseverance, and resilience</li> <li>- Self-regulation, responsibility, and integrity</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communicating effectively in a variety of ways using different modes, including digital</li> <li>- Reflection on and use of the process of learning to improve communication</li> <li>- Learning how to communicate for different audiences.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Citizenship</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Thinking like global citizens</li> <li>- Considering global issues based on diverse values and worldviews</li> <li>- Genuine interest and ability to solve real-world problems</li> <li>- Compassion, empathy, and concern for others</li> </ul>	<p><b>Creativity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learning about economic and social opportunities</li> <li>- Asking the right inquiry questions</li> <li>- Considering new ideas and solutions</li> <li>- Learning how leadership is used to turn ideas into action</li> </ul>
<p><b>Collaboration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Working interdependently in teams</li> <li>- Interpersonal and team-related skills</li> <li>- Social, emotional, and intercultural skills</li> <li>- Managing team challenges and dynamics</li> <li>- Learning from and contributing to the learning of others</li> </ul>	<p><b>Critical Thinking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Evaluating information</li> <li>- Making connections and identifying patterns</li> <li>- Problem-solving</li> <li>- Making sense of what you are learning</li> <li>- Experimenting, reflecting, and taking action on ideas for the real world</li> </ul>

### **POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS (PBIS)**

Each classroom incorporates the philosophy of Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS). PBIS provides a platform from which all other components of the program naturally grow. The fundamental aspects of PBIS include understanding and recognizing the hierarchy of student needs, development of classroom culture, providing communication which promotes classroom management, shaping students' identity via positive input, applying positive approaches to discipline, and creating an environment where naturalistic incentives motivate positive choices for each child. Our classrooms also establish clear priorities in the areas of social communication, emotional regulation, and environmental supports to buoy learning partnerships (supports provided in the environment and by learning partners). Our classroom environments allow for a rich collection of data which documents student achievements and provides the basis for making informed changes to programming and teaching strategy. Focus is always placed on the use of modeling, redirection and positive behavioral supports as the teaching strategies which are used to assist students in meeting their goals.

### **COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES**

Educational and recreational community experiences are provided to enhance knowledge of the world and its people.

### **ADDITIONAL SERVICES**

- All related services prescribed by a student's IEP are provided, including speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, applied behavior analysis, adaptive physical education, vision services, and orientation and mobility.
- Case management services are provided to coordinate therapies, services, and family support.

## SOUTH COAST FREETOWN-LAKEVILLE CLASSROOMS

Lisa Martiesian, EdM, MEd ~ Associate Executive Director,  
Administrator of District-based Elementary Programs

[lmartiesian@scecoll.org](mailto:lmartiesian@scecoll.org)

774-991-5268

**Freetown Elementary School**  
**43 Bullock Road**  
**East Freetown, MA 02717**  
**508-763-2686**

**George R. Austin Intermediate School**  
**112 Howland Road**  
**Lakeville, MA 02347**  
**508-946-6916**

South Coast Educational Collaborative provides services at Freetown Elementary School for students in grades K-3 and at the George R. Austin Intermediate School (GRAIS) for students in grades 4 to 6. These classrooms provide comprehensive educational services to students whose social, emotional, and/or academic delays currently preclude success in the general education classroom environment. The mission is to affect growth in these areas through the implementation of specialized therapies and programs. Counseling, positive behavior intervention and supports, innovative academic programming including STEAM content presented in a problem/project-based format, all operate within the framework of a therapeutic environment employing research informed methods and procedures.

All academic and therapeutic decisions are made based upon the collection and analysis of individualized, selective data which is reviewed daily for each student, and which informs practice for the following day. The goal of the South Coast Freetown Elementary and GRAIS classrooms is that each student, upon attainment of individualized goals, will be successfully included in the general education classrooms of both buildings and will move on to an academic and personal life which is characterized by useful learning, healthy relationships, and good citizenship.

### CURRICULUM

The curriculum is modified to meet the needs of the students who require such modifications. While aligned with the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*, the elementary curriculum emphasizes individual students' learning styles, modes of communication and social-emotional skill-building. Students participate in a full academic curriculum in English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies as well as sensory integration, socialization, life skills and physical education. Art and music are embedded throughout the core curriculum. Physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech-language therapy, and vision therapy are provided in accordance with the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Augmentative communication devices are utilized, as appropriate, to enhance receptive and expressive language skills. Technology is integrated into the curriculum through the daily use of computers, Smart Boards, and other assistive devices in the classroom.

All students participate in a program of positive behavioral supports to encourage self-regulation and promote social-emotional development. Opportunities for integration into the general education setting are explored using a strengths-based approach. The student's IEP Team determines which inclusion opportunities are most beneficial to a student based on their individual strengths and interests. Classes are small and highly structured, which encourages flexible time periods for each subject. The language-based curriculum focuses on stimulating language development throughout the school day using experiential learning models. Students have access to a core curriculum linked to the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*. Curriculum modifications are made to promote student success based on their abilities and learning styles.

### CURRICULUM COMPONENTS

- Language-based curriculum using an experiential learning model.
- Curriculum aligned with the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*
- Family support.
- Development of social and emotional skills.
- Development of fine- and gross-motor skills.
- Use of sensory strategies to support self-regulation.
- Related services as recommended by the IEP Team.
- Community-based experiences.

### DEEPER LEARNING

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**COUNSELING**

Individual, small group, and crisis counseling are provided to all students. Prominent topics include the development of a healthy sense of self, effective strategies to manage emotions, and healthy relationships. Appropriate expression of feelings and emotions is developed through anger management and conflict resolution training and practice.

## ***GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES - ELEMENTARY PROGRAMS***

### **ACCESS TO EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY/NON-DISCRIMINATION**

South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) adheres in full to M.G.L. 76, 3. 5 and CMR 26.08 and as such, does not discriminate against students based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, limited English-speaking ability, or sexual orientation. All students have equal rights to access and equal enjoyment of the opportunities, advantages, privileges, and courses of study available to their peers, as stipulated by each individual student's IEP.

Educational and therapeutic staff represent to students a broad spectrum of education and career opportunities. They are prohibited from presenting race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, limited English-speaking ability, or sexual orientation as limiting factors in career determination. No materials, tests or procedures are utilized for guidance purposes that discriminate and/ or limit choices based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

All educational and therapeutic staff, through their interactions and curricula, encourage respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, limited English-speaking ability, or sexual orientation.

Educators review all instructional and educational materials for simplistic and demeaning generalizations, lack of intellectual merit, based on race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, limited English-speaking ability, or sexual orientation. Appropriate activities, discussions and/or supplementary materials are used to provide balance and context for any such stereotypes depicted in such materials.

Equal opportunity for physical education is provided for all SCEC students. Goals, objectives, and skill development standards, where used, are not designated based on sex, nor designed to have an adverse impact on members of either sex.

SCEC is committed to preventing harassment and/or discrimination based upon a students' race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, limited English-speaking ability, or sexual orientation and responds promptly to such discrimination or harassment when provided information regarding its occurrence.

All students have an equal opportunity to participate in, and if appropriate, receive credit for the supportive and/or remedial services that may be available as part of the general education program as well as the non-academic and extracurricular programs of the student's sending or host school district. Programs, services and activities include, but are not limited to art and music, counseling services, health services, transportation, recess and physical education, including adapted physical education, athletics and recreational activities, school-sponsored groups or clubs, and meals.

### **SOUTH COAST EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE'S POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

South Coast Educational Collaborative's comprehensive *Policies and Procedures Manual* is available to parents/guardians upon their request. Also, the *Policies and Procedures Manual* can be made available to parents/guardians in their primary language.

### **CIVIL RIGHTS**

South Coast Educational Collaborative is committed to ensuring that all students and their families are afforded all education-related civil rights to which they are entitled based on federal and state laws and regulations, especially the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Such rights include, but are not limited to access to student records, confidentiality, student learning time, bullying prevention and intervention, prevention of discriminatory harassment, child abuse prevention and reporting, physical restraint, suspension, and least restrictive environment.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

South Coast Educational Collaborative maintains current and complete files for each enrolled student and adheres to all laws and regulations pertaining to student records, including confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of student records. Records will be filed according to a student's legal name. Preferred names or nicknames may be found in the text of the documents therein, however, the legal identifier for the purposes of the record shall be the legally recognized name of the student.

At each school site, the Educational Administrator ensures that student records under their supervision are kept physically secure; that authorized school personnel are educated as to the importance of information privacy and confidentiality; and that any computerized systems employed are electronically secure.

Except where the regulations specifically authorize access by third parties, no individuals, or organizations other than the parent/guardian, eligible student, SCEC, or school district personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have

access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent or eligible student.

