

# South Shore Educational Collaborative



## Student & Caregiver Handbook 2025- 2026

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## Important Information: Translation

If you need this, or any other document translated into a different language, please notify the Program Director.

(English) Important information: Translation

If you need this, or any other document translated into a different language, please notify the Program Director.

(Arabic) معلومات هامة: الترجمة

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى هذا أو أي مستند آخر مترجم إلى لغة مختلفة، فيرجى إبلاغ مدير البرنامج.

(Burmese) (ဗမာ) အရေးကြီး အချက်အလက်- ဘာသာပြန်ခြင်း။  
လုံအပ်ပါက၊ သို့မဟုတ် အခြားဘာသာစကားသို့ ဘာသာပြန်ဆိုထားသည့်  
အခြားစာရွက်စာတမ်းတစ်ခုခုကို ပရိုဂရမ်ဒါရိုက်တာထံ အကြောင်းကြားပါ။

(Chinese- Simplified) 重要信息: 翻译

如果您需要将此文件或任何其他文件翻译成其他语言，请通知项目总监。

(French) Informations importantes : traduction

Si vous avez besoin d'une traduction de ce document ou d'un autre document, veuillez le signaler au directeur du lycée.

(Haitian-Creole) Enfòmasyon enpòtan: Tradiksyon

Si w bezwen sa a, oswa nenpòt lòt dokiman tradui nan yon lòt lang, tanpri notifiye Direktè Pwogram nan.

(Nepali) (नेपाली) महत्त्वपूर्ण जानकारी: अनुवाद  
यदि तपाईंलाई यो वा फरक भाषामा अनुवाद गरिएको कुनै  
अन्य कागजात चाहिन्छ भने, कृपया कार्यक्रम निर्देशकलाई  
सूचित गर्नुहोस्।

(Pashto) مهم معلومات: ژباړه

که تاسو دې ته اړتیا لرئ، یا کوم بل سند چې بلې ژبې ته ژباړل شوی،  
مهرباني وکړئ د پروگرام رییس ته خبر ورکړئ.

(Portuguese) Informações importantes: Tradução

Se necessita isto, ou qualquer outro documento traduziu numa linguagem diferente, por favor notifica o director de escola.

(Spanish) Información importante: Traducción

Si necesita una traducción de este documento u otros documentos, por favor notifique Ud. A la directora de la escuela.

(Vietnamese) Thông tin quan trọng: Dịch thuật

Nếu bạn cần tài liệu này hoặc bất kỳ tài liệu nào khác được dịch sang ngôn ngữ khác, vui lòng thông báo cho Giám đốc Chương trình.

**\*Please sign and send back to your SSEC program.**

## **Caregiver / Parent School Agreement 2025 2026**

SSEC asks you, our Caregivers, to acknowledge in writing that you have reviewed the SSEC Student/Caregiver Handbook which contains SSEC school policies and procedures.

Please sign and return this form to SSEC. Your signature will indicate that you have received and read the information in the Student-Caregiver handbook. If you have any questions regarding these policies or other information contained in this handbook, please call the Program Director for your SSEC program.

South Shore High School: Cheryl Jacques, 781-749-7518, ext: 1309, [cjacques@ssec.org](mailto:cjacques@ssec.org)

Community School: Hannah Emery, 781-749-7518, ext: 1108 or [hemery@ssec.org](mailto:hemery@ssec.org)  
Danielle Burke 781-749-7518, ext: 1108, [dburke@ssec.org](mailto:dburke@ssec.org)

Quest Program: Rosanna Warrick, 781-749-7518, ext: 1308, [rwarrick@ssec.org](mailto:rwarrick@ssec.org)  
Kim Foresta, 781-749-7518, ext: 1344, [kforesta@ssec.org](mailto:kforesta@ssec.org)

Mini School: Maureen Gattine, 781-749-7518 ext. 1612; [mgattine@ssec.org](mailto:mgattine@ssec.org)  
Shannon Boyd, 603- 512-1836, [sboyd@ssec.org](mailto:sboyd@ssec.org)

I have read the information contained in the 2025 2026 SSEC Student/Caregiver Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Caregiver Print Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Caregiver Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

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Safety \* Respect \* Relationships \* Growth

# Welcome

This handbook has been prepared to assist students, families, and staff in learning and abiding by the South Shore Educational Collaborative's (SSEC) policies, procedures, and philosophy. This handbook contains policies specific to the South Shore Educational Collaborative as well as those necessary to meet state and federal guidelines. It is our belief that the majority of our students will have success in following basic school rules and policies when they are clearly explained and reinforced by both school staff and parents/guardians.

Parents/guardians are vital to the learning process. Student progress is more evident when families are involved; therefore, we welcome and encourage family involvement. Parent and family support is provided and designed to allow parents to actively participate in the educational and therapeutic process utilizing their unique knowledge of their child.

To our students, it is our hope that you will benefit from the academic, therapeutic, and family support services offered at the South Shore Educational Collaborative. Strong efforts, a willingness to set and meet goals, cooperation, and consistent participation will be the keys to accomplishing the successes that you desire. We are committed to accompanying you and supporting you on this journey.

The vision of the South Shore Educational Collaborative is to continue to provide excellence in educational services with state of the art technology in a safe and respectful therapeutic environment. The mission of the South Shore Educational Collaborative is to be responsive to the emerging needs of communities by providing innovative, fiscally sound, high quality educational programs and services for individuals with special needs. These communities are SSEC's member districts as well as non-member districts in need. SSEC's member districts include, Braintree, Cohasset, Hingham, Hull, Marshfield, Milton, Norwell, Quincy, Randolph, Scituate, Weymouth, and Whitman-Hanson RSD.

South Shore Educational Collaborative's leadership team as well as our Board of Directors and all program staff strive to provide a safe and respectful learning environment for all, where relationships between staff and students can be nurtured and developed and where students can learn skills for continued growth and progress.

We look forward to sharing a positive, meaningful, and successful year with you.

-SSEC Leadership Team

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## ARRIVAL / DISMISSAL Schedule

All parents/guardians are encouraged to check with their sending district's Special Education Office or Transporter for exact pick up & drop off times to and from home.

