



Assabet Valley Collaborative

Orchard Street Academy & SOAR Assessment Center

**57 Orchard Street
Marlborough, MA 01752
508-481-3611**

Parent/Guardian/Student Handbook

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MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of Orchard Street Academy (OSA) to provide an engaging academic program that is appropriately challenging to each student, that meets the rigorous requirements of state and district standards, and that meets the needs of students who require an alternative setting to access their education. OSA's multidisciplinary team collaborates with students, families and support networks, sending school districts, and community resources to assist students in meeting their educational goals within the context of a structured therapeutic setting. Students enrolled at OSA have historically experienced difficulty in traditional school settings. It is the mission of OSA to provide an educational alternative for these students while assisting them in gaining a repertoire of skills, experiences, and tools that will improve their ability to succeed in less restrictive settings to complete their educational and post-secondary goals into adulthood.

Notification of Revision to Policy/Procedures

Assabet Valley Collaborative reviews and revises our handbook annually to address state and federal regulations and to ensure quality programming and consistent protocol. Upon enrollment and annually prior to the beginning of the school year each student and family will receive a current handbook. In the event a policy or procedure change occurs mid-year, students and families will be notified of the policy change in writing prior to its implementation. To comply with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) regulations and legislation, OSA also has a DESE Manual which articulates OSA protocol for meeting compliance areas. A copy of this manual is housed in the reception office and can be made available for review upon request.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Referral and Admission

Though Orchard Street Academy has a brand new name, we have been serving students since 1977. Today, OSA serves 5th through 12th grade students whose special education teams have identified the need for an IEP and a therapeutic school placement.

OSA is fortunate to share space and personnel with the SOAR Assessment Center. Since 2009, SOAR has been helping middle and high school students and their teams identify their strengths, assess their needs, and identify interventions and supports that will help them make progress in school.

Before a student can be enrolled at OSA, the sending school district TEAM will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and make a referral to OSA.

The SOAR admission process also requires a referral from a sending district, however does not require an IEP, though many SOAR students do have one. In both cases, once OSA or SOAR receive a referral from a sending district, an administrator will invite the student, parent, school representative and other involved agency representatives for a tour and informational meeting to review more fully whether OSA or SOAR can meet the needs of the student. Once it is determined that OSA or SOAR can support the student's needs, intake will be scheduled following the appropriate documentation and paperwork.

Admission to OSA requires a signed IEP, and signed placement page indicating Orchard Street School as the agreed Public Day School placement. Admission to SOAR requires a signed Assessment agreement and consent forms.

Non Discrimination: Assabet Valley Collaborative does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, disability, or age, in admission, administration of policies, or procedures.

Admissions/Intake Process

A student referral can be made to OSA by a school district. The district needs to send a packet of information to OSA Admissions that includes: current IEP, most recent assessments completed (educational, psychological, OT, Speech, PT, etc.), last 2 progress reports, behavior plan if applicable, discipline report and any other pertinent information.

What happens after the referral packet is received?

- The packet will be reviewed by the program administration.
- Program administration will contact the sending district after the packet is reviewed and update the district on whether or not OSA may be able to meet the student's needs.
- If it is determined that the program may be able to meet the student's needs, the program administrator will set up an informal meeting and tour for student and family. The school district is strongly encouraged to have representation at this

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meeting.

- After the informational meeting, OSA administration will determine if OSA is able to meet the student's academic, clinical, and behavioral needs and will contact the district with an intake decision.
- If all members of the TEAM are in agreement, an enrollment date will be determined. OSA requires a signed placement page (PL1) prior to student start date.
- Once accepted for admission, the student and parent/guardian will receive and fill out all pertinent documents and releases, will receive a student/parent handbook, and the placement consent document will be signed by the parent/guardian.
- Upon successful completion of the TEAM meeting, the Special Education liaison of the sending school district will set up transportation for the student and a start date will be established.

Individual Education Plan Team Process (§300.321)

Assabet Valley Collaborative works with the sending district to comply with CFR§300.321 in the process of convening each IEP Team (annual and 3 year re-evaluation) meeting for each student to include the following parties:

- parent/guardian,
- at least one classroom teacher
- at least one special education provider
- case manager/social worker
- a program administrator from OSA (qualified to supervise the provision of services and is knowledgeable about general education requirements)
- an individual who can interpret and explain evaluation results
- the student (for part or all of the meeting)

OSA will coordinate with the sending district obtaining consent prior to excusing any of the above members of the from participating in an annual or 3-year re-evaluation IEP meeting.

Parent/Guardian Consent

Matters requiring annual parental/guardian consent include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Updated Student Emergency/Contact Information
- In coordination with responsible school districts, any evaluations of the student and/or acceptance of the student's IEP
- Emergency medical care -- see required health information packet
- Medications -- see required health information packet
- Research, Experimentation, Fundraising, Publicity, and Observation - see consent form
- OSA complies with Parental/Guardian Notification Law pursuant to Chapter 71, & 32A concerning curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. In the event that OSA offers health curriculum that covers topics related to human sexual education or human sexuality, OSA will send notification home to parents/guardians which will provide the opportunity for parents/guardians to exclude their students from these studies.

In addition to these requirements, OSA also seeks annual information/consent for the following:

- Field Trips
- Community Excursions
- Photos for school purposes including yearbook and newsletters
- Access to Internet and Technology
- Students attending OSA are subject to and must meet the state health regulations for attendance at public schools. This includes an up to date health record on file indicating all necessary shots and screenings, and documentation from a licensed physician of a complete physical exam within the last twelve months prior to admission.

The program shall notify the sending school district when multiple efforts have been made, yet have failed to involve the parent/guardian and obtain necessary parental/guardian consent.

Change in Legal Status

If a student's legal status changes as a result of any judicial and/or administrative proceedings OSA requires written documentation regarding the change in legal status. Information will be disseminated to appropriate parties as per student record regulations.

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Registering Complaints

Students, parents/guardians and employees can register complaints using the following procedure

- Contact OSA Director or OSA Executive Director express concerns.
- Request to register a complaint, which includes summarizing your complaint in writing.
- Following your complaint, OSA Director or AVC Executive Director will contact you to follow up regarding your complaint.
- If the complaint cannot be resolved through phone contact and initial follow up, and in cases in which student safety or compliance issues are in question, the AVC Executive Director will conduct an investigation.
- Following an investigation, the OSA Executive Director will generate an investigation report and, if indicated, schedule a resolution meeting to address the complaint with the complainant and any additional TEAM members indicated.
- If complaints are related to Harassment or Discrimination - see Assabet Valley Collaborative Policy AC.
- If complaints are related to Bullying, see Bully report Form.

Emergencies

- A first aid kit is in the main office along with the American Red Cross First Aid Manual. The first aid kit is kept and stocked with supplies. An AED (automated external defibrillator) device is located in the first floor main entry hallway.
- Students are considered runaway from the program if they leave the school without permission. The parent/guardian, and the sending school SPED department are notified immediately. Police may be called if the runaway is seen as an immediate threat to him/herself or others.
- As OSA is in a public building belonging to the City of Marlborough, the Fire Department conducts fire evacuation drills at least 2 times per year.
- Crisis procedures for dealing with safety and security are reviewed annually and coordinated with the other programs housed in our school building and the Marlboro Police and Fire Departments.
- Individual Student Behavior Support Plans are recorded in student files and staff are trained to use those procedures.
- In the case of a student emergency, the following procedure will be followed:
- The immediate needs of the student will be assessed by professional staff.
- If determined to be an emergency, OSA will contact additional resources, including first responders, Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES), fire and police.

Every effort will be made to immediately contact the parent/guardian.

- A letter describing in narrative the nature of the emergency will be mailed home within 24 hours, (cc to the SPED department of the sending school) and a copy placed in the student's temporary record.
- A critical incident report will be filled out and placed in the temporary student record.

Mandated Responsibility to Report Suspected Abuse or Neglect

Massachusetts General Law Chapter 119, Section 51A-E places an important responsibility on public and private school teachers, educational administrators, health care professionals, guidance and adjustment counselors, psychologists, and school psychologists, attendance officers, social workers, and others who work with children to report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) if they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse, including sexual abuse, or from neglect. This is a mandated responsibility that OSA takes very seriously. OSA personnel receive annual training on their responsibilities to report suspected abuse or neglect.

Transportation To and From School

- Students are required to take the transportation provided by their local school department, unless other arrangements have been agreed to by the IEP TEAM including the student's parents/guardians.
- Transportation is to and from the student's home address and the school, unless other arrangements have been made and agreed to by the IEP TEAM, local school department and the transportation vendor.
- If a student will not be using district-provided transportation for any reason, the student's parent/guardian needs to inform the transportation coordinator assigned to the student's services. Those students who are transported via OSA vendors should notify the AVC transportation office at 508-481-2424 of any cancellations.
- Students are not permitted to change or alter with plans for transportation (i.e. walking home, transporting with someone other than the provided transportation vehicle, etc.) without express written consent from the student's parent/guardian and notifying the IEP TEAM.
- Any deviation from approved transportation requires prior arrangement by the parent/guardian and IEP TEAM which includes the sending school's special education department, OSA and the transportation provider.
- OSA staff is committed to collaborating with transportation staff to develop plans to support positive and safe transportation to and from school.
- Inappropriate behavior during transportation may result in disciplinary action which the parents/ guardians will be notified.

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- Parents/Guardians/Students transported by AVC vendors will receive an AVC transportation handbook. Other students and families should consult their sending school district to get a transportation handbook.
- If a parent/guardian wishes for your student to be transported by anyone other than your scheduled transportation OSA must have a written note or email by a parent/guardian.
- Other transportation options may be determined through the IEP TEAM process.

Self-Transport

Driving a vehicle onto school grounds is a privilege that can be requested and authorized through the following protocol:

- Express written consent from the student's parent/guardian and sending school district is submitted to the OSA staff.
- Each student granted permission to drive to and from school must participate in the development of a Driving Contract, which will outline the specific expectations for each student driver. This contract will be signed by the student, parent/guardian, sending school district liaison and OSA Director.
- A copy of the student's valid driver's licence must be submitted to OSA staff.
- Student drivers are required to turn their car keys into OSA staff upon arrival to school.
- Student drivers are not, under any conditions, allowed to transport other students.
- Student drivers are not, under any circumstances, allowed to permit other students to drive his/her vehicle.
- Student drivers are not permitted to leave school without permission of the student's parent/guardian.
- Student drivers are expected to arrive to school on time and leave school at dismissal.

Consequences for failing to meet the expectations for self-transport and individual driving contracts may result in disciplinary action through the OSA handbook, and/or revocation of self-transport privileges.

As with all safety-related concerns, OSA will contact/notify emergency personnel if a student's driving behavior poses safety concerns and warrants execution of emergency protocol including notification of emergency law enforcement personnel.

Transportation to School Based Activities

- Students and AVC staff are transported to school field trips, work study sites and community based activities via approved Special Education vehicles by appropriately licenced drivers.
- AVC staff are prohibited from transporting students in personal vehicles.
- School Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Support expectations as well as Individual Student Positive Behavior Support Plans continue to be implemented during transportation to and from school activities and may result consequences according to the discipline code at OSA.
- The following safety protocol and procedures are implemented:

Program Transportation Safety & Policy

As a school placement, AVC programs do not provide home-school transportation. Each student's sending school district is responsible to provide door-to-door transportation between home and school. Once at school, AVC program staff will transport students to and from off-site events including job sites, work-study, field trips, community-based education, etc. AVC 7-D school pupil transport licenced staff will be transport students in AVC 7-D vehicles only, which are 7D equipped, registered, and inspected as per M.G.L. c. 90, Sec 7D. When 7-D licensed staff/vehicles are unavailable, AVC will contract with and accompany a special education transportation vendor to provide the transportation to and from these activities.

School vehicles are owned or leased by the Assabet Valley Collaborative. The program administrator or designee is responsible for the safety inspections and routine maintenance of the vehicle(s). All school motor vehicles are insured and inspected as required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

All AVC staff members who transport students must have a valid 7-D School Pupil Transport driver's license. When hired, staff members receive training and a report from the Registry of Motor Vehicles is requested.

62913393. No more than 8 students will be transported at a time, regardless of seating capacity.

62913394. Students under the age of thirteen are not allowed to sit in the front seat of any vehicle.

62913394. In the event of a motor vehicle accident occurring during the use of a school vehicle, parents, school districts, related human services agencies and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will be notified immediately.

62913345. Parents/guardians are given a copy of the AVC transportation policy and provide authorization for AVC to transport their student(s) during the school day.

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Vehicle Safety and Rules

The following vehicle rules apply to both staff and students to ensure safety and maintenance of clean, reliable transportation to and from activities:

- Seat belts must be worn whenever the students are in the vehicle.
- The number of passengers cannot exceed the number of seat belts.
- Vehicle must be locked when not in use.
- Students under the age of thirteen are not allowed to sit in the front seat of any vehicle.
- No smoking is allowed in vehicles.
- Students are not to be left in a vehicle unattended.
- At least one AVC staff member will carry a cell phone during the transport and off-site activity.
- Ratio of students to staff will be consistent with that of programmatic ratio.
- Student health and behavioral plans will be implemented during transportation to and from school activities.
- If an emergency occurs while in transport to or from school activities, staff will locate a safe location to park the vehicle and will respond to the emergency according to emergency response protocol (including calling for emergency personnel - 911).
- Each vehicle will be equipped with emergency phone numbers, updated Student information sheets, First Aid kit, Fire Extinguishers, 3 flares, and Chock Blocks.