A parent/guardian has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request.

As stated in **603 CMR 23.07 (2)**:

**(2) Access of Eligible Students and Parents:** The eligible student or the parent, subject to provisions of 603 CMR 23.0 (5), shall have access to the student record. Access shall be provided as soon as practicable and within ten days after the initial request, except in the case of non-custodial parents as provided un 603 CMR 23.07 (5). Upon request for access, the entire student record, regardless of the physical location of its parts shall be made available.

The parent/guardian has the right to receive a copy of any part of the record, although SCEC may charge a reasonable fee for the cost of duplicating materials. The parent/guardian may request to have parts of the record interpreted by a qualified SCEC professional or may invite anyone else of their choice to inspect or interpret the record with them.

The parent/guardian has the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written materials to the student record. In addition, the parent has a right to request that information in the record be amended or deleted. They are entitled to meet with the Executive Director, or his/her designee, to discuss their objection to information that is in the record and to receive a written decision.

### **INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The main purpose of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process is to ensure that all students are challenged to excel, progress within the general curriculum, and are prepared for independence in adult life, including post-secondary education and/or employment. The IEP requirements emphasize the importance of working cooperatively as a team. School districts are mandated to bring together parents/guardians/caretakers, students, general educators, and special educators to make important educational decisions for students with disabilities.

The newly revised IEP requires student input and a team vision beginning at the age of three years with associated goals beginning at the age of 14 years.

### **REPORTS OF PROGRESS**

Each student's progress toward the annual goals and objectives in his/her IEP is measured by rigorous data collection. Parents/guardians/caretakers educational surrogate parents are regularly informed of their child's progress and whether that progress is enough for the child to achieve the goals by the end of the year. Progress Reports are issued five times per year for students attending 12 months and four times per year for students attending 10 months. Progress Reports are mailed to parents/guardians/ caretakers/ educational surrogate parents and the Special Education Administrators of the sending school districts. These reports include progress achieved for each IEP objective and whether that progress is enough for the student to achieve the goals by the end of the IEP year.

### **MASSACHUSETTS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS**

The *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework* are documents developed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education that outline the guiding principles for instruction, along with core concepts, skills, and subject matter that all students are expected to know and be able to do by the time they graduate from high school. Performance benchmarks for student achievement at specific grade levels are defined to allow educators to plan sequential and comprehensive instruction. All students follow a curriculum aligned with the *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks*. Parents/guardians and others have access to the complete *Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks* located at each school site.

### **STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT**

All Massachusetts students attending SCEC elementary classrooms participate in the *Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System* (MCAS). Each student's IEP Team determines if the student will participate in on-demand testing without accommodations, on-demand testing with accommodations, or alternate (portfolio) assessment. Students from Rhode Island participate in the appropriate statewide testing mandated by the Rhode Island Department of Education.

### **STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

In order for students to demonstrate academic and therapeutic success, consistent attendance and participation in school

are necessary. When a student is unable to attend school due to illness or any other reason, the parent/guardian/caretaker is required to notify the school and provide acknowledgement of the absence. Medical documentation may be required for extended absences.

### **STRUCTURED LEARNING TIME**

Every elementary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 900 hours per school year of structured learning time. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs may not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student, unless stipulated as a required educational service in the student's approved IEP.

Directed study, independent study, technology-assisted learning, participation in educational presentations by persons other than teachers, and the practice of social and independent living skills, are typically included in structured learning time, designated as a required educational service, and reflected by goals and objectives in an individual student's IEP.

### **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

Families receive a school calendar at the beginning of the school year or at the time their child is enrolled. Calendar distribution enables families the opportunity to note all school closings and holidays, including SCEC's monthly early release days utilized for staff professional learning. The school calendars can be found on the SCEC website ([www.scecoll.org](http://www.scecoll.org)) with the calendar specific to each individual program being located on the program's webpage.

### **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

It is helpful when families can assist their elementary children in maintaining appropriate attire and hygiene. Clothing must be free of obscene, suggestive, or otherwise inappropriate writing, logos, and artwork. Clothing should fit properly, be in good repair, and not be inappropriately revealing.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENTS**

The following code of conduct outlines the expected behaviors of all students and procedures for the discipline of students with special needs and students with Section 504 Accommodation Plans, consistent with M.G.L. c. 76, s. 5. See also page twenty (200 for Bullying Prevention and Intervention and page twenty-four (24) for Discriminatory Harassment, including due process for disciplinary proceedings.

#### ***General Rules for Conduct***

Each school site/classroom establishes its own specific code of conduct for its students. In addition, the IEP of a student may state whether that student can be expected to follow the stated rules of the program and if not, what modifications to the student's program must be made for compliance to take place. However, students are typically expected to adhere to the rules of the following basic Student Code of Conduct:

- Treat Others with Respect: Offer to help others. Cooperate. Maintain a polite and respectful manner to other students and staff.
- Work Hard: Complete work on time, including homework. Make sure work is done correctly and is of a high quality. Listen and pay attention to instruction. Follow directions. Work at a steady pace.
- Maintain Self-Control: Stop and think before you speak. Avoid using offensive language. Avoid verbal and physical attacks or threats to staff, other students, and personal property.
- Comply with the requests of the school staff to the best of your ability.
- Be safe at all times.

#### ***General Intervention Guidelines***

Behavioral and performance expectations of students vary according to a student's individual level of cognitive development and self-regulation. Each student is assessed on an individual basis. A team decision is made concerning appropriate expectations and responses for a student's social and work behaviors. In all cases, focus is placed on modeling, redirection and positive behavioral supports as the teaching tools used to assist students in meeting their goals.

Students are positively supported to exhibit socially acceptable behavior, follow staff directions and requests, and adhere to school rules at their individual levels of understanding. Positive behavioral supports are applied throughout the day to promote generalization of target skills. The following protocols are followed within a routine- and relationship-based model, where students participate in a "recognition of success" credit system. Students practice making good choices,

including asking for time away from an activity if they feel dysregulated.

In general, when a student exhibits non-compliant or disruptive behavior:

- A verbal prompt is used to redirect the student back to task. The student is then positively reinforced for returning to task.
- If the behavior continues, a second prompt is given, paired with a reminder about earning the designated recognition. The student is positively reinforced for returning to task.
- If the behavior continues, the student is asked to remove themselves from the activity and sit in a quiet area in the classroom until composure is regained. Full staff supervision is provided.
- When ready, the student returns to the activity.

If the student continues to have difficulty, the teacher will schedule a staff meeting to review the behavior and possible strategies for its remediation. A behavior plan is developed, or changes in the existing plan are made. If the student continues to have difficulty after the implementation of a new behavior program, a parent/guardian-teacher meeting is scheduled. The purpose of this meeting is to:

- Determine if changes have taken place at home, or in the student's medication regimen, which may be affecting behavior at school
- Elicit suggestions from the parent which may improve the student's progress.
- Provide parent with suggestions to enhance consistency at home.

Representatives of the student's sending school district may also be contacted and a Team meeting to review the student's behavior may be held. Follow-up options include seeking parental consent to conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment or a review of the adequacy of the student's IEP and/or placement.

### **HEALTH AND MEDICAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Each South Coast Educational Collaborative school site has at least one full-time School Nurse assigned to the program. In addition, all staff are fully trained in:

- Policies and procedures outlined in the *Comprehensive Health Care Manual*;
- Emergency First Aid and CPR;
- Universal precautions for blood borne pathogens. The Universal Precautions Protocol is followed by staff whenever they are likely to be exposed to bodily fluids. The use of personal protective equipment and proper disposal of waste is strictly adhered to.
- Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Cleaning and sanitizing work areas
- First Aid kits are located in all classrooms and in each Collaborative vehicle.

#### ***Documentation***

All health and medical related documentation forms included in the admission packet must be completed and signed by a student's parent/guardian before a student can be admitted to South Coast Educational Collaborative. These forms are updated as needed, but at least annually.

#### ***Immunizations***

In accordance with the General Laws of Massachusetts, each child entering school must have received all required immunizations. Parents/guardians must submit to the school the proper form, completed, and signed by the child's health care provider, listing the dates that all immunizations were administered, **prior to the first day** of the child's attendance.

To ensure the health and safety of all children, South Coast Educational Collaborative has been directed by the Department of Public Health and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to exclude from school any child who has not received the following immunizations: Diphtheria; Tetanus; Whooping cough (Pertussis); Poliomyelitis; Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR); Hepatitis B; Hemophilus influenza type B (Hib); Varicella (chicken pox); Meningococcal (MenACWY). A lead test is also required for all children entering school if the child has not been previously tested. The School Nurse will advise the parent/guardian of immunizations required according to the age of the child.