SSEC Quest Elementary & Middle School					
Location	Student Arrival	Student Dismissal	Early Release (Every Wednesday)	Phone	Extended School Year (ESY) Days/Times
<b>HINGHAM</b> Door #1 75 Abington St. Hingham, MA 02043	8:35am  Doors Open: 8:30am	2:50pm	12:30pm	339-201-4571	(2025) Mon-Thurs 8:30AM-2:30PM (2026) Mon-Thurs 8:30AM-2:15PM

SSEC South Shore High School					
Location	Student Arrival	Student Dismissal	Early Release (every Wednesday)	Phone	Extended School Year (ESY) days/times
<b>HINGHAM</b> Door #1 75 Abington St. Hingham, MA 02043	7:45am Doors Open: 7:30am	1:45pm	11:45am	339-201-4579	Mon-Thurs 7:45am-1:45pm Doors open: 7:30am

SSEC Community School					
Location	Student Arrival	Student Dismissal	Early Release (every Wednesday)	Phone	Extended School Year (ESY)

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					days/times
<b>HINGHAM</b> Door #2 75 Abington St. Hingham, MA 02043	Doors Open: 9:00am	3:15pm	12:50pm	339-201-4508	Mon-Thurs 9:00-2:45

<b>SSEC Mini School</b>					
Location	Student Arrival	Student Dismissal	Early Release (every other Wednesday)	Phone	Mon-Thurs 8:30-2:45
<b>HULL</b> Memorial School	8:30 AM	4:00 pm (Mon-Thurs) 2:45 PM (Fridays)	12:00 PM	781-749-7518 ext. 1614	Mon-Thurs 8:30-2:45
<b>HULL</b> Hull High School	8:30 AM	4:00 pm (Mon-Thurs) 2:45 PM (Fridays)	12:00 PM	781-749-7518 ext. 1614 or 781-925-3000	Mon-Thurs 8:30-2:45

## School Cancellation / Delays

### Weather:

#### **Hingham Location: *Follows Weymouth Public Schools***

The SSEC at 75 Abington St. in Hingham follows weather related closings reported by the town of Weymouth. Therefore if Weymouth Public Schools are closed or delayed, the SSEC program will also be closed or delayed. SSEC will be delayed according to the time of the town of Weymouth Public Schools delay, not the time of delay in the student's hometown.

#### **Hull Location: *Follows Hull Public Schools***

The SSEC Mini School at Hull Memorial School and Hull High School follows weather related closings reported by the town of Hull. Therefore if Hull Public Schools are closed or delayed, the SSEC program will also be closed or delayed. SSEC will be delayed according to the

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time of the town of Hull Public Schools delay, not the time of delay in the student's hometown.

### **ALL Locations**

If the town where an SSEC student LIVES cancels school but the town where the student goes to school is open, then the student will have school. However, please note that most transporters will not transport students if school is closed in the student's hometown. Parents have the option of driving the student to school in that event, however the student's absence will be excused if a parent does not choose to transport.

### **Unforeseen Circumstances or Emergency cancellation:**

If any SSEC location needs to close school or a specific program due to unforeseen circumstances or a building/program related emergency (i.e. plumbing/water, septic, electricity, ongoing weather damage, etc...) SSEC will send out a cancellation message by phone recorded message, text message and by email. SSEC offers the text messages and the email messages in the home's native languages present across our five programs.

\*It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure that their student's respective program has their most up to date phone number and email address.

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## SSEC Nursing Contact Information

Please use the appropriate contact information for the SSEC school program your student attends.

### **Community School Nursing office**

Phone: 339-201-4580

Fax: 339-201-4763

Email: [communitynursing75@ssec.org](mailto:communitynursing75@ssec.org)

### **Mini School Nursing**

Phone: 339-201-4704

- 617-515-8217 (Mini nursing cell)
- 617-513-5321 (Mini nursing cell)

Fax: 339-201-4780

Email: [mininursing@ssec.org](mailto:mininursing@ssec.org)

### **Quest Elementary/Middle School & South Shore High School nursing office**

Phone: 339-201-4557

Fax: 339-201-4583 or 339-201-4750

Email: [pallen@ssec.org](mailto:pallen@ssec.org) or [aandrade@ssec.org](mailto:aandrade@ssec.org)

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# SSEC School Policies and Procedures

Notes for 2025-2026

## New additions for 25-26

### Age of Majority

Absent a court appointed guardian, in Massachusetts, at the age of 18, a student is legally considered to be an adult. This is the case even if they have a disability. This is called the “age of majority”. In the eyes of the law, they assume adult rights and responsibilities.

### AI/ GenAI

These guidelines provide a broad guiding framework for responsible, ethical, and creative use of genAI in SSEC by our staff and students who are attending SSEC courses/ classes. It is not comprehensive, and does not anticipate or govern all possible uses of genAI by all people in SSEC. These guidelines reflect SSEC’s internal process of utilizing and implementing AI/ GenAI within the SSEC organization. If SSEC student participates in courses or instruction outside of SSEC (i.e. Community College, Vocational After Dark programs, etc.), they will follow the policy of that organization. These guidelines will be followed unless otherwise noted in the student’s individualized educational plan. Please reference the **SSEC AI/GenAI Practice Guidelines (See appendix J)**

### Attendance

Students are expected to attend school on a regular, consistent basis. Excused absences include those related to a medical documented illness, important appointments, or family commitments previously discussed with the program director. Unusual circumstances that lead to an absence may be given special consideration following a conversation between the program director and the student's parent/guardian.

*If your child is going to be absent please contact the office for your program prior to the start of school indicating the reason for the absence.*

### Dismissal

Students should maintain regular and consistent school attendance. Dismissal will occur when a parent/guardian/student (who has reached age of majority) notifies the school stating the reason for the dismissal. Notification could include a phone call or email.

- Dismissal due to illness at school will be handled by the school nurse.
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the transportation company that their child no longer needs an afternoon pick up.

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- Permission from the parent/guardian is necessary if a student is to be transported by anyone other than the parent/guardian or the regular transportation vehicle. Identification will be required before dismissing the student.

### **Tardiness**

A parent/guardian must call the school if their child is going to be tardy. Parents/guardians must accompany their child into the school once tardy unless arrangements were previously made with program staff so that we are aware that they have arrived on SSEC property. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to inform the transportation company that the student does not need a morning pick up and to inform them that the student will still need transportation at dismissal time.