Massachusetts Anti-Idling Law

In Massachusetts, state laws ([M.G.L. Chapter 90, Section 16A](#) and [M.G.L. Chapter 90, Section 16B](#)) and regulations (See 310 CMR 7.11(1)(b) and [540 CMR 27.00](#)) require public schools to limit vehicle idling to no more than five minutes in most cases. A vehicle may idle longer only if absolutely necessary. Vehicles arriving to or departing from Assabet Valley Collaborative are not permitted to idle for more than five minutes, unless longer idling is required for refrigeration, safety, or operation of equipment. Local boards of health, local police, and state and federal officials are authorized to enforce the state anti-idling law.

Staff Orientation and Training

OSA develops and implements a written plan for staff orientation and training that is consistent with the needs of the student population, appropriate to the role of each staff member and provides, on average, at least two (2) hours per month of relevant training for all staff. Staff input on training needs is elicited and considered through weekly all-staff meetings and supervision sessions.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

Curriculum:

OSA offers curriculum that is aligned to the Massachusetts/Common Core Curriculum Frameworks and that meets the requirements of each sending school district. Academic instruction is provided in all four major content areas. Courses are selected based upon the overall student population as well as the individual district and state requirements for students.

- **Mathematics** - Pre-Algebra, Algebra I and II, Geometry, Pre-calculus, Integrated Math, and Mathematics (Middle School only)
- **English/Language Arts** - Grades 6-12 American and World literature-based units that incorporate the Curriculum Frameworks Strands including fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama, media, and composition.
- **History/Social Sciences** - World History I and II, U.S. History I and II, Economics, U.S. Government. Middle school only courses also include Ancient Civilization and/or Geography.
- **Science/Technology** - Chemistry, Biology, Introductory Physics, Engineering/Technology, and Computers. Middle school courses include Life Science, Earth Science or Physical Science

Teachers employ a variety of strategies to engage students in the learning process while individualizing instruction according to each student's IEP. Best practice methodology including hands-on activities, differentiated instruction, and

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real-world simulations are incorporated in each classroom to ensure that students have access to curriculum that is appropriately challenging to each student. Teachers also utilize a variety of strategies to help students cope with difficulties during class time.

Electives

OSA provides a wide range of elective courses that are designed to further engage students in developing skills, interests, and hobbies and that also align to the Massachusetts/Common Core Curriculum Frameworks. Electives vary each semester depending upon students in developing skills, interests, and hobbies and that also align to the Massachusetts/Common Core Curriculum Frameworks. Electives vary each semester depending upon student input, teacher interest, and outside community resources.

- Art- pottery, sketching, painting, sculpture, mixed media
- Media - Film History, Film Analysis
- Language Arts - Creative Writing, Journalism, Drama, and Yearbook
- Social Sciences - Current Events/Newspaper, Economics, Psychology, Sociology
- Math/Science - Engineering, Technology, Computers, Game Theory, Dissection, Environmental Studies, Lab Science, and Robotics
- P.E./Health - Yoga, Fitness, Softball, Basketball, Soccer, Ice Skating, Nutrition, Healthy Choices
- Life Skills/Transitional Services - Resume Writing, Job Readiness, Work Study, Prevocational Studies (off site as appropriate at work study sites)
- Expressive Art/Music - Art/Music Therapy, Art/Music Appreciation, Art/Music Studio & Theater
- Testing Prep: PSAT, SAT & MCAS Prep
- Community Based Learning Opportunities: high interest electives: visiting/practicing techniques at local art studios, Project Adventure Sites, Nypum: dirt bike riding lessons, horseback riding lessons, visiting/working local farms, dance classes at local dance studios and opportunities at a local YMCA.

Online Learning Opportunities

OSA has partnered with Edgenuity Online Learning Community. Edgenuity offers high school courses that features direct-instruction lessons, and media-rich content that is engaging and offers instructional tools that build upon your students knowledge and skill level.

Edgenuity offers courses that meet MA state standards as well as the Common Core. The content is delivered by interactive multi-model approaches by experience certified teachers. By partnering with Edgenuity your student will be able to add academic rigor to their daily schedule and/or offer course recovery opportunities within the school day. The courses meet your student's academic need and requirements will be individually set up by the Director. Each student will have a username, password, and access to the internet via <https://learn.education2020.com> to access their specific course. The course has been designed to collaborate with OSA grade rubric and the student specific IEP accommodations.

Program Modifications & Support Services for Limited English Proficient Students

If a district's IEP Team determines that student identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) needs the placement and support of a therapeutic setting like OSA, based upon a social/emotional disability, OSA will work with the sending school district and the family to determine how to best meet that student's needs relative to accessing content through sheltered content instruction and/or developing English proficiency through additional instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL).

State and District Wide Assessments

MCAS

The Massachusetts Education Reform Law mandates that all students with disabilities who are educated with

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Massachusetts public funds participate in the MCAS assessment. During the annual meeting, the student's IEP Team must determine how each student will participate in MCAS test in each subject scheduled for assessment in the coming year. This information must be documented in the student's IEP. OSA administration and staff will be responsible for student participation in MCAS and alternate assessments. Students will be tested using the approved accommodations or alternate assessment method established in their IEPs.

Education Proficiency Plan

Regulatory Authority:

603 CMR 30.00: M.G.L c.69, §§ 1B and 1D; St. 2003, c. 140, § 119.

30.03: Standards for Competency Determination

1. Students must satisfy one of the following two conditions in both English Language Arts and mathematics to earn a competency determination.
 - a. Meet or exceed the Proficient threshold scaled score of 240 on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests, or
 - b. Meet or exceed the Needs Improvement threshold scaled score of 220 on the English Language Arts and Mathematics grade 10 MCAS tests and fulfill the requirements of an Educational Proficiency Plan.
2. Students must satisfy the requirements found in 603 CMR 30.03(2), take a discipline specific high school Science and Technology/Engineering MCAS test (Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics or Technology/Engineering) and shall meet or exceed the Needs Improvement threshold scaled score of 220 on the test in order to satisfy the requirement of the Competency Determination.
 - a. The Commissioner may waive the requirement to take the test by grade 10 for an individual student for good cause. Good cause for such a waiver may include a student's illness transfer into the Massachusetts public schools after grade 10.
3. Educational Proficiency Plans for each required content area shall include, at a minimum:
 - a. A review of the student's strengths and weaknesses in the content area.
 - b. Students are required to successfully complete in grades 11 and 12 course ELA and/or Mathematics that will demonstrate the student's progress toward proficiency on the grade 10 curriculum framework standards as well as on grade 11 and 12 standards in English language arts and/or grade 11 and 12 grade span standards or Algebra II standards in mathematics.
 - c. Students will participate in the spring MCAS retests in ELA and/or Math EPP Assessment: Mathematics EPP Assessment in grades 11 and 12 to demonstrate the student's progress towards proficiency on the grade 10 curriculum framework standards as well as on grade 11 and 12 standards in English language arts and/or grade 11 and 12 grade span standards or Algebra II standards in mathematics.
4. A student achieving a scaled score 240 or higher on the ELA or Mathematics MCAS test or a score determined by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on another approved test will be deemed to have achieved proficiency in the subject area and to have fulfilled the Educational Proficiency Plan in that subject.
5. OSA will complete documentation that meets the requirements of the EPP and will keep a copy in the student's records as well as submit a copy to their local school district.

Assessing and Communicating Progress

Report Cards/I.E.P. Progress Notes

Each quarter, OSA personnel collect, compile, and analyze data regarding a student's progress towards achieving IEP goals and academic achievement. Students, parents, and sending districts will receive progress reports that document a student's progress towards the achievement of his/her IEP goals. In addition, each quarter, students receive report cards that indicate progress within the academic program at OSA.

Academic Parent Outreach

Each student's homeroom teacher is the academic liaison for parents. During the midpoint of each quarter

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student/parent/guardian will receive a midterm progress report identifying academic competency, progress on meeting the curriculum standards they are currently working on and noting whether your student is struggling to complete specific assignments and/or at an academic warning level. In addition each student/parent/guardian will receive a quarterly letter sent by U.S. Postal Service containing his or her student's academic data will reflect student's performance in relation to the standards, I.E.P. progress goals and progress towards earning middle/high school credit.

Grading Rubric

The grading rubric is an evaluation tool and set of guidelines used to promote the consistent application of learning expectations, learning objectives and learning standards in the classroom, and to measure their attainment against a consistent set of competency based criteria. The grading rubric defines academic expectations for students and helps to ensure consistency in the evaluation of academic work from student to student, assignment to assignment, or course to course. Students are assessed on what they know and are able to do, rather than punitively. Each student's quarterly grade percentages are scored on a 0-100% weighted scale. The following standards are used to assess student progress on the learning standards of the Massachusetts/Common Core Curriculum Frameworks: Communication, Collaboration, Mastery of content, Critical thinking, and Attendance. Attendance is comprised of attending each possible class in the quarter. Typically an average academic quarter ranges from 40-45 school days. The attendance standard of the rubric takes in account student's time in and out of the learning environment.

Incomplete (INC)

If a student's average grade percentage falls within an average range of 50-62%, the student may earn an incomplete at the end of the quarter to allow time for the student to make up missed assignments. The student will have 15 school days to make up the missed assignments. An incomplete is not available at the end of the quarter 4 of a given school year.

Options for Academic Support

Students will attend 5 student advisory classes per week for the purpose of getting extra assistance for completing assignments and/or engaging in enrichment activities. Students may also be offered additional opportunities to complete work such as taking work home to complete or other options offered by the teacher.

Make Up Work

Students who are absent from class for any reason may be required to make up work missed in each class. This work should take approximately the same time as missed from class. Students and teachers will collaborate to obtain makeup work and make accommodations for completion. If a student will be out of school for an extended period, a parent/guardian/ district should contact the student's academic advisor and/or school based clinician to get make up work sent home. Teachers will notify the student as well as their school based clinician when the student is assigned an "Incomplete" in any class at the end of a quarter; all work must be completed and turned into the classroom teacher within 15 school days or the grade of "Incomplete" or the grade percentage will stand as is. If needed extra help is available for students during homeroom, study hall days and break time. A conference may be arranged with the teacher.

Attendance

It is of great importance that parents/guardians encourage students to attend school every day. In order to be eligible for full credit in coursework, it is expected that students will achieve a minimum of 70% attendance in academic classes (unless otherwise indicated by the student's IEP.)

Many students enrolling in OSA have had a history of poor attendance and/or truancy; for students for whom attendance is a primary difficulty, his/her case manager will work with the student's family, state agencies (as appropriate), and sending school district to devise individualized plans aimed to address the attendance issues. If, after repeated attempts at interventions, a student's attendance is such that when a student is at risk of failing to meet his/her IEP goals, the TEAM will be convened to further discuss strategies to assist the student in improving attendance. Following implementation of

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these strategies, if attendance continues to impede a student's progress, the TEAM will convene to discuss the appropriateness of the placement. This will be updated through the attendance policy committee meeting/final decision

Excused Absences

Studies show that students who attend classes regularly are more successful and exhibit increased engagement in school. As a school, we encourage strong attendance and recognize that some absences are unavoidable. Student absences will be excused for the following reasons:

- Bereavement/funeral
- Documented medical appointments: Illness, psychiatric, therapy appointments/hospitalization/dental/serious illness/nurse dismissal
- Approved school or community sponsored activities
- Religious holidays
- Documented Legal/Court appointments
- College visits (3 per junior or seniors) with prior approval and appropriate documentation.
- Unusual circumstances that must be approved by administration

All documentation for excused absences should be given to the Administrative Assistant who will record them in the attendance system and give them to the appropriate staff member(s).

Students are required to complete work expectations for missed days/classes. Students are responsible for checking in with teachers and/or clinicians to get necessary information about missing assignments. Students will have opportunities for individual academic support during their daily advisory class.

Absenteeism Intervention

After 3 unexcused absences (80% and above academic range/attendance) in a quarter, members of the student's OSA TEAM will be notified that there is an attendance concern.

After 6 unexcused absences in a quarter (70% and above academic range/attendance), an Attendance Intervention Plan may be developed for the purpose of increasing attendance.

After 9 unexcused absences in a quarter (60% and above academic range/attendance), an IEP TEAM meeting may be held.

Late Arrival at School or to Class

Students arriving late to school (defined as after 8:00 a.m.) will be deemed "tardy" for the day. Students having valid reasons for being late to school should call ahead to inform the school they will be late and bring a note to school that day explaining the lateness. Valid reasons include medical or therapy appointments, educational meetings, and court appearances. Lateness due to school-provided transportation will not be attributed to the students.