The South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) has a duty of care under the Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA)



Act of 1970 to provide a safe workplace for its employees and students. To fulfill the duty of care, an employer is allowed to ask for proof of vaccination against COVID-19. If an employee or student is unable or unwilling to provide proof of vaccination, SCEC will enforce other workplace safety policies such as mask wearing, social distancing, etc. The COVID-19 vaccines are one of the best ways to protect yourself and those around you from getting sick with COVID-19. These vaccines have been approved for emergency use by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and are readily available to all eligible individuals in the states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Currently, SCEC is not mandating the COVID-19 vaccine for its employees or students. However, to mitigate exposure events, SCEC now requires its employees and students who have received the vaccine to report that information and provide written documentation of vaccine administration. The document must include name, date of birth, dates of administration, vaccine administrator and location. Do not include any medical or genetic information with proof of COVID-19 vaccination.

All vaccine information will be kept in the employee's/student health record and not shared with a third party without prior written consent of the individual and/or parent/guardian. This policy only applies to individuals for whom the COVID-19 vaccine has been authorized by the FDA and not applicable to students under the age of twelve (12) at this time.

### ***Physical Examinations***

According to the General Laws of Massachusetts, every child must have a physical exam before entering school or during the first year of school. Parents/guardians/caretakers will be asked to submit to the school the appropriate physical exam form, completed and signed by the child's health care provider. It is recommended, but not required, that each child have an annual physical examination and an annual dental examination.

### ***Mandated Screenings***

According to Massachusetts general laws, **all students** are required to have vision, hearing, Growth and Development using body mass index (BMI) and postural screenings, and Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) at certain grade levels in school. Parents and Guardians may opt out of any screening.

***Vision and Hearing Screenings*** are mandated by the state of Massachusetts to be done annually in grades K-5 as well as in one grade in middle school and one grade in high school. At SCEC, vision and hearing will be completed in the 7th grade. At the high school level, vision and hearing will be completed in the 10th grade. Parents/Guardians will be notified of any deviations from normal that should be checked by a physician.

***Postural Screenings*** are required to be provided in all SCEC programs to all students in grades 5-9. These grades cover the years in which adolescents experience most rapid growth, and in which signs of curvature most often appear. If minor postural concerns are found, the student will be re-checked by the school physician every six months or as needed to detect changes. You will be notified to contact your physician if further evaluation is necessary.

***Growth and Development Screenings*** are required to be conducted annually following height and weight screening protocols which include the calculation of a Body Mass Index (BMI) and percentile for grades 1,4,7, and 10. The results will be kept confidential in each student's school health record.

***SBIRT Screening*** (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) focuses on prevention, early detection, risk assessment, brief counseling and referral for assessment that can be utilized in the school setting. The Collaborative shall utilize, in accordance with law, a verbal screening tool approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to screen students for substance abuse disorders. The tool shall be administered by trained staff on an annual basis at grades 7 and 9.

**Please see the complete *Policy on Use of Verbal Screening Tools for Substance Use Risk* in SCEC's Policies & Procedures Manual which is located on our website: [www.scecoll.org](http://www.scecoll.org).**

## **SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY & PROTOCOLS**

The goal at South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) is for students to participate and contribute as fully as possible in the communities in which they live. The health, safety and well-being of students are our highest priority. SCEC recognizes that student, family, and school collaboration are vital in supporting a student's learning and development. SCEC is committed to providing a high-quality educational program to all students in a safe and healthy environment. The school environment is the place in which intelligence, capabilities, and skills are developed and enhanced. At SCEC, an

educational/ medical/health approach will be utilized to help students decide not to use alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs. Our school policy has been developed to maintain high standards of behavior and to underscore our commitment to maintaining healthy growth and development in our students, a respect for the quality of our educational environment and to maintain safety for our school community.

### **Student Support Team**

SCEC has established a Student Support Team (SST) to provide education, assistance, and support for students affected by their own or others' substance-related problems. The SST at SCEC will consist of medical and clinical professionals including the student's mental health clinician, school nurse, and school psychologist where applicable; administrator; and teacher. With reasonable suspicion, the school administrator will refer the student to the SST for further exploration of a suspected or known substance-related problem. The SST will collaborate with the student and parents/guardian to develop a therapeutic plan on a case by case basis, providing recommendations for follow-up care. SCEC will maintain student confidentiality while promoting school-based efforts to combat substance abuse.

### **No Smoking/ Vaping Policy**

South Coast Educational Collaborative complies in full with the federal Pro-Children Act of 1994 which prohibits smoking inside facilities used for preschool, elementary, or secondary education or library services to children. Specifically, students, staff, and visitors may not smoke in the school building, on school property or at any school-sponsored activity. Smoking is also prohibited in any school vehicle and during any school-sponsored community trips or other activities. No tobacco products, or nicotine delivery systems without a doctor's order, are allowed in school. The following will be included in the tobacco products policy vapes, JUUL's & e-cigarettes. Possession of all types of smoking paraphernalia including, but not limited to lighters, matches, cigarette rolling papers, electronic nicotine-delivery devices, vaporizers or any other types of flammable igniters are not permitted on school premises or other school related events; these articles will be confiscated. Parents/ guardians will be informed and asked to make arrangements to pick up the confiscated items. With reasonable cause, the administrator reserves the right to initiate a search and confiscate any of the above items. Possession of these items will be cause for progressive discipline up to and including in- or out of school suspension.

### **Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug (ATOD) Use Policy**

The possession, distribution, sale, or under the influence of alcohol; tobacco products, including vapes/E-cigarettes; any controlled substance; synthetic (including but not limited to "K2", "Spice" and/or bath salts) substances; look-alike drugs; drug related paraphernalia; volatile substances; and illegal drugs on school grounds, at any school function, and in school vehicles is a violation of law and is strictly prohibited.

**AT NO TIME SHOULD A STUDENT BE IN POSSESSION OF ANY DRUG UNLESS SUCH DRUG HAS BEEN PRESCRIBED AND PHYSICIAN'S ORDERS ARE ON FILE WITH THE SCHOOL NURSE FOR SELF-ADMINISTRATION.**

SCEC will respond to the use of alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, and misuse of prescription and over the counter medication through health education, medical/health assistance, progressive discipline, with possible referral to emergency medical treatment. Physical and psychological dependence upon chemical substances creates health problems and is counterproductive to the goals of education. Therefore, use, possession, or sale of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs will not be permitted as it undermines the education process. Equally serious are the detrimental physical and emotional effects caused by alcohol and drug abuse.

It should be noted that whether someone is under the influence will be determined after a reasonable suspicion is raised in the mind of any staff person. Changes in behavior or physical appearance, self-admission, or information provided by a peer and substantiated by any other evidence raise reasonable suspicion.

Substance policy violations on school grounds, at any school-sponsored function, and in any school vehicle are subject to immediate consequences, including out-of-school suspension, possible expulsion for drug offenses and/or police involvement. Additionally, any student who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol at a school-sponsored community activity, will be barred from that activity and may be subject to disciplinary action. The school administrator will notify the parent/guardian of the violation and a search and seizure will be conducted by the appropriate authority.

## **Search and Seizure**

The Supreme Court of the United States has ruled that a warrant is not required before a teacher or school administrator conducts a search of a student suspected of violating a school rule or criminal statute. Probable cause is not required before a student may be searched; rather, before conducting a search, the teacher or administrator must have reasonable grounds for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. The search must be reasonable in its scope as well as its inception.

Search of a student will only be performed, and seizure of a student's belongings will only take place, if there exists reasonable suspicion that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. The search will be conducted in a manner reasonably related to its objectives and will not be excessively intrusive considering the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction. Whenever a personal search is deemed necessary, the student shall be advised of the reason for the impending search prior to its implementation. Search of a student may extend to articles of clothing such as pockets; and to the removal and search of outer garments such as hats/caps/headgear, jackets, coats, sweaters, sweatshirts, or shoes; and to items such as pocketbooks, lunch bags, book bags, athletic bags, or backpacks.

Should a student refuse to voluntarily comply with a request for a search, the student must be detained until parents, and, if necessary, police, can arrive at school to assist, as deemed appropriate. Should a search uncover any substances or contraband, such shall be turned over to the appropriate authorities or rightful owner, as appropriate, and suitable disciplinary action shall be taken. Search of a student or his/her belongings in accordance with the policy may take place at school or at any school sponsored event on or off school property or during the transportation to such event.

## **Responding to Violations of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Policy**

Students violating SCEC's alcohol, tobacco, and drug policy will be subject to disciplinary action. To maintain equity in disciplinary actions, program administrators will be guided by district guidelines for the discipline of both elementary and secondary students in providing student consequences for defined student behaviors. It is expected that disciplinary actions be progressive in nature.

