

TO: School Committee

FROM: Tim Piwowar, Superintendent

DATE: June 5, 2024

RE: Revised Policies from Policy Manual Review

At the May School Committee meeting, a first reading was held for the policies below. Based upon the feedback from the Committee at that meeting, revisions were made to proposed policy EE/EE-R: Transportation to include a formal appeal process for transportation eligibility. The revisions to that policy from the last presentation are in red below; no other policies have been modified from the May meeting.

Should the Committee be willing to waive the third reading of the proposed policies, I would recommend that the Committee vote to implement these policies at the meeting on June 13.

Policy EEAG - Student Transportation in Private Vehicles

The proposed policy revision below reflects a mixture of the previous Westwood policy and the model MASC policy, ensuring that our legal obligations are met and that the policy is implementable.

EEAG - STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

School buses will be used for the transportation of students participating in co-curricular or extracurricular activities. However, when buses are not available, private vehicles may be permitted to transport students to or from school activities that fall within the academic day or extend the school day provided all of the following conditions are met:

- Approval of the Superintendent of Schools or designee
- Written parent or guardian consent, unless the student is over 18 years
- Completed driver C.O.R.I. check
- Evidence of current vehicle registration
- Current driver's license
- Evidence of personal liability coverage upon request

Policy EEBA - Fuel Efficient Vehicle Program

The previous School Committee policy does not have an equivalent in the model MASC model policy language, as its content reflects items that should be operational guidelines, and not policy. As such, it is recommended that this policy be removed.

Policy EE/EE-R - Transportation

The language in the revised policy below reflects a mixture of both the previous existing transportation policy and the model MASC policy language, and reflects current practice in the district. It is recommended that this revised policy language be adopted.

EE/EE-R - TRANSPORTATION POLICY

PURPOSE

The major purpose of school transportation is to get pupils who live beyond the established walking distance from home to school and back in an efficient, safe, and economical manner. Other purposes include the provision of transportation for academic field trips in direct support of the curriculum, transportation for support of the co-curricular program (athletics, music, drama, and the like), and "late bus" transportation for those pupils who stay for school-related activities past the normal dismissal time.

MANAGEMENT

The Superintendent, working with other appropriate administrators and any bus contractor, will be responsible for scheduling all bus transportation, including the determination of routes, bus stops, rules and regulations, and all other matters relative to the transportation program.

ELIGIBILITY

The following limits shall apply to all students.

Grade K-12 Students living, by the most direct route, a distance greater than one and a half miles will be eligible for transportation.

It is the responsibility of district administration to develop a parcel map to determine which parcels are eligible for transportation in compliance with this policy. Exceptions to this eligibility criteria defined by the parcel map will only be considered for students who must travel in a hazardous area to and from school, and are made at the discretion of the Superintendent or their designee. **Eligibility/ineligibility zones as indicated in the parcel map will be reviewed and may be subject to change on an annual basis due to changing conditions, but will be published by July 15 of any given year.**

BUS STOPS

1. Children may be required to walk up to one mile to a scheduled bus stop.
2. Stops will be chosen with concern for numbers and safety of children involved, and also with concern for property of abutters.
3. Bus drivers must pick up only at scheduled stops; they shall not be required to admit students who are not assigned to that particular bus.

APPEALS

If a parent or guardian wishes to challenge transportation eligibility, they must first contact the district administrator in charge. This initial request for eligibility may either be upheld or denied. Should the initial request for eligibility be denied, the parent or guardian may file a formal appeal. All formal appeals will be heard by a quorum of the Transportation Appeal Board.

The Transportation Appeal Board is comprised of three voting members:

- Assistant Superintendent or designee
- Westwood Police Department designee
- A non-employee community member

The non-employee community member will be appointed by the Chair of the Westwood School Committee. Up to two additional non-employee community members may be designated as alternates for this role.

The Transportation Appeal Board is required to be held to a standard of confidentiality.

Appeals must be submitted in writing using the District Transportation Eligibility Appeal Form, found on the district's website. Appeals can only be submitted between the dates of July 15 and September 15, with the exception that the parent/guardian of a newly registered student has thirty (30) days from their child's first day of school to submit an appeal.

The appeal must be submitted with specific criteria for the appeal. The criteria must include at least one of the following:

- Miscalculation of distance
- Documentation of a safety hazard, as submitted by the complainant
- Roadways formally identified as areas of concern by the Westwood Police

Any decisions made by the Transportation Appeal Board establish a precedent for that residence/school combination. Previously denied appeals will not be reconsidered by the Transportation Appeal Board barring significant changes to the public ways (streets or public footpaths) between the residence and school.

The Transportation Appeal Board will issue a decision within fifteen (15) business days of an appeal hearing. In exceptional circumstances, the Board is granted an additional ten (10) business days if roadway research is needed. Should the appeal for transportation eligibility be granted, the implementation of transportation eligibility within the current school year is contingent upon available capacity of existing bus routes and/or funding in the school department operating budget.

The appeal procedures set forth herein do not infringe upon the avenues of recourse otherwise available to students or parents/guardians under applicable law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 71:7A, B and C; 71:37D; 71:48A; 71:68; 71:71A; 71B:4; 71B:5; 71B:8; 74:8A; 76:1; 76:12Bi; 76:14

Policy GCRD - Private Tutoring for Pay

It is recommended to adopt the MASC model policy language, as follows, in order to best ensure compliance with state ethics laws:

GCRD - TUTORING FOR PAY

Definition: "Tutoring" means giving private instruction or help to an individual or group for which the teacher receives remuneration other than through the School Committee.

A teacher cannot recommend that one of their own students get tutoring, and then be paid to tutor that same student in a second job.

A teacher may not tutor students who are currently in their class. Even if the teacher does not recommend that the current student receive private tutoring, the teacher should not tutor current students.

Teachers and other public employees may not approach a student, or the student's parents/guardians, seeking private tutoring work. A teacher may provide tutoring when the relationship is initiated by the parents/guardians or a student, but, if the student is, or in the future may be, under the teacher's authority, the teacher will need to provide a written disclosure.

A teacher cannot use school resources such as classrooms or materials in connection with a private tutoring business. A public school employee cannot use a school or district website to advertise private tutoring services. Schools cannot send home brochures for a particular tutoring service with the children.

Tutoring is not to be recommended for a student unless the appropriate teacher of the student involved is consulted and agrees that it will be of real help. If tutoring seems advisable, the

Principal may give the parents/guardians a list of persons who are willing to tutor. This list may include teachers, but not the student's teacher of the subject in which they are to be tutored.

Tutoring for pay is not to be done in the school building.

LEGAL REF: M. G. L. [268A](#) Mass. Ethics Commission FAQs for Public School Teachers

Policy IJND - Access to Digital Resources

In December 2023, MASC's model policy manual broke this policy into separate sub-policies: [IJND \(Access to Digital Resources\)](#), [IJNDB \(Use of Technology in Instruction\)](#), and [IJNDC \(Acceptable Use of Digital Resources\)](#), in order to provide greater clarity about different types of access to technology. It is recommended to adopt these MASC model policies currently, with acknowledgment that further discussion may be required after the work of the task force on cellphone use in schools is complete.