If a student is tardy and has not called in by 9:30am a safety call will be made to a legal guardian. It is the student's responsibility to ask teachers for make-up assignments and to see that the assignments are completed. When a student arrives late to school, s/he will report to the office to check in with a support staff who will document the time of the arrival to school as well as the reason given for the tardiness.

As all classrooms are within less than a minute walk from each other, students are expected to report for each class on time to be eligible to earn credit for that class period.

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Early Dismissal

Parents/guardians requesting dismissal for their student before the end of the day must deliver a note regarding these arrangements to the Director/designee prior to the dismissal. OSA staff will verbally verify the dismissal with the student's parent/guardian. The student's driver is requested to report to the school office prior to dismissal. Please note that if you wish for your student to be transported by anyone other than your scheduled transportation OSA must have a written note or email by a parent/guardian. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the transportation vendor funded by the school district of any cancellations or alterations to the transportation plans.

High School Graduation/Granting of Diplomas

When a student's IEP TEAM identifies OSA as an appropriate placement to meet the student's need through implementation of the student's IEP, the sending district has determined that OSA's programming and services suffice to address the district's academic expectations. As such, all credit and grades assigned at OSA will be accepted for credit by the sending school district, provided that the district's monitoring of the program determines that the program is following state and federal regulations and aligning curriculum with the state's curriculum guidelines. Each student continues to be required to meet established graduation requirements from the sending district, and OSA will provide access to curriculum that meets each student's district's graduation requirements. Upon completion of the state's and sending district's graduation requirements, OSA graduating seniors will be eligible for diplomas or certificates of completion from their sending district. OSA transcripts reflect grades and credits achieved by a student while enrolled at OSA, but will be transferred to the sending district's records for official transcripts and permanent records.

Early Release of High School Seniors

OSA follows Chapter 71, Section 4 of the Massachusetts General Law, which states "that the date of graduation from such high school may precede the regular closing date of the school by not more than twelve school days". OSA will release graduating high school seniors according to their sending school district's release date for high school seniors as long as the district's release date is not more than twelve school days prior to the close of school at OSA.

Student Related Services

OSA staff provides a learning environment that is safe, responsive, and cohesive and strives to empower each student to reach his/her individual educational goals within the context of a therapeutic environment. OSA staff collaborates with students, families, guardians, sending school districts, state agencies, and community mental health providers to ensure that students are supported during the school day as well as beyond the scope of the school day when indicated. OSA assists students in developing a repertoire of coping strategies, supports and resources to return to their home districts. A team of support staff works with probation officers, social workers, and special education administrators from the sending districts to assist students in returning to their home district when possible.

Electronics/ Cell Phones

Cell Phones

Cell phones and other devices with wireless connectivity can have a negative impact on the educational environment and the safety of students and staff. Although we have come to rely on them, cell phones are a distraction to the education of students, may become the source of disciplinary issues in school and may interfere with school emergency procedures. For these reasons, OSA has developed the following guidelines.

As educators, one of our core values is to teach the appropriate use of technology. The following will be part of the electronic use policy at OSA:

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- Students will be asked to turn off and turn in their cell phones and other devices that can be used to communicate such as ipads and ipods to their home room teacher at the beginning of the day; the teacher will label and lock cell phones in a lock box in the home room.
- Students on Platinum will earn the right to use their device during break.
- Students may use their personal electronic device in the last 5 minutes of the school day.

Consequences

If a student is noncompliant with this policy, they will be asked to turn over their device. (Please Note: If a student refuses to turn in their device and it remains unseen throughout the day, compliance with this policy is assumed. These consequences refer to USE OF/OBSERVATION of a device at OSA).

The first time student refuses to hand over their device they will not be able to socialize in the cafeteria for breakfast, break and/or lunch until they turn in the device. In addition, the student will not earn daily points and/or earn programmatic incentive until they turn in the device.

If the student is noncompliant a second time, in addition to the above consequences the student's parent/guardian will be notified via phone call and/or email. Also an incident report will be completed to document the incident.

If the student is noncompliant a third time - the above consequences hold true and the OSA team may schedule a parent'/guardian's meeting, Some cases may require the parents/guardians to pick up their student's electronic device at the school and may result in an extended, up to one year, device restriction.

After continued noncompliance the OSA team will develop a student specific Technology Intervention Plan with the goal of supporting a student to use technology appropriately and follow school guidelines. The plan may include the student attending an additional class to learn the skills associated with the appropriate use of technology.

Capturing Photos or Video Images

Students are not allowed to capture photos or video images of any person(s) in the school building at any time. This includes film and digital cameras, laptops, chromebooks, the video component of a phone, photo or video recorders, or through the use of any other technology used to capture photos or record video images.

Exceptions will be made for certain students fulfilling the requirements of coursework, an educational and/or extracurricular activity where such activity is assigned and directly supervised by a teacher or their designee.

The secret use of sound or videotaping devices is illegal in Mass. Gen. Laws c. 272, sect. 99. Videotaping or sound recording a class or individual without the permission of everyone involved is a criminal offense with severe penalties. Students engaging in such activities will be subject to disciplinary, and possibly legal, action. Disciplinary action may include confiscation of a student's personal electronic device by administration, parents and/or guardians will be notified and be required to come to OSA to retrieve the device and students may lose their cell phone privilege(s).

Multimedia/Internet/Technology Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the OSA technology tools - including but not limited to computers, devices, email, network, and social media - are to advance and promote educational opportunities, innovation and educational excellence, and to provide students and teachers access to a worldwide array of educational resources. Access to the technology tools will improve learning and teaching through research, student access to information, teacher training, collaboration and dissemination of

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successful educational practices, methods, and materials.

Network Use

The AVC network shall be used in a manner consistent with this policy and the stated purposes of the AVC and district networks, the administrative rules for using the network(s) and with AVC Policies. Staff and student access to the Internet is provided with the understanding that some material that can be accessed on the Internet may be inaccurate; and that some resources may contain material that is deemed contrary to prevailing community standards or inappropriate for classroom use. Access of such resources will not be permitted. If such inappropriate material is inadvertently encountered, it shall be the user's responsibility to disengage immediately.

Internet Safety Policy

In order to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act, AVC has a content filter in place that blocks and filters Internet sites that are obscene, contain pornography, or contain material deemed by AVC standards to be inappropriate or harmful to our students. AVC reserves the right to monitor all use of the AVC network, including but not limited to: email, text, social media, chat rooms, interactive web tools, electronic communications such as instant messaging, and online activities.

The following are basic safety rules pertaining to all types of Internet applications:

- Users should never reveal any identifying information such as last names, ages, addresses, phone numbers, parent/guardian names, parent/guardian employers or work addresses, or photographs, unless approved by a teacher/administrator for the purpose of meeting course requirements.
- Students should immediately tell their teacher, or staff members their supervisor, if they receive a message that they believe is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Users should never share a password or use anyone else's password. If a user suspects that someone else has discovered his/her password, he/she should change it immediately and notify his/her teacher, if a student, or supervisor, if a staff member.

Responsibilities

Access to the OSA network and the Internet is a privilege. OSA has the right to monitor network activity to maintain the integrity of the information network. Users have the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of other users in our network community and on the Internet. Users are expected to act in a responsible, ethical and legal manner, in accordance with the OSA policies, school rules, and in conformance with the purposes of the other networks they use on the Internet, and in compliance with the state and federal laws and regulations.

Usage Guidelines

All use of the OSA network must be consistent with its purposes as stated above. This policy does not attempt to articulate all required or proscribed behavior by users of the network. In any specific situation, we rely upon each individual's judgment of appropriate conduct. To assist in such judgment, the following general guidelines are offered:

1. The OSA network is to be used for educational purposes only.
2. Any use for illegal, political or commercial purposes is prohibited.
3. Email accounts, technology tools (including hardware, software, and networks), and network access provided to staff and students must be used to support AVC- related work. The following are not permitted:
 - a. Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures.
 - b. Using obscene language
 - c. Harassing, insulting, or attacking others (see bullying and cyberbullying policy JICA)
 - d. Damaging computers, computer systems, or computer networks
 - e. Violating copyright laws
 - f. Using another's password
 - g. Trespassing in another's files or accounts
 - h. Use of "chain letters" and messages broadcasted to mailing lists or individuals that do not comport with above

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- i. Revealing the personal address or phone number of yourself or any other person without permission
 - j. Using personal email, instant messaging, or personal social media
4. All use of the Internet, email, and network must be in support of the educational and administrative goals of AVC.
5. Privacy: Network storage areas will be treated like school lockers that may be inspected at any time.

Consequences

While this list is not intended to be exclusive, if a user is found in violation of this Acceptable Use Policy, the consequences imposed could be:

- Up to and including suspension or revocation of network privileges
- Up to and including suspension or revocation of computer access
- Up to and including suspension (students)
- Up to and including dismissal (staff)
- AVC will advise appropriate law enforcement agencies of suspected illegal activities conducted through the AVC network. AVC will cooperate fully with local, state, and/or federal officials in any investigation related to suspected illegal activities conducted through the AVC network.

Social Media

Orchard Street Academy(OSA) acknowledges that it has an obligation to protect student data and to maintain professional boundaries between our staff and the community. OSA recognizes the prevalence of social media used for personal and educational purposes. Social media are those websites which serve as communication tools with a focus on immediacy, interactivity, user participation and information sharing in multiple ways and that are in widespread use. As with any technology, these sites have the potential to be misused, to cause harm to others, and to disrupt the school/learning environment.

Google Apps for Education

The Assabet Valley Collaborative utilizes G-Suite for students, teachers, and staff. As with any educational endeavor, a strong partnership with families is essential to a successful experience. The following services are available to each student and hosted by Google as part of Assabet Valley Collaborative's online presence in Google Apps for Education:

- Mail - an individual email account for school use managed by the Assabet Valley Collaborative
- Calendar - an individual calendar providing the ability to organize schedules, daily activities, and assignments
- Docs - a word processing, spreadsheet, drawing, and presentation toolset that is very similar to Microsoft Office
- Sites - an individual and collaborative website creation tool
- Social Media Tools - YouTube, Blogger, Google+, Google Chat, Google Talk + Google Classroom.
- 3rd Party GAFE compatible apps - based on curriculum needs, teachers and students will be using various educational apps that are compatible and accessible through their GAFE account.

Using these tools, students collaboratively create, edit and share files and websites for school related projects and communicate via email with other students and teachers. These services are entirely online and available 24/7 from any Internet-connected computer and certain apps are compatible with mobile devices and phones. Examples of student use include showcasing class projects, building an electronic portfolio of school learning experiences, and working in small groups on presentations to share with others.

Technology use in the Assabet Valley Collaborative is governed by federal laws including:

Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)

COPPA applies to commercial companies and limits their ability to collect personal information from children under 13. By default, advertising is turned off for Assabet Valley Collaborative's presence in Google Apps for Education. No

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personal student information is collected for commercial purposes. This permission form allows the school to act as an agent for parents in the collection of information within the school context. The school's use of student information is solely for education purposes.<http://www.ftc.gov/privacy/coppafaqs.shtml>

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA protects the privacy of student education records and gives parents the rights to review student records. Under FERPA, schools may disclose directory information, but parents may request the school not disclose this information. Parents are provided the opportunity annually to opt out of disclosing their student's directory information on the Collaborative's Enrollment Form. <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa>

Guidelines for the responsible use of Google Apps for Education by students:

1. **Official Email Address.** All students will be assigned a username@student.avcollaborative.org email account. This account will be considered the student's official AVC email address until such time as the student is no longer enrolled in Assabet Valley Collaborative's programs. The students are able to email within the avcollaborative.org and student.avcollaborative.org domains. They are not able to send/receive email outside these domains.
2. **Prohibited Conduct.** Please refer to the Student Handbook for the Acceptable Use Policy
3. **Access Restriction.** Access to and use of student email is considered a privilege accorded at the discretion of the Assabet Valley Collaborative. The Collaborative maintains the right to immediately withdraw the access and use of these services when there is reason to believe that violations of law or Collaborative policies have occurred. In such cases, the alleged violation will be referred to the program Administrator for further investigation and adjudication.
4. **Security.** Assabet Valley Collaborative cannot and does not guarantee the security of electronic files located on Google systems. Although Google does have a powerful content filter in place for email, the Collaborative cannot assure that users will not be exposed to unsolicited information.
5. **Privacy.** The general right of privacy will be extended to the extent possible in the electronic environment. Assabet Valley Collaborative and all electronic users should treat electronically stored information in individuals' files as confidential and private. However, users of student email are strictly prohibited from accessing files and information other than their own. The Collaborative reserves the right to access the username@student.avcollaborative.org Google systems, including current and archival files of user accounts when there is reasonable suspicion that unacceptable use has occurred. Students may not share their GAFE passwords with other students in order to protect the privacy of their documents and email.
6. In the event that the student leaves or graduates from AVC and needs school created work, the student can request help creating a personal gmail account and transferring files using Google Takeout.