### **Bullying / Cyberbullying**

The South Shore Educational Collaborative expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a manner that demonstrates respect for individuality and diversity. All types of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation are prohibited. This law extends to circumstances where a student feels bullied by school personnel. Any confirmed instances of bullying will be subject to actions and consequences as outlined in the **South Shore Educational Collaborative Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. (See appendix A).**

The South Shore Educational Collaborative is committed to working with students, staff, families, the community, and law enforcement in preventing all types of bullying. This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan has been established for the prevention, intervention, and timely response to reported incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. Please visit the Bullying Resources tab on the SSEC website at [www.ssec.org](http://www.ssec.org) to view our current Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

### **Cell Phones**

The South Shore Educational Collaborative ("SSEC") has enacted the following policy in regards to students' electronics and cell phone use.

- Use of unauthorized electronic devices\* (to include but not limited to student cell phones, tablets/iPads, smartwatches and any technology determined by SSEC Administration) is not permitted during the school day at SSEC. Personal computers are not authorized at SSEC.
- If brought to the school building, all unauthorized electronic devices must be turned in immediately upon arrival each day and will be kept in a SSEC staff secured location.
- Any student who fails to comply with SSEC staff and administration directives will result in disciplinary action. **Furthermore, any student using an electronic device to record**

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**without specific staff permission, or recording an individual without their express permission, will face immediate disciplinary consequences.**

**\*This does not include any unaided or aided Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Devices.**

SSEC sends notification of this policy and receives annual acknowledgement from students and caregivers.

### **Code of Conduct / Discipline**

The SSEC staff work diligently to ensure the success of all students including implementing a number of general and individualized proactive, positive supports and therapeutic management strategies throughout the day. There are times where students are not able to access support to de-escalate effectively. This can lead to conduct which could result in a disciplinary action. The Program Director/Coordinator in collaboration with the student's SSEC care team will determine the appropriate course of action based on the conduct and any other pertinent information.

**(Please refer to the *Physical Restraint and Suspension* sections of the handbook as well as their procedural counterpart in the appendices).**

### **Community Based Trips**

#### **Community Experience: (South Shore High School)**

SSEC offers students opportunities to utilize their skills and strategies as part of the transition process. If your child will be participating in a community outing (i.e. a dual enrollment community college class; a vocational internship), you will be asked to sign a release seeking permission for SSEC staff to transport and accompany your child for these outings.

#### **Community Based Instruction (Community Program and Mini School)**

SSEC offers student opportunities to utilize and learn skills in the community. This may include opportunities to shop, use money skills, safety skills, swimming, and other community activities. These activities may vary across age and are part of their educational learning. Parents/Guardian will be asked to sign a release seeking permission for participation and for SSEC staff with a 7D license to transport and accompany the student for these outings.

#### **Field Trips (All Programs)**

Parent/guardian permission slips must be submitted and signed for all field trips. Field trips are a privilege and student attendance will be based on the discretion of the staff with careful consideration of the student's ability to consistently demonstrate expected

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behaviors and safety. Behavior is expected to reflect favorably on the staff, students, and school at all times while on a field trip. All school rules remain in effect while on any school sponsored community trip. Only chaperones who have successfully completed the CORI process and have been selected by school personnel will be allowed to go on field trips.

### **Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI)**

All current and prospective employees, volunteers, and people who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children in this program must sign a request form authorizing receipt by SSEC of all available Criminal Offender Record Information from the criminal history systems board. All public school employees and interns are also required to be fingerprinted in Massachusetts.

### **Dress and Appearance**

The values of SSEC; Safety, Respect, Relationships, and Growth are reflected in our dress code. The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s). The school is responsible for setting an atmosphere conducive to learning and seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of, nor contribute to a disrespectful, hostile, or intimidating atmosphere for any member of the school community. To ensure effective and equitable enforcement of this dress code, staff shall enforce the dress code consistently and in a manner that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, or body type/size.

- When the body is standing straight, clothing must cover the chest, back, torso, stomach, and lower extremities from armpit to armpit to mid thigh. Tops must have a strap. Rips or tears in clothing should be less than 3 inches and not expose areas mentioned above.
- Clothing must cover all undergarments. No underwear or undergarments may be visible at any time. Clothing may not be seen through.
- Shoes must be worn at all times and should be safe for the school environment, including appropriate footwear for physical education classes.

Attire and/or grooming that creates a material disruption to the school environment, creates a hostile environment, or violates the rights of other students is prohibited.

No list of dress and appearance guidelines for students can be written that will anticipate all potential dress and grooming issues. In the case of questionable dress or grooming that is not specifically covered in the outlines above, the administration will make a final decision and, if necessary, contact will be made seeking parental cooperation and assistance.

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## Emergencies:

### Emergency Treatment

In the event of a medical, physical or psychiatric emergency, every effort will be made to notify the parent/guardian of the student in crisis. However, when a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the Emergency Contacts listed on the Student Information Sheet will be contacted and a student may be transported to the nearest hospital by ambulance. Parent signature on the Student Information Sheet authorizes SSEC staff to get emergency medical treatment for a student.

### Emergency Crisis

If a staff member observes the behavior of a student or staff member that in their estimation is unusual, possibly suicidal, or life-threatening to others, the individual shall immediately contact the Program Director/Designee and/or On-Call Program Clinician. The Program Director/Designee and/or On-Call Program Clinician will immediately contact the SSEC clinical team members to determine whether an emergency evaluation by the South Shore Hospital Urgent Care staff is necessary. If an evaluation is necessary, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff's emergency contact will be contacted and informed of the impending emergency evaluation. Also, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be informed that their presence at the evaluation is necessary. Hospitalization or return to school will be determined by the evaluation staff.