The goal of progressive discipline is prevention of a recurrence of negative behavior by helping students learn personal accountability. Discipline is the dual responsibility of the home and school. The purpose of disciplinary action is to restore acceptable behavior. When disciplinary action is necessary, it shall be administered with fairness and equity while considering the individual circumstances in each incident of student misconduct. SCEC will actively engage parents/guardians in the Progressive Discipline approach by involving them in ongoing conversations about their student's achievement, well-being, and behavior. Essential to the implementation of progressive discipline is helping students who have engaged in unacceptable behavior to:

- Understand why the behavior is unacceptable and the harm it has caused
- Understand what they could have done differently in the same situation
- Understand the impact their behaviors have on others
- Take responsibility for their actions
- Be given the opportunity to learn prosocial strategies and skills to use in the future
- Understand the progression of more stringent consequences if the behavior re-occurs

## **Determining the disciplinary response**

In determining how to best address policy violation, it is necessary to evaluate the totality of the circumstances surrounding the conduct. The following facts must be considered prior to determining the appropriate disciplinary measures:

- The nature, severity, and scope of the behavior
- The student's age and maturity
- The circumstances/context in which the conduct occurred
- The frequency and duration of the behavior
- The student's disciplinary record (including the nature of any prior misconduct, the number of prior instances of misconduct, and the disciplinary and guidance intervention measures applied for each)

## **Procedures**

These procedures are not exhaustive nor are they meant to be rather these are guidelines for addressing inappropriate conduct and suggested disciplinary consequences. A range of discipline is possible within these guidelines, and school administrators have the discretion to impose more severe consequences than contained within these guidelines depending on the individual circumstances presented. Consequences may carry over from one school year to the next. Please be aware that some behavior warrants police investigation as the breach of conduct may also be a criminal offense.

### ***Step 1: Verbal warning with written report, Counseling, Referral to Student Support Team***

The Primary focus of this school intervention is medical evaluation, parent/guardian involvement, in-house team meeting and counseling. Step one creates an opportunity for the SST to discuss with the student and parent/ guardian the nature of the problem and/or violation of policy. SCEC will respond to the use of alcohol and illegal drugs through education, medical/ health assistance, and discipline. The administrator will clearly describe student expectations and steps the student must take to improve his or her conduct, with the additional guidance from the SST and collaboration between the student and parent/guardian. The administrator will prepare written documentation of the verbal counseling. The student and parent/ guardian will be asked to sign this document to demonstrate his or her understanding of the issues and the corrective action.

#### ***Student Use, Possession and Distribution of ATOD:***

With reasonable suspicion, a SCEC staff member will notify the administrator of the nature of the concern.

If a student is suspected of being under the influence (i.e., exhibiting signs of impairment), the school nurse will be notified to assess potential medical risk. If the school team determines that the student is at risk for medical harm, the school nurse will refer the student to emergency medical treatment. SCEC emergency procedures will be followed, as applicable.

The principal will notify the parents/guardian and request a Parent/Guardian - School Team meeting. If the student is not exhibiting signs/ symptoms of compromised health to the best of the school nurse's ability, the administrator will request the student's parent/ guardian pick up the student within a reasonable time frame. If a parent/guardian/caretaker is unavailable, the student will remain under in-house suspension for the remainder of the school day. Any class work missed because of the offense will be made up under in-house suspension on the following day.

The administrator will convene the Student Support Team.

The sending school district will be notified of the offense by phone and/or in writing.

#### ***Student Witness to Use, Possession and Distribution of ATOD:***

If at any time, a student found to be in the presence of other student(s) using or distributing alcohol, tobacco, and/or drugs:

- A SCEC staff member will notify the administrator of the nature of the concern.
- All students involved may be subject to a search. Search of a student will only be performed, and seizure of a student's belongings will only take place, if there exists reasonable suspicion that the student, or students, have violated or is violating either the law or school policy.
- Administrator will inform the parent/ guardian of the incident.
- Referral to Student Support Team for further exploration.
- Disciplinary action, with possible suspension, may occur.

If a student voluntarily confides an alcohol, tobacco and/or drug problem to a staff member, a SCEC staff member will notify the administrator who will consult with the student's parent/guardian, SST, and the sending district to discuss recommendations with referral to treatment. The collaboration between the student, school team and the student's health care team will be prioritized.

### ***Step 2: Written warning, District Meeting & Ongoing SST Involvement***

The step two written warning involves the student's parent/guardian and the sending school district will be notified in writing of the offense. The student and parent(s) will be asked to attend an emergency Team meeting to process the issue.

During Step 2, the administrator will meet with the student, parent/ guardian, and sending district to review the student's performance and conduct and an individualized plan requiring the student's immediate and sustained corrective action. The written warning may also include a statement indicating that the student may be subject to additional discipline, as determined by the school administrator and the student's sending district, if immediate and sustained corrective action is not taken. At the discretion of the SST, a student with repeat occurrences may be asked to complete a medical evaluation prior to school remittance. Any treatment recommendations should be shared between the student, parent/ guardian, SST, and sending district.

### ***Step 3: Suspension and final written warning***

Some performance, conduct or safety incidents are so problematic and harmful, such as a student found selling or distributing drugs or alcohol at school, on school grounds, or at a school-sponsored event, that the most effective action may be the temporary removal of the student from in-school learning (i.e., Out of school suspension). When immediate action is necessary to ensure the safety of the student or others, the administrator may suspend the student pending the results of an investigation. Police will be notified immediately. The student's parent/guardian and the sending school district will be notified immediately. A follow-up team meeting will be convened to determine the course of action to be taken.

### ***Step 4: Recommendation for termination of enrollment and/or referral to treatment***

The last and most serious step in the progressive discipline process is a recommendation to attend and complete a drug rehabilitation program or termination of student enrollment. SCEC will make reasonable efforts to exercise the progressive nature of this policy by first providing warnings, issuing a final written warning and/or suspending the student before proceeding to a recommendation to terminate enrollment. If all referral to treatment options have been exhausted and a parent/guardian/student/SST meeting has been completed, student refusal to attend a drug rehabilitation program may result in student termination of enrollment.

SCEC reserves the right to combine and skip steps depending on the circumstances of each situation and the nature of the offense. Furthermore, students may be terminated from enrollment without prior notice or disciplinary action.

**(LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. Chapter 71, S. 37H and 37L; M.G.L. Chapter 76, S. 16 and 17; and MA Regulation 603 CMR 53. For more information, visit: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr53.html>)**

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: SAFE SCHOOLS PROGRAM PLAN**

South Coast Educational Collaborative has established complete policies and procedures for emergencies within its *Safe Schools Program Plan* which includes policies and procedures for:

- At-risk management systems
- Alarm systems and signals
- Evacuation routes and procedures
- Evacuation drills
- Emergency assistance to students
- Ongoing safety programs
- Situations involving students who have run away
- Bomb threats
- Potential suicide crisis
- Threats of school violence

All staff are fully trained in, and are familiar with, all emergency procedures. Fire drills are conducted on a regular basis. Primary and secondary exit routes are posted in each room. Teachers bring their daily attendance sheets outside and staff and students meet in the pre-designated area, where attendance is taken. In the event of an emergency where students cannot return to the building, South Coast Educational Collaborative's main office in Swansea is contacted by cell phone and arrangements are made to transport students' home or to an appropriate alternate school building.

### **FAMILY PARTICIPATION**

Families are encouraged to actively participate in the educational process. Family support and cooperation are necessary to The Family Partnership Networks (FPN) is directly aligned with South Coast Educational Collaborative's core values, that state, "The family unit and the family-school partnership are essential factors in supporting and sustaining a student's wellness, learning and development." In addition to providing strategic and collaborative support to students and their families, FPN's goal is to foster a sense of belonging while developing a transformative relationship with family members as

leaders and collaborators in their child's education. FPN provides a safe and transparent environment that emphasizes a mutual exchange of communication with families, educational partners, community partners, healthcare providers, and family support service agencies. Through adaptation of a family systems perspective and a strengths-based model, the family is viewed as a dynamic and interactive entity, with the student as center, utilizing a more collective approach to student learning. In supporting family stability, regulation, and social connectedness, the student is provided with a solid foundation for wellbeing, performance and success. The intent is to develop a network of student and caregiver support that is responsive to family diversity, uniqueness, and expertise. The outcome is to support caregivers in providing continuity of care and services for their child and family as part of a collaborative team with mutual goals and individualized and transformative action plans.

Families are encouraged to share any questions or concerns they may have about their child's educational or therapeutic experiences. Family members may contact the school's Educational Administrator Teacher/Leader, the SCEC Executive Director, a Social Worker or a Teacher to express their questions or concerns, either verbally or in writing. Staff will respond in a timely and cooperative fashion and will make every attempt to ensure that families are comfortable with and have confidence in their child's educational and therapeutic experiences.