Supervision of Students

The student-teacher ratio is 8:1 with a maximum of eight (8) students to one (1) licensed teacher and/or clinician. The students enrolled at OSA are supervised at all times. At the start of the school day, two staff welcome students into the building upon arriving at school. These staff record their attendance, monitor their entry into the building, and announce their arrival by two-way radio. Additional support staff are available to monitor students as they enter the building and until they arrive in their homeroom classes, where supervision of students transfers to the homeroom teachers. While in classes/groups, the teacher/staff assigned to the class is responsible for monitoring/supervising each student assigned to the group; when a student requests to or is asked to leave class, staff utilize a two-way radio system to ensure that an available staff receives and supervises the student while outside of the classroom. In between classes, the related-service and support staff are responsible for monitoring the hallways. Students are accompanied by staff when moving throughout the building unless they have earned specific school based privileges that allow for the ability to transition independently throughout the building.

While off-grounds all students are accompanied by staff at all times with a ratio of one staff for every four students.

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During lunch, related service staff supervise students who are assigned to specific locations. The ratio of students to staff during lunch is the same as that of the rest of the day – no more than eight students to one staff. During check-in groups and wrap up groups, students report to their homerooms and are supervised by their homeroom teachers. Students are dismissed for school in groups based upon the arrival of their approved transportation; these notifications are made by two-way radio and students are monitored in the hallway by support staff, and outside by another support staff until they enter their approved transportation vehicles.

Support Staff and Related-Services

OSA employs clinical and student support specialists trained in principles of PBIS and ABA. OSA employs a variety of personnel to meet the non-academic needs of our students – this includes but is not limited to a consulting psychiatrist, school psychologists, school adjustment counselors/social workers, behavior specialist, expressive therapists, nurse, speech/language pathologist and transition specialist. These personnel collaborate with other educators and the team to develop goals and services related to social/emotional, behavior, language, and health care needs.

The following are among the services provided by the OSA support staff team:

- Individual School Based Counseling and Clinical Groups– topics range from DBT, CBT, anger management and mood regulation, effective coping skills acquisition, substance abuse, interpersonal and social skills, life skills, etc.
- Assessment and referral for community-based therapy services
- Clinical support during school day including weekly sessions and check-ins as indicated
- Family Consultation - case managers will make referrals to community-based providers for additional family services as needed and will assist families in navigating systems and obtaining support outside of the school day.
- Nursing staff provide health services to all students that include but not limited to safety and emergency planning, infectious disease surveillance and education, immunization surveillance, medication administration and training where appropriate on the use of medication with students, communicates with families/guardians regarding medical issues as they arise, and is a resource for health-related topics.
- Transition Planning (Developing and implementing plans for return to sending district as well as for transition to adult education, training, workforce or military paths.)
- Social skills and social pragmatics – small group or individual instruction
- Reading remediation and/or intervention as indicated

Parent, Guardian & Family Engagement

Parent, guardian, and Family involvement is key to the progress and success of our students. OSA clinicians and teachers develop productive relationships with families/guardians and strive to assist them in supporting their student's progress and success at school and in the community. OSA case managers schedule weekly contact with families/guardians based on student needs and communication preferences (phone contact, email, check-in meetings). As part of OSA procedure, case managers complete a contact note that documents the content of the communication. In addition to routine communication, it is imperative to student progress that there be two-way communication between home and school especially during periods of emotional and/or behavioral change (medication changes, crisis, emergencies). Dependent on the nature of the information to share, OSA case managers will prioritize direct and timely contact with families.

OSA holds an Open House in the fall so that parents/guardians can drop in to talk with teachers, see student work and learn more about the programming at OSA. Parents/guardians are encouraged to schedule update and progress meetings. Arts night is a popular event in the Spring - which includes opportunities for students to showcase their tremendous artwork and musical performances.

SOAR Assessment Center

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SOAR is a short-term stabilization and diagnostic assessment center for 5th through 12th grade students who are struggling in their school setting as a result of emotional and/or behavioral difficulties. The clinical and educational expertise available from SOAR staff assists districts in addressing diagnostic and placement questions or concerns for students experiencing difficulties.

SOAR staff provide counseling, behavior and academic support (small group and tutoring available) and interventions, case management, and formal assessments. Prior to a student's short term placement, the Team will identify referral questions. During the placement, SOAR staff will work with all constituents to answer these questions and formulate appropriate recommendations. We strive to assist students, families, and districts in coordinating the appropriate services and structures so that SOAR students can access their education in their least restrictive setting.

Family Success Partnership (FSP)

OSA is fortunate to utilize AVC's wraparound services called Family Success Partnership (FSP). FSP works directly with some of our families if they need additional support finding resources and support at home. FSP also offers monthly workshops designed to assist both families and people who work with families to gain more knowledge on a variety of topics ranging from mental health, to state agencies, to health insurance, to psychiatric services, to transition to adulthood. The workshops are nearly free and include dinner. OSA is always interested in providing more opportunities to engage families directly in our work at OSA - in advisory and guidance to our program improvement efforts. We will be starting a Parent/guardian Advisory Group this fall, and look forward to engaging our parents/guardians in this capacity. We will be starting a Parent/guardian Advisory Group this fall, and look forward to engaging our parents/guardians in this capacity.

Least Restrictive Environment: Transition: Preparations for students' transition

OSA strives to assist students in developing the skills to enable them to return to their public school or to prepare for post-secondary options. OSA works with districts, families, guardians, and students upon intake to address the discharge or transition goals identified by the TEAM and to identify the skills needed by the student to achieve those goals and transition to a less restrictive setting. OSA programming and services will target those skills needed by delivering services that include social skills remediation, coping skills acquisition, behavioral intervention, case management, and prevocational and post-secondary planning groups. Students preparing to transition successfully from OSA participate in transition electives, work-study, partial attendance at the sending district, dual enrollment at community colleges, or vocational job sites for partial programming.

Transition: Preparations for students approaching/reaching 16 and 18 and Transition to adulthood

To comply with federal and state regulations regarding preparation of students for transition to adulthood, OSA employs the following protocol:

Statement of Needed Transition Services - beginning no later than the first IEP developed when the eligible student is 15.

Recognizing the need for students with disabilities to engage in effective transition planning, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that transition planning be part of the Individualized Education Program (IEP). Beginning no later than the first IEP developed when the eligible student is 15, the Team considers the student's need for transition services and documents this discussion. If appropriate, the IEP includes a statement of needed transition services. In cooperation with the sending school district OSA will assist in documentation of a full discussion of the student's transition needs, whether or not such discussion identifies needed transition services for the IEP. Such documentation will be reviewed and updated annually thereafter. Students must be invited to all educational meetings and allowed to participate actively when transition planning is discussed.

Linkages to Post School Options - beginning no later than the first IEP developed when the eligible student is 15 and updated annually.

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Beginning no later than the first IEP developed when the eligible student is 15, the IEP's of students should include a post school vision statement as well as identify the transition services necessary to support the vision. IDEA 2004 defines transition services as a coordinated set of activities for a student with a disability that -

- A. Is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the student with a disability to facilitate the student's movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;
- B. Is based on individual strengths, preferences and interest; and
- C. Includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation. (P.L. 108-446, Sec 603 (34))

Transition Planning Form

OSA staff will work with sending school districts to complete the Transition Planning Form (TPF) 28M/9 for all students with disabilities who are over 15 years of age. This form has been developed for transition planning that occurs either prior to or at the time of the annual development of the IEP. The TPF (28M/9) is a mandated form that is maintained with the IEP. As a mandated form, districts must use this format to document that transition planning has occurred. *Only* those aspects of this planning that translate to elements of the IEP are "mandated" to occur. This inclusive planning process does not require that all identified actions will be the responsibility of the school's special education program, but rather that parents/guardians, the student, general education services, other agencies, community partners, and special education services should all work together to assist the student in making a smooth transition to adult life.

For a detailed description of a TPF template see enclosed materials: Appendix A

Age of Majority - Transfer of parental rights to student at age 18

In Massachusetts, regardless of the severity of their disability, students are considered adults and competent to make their own decisions at age 18 (Age of Majority). Unless there is a court appointed guardian or the student has chosen to share decision making with his or her parent, the school district must seek the consent of the student to continue the special education program. Students at age 18 have the right to make their own educational and medical decisions and must sign all consent forms. Parents and students must be notified about the transfer of parental rights to the student at least 1 year before the student turns 18 years of age.

Inter-Agency Collaboration - Develop supports and services necessary for adult life

The adult service system is complex and understanding it is essential for effective transition planning. When students with disabilities graduate from school or turn 22 years of age, they move from an entitlement to a non-entitlement system. While in school, students receive services and supports mandated by federal and state law. As adults, while they may be eligible for services from adult service agencies, these services are not an entitlement which means they are not guaranteed. Consequently, it is essential that educators, parents/guardians, and students understand the adult service system years before adult services need to be accessed. OSA will work with sending districts to prepare students and their families to navigate the adult service systems in Massachusetts. The sending district is responsible to make Chapter 688 Referrals or general referrals for adult services as appropriate. OSA will assist in providing documentation needed for the referral process to adult service systems.

Student Records

Notification Regarding Student Records

The Massachusetts Department of Education has written regulations about student records which can be located at

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<http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr23.html>. The student record has two parts: the transcript and the temporary record. The transcript includes student name, address, date of birth, and phone number; parent/guardian name, address and phone number; course titles, grades, credits, grade level and year of completion. The temporary record includes other information maintained at the sending school. All grades and records at OSA transfer into the sending district's records; the sending district is responsible for maintaining the permanent record (the transcript) for 60 years and the temporary record for 5 years after graduation or transfer.

Parents/guardians and students have clear rights to inspect the entire body of the student record within two days of request, and copies may be provided for a reasonable fee. Parents/guardians and students may request that a school professional interpret the student record, or they may authorize a third party to review the record with a signed release to do so. The student or parent/guardian may request in writing the addition to, deletion from or amendment of information contained in the record. The student record is maintained in privacy and security. Authorized school personnel have access to the record, but a log is maintained documenting the release of any part of the record to a third party.

Students and parents/guardians are hereby notified of the release of student record and information, without written consent, as provided in the Massachusetts Student Record Regulations:

- A. Directory information such as student name, city/town or residence, academic program, activities, honors, degrees, and future plans.
- B. Subpoenaed information by court order.
- C. Requested information by DSS, DYS, Probation or justice of the court.
- D. Audit information for federal, state, and local education officials.
- E. Information to agencies protecting health and safety.
- F. Student record requests occurring after law enforcement report a student as missing.
- G. Health records to state and local health personnel.
- H. Complete school record including discipline to authorized school personnel when student seeks or intends to transfer.
- I. A student at the age of maturity may request, in writing to the Director, that report cards, progress reports and attendance/discipline records be sent directly to the student. According to law, the parent or guardian of said student maintains the right to review the records of said student upon request.

Program/Class Observation

Assabet Valley Collaborative welcomes visitors and tours of our program as we are proud of the services we provide. However, visits and tours must be scheduled through the Program Director(s) and take into account the programmatic needs of our students and their rights to privacy and confidentiality. Often parents/guardians who may be interested in the program will participate in a tour which will include opportunity to see various elements of the program in action. At other times, parents or parent advocates or school districts may request to observe for a longer duration of time. Assabet Valley Collaborative requires all observers (those not just touring the building, but spending more time in a classroom or activity) to schedule the observation with the Program Director, to sign the Confidentiality Statement, to refrain from taking notes or pictures during the visit and be supervised by program staff at all times. The Program Director reserves the right to limit the observation to a particular duration, or the scope of the observation to a particular area - depending upon the needs of the students attending the program. The Program Director also reserves the right to end the observation if it is determined that the observation/visit is disruptive to the educational services being provided to our students.

School Messenger

Assabet Valley Collaborative will utilize the School Messenger call notification system when appropriate to communicate with families regarding special events, special notifications, snow days/delays and/or school emergency.

Snow Days/Delays/Cancellations/Early Dismissals

Assabet Valley Collaborative posts announcements regarding weather-related dismissals, cancellations or delays through local media - including Channels 4, 5, and 7 and their corresponding websites. In addition, Assabet Valley Collaborative

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utilizes School Messenger = an automated notification system which enables Assabet Valley Collaborative to record important messages about school closings and send them via email and phone.

Guidelines for Health Services in School

Code of Massachusetts Regulations (105 CMR 220.00) specifies minimum requirement for enrollment in school. The school nurse is knowledgeable in the current updates for immunizations and charged with maintaining that all students have required vaccines against: polio, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B and varicella (chicken pox).