## Equal Access

According to 603 CMR 26.00, SSEC does not discriminate against students on the basis of his or her actual or perceived race, color, creed, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex/gender, homelessness, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or age and that all students have equal rights of access and equal enjoyment of the opportunities, advantages, privileges and courses of study within SSEC programs. SSEC further does not deny equal access to or a fair opportunity to meet, or discriminate against, any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society. **(please refer to the Non-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment section of this handbook).**

## Equipment

SSEC's physical and occupational therapists support families in obtaining and maintaining school-related durable medical equipment through vendors. They assist with new orders, modifications, adjustments, and repairs. Parents should be present during new equipment ordering and delivery. In addition, parents or legal guardians should give written permission for new equipment, modifications, and repairs. Exceptions can be made for unexpected



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circumstances. If applicable, please reference the 2024 SSEC Equipment procedures here:

## **Family-owned mobile devices for (AAC) Augmentative and Alternative Communication**

When a family/guardian supplies a mobile device for a student's AAC needs, SSEC will provide training/support as needed to families/guardians. Families and guardians should maintain the device including maintenance, user ID, and apps. The family/ guardian and SSEC will communicate regarding device concerns and students needs. **If applicable, please reference the Family/Guardian-Owned AAC Mobile Device Guidelines here:**



## **Feeding**

Students who present with unique feeding challenges must have a completed feeding protocol form signed by both the parent and a physician on a regular basis (or more often should there be a change in status). This form outlines any specific protocols and food textures needed to support the student at school in a safe manner which allows for ongoing skill development in this area. **(As appropriate, the Feeding Protocol Form will be sent to caregivers and updated annually if needed)**

## **Fire Drills**

Fire drills, at regular intervals, are required by law and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone participates promptly and clears the building by the prescribed route as quickly and orderly as possible. The staff in each classroom/program will give the exact directions.

## **Hazing**

The South Shore Educational Collaborative (SSEC) forbids hazing in any form. Should an alleged instance of hazing occur, the provision of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 269, Sections 17-19 shall be adhered to. In addition, the Executive Director or Designee and the Police Department shall immediately be notified of the circumstances of the complaint and the action taken. Any student who has engaged in hazing shall be subject to disciplinary actions. Any employee who has engaged in hazing shall be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action. **(Please see SSEC Hazing Conduct Policy/ MGL Chapter 269.S.17-19 Crimes against Public Peace in Appendix C).**

## **Health**

The South Shore Educational Collaborative assigns a Registered Nurse(s) to each program. School Nursing is a specialized practice of Public Health Nursing which protects and promotes student

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health, facilitates optimal development, advances academic success and provides a safe and supportive environment. SSEC School Nurses are an essential member of the educational team. They are committed to meeting the individual, physical, and emotional health needs of SSEC students. This is achieved through collaboration with SSEC faculty and staff, families, health care providers and outside agencies. A **Health Care Manual** including all SSEC health policies and practices is maintained in the school health office and available for parent/guardian review.

#### **1:1 Nursing** (applicable programs)

- 1:1 nursing is determined through the student's team process. Therefore, some SSEC students attend school with a 1:1 nurse. The nurse provides for all medical needs of the student while at SSEC. The 1:1 nurses that attend SSEC programs with their students are expected to comply with all SSEC policies and procedures.

#### **Health Education Classes: Notification**

The South Shore Educational Collaborative programs conduct formal and informal Health education classes/instruction. This instruction will address a variety of topics depending on the SSEC program, classroom, age and instructional level of each student. SSEC programs will use varying levels of a multidisciplinary team approach to ensure each child has access to the curriculum ensuring that we are meeting each learner's unique needs. The curriculum will be aligned with the National Health Education Standards(NHES) in U.S. schools and addressed through the child's instructional level of learning. Part of this curriculum includes education related to human sexuality. The appropriateness of this content is determined on a student to student basis. If this content is appropriate for your child, caregivers will receive further notification which outlines the subject matter. If your child will receive instruction related to these sensitive topics, caregivers will receive a consent form with the option to opt out.

Topics and instruction will vary with a general focus on physical health (ie: nutrition, physical activity), social and emotional health (ie: social skills, social behavior, relationships, etc.), and safety and prevention (ie: safety, handwashing, wearing a mask, etc.). For older students and with a signed parent consent form, topics may also include (puberty, growing into an adult, etc.).

#### **Homework** (applicable programs)

Homework is a contributing factor in enhancing student achievement. Homework assists with organizational habits and skills and provides reinforcement and practice of newly presented material. Teachers may assign homework on a regular basis and it may vary in accordance with an individual student's needs and abilities. Homework is meant to be realistic in length and difficulty, and should not take too much time away from other home activities.

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## **Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Meetings and IEP Revisions (8.8)**

All students enrolled at the Collaborative have a current IEP with individualized run dates which are updated annually based on these dates or sooner if needed.

IEP Team meetings will be scheduled by the LEA in conjunction with the Program Director, Coordinator, or the designee. The Team will be convened at least annually to discuss transition planning, parent/student concerns, to review strengths and areas of need, to update any accommodations necessary, and to report on current performance levels, annual measurable goals, and specific related benchmarks. A draft of the Individual Education Plan is presented at the meeting. All drafts are collected at the end and the updated copy of the now proposed IEP is sent to the student's district. The district is responsible for sending the official proposed IEP to the family. The Team will consist of a decision-making representation from the sending school system, all service providers and an administrator from SSEC Program. Students are invited and supported in attending their meetings beginning at transition age. When appropriate or requested, students may attend their meetings at an earlier age.

### **IEP Revisions (Amendments):**

The Program Director, Coordinator or designee, will notify the sending district and parents when there is a need to reconvene the Team. The student's team, family or sending district can request a review of the IEP to determine if an amendment is needed. In conducting a meeting to review, and, if appropriate, revise a student's IEP, the IEP team shall consider the following factors:

- The strengths of the child and the concerns of the parents for enhancing the education of their child.
- The results of the most recent evaluation(s) of the student.
- As appropriate, the results of the student's performance on any state or district-wide assessment
- Current data on goals & services.
- Need for changes to accommodations, modification of content, additional services and assistive technology.
- A complete presentation of the student's progress will be presented with recommendations provided in a draft amendment.

IEP'S that are accepted in whole are implemented immediately or based on the previously decided start date at the IEP meeting. IEPS that are partially accepted will be implemented based on what components have been accepted by the family. Stay put will be applied for those portions formally rejected. For an IEP that is either partially accepted or completely rejected, a team meeting will be scheduled in an attempt to resolve the concerns. Procedural safeguards will

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be followed and the family will receive a second copy of such safeguards when an IEP has been partially accepted or fully rejected.