### **VISITORS AND SCHOOL SECURITY**

Family members are encouraged to visit South Coast Educational Collaborative classrooms. To ensure a successful visit, it is recommended that visits are pre-arranged to ensure that the student, staff, or activity will be available when you arrive. Also, since security is increasingly an issue of concern in schools today, certain measures are in place to keep unauthorized persons from entering school buildings. Visitors to our schools and classrooms must follow all security measures in place to gain access to the school facility. After admission to the building, all visitors must check in at the main office. During the time spent at the site, visitors are expected to adhere to the following policies:

- If given a Visitor's Badge, please always display it prominently.
- In order to maintain an appropriate teaching and learning environment, observations only should be conducted. Should you wish to confer with staff, an appointment should be scheduled in advance so that individual time can be devoted to private conversations.
- Due to the complex and sensitive nature of our student population, staff may politely ask visitors to conclude their observation should the students or the educational environment become disrupted, due to a change in structure.

### **OBSERVATIONS**

South Coast Educational Collaborative will grant timely and sufficient access to programs by parents guardians and parent/guardian- designated independent evaluators and educational consultants to their child's current or proposed special education classroom so that the parent/guardian and named designees can observe the child in the current classroom or any proposed classroom. South Coast staff are committed to collaborating with parents/guardians and their designees to achieve timely and sufficient access to classrooms for observations that will help parents/guardians and their designees better understand the school that serves students with disabilities, while safeguarding the confidentiality interests of all students and minimizing disruption in the classroom and school.

*Please see SCEC's Observation Policy for further details. It can be found on our website at [www.scecoll.org](http://www.scecoll.org) as well as in the SCEC Policies & Procedures Manual.*

### **STUDENT INPUT**

If a student has a complaint or concern about any aspect of his/her experience at South Coast Educational Collaborative, s/ he is encouraged to express the complaint or concern to any staff person with whom they feel comfortable. This staff person may be the Educational Administrator, Teacher/ Leader, a Counselor, a Teacher, a Social Worker or the School Nurse. All concerns will be responded to thoughtfully, seriously, and in a timely manner.

### **FEDERAL GUN-FREE SCHOOLS ACT**

South Coast Educational Collaborative adheres to the *Federal Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994* (Section 14601 of the *Improving America's Schools Act*) which requires school districts and other local education agencies to expel from school for a period of not less than one year any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school. An exception is made to permit the Executive Director to modify the expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis. The law does not preclude an expelled student from receiving educational services in an alternative setting. Any items which could be used as weapons are not allowed on school grounds and will be confiscated and turned over either to a parent or the police, and the student may be suspended or expelled.

## **NO SMOKING/VAPING POLICY**

South Coast Educational Collaborative complies in full with the federal *Pro-Children Act of 1994 [Section 1041 of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, P.L. 103-227, 20 USC 6081]* which prohibits smoking inside facilities used for preschool, elementary or secondary education or library services to children. Specifically, students, staff and visitors may not smoke/vape in the school building or school property. Smoking/Vaping is also prohibited in any school vehicle and during any school-sponsored field trips or other activities. No tobacco products are allowed in school. Possession of lighters or matches is prohibited; these articles will be confiscated. Parents/Guardians will be informed and asked to make arrangements to pick up the confiscated items.

## **PERSONAL ITEMS ON PREMISES**

Students are discouraged from bringing personal items of value to school. South Coast Educational Collaborative and its staff are not responsible for the loss of or damage to such items. Students are prohibited from bringing to school any items deemed dangerous.

## **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION POLICY**

South Coast Educational Collaborative (SCEC) expects that all members of its school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences and is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying, harassment, teasing and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

We understand that members of certain student groups, such as students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender and homeless students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment or teasing. SCEC will take specific steps to create a supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community and provide all students with the skills, knowledge and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment or teasing.

South Coast Educational Collaborative does not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation, in our classrooms, school buildings, on school grounds, during school-related activities, at school bus stops, on school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by South Coast Educational Collaborative, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by South Coast Educational Collaborative.

South Coast Educational Collaborative does not tolerate any form of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation perpetrated by any student or by any member of the staff including, but not limited to, an educator, an administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, paraprofessional, or related service provider. We investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation and take prompt action to end this behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities and parent involvement.

"Bullying" is defined as the repeated use by one or more students or an adult of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

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

"Cyber-bullying" is defined as bullying using technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, e-mail, instant messages, text messages, Internet postings, and the use of an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons.

## ***Prevention and Intervention Plan***

**Prevention:** South Coast Educational Collaborative educators focus on the prevention of bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation through the following initiatives:

- promoting and modeling the use of respectful language;
- fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference;
- building relationships and communicating with families;



- constructively managing classroom behaviors;
- consistently using positive behavioral intervention strategies;
- applying constructive disciplinary practices;
- teaching positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others;
- Social skills education groups including issues of building community; respect; sexual harassment; bullying; social thinking; activities of daily living; anger and stress management; assertiveness training; conflict resolution; coping; problem solving; study and time management skills;
- Using social stories, scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- Empowering students to understand when they are the target of bullying;
- Empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- Helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber-bullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- Emphasizing cyber-safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making; and
- creating and maintaining a learning environment where the care, welfare and security of each student is assured.

**Reporting:** Students or employees who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying. Each South Coast Educational Collaborative school site has a means for anonymous reporting by students or staff of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Parents/guardians/caretakers, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible. Any South Coast Educational Collaborative employee shall immediately report any instance of bullying he/she has witnessed or become aware of to the Educational Administrator or designee. Confidentiality shall be utilized to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying. *(Please see Appendices for Reporting Form.)*

#### **Investigation:**

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation, the Educational Administrator or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. The Educational Administrator or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation a student or employee who has reported bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation, a student or employee who has witnessed bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation, a student or employee who provides information during an investigation, or a student or employee who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation. Upon determining that bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Educational Administrator or designee will promptly notify the parent/ guardian/caretaker of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it.

In addition, South Coast Educational Collaborative will notify the parent/guardian/caretaker of the target of bullying of the availability of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Problem Resolution System and assist the parent/guardian/caretaker in understanding and accessing this process. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Problem Resolution System provides for the investigation of complaints and the enforcement of compliance with 603 CMR 28.00, as well as with other statutes and regulations pertaining to education. Any party wishing to file a complaint may do so through the

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Problem Resolution Systems (PRS)  
 135 Santilli Highway, Everett, MA 02149  
 Telephone: 781-338-3700  
 TTY: N.E.T. Relay: 1-800-439-2370  
 FAX: 781-338-3710  
 Email: [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu)  
 Web: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/prs>

When first informed of the incident, the student's Educational Administrator will promptly notify by telephone the Special Education Administrators or designees of the aggressor's and the target's local education agencies (school districts). At any point after receiving a report of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the Educational Administrator or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Educational Administrator or designee will notify the local law enforcement agency. All communications will be in



accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations.

The Educational Administrator or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the developmental levels and ages of the students involved. The Educational Administrator or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation by using the *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form*.

The investigation shall be completed within fourteen (14) school days from the date of the report. The parent/guardian/caretaker and the local education agencies shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results. The Educational Administrator or designee will decide if bullying occurred based upon all the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Educational Administrator or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The Educational Administrator or designee will:

- 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and
- 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Upon the Educational Administrator or designee determining that bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has occurred, the school will use a range of strategies to initiate an appropriate response which balances the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior according to the ages and developmental levels of the students.

If the Educational Administrator or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the form of that action will be determined based on facts found by the Educational Administrator or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, the developmental level of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the school's Code of Conduct, which conforms to all federal and state regulations governing discipline procedures for students with disabilities.

**Target Assistance:** SCEC will provide counseling or referral to appropriate services and protection to students and employees, both targets and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as needed.

**Training and Assessment:** Annual training is provided for South Coast Educational Collaborative employees who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention will be incorporated into the curriculum for all students.

**Publication and Notice:** Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* is provided to students and their parent/guardian/caretaker. Annual written notice of the *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* is provided to all South Coast Educational Collaborative staff. All South Coast Educational Collaborative employees are trained annually on the *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan*. South Coast Educational Collaborative's *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* is posted on its website.

The *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* is posted on the SCEC website.