The law and regulations provide for exclusion of students from school if immunizations are not up to date, however exemptions are permitted at school entry for medical and religious reasons. This exemption must be in writing. The exception to this exclusion is for homeless children. The federal **McKinney-Vento Homeless assistance Act of 2001** stipulates that homeless children cannot be denied entry to school for non-possession of immunizations. **NOTE:** In the event of a case of vaccine preventable disease emerges, susceptible individuals (including those with medical or religious exemptions) who are not vaccinated with need to be excluded for the appropriate time periods as outlined in *Reportable Diseases, Surveillance and Isolation & Quarantine Requirements* (105 CMR 300.000)

Medications in School

When a student requires short-term or long-term medication during the school day, parents/guardians are required to contact the school nurse and provide (a) physician's order, (b) parental consent and (c) medication (30 days supply). The administration of medications to children at school is managed by a school nurse with provisions for self-administration of selected medications, as determined by the school nurse. Please contact the school nurse regarding any questions or concerns related to medications at school. If your student requires medication at school please note the following:

Medicines must be delivered to the school nurse in a pharmacy or manufacturer labeled container with no more than a thirty (30) day supply. Medicines may **NOT** be sent on school transportation. Parent/Guardian or responsible delegated adult may deliver provided this has been discussed and agreed upon with the school nurse beforehand. The nurse and parent/guardian/delegate must count together and sign that the quantify of specific medication is received at school. Only nursing staff can accept medications at school.

Reference: [105 CMR 210.000: The Administration of Prescription Medications in Public and Private School \(PDF\)](#)

The following are guidelines for determining whether or not to send your child to school. If you have any questions regarding the follow statements, please contact the school nurse:

- Student has a temperature over 100.5
- Student vomits at home during the night or in the morning
- Student has 2 or greater bowel movements with loose or more watery than usual should be observed for 24 hours.
- Student has unusual rash
- Eye drainage persisting after washing with warm water compress

Your student is ready to return to school when:

- Temperature is below 100.5 for 24 hours without medication.
- No vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours and eating a usual diet
- Rashes must be cleared by medical provider
- Persistent eye drainage must be cleared by medical provider

Dress Code

OSA/SOAR Parent/Guardian and Student Handbook

Students will dress in a manner that is neat, clean and consistent with the educational and behavioral philosophy of the OSA Program. At OSA we allow students to have the right to determine individual patterns of dress and grooming as they deem proper, provided that such dress and grooming do not interfere with the health and safety of themselves or others, and do not interfere with the educational process of the school. Reasonable expectations have been established concerning student dress and grooming that shall:

- encourage students to dress in good taste and present a general appearance that is commendable
- prohibit clothing or adornment that disrupts the educational process
- prohibit dress that constitutes a potential safety or health hazard

Examples of current fashion items that are not in good taste, or dress that disrupts the educational process may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Pants secured at the waist, belts buckled, no underwear as outerwear, no underwear exposed.
- See through tops exposing skin, strapless tops are not allowed.
- Short skirts, short shorts or any clothing that is too short is not allowed. (The length of shorts or skirts is determined by placing the arms down by each side and having fingertips fully extended, touching material.) Any dress or skirt slit must meet the same fingertip requirement.
- Shoes shall be worn. Cleated shoes and bedroom slippers are not allowed. Shoes with wheels are not to be worn.
- Bare midriffs and bare sides must not show. Shirts or blouses must be long enough so that skin is not exposed between the top and the pants or skirt.
- Garments and/or jewelry, which display or suggest sexual, vulgar, drug, alcohol or tobacco-related wording/graphics or may tend to provoke violence or disruptions in school, are not allowed.
- Gang paraphernalia, jewelry, tattoos or other insignias, including flags that display, suggest, provoke or may tend to provoke violence or disruptions are not allowed. This includes identifying clothing such as bandanas or one pant leg rolled up, identified gang “uniforms”, etc. Gang paraphernalia (including bandanas) will be taken and not returned.
- Jewelry that contains any type of sharp objects.

CODE OF CONDUCT- SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

School Wide Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

OSA students have typically struggled in traditional settings with traditional discipline strategies. In order to maintain a safe and predictable learning environment, OSA sets has developed systems and practices that provide an environment rooted in function based and data driven interventions. OSA staff will design and implement universal preventative strategies including: Universal Design for Learning, structured routines, a level system, liberal staff ratios, reinforcement, parent/guardian contact, and teaching of alternative behaviors, function based and data driven interventions.

There are many strategies available to schools when determining how to prevent misbehavior and promote and reinforce desired behavior, including, but not limited to: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Collaborative Problem Solving, and Restorative Justice. Research indicates that evidence-based practices such as PBIS enhance the capacity of schools to educate all students, especially those with challenging social behaviors.

PBIS is a school-wide framework that emphasizes proactive approaches to designing, teaching, promoting, and supporting appropriate student behavior in all school settings. By relying upon a continuum of highly individualized strategies, PBIS allows schools to develop a comprehensive, systems-based program that is tailored to a school’s unique needs. PBIS enhances the ability of schools, families, and communities to create effective and efficient environments for learning and growth. A three-tiered system of supports ensures that all students receive the interventions needed at the primary (school-wide), secondary (targeted, small-group), and tertiary (individual) tiers.

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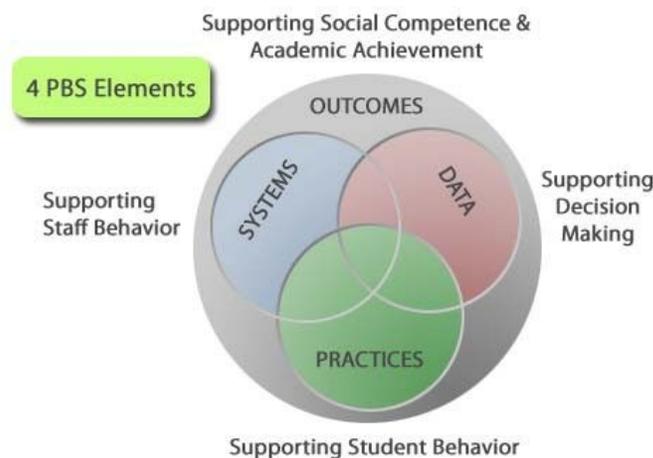
A PBIS school focuses on teaching behavioral expectations directly, just like academic skills. PBIS views inappropriate behavior as a skill deficit just like a problem in Reading or Math. Skill deficits are re-mediated via direct instruction - the teaching of the appropriate skill. PBIS promotes the teaching of pro-social skills so all students can succeed even when confronted with potential conflicts and an ongoing acknowledgement system for students who meet expectations.

OSA implements PBIS will use school-wide expectations in all settings to teach students appropriate behavior, an acknowledgement system to encourage appropriate behavior, predetermined consequences to discourage inappropriate behavior, discipline referral procedures that are implemented consistently, outcome data to monitor progress, and a problem-solving process for making data-based decisions.

School-wide positive behavior intervention and supports (SW-PBIS) is a system of tools and strategies for defining, teaching, acknowledging appropriate behavior, and correcting inappropriate behavior. It is a framework for creating customized school systems that support student outcomes and academic success. SW-PBIS is for the whole school, it is preventative, and it changes the paradigm of focus from negative behaviors and exchanges to positive expectations and interactions.

There are four main elements in SW-PBIS:

- Customized practices to support student behavior, such as defining and teaching appropriate behavior
- Systems of support for educators in the school; such as school-wide behavioral expectations, indicators, and coaching
- Data-based decision making, which is the cornerstone of the behavior problem-solving process
- And, the combination of these to enable school-wide outcomes, which promote social proficiency and academic success

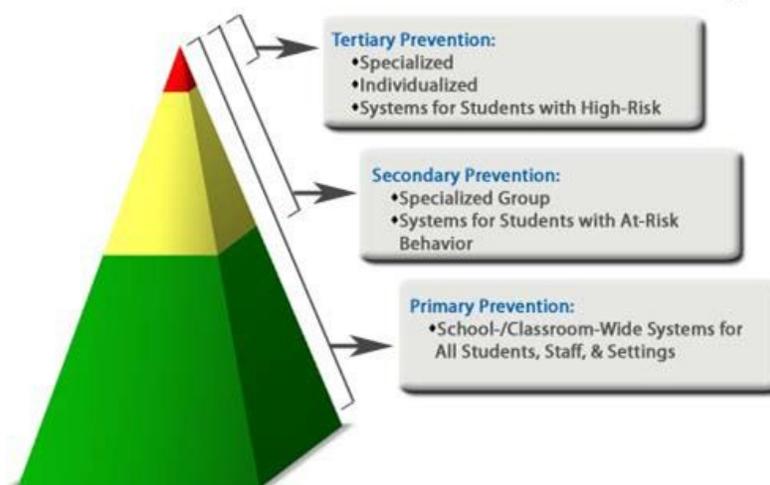


Multi-tier support

School-wide means that educators support appropriate behavior in classroom and non-classroom (bathrooms, assemblies, hallways) areas. This support happens along a continuum from Tier 1 for all students and Tier 2 for a small group of students to Tier 3 for individual students. The goal is to create an environment that sets up ALL students for success.

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Continuum of School-Wide Instructional & Positive Behavior Support



An important aspect of SW-PBIS is the understanding that appropriate behavior and social competence is a skill that requires direct teaching to students just like math and reading. There is no assumption, in SW-PBIS, that students will learn social behavior automatically or pick it up as they go through life. This critical feature in SW-PBIS leads to its effectiveness.

School Wide PBIS Practices at OSA

Our staff has been able to develop a unique system to ensure student success at OSA/SOAR. There are five basic components to our program:

1. The Behavior Matrix: Specific expectations for every student to follow in every setting (For a detailed description see enclosed materials: Appendix I)
2. Lesson Plans: Used to teach students the behavioral expectations for each setting
3. Crowns: An acknowledgement system of positive reinforcement for recognizing students when they follow set expectations
4. Systematic Behavioral Response: A school wide approach to behavior support used to support students who need a little extra help learning and practicing the behavior expectations
5. Office Discipline Referral Forms: Used to document behavioral incidents that are managed outside of the classroom environment. The number of ODRs will be tracked for each child and the school as a whole in our School Wide Information System (SWIS). These data will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of our program and develop interventions and supports based on data.

One of the key features of PBIS is clearly defining rules and expectations for all students in every school setting. OSA/SOAR's expectations are summarized in the three expectations for everyone in the learning community to abide by:

Be Respectful
Be Responsible
Be Safe

It is our goal to make OSA/SOAR expectations as clear and specific as possible. What you will find on the matrix is what you would expect to see happening in every physical setting at OSA/SOAR. Since the system is set up to promote a positive environment, you will find that it is written to advise children on what it looks like to be respectful, responsible, and safe at OSA/SOAR. The expectations tell students what to do, not what not to do. Our staff will continuously help our students understand and learn the behavioral expectations we have in place. We will explicitly teach, model, and practice the behavioral expectations in order to ensure our students are able to apply them in every setting.

OSA/SOAR Parent/Guardian and Student Handbook

Please review the matrix (see Appendix H) with your child. It would be wonderful if you could post the matrix in a visible place in your home, as well. This will serve as a continuous reminder for your children and promote the consistency that is essential to their success.

Expectations are taught through a process involving four steps:

1. Define Behavioral Expectations: A small number of behavioral expectations are positively stated and clearly defined—Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Safe
2. Teach Behavioral Expectations: Expectations are taught to students in their everyday context. These expectations are taught using the same process as academic instruction—teach, model, practice
3. Acknowledge Appropriate Behavior: Once the students have been taught the expectations, they will regularly be rewarded and reinforced for demonstrating them. Students will earn Crowns that they will be able to buy snacks, prizes, passes, and other items with
4. Correct Behavioral Errors: When students violate behavioral expectations, they will be addressed in a consistent manner that is meant to re-teach the appropriate behavior and develop alternative coping strategies

Student Recognition

Crowns

Research indicates that positive reinforcement is one of the best ways to not only change behavior, but to encourage and maintain continuous appropriate behavior. Another component of the PBIS system is the use of consistent, positive reinforcement to celebrate student success in demonstrating OSA/SOAR expectations. Students who demonstrate behaviors outlined on the behavior matrix will receive Crowns from an OSA/SOAR staff member along with specific verbal praise. Students will have an opportunity to redeem their Crowns at the School Store. There may also be weekly opportunities to redeem their Crowns in their classroom. Also, school wide incentives and rewards can be purchased with Crowns.

Verbal Praise

Specific verbal praise has been found to be one of the most effective reinforcers for appropriate, rule-following behavior. At OSA/SOAR students will receive frequent and specific verbal feedback when they demonstrate behavior that is Respectful, Responsible, and Safe. A kind word can go a long way in helping to develop appropriate behavior in children!

Other examples of student recognition at OSA/SOAR include:

- Student of the Month
- Art and Music Show
- Leadership Opportunities
- Honor Roll
- Off campus activities
- Level rewards (see below)

The OSA/SOAR Level System

The OSA/SOAR level system is a weekly system. Students' level and rewards are determined based on the total percentage points per week they earn on their point sheet.