### **Immediate Notification Procedure (Criterion 4.5)**

In accordance with criteria put forth by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, SSEC must notify all appropriate parties of serious incidents within the programs (SSEC's Careers High School, Community School, Mini School Program, Quest Elementary & Middle School and South Shore High School)

Serious incidents include the following:

- Death of a student;
- Filing of a 51-A report with DCF, or a complaint to the Disabled Persons Protection Commission against the school or a school staff member for abuse or neglect of a student;
- Any action taken by a federal, state or local agency that might jeopardize the school's approval with the Department;
- 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 student (including out-patient emergency room/urgent care visits) due to physical injury at school or previously unidentified illness, accident or disorder which occurs while the student is in the program;
- Student run away;
- Emergency termination of a 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); and
- Any other incident of serious nature that occurs to a student.

SSEC Procedures are as follows:

1. Staff notifies the Program Director immediately.
2. The Program Director makes immediate notification to the parent, the public school district special education administrator and to any state agency involved in the student's care or placement (by telephone and letter), and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (by telephone and Form 2).
3. An incident report(s) is filled out and maintained in the student record.

### **Internet Use**

Internet use is an opportunity available to SSEC students. Internet use is a privilege and is restricted to educational purposes only. Students found in violation of internet use guidelines may be subject to disciplinary action. All students/parents/guardians must sign an acknowledgement

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of reviewing this handbook which includes receiving and reading the responsible use policy.  
**(Please see the 2024 SSEC Technology and Electronic Communication Device Responsible Use Policy (Board approval October 2024) in Appendix G.**

### **Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect**

South Shore Educational Collaborative affirms its responsibility to provide for the safety and well-being of students. This responsibility extends to complying with the Massachusetts Mandatory Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Statute, Chapter 119, Section 51A, which mandates that certain persons in their professional capacity report child abuse and neglect when there is reasonable cause or suspicion to believe that a child under the age of eighteen (18) has been abused or neglected. It is expected then, that when any staff member in his/her professional capacity, has reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years is suffering from the effects of any form of child abuse and neglect, that the staff member will report his/her concerns to the Program Director, and appropriate action will be taken.

### **Motor Vehicle Idling on School Grounds**

No motor vehicle operator shall cause or allow any motor vehicle operated by him or her on school grounds to idle unnecessarily, except for any of the following reasons: traffic congestion; waiting at a school for the purpose of picking up or discharging students; turbo-charged diesel engine cool down or warm up; maintenance of appropriate temperatures for school buses when accepting or discharging passengers not to exceed three minutes in any fifteen minute period or one minute in any fifteen minute period for other motor vehicles; for circumstances involving safety or emergencies, and for servicing or repairing motor vehicles.

(540 CMR 27.00: Regulation of motor vehicle idling on school grounds)

### **Non-Discrimination / Anti-Harassment**

The South Shore Educational Collaborative is non-tolerant to any discrimination or harassment, and conducts its programs and operations in conformity with MGL c 76 s5, Title II, Title VI, Title IX, Chapter 622, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, G.L.c.151C and the Americans with Disabilities Act. It is the policy of The South Shore Educational Collaborative ("SSEC") to maintain a learning environment that is free from harassment or discrimination of any kind, including sex-based harassment. It is a violation of this policy for any member of the school community to harass or discriminate against another individual on the basis of his or her actual or perceived race, color, creed, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex/gender, homelessness, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or age or who has witnessed or learns about the harassment of or discrimination against, another person in the school environment. SSEC further does not deny equal access to or a fair opportunity to meet, or discriminate against, any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States

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Code as a patriotic society. SSEC's policy also ensures that students should be free from retaliatory and/or harassment based upon any of the foregoing attributes. Harassment and discrimination is banned not just at school, during school hours, but also before or after school hours on all school property, including the school bus, school functions, or at school events held at other locations. The policy also applies to any off-campus conduct that causes or threatens to cause a substantial and material disruption at school, or interferes with the rights of students or employees to be free from a hostile school environment taking into consideration the totality of the circumstances on and off campus.

Problems and complaints regarding discrimination and harassment should be resolved in a prompt and equitable manner. When possible, such problems and complaints should be resolved in an informal manner. Anyone having a complaint alleging a violation of any anti-discrimination laws or regulations, including proscription against sexual harassment, should immediately bring the complaint to the attention of the administration of the Collaborative who will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation into the charges. In the event that the charges are substantiated, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action. **(Please see the SSEC Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Procedures EXCEPT for Title IX in Appendix E)**

### **Observation & School Visitation**

It is the procedure of the South Shore Educational Collaborative that all visits to SSEC classrooms shall be scheduled in advance (at least 24 hours notice) with the Program Director. This policy applies to SSEC parents/guardians, college students, consultants, advocates, or other teachers, or any other visitors. The purpose of this procedure is to minimize the interruptions and distractions to maintain student privacy for students and educators while the class is in session. Visitors must observe only and may not interrupt students and staff. **(Please see the SSEC Agreement regarding Procedures & Confidentiality during Observation of Student Classrooms and Related Areas at SSEC in Appendix H)**

### **Parent Consent and Required Notification (15.5)**

SSEC Program information and all annual paperwork are given to new parents/guardians before the child starts in the program. For all returning students, new packets are sent directly to the parents/guardians prior to the upcoming school year. Parents/Guardians have the choice to send the packet back to school with the child, fax, scan/email or even return it in a self stamped envelope.

Upon admission, and annually thereafter, parents/guardians complete paperwork providing consent for: Emergency Medical Treatment and Medication Administration at school (when applicable).

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The SSEC programs will not conduct any of the following without prior written notification to, and the prior written specific consent of, the affected student's parent.

(For students in the Department of Children and Families care or custody, an Educational Surrogate Parent shall not have authority to consent to any of the following. For such students, consent shall be obtained consistent with the applicable Department of Children and Families requirements. There also shall be consent by the student (if 14 years of age or older), unless the school has written documentation that the student is not capable of such a decision. A written copy of the school's notification to parents and the parent's consent, if granted, shall be sent to the school district responsible for the student).