## **DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT**

Some student and adult misconduct that falls under the anti-bullying policy may also trigger responsibilities under one or more of the federal antidiscrimination laws enforced by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR). The statutes that OCR enforces include Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d *et seq.*) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. § 1681 *et seq.*) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. § 794); and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. § 12131 *et seq.*). Section 504 and Title II prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. OCR also enforces the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. § 6101 *et seq.*) and the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act (20 U.S.C. § 7905). The U.S. Department of Education's regulations implementing these statutes are in 34 C.F.R. parts 100, 104, and 106. Under these federal civil rights laws and regulations, students are protected from harassment by school employees, other students, and third parties.

Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling; graphic and written statements, which may include use of cell phones or the Internet; or other conduct that may be physically threatening, harmful or humiliating. Harassment does not need to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.

Harassment creates a hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by South Coast Educational Collaborative. When such harassment is based on race, color, national origin, sex or disability, it violates the civil rights laws that OCR enforces.

South Coast Educational Collaborative employees are responsible for addressing discriminatory harassment incidents brought to their attention as follows:

**Reporting:** Students or employees who believe that they are a target of discriminatory harassment, observe an act of discriminatory harassment, or have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report harassment.

Parents/guardians/caretakers, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of discriminatory harassment as soon as possible. Any South Coast Educational Collaborative employee shall immediately report any instance of discriminatory harassment he/she has witnessed or become aware of to the school's Educational Administrator or designee. Confidentiality shall be utilized to protect a person who reports discriminatory harassment, provides information during an investigation of discriminatory harassment, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of discriminatory harassment. *(Please see Appendices for Reporting Form.)*

**Investigation:** Before fully investigating the allegations of discriminatory harassment, the Educational Administrator or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. The Educational Administrator or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from discriminatory harassment a student or employee who has reported discriminatory harassment, a student or employee who has witnessed discriminatory harassment, a student or employee who provides information during an investigation, or a student or employee who has reliable information about a reported act of discriminatory harassment.

When responding to discriminatory harassment, the Educational Administrator or designee will take immediate and appropriate action to investigate or otherwise determine what occurred. The specific steps in the investigation may vary depending upon the nature of the allegations, the source of the complaint, the age of the student or students involved, the size and administrative structure of the school, and other factors. In all cases, the inquiry will be prompt, thorough and impartial

Upon determining that discriminatory harassment has occurred, the Educational Administrator or designee will take prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to end the discriminatory harassment, eliminate any hostile environment and its effects, and prevent the discriminatory harassment from recurring. The Educational Administrator or designee will promptly notify the parent/guardian/caretaker of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it.

Appropriate steps to end discriminatory harassment may include:

- separating the accused harasser and the target;
- providing counseling for the target and/or harasser;
- providing disciplinary action against the harasser;
- providing training or other interventions not only for the perpetrators, but also for the larger school community;
- providing additional services to the student who was harassed in order to address the effects of discriminatory harassment;
- reviewing current policies against discriminatory harassment and updating as needed.

Appropriate steps to prevent further discriminatory harassment may include:

- making sure that the harassed student(s) and their families know how to report subsequent problems;
- conducting follow-up inquiries to see if there have been any new instances of harassment or retaliation;
- responding promptly to address continuing or new problems.

## **REGISTERING COMPLAINTS OR GRIEVANCES**

Parents/guardians/caretakers are encouraged to share any questions, concerns, complaints or grievances they may have

about their child's program. Parents/guardians may contact the Educational Administrator, the Executive Director, a Social Worker/ Counselor or a Teacher to express their questions or concerns, complaints or grievances, either verbally or in writing. Staff will respond in a timely and cooperative fashion and will make every attempt to ensure that parents are comfortable with their child's educational experience.

If a student has a complaint or concern about any aspect of his/her experience at South Coast Educational Collaborative, they are encouraged to express the complaint or concern to any staff person with whom s/he feels comfortable. This staff person may be the Educational Administrator, a Counselor, a Teacher, a Social Worker or the School Nurse. All concerns will be responded to thoughtfully, seriously, and in a timely manner.

### **COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES**

All students participating in community experiences are expected to follow all school rules, which are reviewed prior to and during the experience. Written permission slips signed by a parent/guardian/caretaker are required for every community experience. Verbal authorization cannot be accepted. School personnel reserve the right to exclude any student from participation in a community experience based on issues of safety and/or behavior.

### **PHOTO AND VIDEO POLICY**

Still and video photography may be used to provide students and their families with visual feedback on the student's performance. No images are used for any purpose other than education without the specific written permission of the parent or guardian.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER CLOSURES**

In the event of snow or other weather emergencies, school may be canceled or delayed. School cancellation and delay announcements are made on local radio and television stations (<https://www.ribroadcasters.com/station-list/> and their respective broadcast websites. Staff and parents/guardians are encouraged to register for the text message alerts when school is closed or delayed. If school is canceled for the school district in which a program is located, then that program is also canceled. If school is delayed for the school district in which a program is located, then the opening of the program will also be delayed. For instance, if the SCEC program is in Seekonk, then the program will follow the determination of Seekonk Public Schools. Main office employees follow the cancellation and delay schedule of the Swansea Public School District.

There may be times when students are dismissed early from school due to weather. Educational personnel will contact each parent/guardian/caretaker to ensure that a responsible adult will be at home to accept the student. Please make provisions for your child's care in the event of an early release.

We are not always able to reach every parent in the event of weather- related school closures, so it is important to listen for announcements on local radio and television or internet site.

### **FAMILIES WITH ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

At the time a student is first enrolled in a South Coast Educational Collaborative school site, a determination is made of the primary language of the student's parent/guardian/caretaker as well as that of the student by asking the family to complete a Home Language Survey form.

SCEC makes arrangements for effective verbal and written communication with families in their native language, if other than English, either through bilingual staff, securing an interpreter through the student's sending school district, and/or ensuring that important information and documents are available to families in their primary language. Communications are in simple and commonly understood words. Communications are in both English and the primary language of the home, if such primary language is other than English. Where the parents/guardians or the student are unable to read in any language or are blind or deaf, communications are made orally in English or with the use of a foreign language interpreter, in Braille, in sign language, via TDD, or in writing, whichever is appropriate, and all such communications are documented.

It is the responsibility of the student's sending school district to secure interpreters for IEP and other meetings involving a family that requires such services. The sending school district ensures that any interpreter used is fluent in the primary language of the home and is familiar with special education procedures, programs and services. It is also the responsibility of the sending school district to translate the IEP, all related IEP notifications and documents, and reports of progress to the primary language of the family prior to dissemination to the family. South Coast Educational Collaborative ensures that

admission forms, Student-Family Handbooks, Codes of Conduct, Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans, SCEC forms and notices, and other SCEC documents, are translated to the primary language of each family, when required or requested, and are disseminated to the family in both English and translation.

### **ACCESSIBILITY**

All South Coast Educational Collaborative school facilities are fully accessible. Additional accommodations for individual students may be made through South Coast Educational Collaborative's Assistive Technology Team.

### **USE OF PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

All South Coast Educational Collaborative employees are trained annually in physical restraint policies and procedures as well as crisis prevention and intervention. Physical restraint may be utilized only in accordance with 603 CMR 46.00 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts regulations. Parent/guardian informed consent for the implementation of restraint is obtained annually. SCEC prohibits the use of **medication restraint, mechanical restraint, and seclusion.**

All South Coast Educational Collaborative employees are trained annually in physical restraint policies and procedures as well as crisis prevention and intervention. Only trained school personnel shall administer physical restraint with students. Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of punishment or as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or school personnel directive, a student's use of inappropriate language, or the use of verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent serious physical harm.

School personnel shall use physical restraint a) only when needed to protect a student and/or member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm; b) in a manner which prevents or minimizes any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint; and c) non-physical interventions would not be effective.

### **USE OF TIME OUT**

#### **Definitions**

- **Time Out:** A behavioral support strategy in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time out, a student must be continuously observed by school personnel, who shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time out must be clean, safe, sanitary and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.
- **Inclusionary Time Out:** When the student is removed from positive reinforcement or full participation in classroom activities while remaining in the classroom.
- **Exclusionary Time Out:** The separation of a student from the rest of the class either through complete visual separation or through actual physical separation.
- **Seclusion:** Involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time out. **The use of seclusion is prohibited.**

SCEC utilizes both inclusionary time-out and exclusionary time-out. These behavioral strategies may be initiated by school personnel and/or student elected. A student must be continuously observed by school personnel, who shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for timeout must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed and shall not exceed thirty minutes. The principal or other administrator may grant an extension beyond thirty minutes based on the individual student's continuing agitation.

**Use of Inclusionary Time Out:** The use of *inclusionary* time-out functions well as a behavior support strategy while allowing the student to remain fully aware of the learning activities of the classroom.