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Level	Weekly Point Sheet Criteria	Consequences (Reinforcement/Restrictions)
Trust	Students earn 90-100% across 3 consecutive weeks and have completed the trust application packet	Reinforcement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Universal programming ★ Student specific incentives available ★ PBIS snacks twice a week ★ Preferred advisory options (gym, art, music) ★ Full Friday choice options plus preferred ★ Leadership opportunities available ★ Monthly in school activity ★ Field trips ★ Preferred school store options ★ Semi-Independent movement around the school ★ Trust level lunch options ★ Individualized trust goal ★ Increased opportunities for electronics use
Platinum	Students earns weekly behavior average of 90%-100%	Reinforcement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Universal programming ★ Student specific incentives available ★ PBIS snacks twice a week ★ Preferred advisory options (gym, art, music) ★ Full Friday choice options plus preferred ★ Leadership opportunities available ★ Monthly in school activity ★ Field trips ★ Preferred school store options ★ Platinum lunch passes available ★ Criteria to increase level: Student earns behavior average of 90%-100% across three consecutive weeks and complete trust application packet
Gold	Student earns weekly behavior average of 80%-90%	Reinforcement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Universal programming ★ Student specific incentives available ★ PBIS snacks twice a week ★ Optional academic support sessions during advisory periods ★ Full Friday choice options ★ Monthly in school activity ★ Criteria to increase level: Student earns behavior average of 90% or more
Green	Student earns weekly behavior average of 70%-80%	Reinforcement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Universal programming ★ Student specific incentives available ★ PBIS snacks 1x a week ★ Academic support sessions available during advisory periods ★ Criteria to increase level: Student earns behavior average of 80% or more Restrictions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students will have a limited Friday choice selection
Blue:	Student earns less than 70% of behavioral average	Reinforcement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Universal programming

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	<p>OR 3 TOs/3 Cell violations or a combination of the two</p> <p>OR Student “earns off” red</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Student specific incentives available ★ Criteria to increase levels: Student will earn a behavioral average above 70% <p>Restrictions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students will be required to attend skills instruction/academic support during some advisory blocks -Friday choice will be focused on skills instruction <p>Staff response: Staff will review behavioral data with student and additional support will be implemented for any student who remains on blue for three consecutive weeks</p>
Red	<p>Students will be dropped to red after a major safety incident. Ex. Fighting, Possession/consumption of contraband, self-injurious behavior, elopement, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Student may be searched upon entering school ★ Student will attend red level lunch ★ Student will attend red level Friday choice focused on skills instruction ★ Student may have 1-1 transitions (student specific) ★ Increased electronics restriction ★ Loss of established incentives (incentives may be provided as part of the BSP/ student specific) <p>Staff Response:</p> <p>Staff will meet with student to discuss academic and behavioral concerns, review data, and discuss individualized function based intervention plan.</p> <p>Requirements to increase level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student completes initial requirements of the behavior support plan

How can I help? PBIS at Home

As the parent/guardian of your child, you are the most important factor in their life. You can help to support PBIS and OSA/SOAR by establishing a positive home environment that is consistent with our school-wide expectations. Frequent and regular contact with school staff will also assist us in ensuring your child’s success and happiness.

1. Clearly define and communicate expectations.

Tell your child exactly what you want them to do. Identify situations in which appropriate behavior is important. Teach with examples and non-examples of appropriate behavior. Model expectations through your own behavior!

2. Give frequent, positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior.

Look for opportunities to praise your child and praise them for the specific behavior that they have demonstrated. Catch them doing something good! Try to praise them five times more than you correct them.

3. Actively supervise your child.

Watch and interact with them while they engage in activities. Communicate your interest in and awareness of their activities.

4. Pre-correct and intervene early.

Pre-corrections involve seeing a possible problem coming and changing it before it happens. Do not yell at a child for a behavioral issue that he/she has not yet committed, instead use the opportunity to re-teach the expected behavior.

Tips for Encouraging Appropriate Behavior

Set the stage for success and reward the effort	Be consistent
Stay calm. Always use a calm voice	Set the example. Actions speak louder than words
Set reasonable limits	Have patience, and most of all, have fun and enjoy your child!

How can parents be involved with PBIS at home?

Compare home rules with PBIS rules at school	Help out with school and home responsibilities
Ask if your child received any Crowns	Create posters with expectations for home (see matrix for examples)
Recognize and reward appropriate behavior	

For a detailed description of PBIS at Home see enclosed materials: Appendix J

Use of Inclusionary and Exclusionary Time Outs

In accordance with 603 CMR 46.00: The definition of time-out includes the practice of **inclusionary** time-out (i.e., when the student is removed from positive reinforcement or full participation in classroom activities while remaining in the classroom) and **exclusionary** time-out (i.e., the separation of students from the rest of the class either through complete visual separation or from actual physical separation).

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 teachers 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 those 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

The use of **exclusionary time-outs** in educational settings will only be used when the student is displaying behaviors which present, or potentially present, an unsafe or overly disruptive situation in the classroom. Staff-directed **exclusionary** time-out are not used as a method of punishment for noncompliance, or for incidents of misbehavior that are no longer occurring. An exclusionary time-out is an opportunity for students leave the environment that is the source of over-stimulation, frustration, anger or anxiety provoking to practice coping skills, replacement behaviors and/or a gross motor break.

During an **exclusionary** time-out: the student is continuously observed by a staff member; staff are present with the student or immediately available to the student at all times; the space used for **exclusionary** time-outs are clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming; **exclusionary** time-outs cease as soon as the student has calmed.

When a student is separated from the learning environment in an **exclusionary** time-out, s/he must be in a safe and calming environment. For any **exclusionary** time-out that may last longer than 30 minutes, programs must seek approval from the Director(s) for the continued use of time-out. The Director(s) may not routinely approve such requests but will consider the individual circumstances, specifically whether the student continues to be agitated to determine whether time-out beyond 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 30 minutes has not helped the student to calm, then other behavioral support strategies will be attempted.

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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. Unless it poses a safety risk, a staff member will be physically present with the student who is in an **exclusionary** timeout setting. If it is not safe for the staff member to be present with the student, the student may be left in the timeout setting with the door closed. However, in order to ensure that the student is receiving appropriate support, a school counselor or other behavioral support professional will 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 are never locked in a room. For students displaying self-injurious behavior, a staff member will be physically present in the same setting with the student.

The data from the time out of the classroom is collected and analyzed to help assist the staff in developing strategies needed to help the students who need to make better choices or to address behavior patterns throughout the school. If a student earns a time-out, documentation on their daily progress monitoring behavioral sheet will be noted. A parent/guardian should expect a phone call and an incident report to be written **only** if the behavior displayed is deemed a major behavioral incident impacting his/her or other's learning environment.

A student's time-out process is based on the student's need to build skills with interventions based on the function of the behavior. Staff members will collaborate to consider the function of the problem behavior when identifying:

- A. *Setting Event Strategies*: The goal of which is to eliminate temporary or unusual outside factors that lead to misbehavior
- B. *Antecedent Strategies*: The goal of which is to remove or prevent triggers for misbehavior
- C. *Teaching Strategies*: The goal of which is to teach alternative behaviors that are more efficient, effective, and relevant than an identified problem behavior
- D. *Consequence Strategies*: The goal of which is to provide reinforcement for appropriate behaviors and prevent reinforcement of problem behaviors

Daily Progress Monitoring of Individualized Check in Check Out Tracking Sheet

Research shows that students who have social/emotional deficits also struggle with organization, staying on task and following directions which are key components to a student's executive functioning skills. Students are given a daily progress monitoring behavioral tracking sheet to collect data on these key executive functioning skills as well a major goal notes on their Individual Education Plan, IEP. This data is used to make evidence based decision on their IEP goals, behavioral progress, specific interventions and/or incentive plans. Students are rated on a three point (0, 1, 2) scale with 2 indicating that they met the requirements of the expectation by demonstrating the particular skill during a specific period of the day, 1 indicating they partially met the expectation during a specific period of the day, and 0 indicating that the student did not demonstrate this skill with this area during a specific period of the day. Additionally, staff will often write notes in the margins of the daily sheet to indicate what specific behaviors were displayed by the student during a specific period of the day.

For a detailed description see Appendix B: Sample Point Sheet

Dialectical Behavioral Therapy in Schools

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is a cognitive behavioral treatment that research has shown to be effective in treating a wide range of social/emotional disorders. There is increasing evidence that DBT skills training is a promising intervention for a wide variety of both clinical and nonclinical populations and across settings.

DBT includes four main areas of behavioral skills.

- Mindfulness: the practice of being fully aware and present in this one moment

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- Distress Tolerance: how to tolerate pain in difficult situations, not change it
- Interpersonal Effectiveness: how to ask for what you want and say no while maintaining self-respect and relationships with others
- Emotion Regulation: how to change emotions that you want to change

OSA/SOAR is committed to teaching students a wide range of healthy coping skills that each individual student can practice and utilize to best increase their ability to access curriculum. DBT in schools has shown to be highly effective to increase time on learning and to develop longstanding capabilities to manage emotional and behavioral dysregulation.

Notice Re: Non-Discrimination and Civil Rights Protections

It is the role of the Assabet Valley Collaborative to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all its students without distinction based on race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, disability, or age. Discrimination, sexual and bias-motivated harassment, and violations of civil rights disrupt the educational process and will not be tolerated. Because of the importance of this issue, the Assabet Valley Collaborative Board of Directors has adopted policies that provide for specific responsibilities for school staff in ensuring a discrimination free learning environment. OSA adheres to all laws and mandates in Access to Equal Educational Opportunity Regulations, 603 CMR 26.00 to reflect the boarded student anti-discrimination provision in G.L.c.76, S5.

Grievance Procedure: Reporting Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment

Introduction

If any Assabet Valley Collaborative student, parent or employee believes, in good faith, that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment or any other form of harassment or discrimination described above, the individual has a right to file a complaint with Assabet Valley Collaborative. This may be done informally or formally, as described below.

Teachers or other staff members who observe or receive reports of incidents of harassment or discrimination involving students shall report such incidents immediately to the student's Program Administrator. Administrators aware of harassment or discrimination involving any employee shall report such incidents to the Civil Rights Coordinator, listed below, or to the Executive Director.

Please note that while these procedures relate to Assabet Valley Collaborative's policy of promoting an organization that is free from discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, as detailed further in this policy, these procedures are not designed nor intended to limit Assabet Valley Collaborative's authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which Assabet Valley Collaborative deems unacceptable.

Grievance Procedures

Organization Contact

Assabet Valley Collaborative's Civil Rights Coordinator is:

Jennifer Medina

Assabet Valley Collaborative

57 Orchard Street; Marlborough, MA 01752

Telephone: 508-481-3611; E-Mail: jmedina@avcollaborative.org

Students, parents or employees who wish to initiate the formal complaint process may also put their complaint in writing to the Program's Administrator. Any Program Administrator receiving such a complaint shall immediately forward the complaint to the Civil Rights Coordinator listed above, who will then begin the formal procedure described below.

Any teacher or other employee who receives a formal complaint of discrimination or harassment shall immediately forward the complaint to the Program Administrator. The Program Administrator will then forward the complaint to the

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Civil Rights coordinator listed above, who will begin the formal procedure described below.

The Civil Rights Coordinator shall handle the investigation and resolution of the complaint, unless the Executive Director chooses to investigate the complaint or designates another person to investigate it on his/her behalf. Any complaint about an employee who holds a supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that supervisor's authority. Any complaint about the Executive Director should be submitted to the Chairperson of the Assabet Valley Collaborative's Board of Directors, who should consult with legal counsel concerning the handling and investigation of the complaint.

Anti- Hazing Policy

Hazing is prohibited at Assabet Valley Collaborative and is subject to discipline including in-school consequences up to out-of-school suspension. **Hazing** refers to any activity expected of someone joining a group (or to maintain full status in a group) that humiliates, degrades or risks emotional and/or physical harm, regardless of the person's willingness to participate. According to [Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Sections 17-19](#) , Assabet Valley Collaborative is required to annually provide copies of [Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Sections 17-19](#) to each person who enrolls as a full-time student. A copy of MGL C 269, S 17-19 is enclosed at the end of the Handbook.

Bullying Prevention

Assabet Valley Collaborative is committed to providing a safe, positive, and productive environment where students can achieve their educational goals. Bullying (including cyber-bullying) will not be tolerated. Allegations of bullying (including cyber-bullying and retaliation) will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Assabet Valley Collaborative complies with all state and federal regulations and legislation related to bullying - including reporting and investigation requirements.

Assabet Valley Collaborative has developed a Bullying and Intervention Plan, While any student could be the subject to bullying and harassment, the collaborative understands that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying or harassment on the basis of actual or perceived differentiating characteristics such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics.

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by not limited to, electronic email, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include I) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes identity of another person. II) the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definitions of bully.

Definitions

Aggressor: A student or a member of the staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

Bullying: The repeated use by one or more students or a member of the staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- A. Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the targets property;
- B. Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;

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- C. Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- D. Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- E. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyber-bullying: by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definitions of bullying above. Is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by not limited to, electronic email, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include I) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes identity of another person. II) the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed

Hostile Environment: A situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

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

Staff: Includes all Assabet Valley Collaborative staff employed to support or serve students; includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurse, and support staff.

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

Discrimination includes conduct that excludes a person from participation in, denies an individual the benefits of, or otherwise subjects an individual to different treatment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, disability, or age. Harassing conduct involving these bases can be a form of discrimination. (In cases involving Discrimination, see Assabet Valley Collaborative Board Policy AC.)