1. Research or experimentation;
2. Use of the student or family's name, photographs, or videotapes, for fund raising, publicity, observation or any other purposes.
  - (a) The school shall not allow, without the written specific consent of the affected student's parents observation of any student in the school by persons other than parents of current or prospective students, paid staff of the school, volunteers and student interns working in the school, authorized staff of the public schools responsible for students in the school, authorized staff of the Department or authorized state or federal monitoring personnel. For students in the Department of Children and Families care or custody, an Educational Surrogate Parent shall not have authority to consent to observations of the student as provided above. For such students, consent shall be obtained consistent with the applicable Department of Children and Families requirements.
  - (b) The consent described above is not required for observation or data collection used to evaluate or document the services provided by the program when such observation or data collection is conducted by staff from the school, the Department, the public school, the parents or authorized state or federal monitoring personnel.

The Program informs parents/guardians concerning curriculum that primarily involves human education or human sexuality issues. Parents or guardians will be afforded the flexibility to exempt their children from any portion of this curriculum through written notification to the school principal. No child will be penalized by reason of such exemption.

When the participation or consent of the parent is required and the parent fails or refuses to participate, SSEC, in conjunction with the LEA, shall make and document multiple efforts to

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contact the parent. Such efforts may include:

- 1.) Letters
- 2.) Written notices sent by certified mail
- 3.) Electronic mail (e-mail)
- 4.) Telephone calls or TTY communications to the home
- 5.) Home visits at such times as the parent is likely to be home.

Efforts may include seeking assistance from a community service agency to secure parental participation. All efforts attempted are to be documented in the student's record. It is the responsibility of the LEA to determine if the parent's failure or refusal to consent will result in a denial of a free appropriate public education to the student, and has the authority to seek resolution of the dispute through the procedures provided in Options for Dispute Resolution (Section 28.08) of Special Education regulations.

### **Parental Notification and Student Opt-Out Relative to Some Curriculum Material**

Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, 603 CMR 26.05(1), the South Shore Educational Collaborative, through its curricula and materials, encourages respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. In accordance with district guidelines, families may request information from the respective SSEC Program of their child on available accommodations related to curriculum content.

### **Personal Belongings**

Students are strongly advised not to bring valuable personal items to school, especially those that are not essential for educational purposes. The school cannot assume responsibility for any such items that may be lost, stolen, or damaged while on school premises.

### **Photographing Students**

Photographs or video may be taken by SSEC staff of students participating in SSEC program activities. Signed photo/video consent paperwork is sent annually and can be updated by a parent/guardian at any time.

### **Physical Contact**

A primary concern for all staff and students is to work and learn in a safe environment. Physical contact between students, including friendly horseplay, is not allowed to avoid any misunderstanding of intent.

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## **Physical Restraint**

At SSEC, our mission is to provide a safe and respectful learning environment. All staff are trained and certified through the WELLE behavioral safety management system. Physical restraint is considered an emergency procedure of last resort and is only used when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other less intrusive behavioral interventions, or such interventions are deemed inappropriate under the circumstances. The physical restraint policy is made available to students and parents/guardians upon admission to the program and annually thereafter if requested. A parent/guardian acknowledgement/ signature is requested annually on the SSEC restraint notification form. **(Please see the Physical Restraint Policy in Appendix F).**

## **Progress Reports and Report Cards**

In accordance with the student's IEP, Special Education progress reports and report cards are sent to parents/guardians and school districts on a routine basis throughout the school year depending on the student's respective program. For any SSEC Careers High School or South Shore High School student that is in danger of failing or failing a particular class, a mid-term warning report will be issued.

## **Re-Entry after Hospitalization (including Change-in-Status)**

Re-Entry: Any student requiring a psychiatric evaluation, an emergency room visit, or inpatient hospitalization for psychiatric or medical conditions will be readmitted to SSEC programs after receipt of the appropriate documentation (such as but not limited to a discharge summary) is received by the program. A re-entry meeting is also held with the SSEC team and the family/guardian before the student is readmitted. The re-entry meeting is necessary to ensure that the SSEC program has the most current information from the family/guardian and the student. The documentation is required to ensure that the SSEC program has the most current medical information in writing, from the attending physician regarding changes in medication procedures, or adjustment in dosage for any ongoing medical/psychiatric treatments.

Change in Status Procedure: When a student has any type of change in physical status, which may impact the student's ability to participate in typical school activities and therapy treatment, all SSEC programs will need to receive Occupational/Physical Therapy Clearance (an SSEC form can be provided) or a comparable doctor's order. Occupational/ Physical Therapy services cannot be provided until the proper documentation is returned to the school.

## **Responsible Use of Technology and Electronic Communication Devices**

The South Shore Educational Collaborative supports the use of technology when used in a responsible, ethical and legal manner. It is understood that students, personnel, and contractors will use technology solely for educational purposes related to the mission of

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SSEC and in accordance with the Collaborative's Responsible Use Policy. **(Please see Appendix G for SSEC Technology and Electronic Communication Device Responsible Use Policy)**

An SSEC Chromebook is loaned to SECC students during the school year for classroom use. Students and Caregivers sign off on an annual agreement with SSEC for this loan. The purpose of the use of the Chromebook is for SSEC academics and enrichment activities only while at school. The Chromebook and its charger remain property of the South Shore Educational Collaborative and should not leave school property. All chromebooks will be turned back into the school when requested by a teacher or administration. The annual agreement informs students and caregivers of their financial responsibility in the event of loss or damage to the student's Chromebook. Please feel free to reference the [SSEC Temporary Chromebook Loan Contract](#) here or the form will be shared with parents in the annual paperwork.

### **Runaway/ Missing Students (Criteria 9.3)**

All SSEC staff will be familiar with building security at their site locations and programmatic nuances. Each school program at SSEC follows a procedure for runaway students/elopement. All SSEC staff will be familiar with the procedures for handling these situations and the persons or agencies to be notified. SSEC will notify the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the parents (or Department of Social Services as appropriate), immediately whenever this situation may occur.

### **School Resource Officer (SRO)**

The SSEC collaborates with the Hingham Police Department and the Town of Hingham in employing a School Resource officer. The officer works predominantly at our main site in Hingham but is available to provide support and educational opportunities at all Collaborative sites. The SRO officer is on duty from 7:30am to 4pm each day students are present. The SRO is a liaison between the Collaborative and the Hingham Police Department with the primary goal of supporting a safe environment for students and staff. The SRO wears a uniform agreed upon by both the Collaboratives Executive Director and the Chief of Police in Hingham and carries a firearm as well as other standard gear as required by the Hingham Police Department. The SRO will be highly visible throughout the main campus. The SRO may provide instruction to the students in a variety of topics. The SRO is also available to support the students and staff through unexpected events and various types of emergencies.