*Inclusionary* time out includes practices used by school personnel as part of their classroom behavior support tools, such as "planned ignoring," asking students to put their heads down, or placing a student in a different location within the classroom (this does not include walled off "time-out" rooms located within the classroom; use of such areas is considered to be an *exclusionary* time-out). These strategies, used to reduce external stimuli in the student's environment while keeping the student physically present and involved in learning, have proven to be useful tools for classroom management.

**Use of Exclusionary Time Out:** *Exclusionary* time-out as a school personnel-directed behavioral support

should only be used when the student is displaying behaviors which present, or potentially present, an unsafe or overly disruptive situation in the classroom. School personnel-directed *exclusionary* time out should not be used as a method of punishment for noncompliance, or for incidents of misbehavior that are no longer occurring. During an *exclusionary* time-out:

- The student must be continuously observed by school personnel;
- School personnel must be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times;
- The space used for *exclusionary* time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming.
- *Exclusionary* time-out must cease as soon as the student has calmed.

When a student is separated from the learning environment in an *exclusionary* time out, they must be in a safe and calming environment. For any *exclusionary* time-out that may last longer than thirty (30) minutes, school personnel must seek approval from the principal/administrator for the continued use of time out. The principal/administrator may not routinely approve such requests, but must consider the individual circumstances, specifically whether the student continues to be agitated, to determine whether time out beyond thirty (30) minutes is justified. If it appears that the use of *exclusionary* time out exacerbates the student's behavior, or the continuation of the exclusionary time out beyond thirty (30) minutes has not helped the student to calm, then other behavioral support strategies must be attempted.

*Exclusionary* time-out is an intervention that is reserved for use only when students are displaying behaviors which present, or potentially present, an unsafe or overly disruptive situation in the classroom. In such circumstances, the student may either ask to leave the classroom, or the student may be directed to a separate setting for the purpose of helping the student to calm down. Unless it poses a safety risk, school personnel must be physically present with the student who is in an *exclusionary* time-out setting. If it is not safe for school personnel to be present with the student, the student may be left in the time out setting with the door closed.

However, to ensure that the student is receiving appropriate support, a school counselor or other behavioral support professional must be immediately available outside of the time out setting where the individual can continuously observe and communicate with the student as appropriate to determine when the student has calmed. Students must never be locked in a room. For students displaying self-injurious behavior, school personnel must be physically present in the same setting with the student. Exclusionary time out must end when the student has calmed.

**Seclusion:** Seclusion is the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. The key elements of seclusion are: 1) the student is alone with no staff present or immediately available and 2) the student is prevented from leaving the area. **The use of seclusion is prohibited in Massachusetts and is never used at South Coast Educational Collaborative.**

### **SUSPENSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Suspension is rarely used at South Coast Educational Collaborative and is not considered to be an appropriate method of coping with or changing behavior. The use of suspension is utilized only in extreme cases and only with the purpose of protecting the health and safety of the student in question, other students and staff, and only to give the classroom staff and the student's sending school district time to develop an appropriate behavioral intervention or alternative placement.

School personnel make every attempt to assist students in making the right decisions about their behavior and avoid the use of suspension. However, a student may be suspended from school for significant breaches of school policy and/or law, such as bringing to school illegal drugs, tobacco, alcohol, or a weapon; engaging in violence toward others; leaving the building without permission; and other behavior deemed dangerous or illegal.

In most cases of student misconduct, the Educational Administrator exercises discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense and considers a variety of ways to re-engage the student in learning. Suspension is avoided whenever possible. Possible alternatives to suspension include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports. Any student who commits a suspendable offense may be removed from school for a period of not more than 10 consecutive school days. If similar suspensions occur around the same infraction and are relatively close in time and demonstrate a pattern of behavior, a change of placement

may be necessary. If a planned suspension will constitute a change in placement, the program and the sending school district will convene the IEP Team prior to such suspension to consider the following:

- Develop or review a functional behavioral assessment of the student's behavior;
- modify a student's behavior plan;
- identify appropriate alternative educational setting(s);
- conduct a manifestation determination.

Relative to other offenses, in 2022, the Massachusetts legislature amended G.L. c.71 §37H <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, through section 29 of *An Act Addressing Barriers to Care for Mental Health* requiring School Administrators to consider a variety of ways to re-engage the student in learning, and avoid suspension. Possible alternatives to long-term suspension include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

School administrators at SCEC must do the following under G.L. c.71 §37H <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> (b):

- Consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process.
  - Have alternative remedies been employed first? Have their use and the results been documented in writing?
- Not suspend the student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents.
  - If alternative remedies have not been employed, have the specific reasons been documented in writing as to why such remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive?
    - Does the student's continued presence in the school pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction or serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school?

Upon admission of a student, the Educational Administrator provides a copy of the suspension policy to the parents/guardians and the sending district. Parents/Guardians are required to review and sign the appropriate form indicating their understanding of the policy. This policy conforms to the federal requirements on discipline pursuant to 34 CFR 300 and Massachusetts General Laws 71, Section 37H, 37H<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> and 37H<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> (Chapter 222.)

### Definitions

- **In-School Suspension:**
  - Removal of a student from the regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises.
  - For no more than 10 consecutive school days, or no more than 10 total school days.
- **Short-Term Suspension:**
  - Removal of the student from regular classroom activities AND from the school premises.
  - For 10 consecutive school days or less.
  - The Principal may allow the student to serve a short-term suspension in school.
- **Long-Term Suspension:**
  - Removal of a student from the regular classroom activities AND from the school premises.
  - For more than 10 consecutive school days OR for more than 10 total school days for multiple offenses during a school year.
  - The Program Administrator may allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school.
  - May not last more than 90 days.
  - May not extend beyond the end of the school year.
- **Expulsion:** Removal for more than 90 days.

## **TERMINATION POLICY**

Students may be terminated from participation in a South Coast Educational Collaborative program for behaviors which endanger the health and/or safety of others or self, and for behaviors which significantly disrupt the integrity of the educational and therapeutic process.

At the time of a student's admission, the Educational Administrator shall make a commitment to the sending school district that South Coast Educational Collaborative employees will try every available means to maintain the student's placement until the sending school district's Special Education Administrator has had sufficient time to search for an alternative placement. The Educational Administrator will immediately contact the student's Special Education Administrator if termination or discharge of the student is being considered.

### ***Planned Termination***

If termination or discharge is recommended, the student's Educational Administrator will schedule a meeting and provide to all parties, including the parent/guardian and student (if appropriate) notice of this meeting ten (10) days in advance of the intended date of the meeting. The meeting shall be held for the purpose of planning and developing a written termination plan for the student. The plan shall describe the student's specific program needs, the short- and long-term educational goals of the program, and recommendations for follow-up and/or transitional services. The Educational Administrator shall thoroughly explain termination procedures to the student, the parent/guardian and the Special Education Administrator. The written termination plan shall be implemented in no less than thirty (30) days unless all parties agree to an earlier termination date.

### ***Emergency Termination***

South Coast Educational Collaborative will not terminate the enrollment of any student, even in emergency circumstances, until the sending school district is informed and assumes responsibility for the student. At the request of the sending school district, South Coast Educational Collaborative shall delay termination of the student for up to two calendar weeks to allow the sending school district the opportunity to convene an emergency Team meeting or to conduct other appropriate planning discussions prior to the student's termination [603 CMR 28.09(12)]. With the mutual agreement of South Coast Educational Collaborative and the sending school district, termination of enrollment may be delayed for longer than two calendar weeks.

## **RESTITUTION**

Students who damage school property may be charged restitution for the damage, which may include the cost of replacement, labor costs and cost of materials. Students will be able to develop a plan to pay off the restitution in increments.

## **RESPONSIBLE USE POLICY AS IT RELATES TO STUDENTS**

The use of technology and the Internet provides great educational benefits to students. Access to technology and the Internet is given as a privilege to students who agree to act in a considerate and responsible manner with the purpose of promoting the use of technology for educational purposes and to prevent inappropriate use of resources.

The proper use of technology in school provides information and communication technologies that are integrated across the curriculum and used to support student achievement. Such technologies are also used to support programs and activities that promote safe schools and healthy, responsible students.

Site administrators control the access to and availability of technology in the classroom and other spaces to support educational outcomes. Students and staff may be required to jointly execute their best judgment about the appropriate use of technology. If a student has any questions about appropriate use, he/she should discuss it with a staff member.

### ***General Guidelines***

- Obtain permission from a staff person before accessing any technology resources.
- Treat all school property with respect.
- Report any system or hardware problems to a staff person immediately.
- Following use, all technology is to remain as it was found.
- Only educationally relevant gaming is allowed at school.
- Only educationally relevant content may be viewed or transmitted via technology at school.
- Request permission from staff to attach any device.