Harassment is defined as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on: race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, disability, or age. Harassment is prohibited by Assabet Valley Collaborative, and violates the law. (In cases involving Harassment, see Assabet Valley Collaborative Board Policy AC.)

Statement of Prohibition

Bullying (including cyber-bullying), discrimination, harassment, hazing, and intimidation are prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds;
- At school bus stops;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased, or used by the school district; or
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by Assabet Valley Collaborative.
- Repeated negative communication through the use of personal electronic devices that impact the learning environment may necessitate intervention by AVC staff and/or administration.

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by Assabet Valley Collaborative if the act or acts in question:

- Create(s) a hostile environment at school for the target;
- Infringe(s) on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- Materially and substantially disrupt(s) the educational process or the orderly operation

of school.

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

Assabet Valley Collaborative staff will implement the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan which includes reporting and investigation procedures when incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation are reported. In order to ensure that our students are safe at school and to ensure that students are making progress towards their goals, it is important that our students and their parents/guardians assist us in reporting and investigating incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation.

Reporting of Bullying

- A student or parent should report incidents of bullying behavior, even if they do not know if the behavior is repeated.
- Reports of bullying should be made via Assabet Valley Collaborative's [Bullying Report Form](#), which is distributed with the student handbook and available on the Assabet Valley Collaborative website.
- Staff must immediately report any instance of bullying behavior that he/she has become aware of or has witnessed to the Program Administrator or his/her designee.
- Reports may be made verbally in the interest of timeliness but must be followed up the same day with a written report on the Assabet Valley Collaborative [Bullying Report Form](#).
- Students who believe that they are the targets of bullying, observe bullying behavior, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that bullying is taking place, are expected to report incidents either verbally or using the Assabet Valley Collaborative [Bullying Report Form](#) to a member of the AVC staff. If a verbal report is made, staff will assist the student in completing the report form.
- Parents or guardians are encouraged to report bullying behavior that they witness or their child experiences to the appropriate Program Administrator. If a parent makes a verbal report to AVC employees, staff must report to the Program Administrator using the AVC Bullying Report Form.
- Assabet Valley Collaborative will accept anonymous reporting of bullying behavior.
- No formal disciplinary action will be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
- Any student who knowingly makes a false report of bullying will be subject to disciplinary action.

Assabet Valley Collaborative administration will investigate reports of bullying and will consider whether or not the incident of bullying constitutes criminal behavior using the response flow chart - in which case aggressors may face criminal charges and consequences through law enforcement and judicial processes.

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

At least once every four years beginning with 2015-16 school year, AVC will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary-developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our schools. Additionally, the school or district will annually report bullying incident data to the Department. Surveys will also be used with faculty, staff, and parents/guardians to assist in determining school climate needs.

For a detailed description of AVC's Bullying Policy, Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, and Reporting process, see enclosed materials: Appendix C & D.

Chapter 222: An Act Relative to Student Access to Educational Services and Exclusion from School

Recent changes in laws from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE 603 CMR 53.00 Student Discipline) require all public schools to modify certain policies regarding discipline and due process meant to “insure safe and supportive environments for all students while ensuring fair and effective disciplinary practices”.

Although many of the protections embedded in the new law (known to many as “222”) are addressed within current OSA policies, there are new definitions and due process enhancements listed below.

Policy on Suspensions and Expulsions

Suspensions at OSA are designed to reinforce the seriousness of an infraction and maintain a safe school environment, both emotionally and physically.

The OSA team works in conjunction with the liaison from the student’s sending district to ensure that all of the student’s rights to due process and to special education services are enforced. These include due process rights regarding the hearing related to an infraction, special education entitlements as set forth in the IDEA regarding exclusions constituting a disciplinary change in placement and any applicable appeal rights under state and/or federal laws and regulations. A suspension is a change of placement when: 1) it exceeds 10 consecutive school days or 2) it is one of a series of suspensions that constitute a pattern under 34 CFR 300.536.

NOTE: Sending a student home “early” or an in-school suspension of a student who is not receiving instruction from either a licensed teacher or a paraprofessional who is being supervised by a licensed teacher is considered a suspension if the student’s IEP does not allow for the modification of learning time requirements of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education.

In addition, OSA conforms to M.G.L. c.71, §§ 37H, 37H1/2 and 37H3/4 regarding the authority of the principal/director related to students in possession of weapons, controlled substances, assaults, felony charges and other disciplinary violations.

Operational Defined Terms

Director: The primary administrator(s) of the school or the Director’s designee for disciplinary purposes.

Written Notice: Written correspondence sent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, and/or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Program Director and the parent.

Disciplinary offense: means any alleged or determined disciplinary infraction by a student that is determined by director that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½. A disciplinary offense, as defined, is subject to the provisions of G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾ and these regulations. **Except for:** a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony

Disciplinary offense under G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½: means one or more of the following alleged or determined disciplinary infractions: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; and d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school

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would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½.

In-School Suspension: the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. * *Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating cumulative days of suspension.* .

Suspension: the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities ranging between 1-9 school days. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Long-Term Suspension: the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Expulsion: means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently

Disciplinary Due Process

In-School Suspension under Section 37H ¾

- (1) The director(s) may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.
- (2) The director(s) may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the director(s) follows the process set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(3) through 603 CMR 53.10(5) and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as set forth in 603 CMR 53.13(1).
- (3) The director(s) shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the director(s) determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.
- (4) On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the director(s) shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The director(s) shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the in-school suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.
- (5) The director(s) shall follow up orally notification with a written notice sent to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the director(s) for the purpose set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(4), if such meeting has not already occurred. The director(s) shall deliver such notice on the day of the in-school suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail and/or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, and/or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

Out-of-School Suspension

In the case of disciplinary offenses **not** involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension. Written notice of the date and time for the hearing will be provided in English and in the primary language of the Student's home and will identify the disciplinary offense with which the student has been charged, the basis for the charge, the potential length of the student's suspension, and shall inform the parent and student of the right to interpreter services if necessary to participate in the hearing. Where a student may be subject to a Long-Term Suspension, the Director will also notify the student and parent of the student's right to legal representation (at private expense), the right to present and examine witnesses, the right to review the student record and documents that may be relied upon by the Director, and the right to request that the hearing be audiotaped.

For disciplinary offenses involving a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student will be given oral notice of the violation with which the student is charged and an opportunity to respond thereto prior to the Director's imposition of a short-term/interim suspension of ten (10) consecutive school days or less pending formal disciplinary proceedings. Upon imposition of a short term or interim suspension or an interim suspension of ten (10) consecutive days or less pending further disciplinary proceedings, the student and parents will be provided with written notice of the suspension and the date and time of any formal disciplinary proceedings to consider the student's long-term suspension or recommendation for termination.

Short-Term Suspension

In the case of disciplinary offenses **not** involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction; means any alleged or determined disciplinary infraction by a student that is determined by director(s) that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½. The removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities ranging between 1-9 school days and removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

(1) Except as provided in 603 CMR 53.07 and 603 CMR 53.10, a director(s) may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing. In addition, if the student is in 3rd grade or younger (not applicable at OSA), the director will send written documentation to the Executive Director explaining the reasons for an out-of-school suspension before it takes effect.

- a. OSA/SOAR will have standing opening for Disciplinary Hearings every day at 8am and 1pm
- b. Disciplinary Hearings may be conducted in person or over the phone

(2) The director(s) shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language:

- (a) the disciplinary offense
- (b) the basis for the charge
- (c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension
- (d) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing

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- (e) the date, time, and location of the hearing
- (f) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate
- (g) if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the director(s):
 1. the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08 (3)(b); and
 2. the right to appeal the Director's decision to the executive director

(3) The director(s) shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The director(s) is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the director(s) has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

(4) The director(s) shall deliver such notice on the day of the in-school suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail and/or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, and/or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

Director's Hearing: At the Director's hearing, the student and parents/guardians (if participating) may dispute the charge(s) against the student and present information, including mitigating facts, for the Director's consideration in determining consequences for the student. ***Notice of Suspension Hearing and Post-Hearing Notification will be documented and provided to parents/guardians as well as Educational Collaterals.***

Emergency Removal (Suspension prior to hearing):

The Program Director may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal will not exceed two school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the Director will::

- (a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the need for emergency removal.
- (b) Provide written notice to the student and parent/guardian.
- (c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Director and the parent/guardian an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Director, student, and parent.
- (d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(2)(c) and (d) or (3)(c) and (d), as applicable.

The Director will not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

Short-Term Suspension Re-entry meeting: A short-term suspension is any length of time from one (1) day up to ten (10) days. Upon the student's return to school the Director(s), the student's case manager and the student will meet prior to the student attending homeroom. A parent/guardian is invited to the re-entry meeting but depending on the severity of the student's behavior a parent/guardian will be asked to attend the re-entry meeting. The Director(s), case manager and the parent/guardians will discuss this at the *Suspension Hearing*.

The purpose of the re-entry meeting is to discuss and evaluate the student's current presentation. The events that led to the suspension will be discussed as well as replacement behaviors that would support the student during time of stress. Depending on the severity, duration and/or frequency of the student's behavior a *Behavior Management Plan*, *Safety Contract* and/or *Positive Behavioral Intervention Plan* may be discussed and implemented.

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Long-Term Suspension/Expulsion: In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student will have the following rights:

- a. the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
- b. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
- c. the right to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Director may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not
- d. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident;
- e. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- f. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Program Director, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request.

Following the Director's hearing, a student placed on a long-term suspension may appeal the Director's decision to the Executive Director.

AVC Procedures for Executive Director's Hearing

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Director has the right to appeal the Director's decision to the Executive Director.

The student or parent/guardian shall file a notice of appeal with the Executive Director within the time period set forth 603 CMR 53.08 (3) (d) 5.a. The student shall have five (5) calendar days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the Executive Director, but shall be granted an extension of seven (7) calendar days upon request. If a student's or guardian's appeal is not timely, the Executive Director may deny the appeal.

The Executive Director will hold the hearing within three school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven additional calendar days, in which case the superintendent shall grant the extension.

The Executive Director will make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing and to send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Executive Director will conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be.

The Executive Director shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Executive Director will inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

The student will have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension under 603 CMR 53.08(3)(b).

The Executive Director will issue a written decision within five calendar days of the hearing. If the Executive Director determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Executive Director may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Program Director, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Program Director's decision.

The decision of the Executive Director will be the final decision of the Collaborative with regard to the suspension.

For a detailed description see Appendix E & F: Suspension Flow Chart & Suspension Hearing Template

School-Wide Education Service Plan: Based on the evidence presented at the hearing, the Director(s) will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and the remedy or consequences to be imposed. The Director(s) shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense and, in cases not involving possession of a controlled

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substance, a weapon, an assault on staff or felony charges, shall avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. If the Director decides to suspend or expel the student and after all procedural safeguards are met the Director will also notify the student and parent of the student's opportunity to make academic progress during the period of removal from school in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, §21.

Students excluded from school for disciplinary reasons will have a re-entry meeting with the director(s) and their designee case manager to discuss proactive ways to reengage in their educational environment. When Students are excluded from school for disciplinary reasons their parents or guardians may request re-entry conference prior to a student returning to school. The purpose of the conference is to develop a plan, including a revised behavior plan if appropriate, to ensure that the student has a successful re-entry to the program. After three (3) non-consecutive days of suspension within one school year, OSA staff may convene a TEAM meeting with parents, school staff, and the student's district liaison to discuss the appropriateness of the current out of district placement.

Academic Progress: Any student who is serving an in- school or out-of-school suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, in accordance with the M.G.L. c.76, §21.

TERMINATION PROCESS

Termination of Enrollment: OSA reserves the right to terminate a student's enrollment in any OSA program in accordance with the procedures set forth in 603 CMR18.00 and 603 CMR 28.09.

1. In accordance with CMR 18.05 (7):

- (a) Upon admission of a student pursuant to 603 CMR 28.00, OSA will keep the district liaison informed of student progress and shall notify that person immediately if termination or discharge of the student is being discussed.
- (b) OSA, at the time of admission, makes a commitment to the sending school district to try every available means to maintain the student's placement until the sending district has had sufficient time to identify an alternative placement.
- (c) Planned Terminations:
 - Except in emergency cases, OSA will notify the school district of the need for an IEP review meeting.
 - The school district shall arrange such meeting and provide to all parties including the parent and if appropriate, the student, notice of this meeting (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.
 - OSA shall thoroughly explain termination procedures to the student, the parents, the Administrator of Special Education of the sending district and any representatives from state agencies if applicable.
 - The written termination plan shall be implemented in no less than (30) days unless all parties agree to an earlier termination date.

(d) In case of an emergency termination, which shall be defined as circumstances in which the student presents a clear and present threat to the health and safety of him/herself or others, the school shall follow the procedures required under 603 CMR 28.09(12).

2. Procedures for Emergency Termination: CMR 29.09(12)(b)

- OSA shall not terminate the enrollment of any student, even in emergency circumstances, until the sending public school district is informed and assumes responsibility for the student.
- At the request of the sending school district, OSA 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 from OSA.