### **Search and Seizure**

School lockers and desks are the property of the school and may be searched at any time either with or without cause. The personal property of the student or the student's person may be

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searched when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a school rule or a law has been or is being violated. The Collaborative may conduct searches of all students at its discretion using a metal detecting wand and/or drug sniffing canines.

### **Security Camera Surveillance (Hingham Location)**

The South Shore Educational Collaborative authorized the use of video cameras throughout the main building at 75 Abington Street, Hingham, Massachusetts as well as in all SSEC owned school vans. The security cameras are installed in public areas only. Security cameras will not be used where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy, including but not limited to restrooms, changing rooms, private offices, nurses offices, or locker rooms. The purpose of this video surveillance is to enhance school safety both on and off campus. SSEC is committed to providing a safe environment for all students, staff and community members attending, working at or visiting our schools. **(please see the SSEC Security Camera Surveillance Policy in Appendix I)**

### **Sexual Harassment and Harassment**

SSEC does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX, including in admission and employment.

Under state law, sexual harassment is sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. These constitute sexual harassment under Massachusetts law when: Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's advancement (quid pro quo harassment); Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions; Such conduct interferes with an individual's job duties; or The conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Under Federal law, sex-based harassment is a form of sex discrimination and means sexual harassment and other harassment on the basis of sex, including on the basis of sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity, that is:

- Quid pro quo harassment.
- Hostile environment harassment. Unwelcome sex-based conduct that, based on the totality of the circumstances, is subjectively and objectively offensive and is so severe or pervasive that it limits or denies a person's ability to participate in or benefit from SSEC's education program or activity (i.e., creates a hostile environment).
- Specific offenses such as Sexual assault, Dating violence and Domestic violence
- Stalking meaning engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to: Fear for the person's safety or the safety of others; or Suffer

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substantial emotional distress

Harassment is the act of abusing the dignity of another person, through insulting or degrading personal remarks or conduct in a persistent manner. Harassment violates state and federal law and the policies of the South Shore Educational Collaborative. Harassment may take many forms including, but not limited to, derogatory remarks and gestures based on his or her actual or perceived race, color, creed, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex/gender, homelessness, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or age or who has witnessed or learns about the harassment of or discrimination against, another person in the school environment. Complaints of harassment should be brought to the attention of the Program Director immediately at which time such complaints will be investigated in a prompt and equitable manner. Harassment will be responded to with school consequences at a minimum and possible court action if warranted.

Harassment shall mean:

- a. Communications such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct, which offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability.
- b. Harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals and/or impact other individuals.

As it is not possible to list all circumstances that may constitute harassment, should a student, staff, or family member of a student have any question or concern regarding possible harassment, that individual should bring it to the attention of the Program Director for further discussion. **(See both Appendix E - SSEC Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Procedures EXCEPT for Title IX and Appendix D- SSEC Sexual Harassment/Title IX Policy).**

### **Smoke / Vape Free Schools**

In the interest of promoting healthy working conditions and protecting the safety of students, staff and visitors, the South Shore Educational Collaborative adheres to a Smoke / Vape Free Environment for all programs. Therefore, the use of tobacco products by staff, students, and visitors is prohibited at all times in all school facilities, school grounds, at all school sponsored activities, including field trips, and on school vans. In accordance with **M.G.L, c. 71, § 2A**, it is unlawful for any student enrolled in a public primary or secondary school in the Commonwealth to use tobacco products of any kind on school grounds. Tobacco products are defined in **Section 6**

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**of Chapter 270 of the Massachusetts General Laws** as “a product containing, made or derived from tobacco or nicotine that is intended for human consumption, whether smoked, chewed, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, snorted, sniffed or ingested by any other means including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, snuff, electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes, electronic nicotine delivery systems or any other similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization; provided, however, that "tobacco product" shall also include any component, part or accessory of a tobacco product; and provided further, that "tobacco product" shall not include a product that has been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for the sale of or use as a tobacco cessation product and is marketed and sold exclusively for the approved purpose.”

## **Social Media at SSEC**

SSEC has developed a policy for the professional and personal use of websites and social media by South Shore Educational Collaborative (SSEC) employees in a responsible manner. All users, including students, teachers, staff, administrators, and organizations are covered by this policy and are expected to be familiar with its provisions. Official SSEC Social Media sites will be used solely for communicating information about the Collaborative and its programs, including projects, events, and services. Examples include announcements; newsletters; emergency notifications; Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), sporting, fundraising, or club events and activities; or meetings. School employees and representatives with website access through organizations such as PTO may not engage in private messaging over official social media accounts.

### **Official Social Media:**

“Official Social Media” is understood to be content created by individuals or groups representing South Shore Educational Collaborative, using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the Internet. Examples of Official Social Media include but are not limited to, the Collaborative as a whole, individual programs, clubs, teams, or class websites, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, blogs, YouTube videos/channels, LinkedIn, Snapchat, NextDoor, and Flickr.

### **Personal Social Media:**

"Personal Social Media" is understood to be content created by individuals for non-work related activities (e.g., a staff member establishing a Facebook page or a Twitter account for his or her own personal use). Collaborative employees should not use personal social media sites to communicate, monitor, or befriend current or former students.

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## **SSEC Social Media Student Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of students who are using Official SSEC Social Media tools to learn about safe and responsible use of these sites. They are responsible for using these resources appropriately. They must abide by the Acceptable and Unacceptable Uses as stated in the SSEC Social Media Policy Section 9, Part C. If a student misuses the resources, educators must follow appropriate disciplinary protocols, including but not limited to reporting the misuse to building administrators, who have the right to discontinue a student's access to the official social media. SSEC staff members should thoroughly review Section 7, (Personal Social Media Guidelines for Staff) of the SSEC Social Media Policy

**(Please reference the SSEC Social Media Policy 2024 in Appendix K)**

## **Student Records / Confidentiality**

All student records are kept in a secure area. A Record Access Log is maintained to document if a third party has access to the student record. If a parent/guardian wishes to amend his/her child's student record, they must contact his/her home school. Under 603 CMR 23.00, no individuals or organizations but the parent/guardian and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student. When any part of a students' record is released at the request of the parent, a written release is obtained and maintained in the student record. The portions of the record released, who the information was released to and why the information was released is documented in the Record Access Log.