### ***Internet Guidelines***

South Coast has configured Internet access filters appropriate to the teaching and learning environment. Students are required to adhere to the following rules:

- Only educationally relevant sites may be accessed during class time.
- Chat or IM may not be used for non-school related purposes.
- The South Coast network may not be used to download personal files.
- South Coast equipment, connections or resources may not be used for the purpose of personal gain.

### ***Social Media Guidelines***

South Coast Educational Collaborative recognizes the importance of social media as a tool for communicating, teaching and learning. The following guidelines address the student use of publicly available media including, but not limited to Facebook, X, YouTube and other networking sites, blogs, online games and content communities.

- Be responsible. You are accountable for anything that you write or post online, even on your personal account at home. Respect trademarks, copyrights and fair use requirements. Keep school and personal accounts separate.
- Staff members are unable to accept invitations to social network sites from students.
- Do not disclose or use confidential information. Do not post photos of students or staff.
- Cyber-bullying will not be tolerated.
- Be respectful. Remember that our community reflects diverse customs and values. Always express ideas and opinions in a respectful manner. Any comments made about your school experience should be insightful and build a sense of community.

SCEC has established certain protocols to ensure the safety of our school communities, the security of computer networks, and compliance with applicable law. All users should be aware of the following provisions:

1. ***Network and Internet monitoring:*** The SCEC locations and/or their host districts have software and systems in place that monitor and record all Internet usage. Users should have no expectation of privacy when browsing the web, sending or receiving emails, or using other electronic resources. Using SCEC accounts on a personal device exposes that device to the same oversight and monitoring systems as devices owned by SCEC.
2. ***Filtering:*** In accordance with the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), passed by the U.S. Legislature in January 2001 (Public Law 106-554), our schools shall employ filtering software to block access to inappropriate content on all computers with Internet access. SCEC, its schools, and districts certify that a policy of Internet safety and technology protection measures shall be enforced.
3. ***Content Issues:*** Users are restricted from accessing visual depictions of subject matter that are obscene, pornographic, or harmful to minors. In compliance with CIPA, the SCEC policy and, if applicable, host districts’ policy, shall, in furtherance of this set of Acceptable Use Procedures regarding Internet safety, monitor the online activities of users. Using SCEC accounts on a personal device exposes that device to the same oversight and monitoring systems as devices owned by SCEC.

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

### **User-specific Provisions**

***Students, administrators, staff, and faculty shall not:***

1. Use the network to access and/or transmit material in violation of any U.S. or Commonwealth law, including copyrighted material.
2. Access, download, display, transmit, produce, generate, copy, or propagate any material that is obscene or pornographic; advocates illegal acts; contains ethnic slurs or racial epithets; or discriminates based on gender, national origin, sexual orientation, race, color, ancestry, religion, handicap or age.
3. Degrade, damage, or disrupt equipment or system/network performance (for example, excessive bandwidth use that disrupts the network for other users).
4. Gain unauthorized access to network resources.
5. Permit or authorize any other person to use their name or login password.
6. Use an account of any other person or vandalize another user’s data.
7. Waste electronic storage space by saving unnecessary files or programs.
8. Download, install, load, or use programs without written permission of the Director of Technology or their designee.
9. Use the Internet for personal commercial purposes or for political lobbying.
10. Use inappropriate, offensive, foul, or abusive language.



11. Harass or annoy any other party with obscene, libelous, threatening, or anonymous messages, objectionable information, images, or language.
12. Knowingly make use of pirated software or violate software-licensing agreements.
13. Engage in the practice of “hacking” or knowingly engage in any other illegal or inappropriate activity using the network.

***Students, staff and faculty must:***

1. Use the Internet and other electronic resources only for legitimate educational and Collaborative business purposes.
2. Respect commonly accepted practices of Internet etiquette including, but not limited to, use of appropriate language.
3. Be aware of potential security risks at all times and take all reasonable steps to minimize risks by, at minimum, logging off the network when a computer is unattended and reporting all unauthorized use of one’s account to the Director of Technology.
4. Avoid bulk emailing and forwarding emails of broad interest, such as virus alerts, to the larger community without prior approval from the Director of Technology.
5. Treat all computer areas and equipment with the utmost care and respect.
6. Protect their own and respect other users’ IDs and passwords and regularly change passwords.
7. Students may access the Internet only with adult supervision for a specific task.
8. Abide by this procedure and specific host district policies, where applicable.

***Electronic Communication***

School and district resources for electronic communication shall be used for educational purposes only. Electronic communication done for and on behalf of the SCEC must be done with official SCEC email accounts provided to users and should not use any personal accounts.

Prohibited electronic communications include, but are not limited to:

1. Use of electronic communications to send copies of documents in violation of privacy or copyright laws.
2. Use of electronic communications to intimidate others or to interfere with the ability of others to conduct Collaborative business.
3. Constructing electronic communications to appear to be from someone else.
4. Obtaining access to the files or communications of others for the purpose of satisfying idle curiosity, with no substantial Collaborative business purpose.

Users will conform to the rules of email archiving and document retention set forth by policy or applicable laws.

***Hardware***

Regarding the use of equipment other than that owned by SCEC or the host school/district:

1. SCEC provides limited support for equipment brought in from the outside by any user.
2. If a computer network is provided that is designated for guests, users must only connect outside devices to these networks.
3. The Director of Technology has the right to confiscate or disconnect any outside equipment that interferes with operation of the system/network.
4. SCEC and host school/district are not responsible for damage to or loss of equipment brought in from the outside.

***Sensory Diet and Technology***

A “sensory diet” is personalized set of activities that provides the sensory input a student needs to stay focused and organized. A sensory diet may include the use of various technological devices to help a student tolerate sensations and situations that he/she finds challenging or to regulate his/her alertness, limit sensory seeking and sensory avoiding behaviors, and handle transitions. The use of technology as part of a sensory diet is an educational application and may be included in a student’s Individualized Education Plan or as determined by classroom staff with input from Clinicians and Related Service Providers.

**SOUTH COAST EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE**

**BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION  
INCIDENT REPORTING FORM**

**COMPLAINANT INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Check whether you are the:       Target of the bullying     Reporter (not the target)

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

Home/Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

If student, which program? \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

If staff member, which program?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE INCIDENT:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used. Please use additional space on back if necessary.

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Signature of Person Filing this Report: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged harasser solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)*

Form Given to: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

**INVESTIGATION**

Investigator(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Position(s): \_\_\_\_\_

**Interviews:**

Interviewed aggressor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewed target Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewed witnesses Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Any prior documented incidents by the aggressor?  Yes  No

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

Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, RETALIATION?  Yes  No

**Summary of Investigation:**

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

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**CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION**

Finding of bullying or retaliation:  Yes  No  
 Bullying  Retaliation

**Contacts:**

Target's parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Law Enforcement Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken:

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

Describe Safety Planning:

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

Report forwarded to Site Leader (if Site Leader was not the investigator): Date \_\_\_\_\_

Report forwarded to Executive Director: Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

***SOUTH COAST EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE***

**DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT REPORTING FORM**

**COMPLAINANT INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Check whether you are the:     Target of the harassment     Reporter (not the target)

Check whether you are a:     Student     Staff member (specify role) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian     Administrator     Other \_\_\_\_\_

Home/Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

If student, which program? \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

If staff member, which program? \_\_\_\_\_

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE INCIDENT**

Name of Target (of harassment): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Aggressor (person who engaged in the harassment):  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

Witnesses (List people who saw the incident or may have information about it):

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

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

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

Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used. Please use additional space on back or additional pages, if necessary.

---

Signature of Person Filing this Report: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Form Given to: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

**INVESTIGATION**

Investigator(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Position(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Interviews:

- Interviewed alleged harasser    Name: \_\_\_\_\_    Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Interviewed target    Name: \_\_\_\_\_    Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- Interviewed witnesses    Name: \_\_\_\_\_    Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Any prior documented incidents by the alleged harasser?     Yes     No

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

Any previous incidents with findings of discriminatory harassment?     Yes     No

***Summary of Investigation:***

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

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**CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION**

Finding of discrimination:     Yes     No

Type of discrimination: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contacts:**

- Target's Parent/Guardian    Date of Contact : \_\_\_\_\_
- Harasser's Parent/Guardian    Date of Contact : \_\_\_\_\_
- Law Enforcement    Date of Contact : \_\_\_\_\_
- Other:    Date of Contact : \_\_\_\_\_
- Office of Civil Rights    Date of Contact : \_\_\_\_\_

**Action Taken:**

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**Describe Safety Planning:**

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Report forwarded to Site Leader  
(if Site Leader was not the investigator): Date \_\_\_\_\_

Report forwarded to Executive Director: Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_