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- With the mutual agreement of OSA and the sending school district, termination of enrollment may be delayed for longer than two calendar weeks.

Runaway Student(s) Guidelines

Definitions

OSA's definition of a runaway student is one who has left school grounds without supervision or permission from OSA staff or a parent/guardian. School grounds are defined as the assigned transportation vehicle, the physical campus at 57 Orchard Street, and anywhere that school functions occur (i.e. field trips, physical education activities, etc.).

If a student leaves school grounds and his/her location is unknown by OSA staff or a parent/guardian the student will automatically be considered runaway. If a student leaves school grounds without permission, but his/her location is known because OSA personnel are shadowing the student or still have him/her in eyesight, the student is considered to be off grounds without permission and at risk for running away.

Responses

- 1) OSA provides training to personnel to ensure adequate supervision of students so that students are very unlikely to be able to leave the building without staff being aware of the situation and able to respond immediately and appropriately.
- 2) If a student leaves the building without permission, personnel who observe the student exit the building will communicate with the rest of personnel using the walkie-talkie. At least two personnel (trained in crisis prevention and de-escalation) will respond to the scene and will have walkie-talkies and cell phones. They will observe the student's whereabouts, actions, and mental status to determine the next response.
 - a. If a student is over the age of 16 (and not in DCF custody), does not appear to be in distress, in danger, or a threat to others, staff will note the location of the student, which direction the student headed (on foot, in car, or other) and move forward with documentation and notification guidelines noted below. The personnel observing the student will determine if they will continue to observe the student or if they will discontinue their observation.
 - b. If the student is under the age of 16 (or in DCF custody) and does **not** appear to be in danger or a threat to others, the observing staff may determine to follow the student and to communicate to staff in the building about their whereabouts and status of student (via cell phone). Crisis prevention-trained personnel will determine if engaging the student in de-escalation activities might assist in persuading the student to return to the school building. If the student continues to walk beyond a .25 mile area away from the school and is continuing to get further away, personnel will contact the Marlborough Police (and follow procedure noted below). If police are notified the personnel observing the student will determine if they will continue to attempt de-escalation techniques, but will continue to keep the student in eyesight until police arrive on the scene.
 - c. Police will be called immediately if the student is running, threatening, throwing rocks or any behavior deemed to pose risks to the student or others. Police will also be contacted if a student (under the age of 16 or in DCF custody) does not respond to staff intervention or has reached a distance of .25 miles or greater away from the school building. As police are notified, personnel will continue to keep the student in eyesight until police arrive on the scene. Police will be provided with the following information:
 - i. Name
 - ii. Age/DOB
 - iii. DCF, Probation or other state involvement
 - iv. Guardian/home of residence
 - v. Appearance (hair color, approximate weight height, clothing)
 - vi. Location and ideas about where the student might be going
 - d. In all of the above, personnel observing the student will stay in contact with OSA personnel in the building to keep an update on location and status.

Upon Return- Discipline/Responses

If a student who has left without permission returns with staff or returns on his/her own and attempts to re-enter the building, an administrator or designee will assess the student's safety to determine if the student may re-enter building and where the student will be directed upon re-entering the building.

Students who leave school during hours of operation will not be eligible to return immediately to scheduled activities, but will instead be directed to a therapeutic intervention room to work with personnel who will continue to monitor the student's status. Personnel working with the student will process the events if indicated, or will support the student in engaging in academic work if indicated.

If out-of-school suspension is considered as a consequence for the student's behavior, an administrator or designee will follow Chapter 222 and suspension protocol. (See Chapter 222/Suspension Flow Chart).

If in-school suspension is considered as a consequence for the student's behavior, an administrator or designee will notify the student's parent/guardian and sending school district per OSA behavior management protocol.

Ultimately, it is the goal of OSA staff to motivate students to stay in school and to encourage students who have made irresponsible or unproductive choices in one day to have an opportunity to rejoin the school community and return to accessing their education as soon as possible. Out-of-school suspensions are one option as a consequence for runaway behavior, but not the only option and not the best option for some students.

OSA reserves the right to individualized behavior plans in conjunction with the student's parent/guardian and TEAM based upon the frequency, severity or intensity of safety issues presented by a student's behavior.

Physical Restraint and Behavior Support Policy

Physical restraint is defined as direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort, after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution. Physical restraint shall only be used when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the Assabet Valley Collaborative school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. Furthermore, any such physical restraint shall be administered so as to prevent or minimize any harm to the student.

This policy shall be reviewed annually and provided to Assabet Valley Collaborative staff and made available to the parents of enrolled students. Nothing in this policy precludes any teacher, employee, or agent of the Assabet Valley Collaborative from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons, or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

See Appendix K: Physical Restraint and Behavior Support Policy

Notification Procedures & Documentation

A runaway student is considered an emergency and will be handled as such according to the parent/student handbook. In the event that a student does not return to school and is considered a runaway, the following notification procedures will be implemented:

1. An administrator or designee will contact the parent/guardian of the student, which will include calling home, mobile, and work phone numbers.
2. If the student is considered to be a danger to himself/herself or others, is under the age of 16, or is in foster care/state custody, the Marlborough Police Department will also be called.
3. An administrator or designee will contact the sending school special education department of the student, the

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transportation provider, and any social service or agency involved with the student (i.e. DSS, DMH, DYS, probation, etc.).

4. Within 24 hours, an administrator or designee will contact the Department of Education's Program Quality Assurance Services Liaison to inform of the runaway incident.
5. An administrator or designee will complete an OSA incident report, which will become part of the student's temporary record and will be distributed to the sending school district.
6. An administrator or designee will schedule a meeting with the student and his/her guardian following the incident to review the incident and the subsequent consequences. This meeting may include representatives from the student's school district and/or other agencies involved with the student depending upon the nature and severity of the runaway incident and the subsequent consequences.
7. An administrator or designee will complete a Department of Education Notification Form 2, which will include an attachment of the incident report. The Form 2 and the incident report will be faxed to the Department of Education's Program Quality Assurance Services Liaison. An administrator or his/her designee will also follow up by phone or email with the PQA liaison to update the Department regarding the status of the student's runaway (i.e. date/time of return, outcome, etc.)

For a detailed description see Appendix G & H: OSA Incident Report Template

Searches and Seizure

A student search (person, gym bag, etc.) by the school Director or designee will be conducted when there is reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student is in possession of any illegal or potentially dangerous item. Equipment assigned to students, such as desks and lockers when available, belong to the school, and the school reserves the right to inspect such equipment periodically. The search of student personal property will comply with the following procedures:

1. There shall be reasonable cause for school authorities to believe that a search will disclose possession of items constituting a rule violation.
2. When such reasonable cause exists, a search may be conducted under the explicit authorization of the Director or designee.
3. Search of items belonging to a student shall be made in the presence of a witness, and when possible, in the presence of the student, and the reason for the search must be disclosed to the student at that time or as soon as possible.
4. Items that might constitute evidence of a crime must be turned over to the police by school authorities.

At times, individualized student behavior plans will require students to check-in and leave personal items (backpacks, book bags, pocketbooks) with OSA Administration for the school day (s). Students' personal items will be safely secured in Administration offices. Families will be notified if their student will be required to leave personal items with school administration.

Items constituting a rule violation are classified as contraband and will be confiscated. A partial list of contraband follows:

- Items associated with tobacco usage such as matches and lighters; these will not be returned to students.
- Drug paraphernalia; will not be returned to students.
- Controlled Substances; these will not be returned to students but will be returned to parent/guardian.

Weapons Free School

OSA is a weapons free school. No person, other than a law enforcement officer and regardless of any license obtained by such person under the provisions of MGL Chapter 140, shall enter or remain in, on or upon the property of a school while carrying or in possession of a firearm, as defined in this article; an air, BB or pellet gun or pistol; chemical mace or an oleoresin capsicum product; a bow or crossbow; a billy club, nightstick or police baton; a starter's pistol; a replica firearm, handgun or shotgun, regardless of the actual use or purpose for which it was designed; any knife or cutting instrument,

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other than a knife or cutting instrument actually being used in the course of food preparation or service, or a knife or cutting instrument used in the normal conduct of a recognized trade by a person employed or being trained in such trade; or any weapon enumerated in paragraph (b) of Section 10 of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 269 (<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartIV/TitleI/Chapter269/Section10>), without the written authorization of the board, officer or person in charge of school. (§ 619-4 Prohibited acts on school property.) In the event an item listed above is found it will not be returned to the students; willful violation of the guidelines noted above will result in notifying the Marlborough Police Department.

Prohibition of Smoking and the Use of Tobacco

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71: Section 2A, states it is “unlawful for any student, enrolled in either primary or secondary public schools in the commonwealth, to use tobacco products of any type on school grounds during normal school hours.” In accordance with this law, OSA does not allow tobacco/smoking products (including electronic cigarettes, vape pens, JUUL device, e-liquid cartridge(i.e. JUUL pods)), lighters, or matches in school. Students found in possession of these items or reasonably suspected to be in possession of any of these items will be required to turn them over to staff immediately and will receive consequences for this infraction. When lighters, matches, and/or tobacco products (including electronic cigarettes, vape pens, JUUL device, e-liquid cartridge (i.e. JUUL pods) are confiscated, parents will be notified. Items confiscated will be held for parents to pick up if they desire. We will not return these items to students. The items will be disposed of after a week if parents/guardians do not make arrangements to collect these items.

Please understand that when staff check a bathroom immediately before a student enters it and immediately after that student leaves it, and determine that the bathroom smells of recent smoke, vapor, or see signs of ashes that were not there before the student entered, that student WILL be given consequences for smoking/possession of contraband. Any student entering a bathroom that smells of smoke, vapor or has visible ash residue should alert staff before using the bathroom to avoid any suspicion or confusion.

Emergency & Evacuation Procedures

Assabet Valley Collaborative's safety committee has developed and maintains updated emergency and evacuation plans - including emergency responses for a variety of emergencies. Emergency phone numbers are posted in each room along with directions to the nearest first aid kit. All staff receive training annually in emergency protocols.

Copies of the Emergency Plan Binder are located throughout the building - including the reception area, the nurse's office, the Program Director's office, the Education and Clinical Coordinators' offices, and with Central Office on the second floor.

In the case of a student emergency, the following protocol will be followed:

- immediate needs of the student will be tended to and every effort will be made to contact the parent/guardian immediately,
- an incident report will be filled out, distributed to guardians and other appropriate agencies, and placed in the student record.

In the event of a school emergency, the following procedure will be followed:

- Immediate needs of the students will be met to the best ability of staff
- every effort will be made to contact parents/guardians immediately,
- A letter describing the nature of the school emergency and steps taken by the school to mitigate the incident and care for the students will be sent to parents/guardians, school districts within 24 hours.

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Critical Incident Report:

Incident Reports will be written to document critical incidents that affect a student's educational, social and emotional growth. Parent/Guardians and/or Educational Surrogates will be notified the day of incident. All members of the student's IEP TEAM will be notified of the incident via phone and or email within 48 hours of the incident. In addition a formal incident will be provided via email and/or U.S. postal service. Incident reports will be written for the following critical incidents, as well as any behavior and event deemed critical by OSA staff:

- Injury to Student or Staff
- Self-Injury
- Property Destruction
- Disclosure
- Disruption to a student academic progress
- Unsafe/Dangerous Behavior
- Medical Treatment or Emergency (PES)
- Complaint Against Staff Outside
- Disruption to school assembly

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requires that a *FORM 2 Incident Report* be completed and submitted to the DESE Program Quality Assurance Services for the following critical incidents:

- The death of any student
- The filing of a 51-A report with DCF OR a complaint filed with the Disabled Persons Protection Commission, against the school or a school staff member, for abuse or neglect of any student
- Any action taken by a federal, state, or local agency that might jeopardize the school's approval with ESE
- Any legal proceeding brought against the school or its employee(s) arising out of circumstances related to the care or education of any of its students regardless of state of residency
- The hospitalization of a Massachusetts student (including outpatient emergency room visits) due to physical injury at school or previously unidentified illness, accident or disorder which occurs while the student is in the program
- Massachusetts student injury resulting from a motor vehicle accident during transport by school staff (including contracted staff) which requires medical attention
- Massachusetts student serious injury requiring emergency medical intervention resulting from a restraint
- Massachusetts student run away
- Emergency termination of a Massachusetts student under circumstances in which the student presents a clear and present threat to the health and safety of him/herself or others pursuant to 18.05(7)(d)
- Any other incident of a serious nature that occurs to a Massachusetts student

For a detailed description see Appendix G: FORM 2 Incident Report and OSA Incident report

APPENDIX

Appendix A: Transition Planning Form

Appendix B: Sample Point Sheet

Appendix C & D: Response to Bullying Flowchart & Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

Appendix E & F: Suspension Flow Chart and Suspension Hearing Template

Appendix G & H: DESE Form 2 and OSA Incident Report Template

Appendix I: OSA/SOAR PBIS Behavior Matrix

Appendix J: PBIS at Home

Appendix K: Physical Restraint and Behavior Support Policy

Appendix L: Anti-Hazing Statute