## **Student Records / Destruction**

In accordance with Massachusetts Law, 603 CMR 23.00: M.G.L. c.71, 34D, 34E, SSEC will notify the parent/guardian/and if applicable the home district of our intent to destroy our archived (K-8, K-12, 9th-12th, 3-22, 12+) special education records. The local school district for SSEC students maintains the transcript if applicable to their education. The record destruction will take place thirty (30) calendar days from the date of notice and will be off-site and by a contracted document shredding company. Parents/guardians/home districts will be given the opportunity to obtain these records with appropriate communication and scheduling. This does not include current SSEC students. This includes students who have transferred, unenrolled or graduated. SSEC will keep special education records for a minimum of 3 years and for a maximum of 7 years. SSEC will provide thirty days notice for pick up.

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## **Student Self- Transportation**

### **Automobiles**

- High school students with driver's licenses who drive to school may park in parking spaces at SSEC with SSEC parking passes visible in their car during the school day. Furthermore, students who drive to school and park on school property are required to adhere to all guidelines and rules established by the SSEC administration.
- The ability to park on school property is a privilege which may be revoked by SSEC administration in the event established rules and guidelines are not followed. Additionally, administration shall have the authority to search student vehicles parked on school property if the situation arises where there is a reasonable suspicion that a school rule or a law has been or is being violated.
- The SSEC does not take responsibility for student vehicles which may be lost, stolen, or damaged while parked on school property.

### **Substance Abuse/Use**

A student shall not use, possess, transmit, or be under the influence of any drugs, alcohol, intoxicant, or controlled substance within the school building, on school grounds, or during any school activity.

#### **Possible Use in School:**

Should a student's behavior in school be such that there is reason to be concerned for his/her well-being, the student shall be referred to the Program Director and/or Program Nurse. If after consultation with the school nurse the Program Director determines that the student should be removed from school, the student's parent/guardian will be notified and requested to take the student home and/or for treatment.

#### **Use in School:**

If a student has used harmful or potentially harmful drugs, alcohol, intoxicants, or controlled substances in school, the student's parent/guardian will be immediately notified and requested to come to the school for a meeting with the Program Director. Due process disciplinary action will occur. The police/SRO will be notified. A discussion regarding the potential need for a substance abuse evaluation and/or substance abuse treatment will occur. All efforts will be made to assist the parent/guardian in navigating this process.

#### **Possible Possession:**

If a staff member has reason to believe that a student may be in possession of drugs, alcohol, intoxicants, or controlled substances, the program director will be

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immediately informed. If after further investigation (which may include a search) and after speaking with the student the program director believes that the student is in possession of a harmful drug or controlled substance, the student's parent/guardian will be contacted and may be requested to attend a meeting at the school.

**Possession:**

The parent/guardian of any student who is found to be in possession of drugs, alcohol, intoxicants, or controlled substances will be called to the school immediately for a meeting. The police/SRO will be notified. The student will receive due process disciplinary action.

**The Selling or Distribution of Drugs in School:**

The selling or distribution of drugs in school, on school grounds, or during any school activity will be determined by either the quantity of the controlled substance in the student's possession or by the direct act of selling or distributing. The parent/guardian of any student selling or distributing drugs, alcohol, intoxicants, or controlled substances will be informed immediately and requested to report to the school. The police will also be notified and requested to be present at the time that the parent/guardian and student are present. The student will receive due process disciplinary action.

**Supervision of Students** (Criteria 11.11) 18.03 (1) (a)

South Shore Educational Collaborative Programs are responsible for providing direct supervision of students at all times while they are engaged in any school-related activity on or off school grounds. Students are directly escorted to and from their bus to ensure safety. Nursing is present at each site and is provided on field trips when emergency medication is needed. Students are consistently observed for medical events which are immediately documented and reported based on established procedures for that student in their nursing care plan.

In some cases, it is part of a student's IEP or transition plan to function independently. In these cases, staff may deliberately reduce the level of supervision, allow for independent transitions, or make other modifications to the above.

**Suspension**

The South Shore Educational Collaborative's (SSEC) policy and procedures for suspension are governed under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Sections 37H, 37H1/2, and 37H3/4 and 603 CMR 53.00. The purpose of this policy and the procedures is to ensure that every SSEC student participating in the program is provided procedural protections in school discipline matters. The SSEC staff work diligently to ensure the success of all students including implementing a number of universal and individualized proactive positive supports and

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antecedent management strategies throughout the day. There are times where students are not able to access their supports to de-escalate. This can lead to conduct which could result in a school suspension. The Program Director/Coordinator in collaboration with the student's team will determine if a suspension is the appropriate course of action based on the current code of conduct and any other pertinent information. \*Students who are 18 years and older who are not under full guardianship will be a part of all decisions and agreements. **(Please reference the SSEC Suspension Policy and Procedures 2024 in Appendix B)**

### **Termination: Planned and Emergency**

South Shore Educational Collaborative will be aggressive in their attempts to assist every student in accomplishing their goals and in growing academically, socially, and emotionally. Consistent home/school communication and meetings will occur as a way to effectively problem-solve and facilitate a student's success.

South Shore Educational Collaborative does recognize however, that despite flexibility, creative problem solving, and a strong effort, we may not be the right program at the right time for all students. When a pervasive lack of success occurs for a student and/or when that pervasive lack of success impinges upon the needs of other students in the program, termination from the program may be warranted.

In the case of a planned termination, SSEC will follow the procedures required in accordance with 603 CMR 18.05 (7). Except in emergency cases, SSEC will notify the school district of the need for an IEP review meeting. The school district will arrange such a meeting. SSEC will provide notice of this meeting (10) days in advance of the intended date of the meeting to all parties including the district, the parent and if appropriate, the student. The meeting shall be held for the purpose of planning and developing a written termination plan for the student.

In the case of an emergency termination, which is defined as "circumstances in which the student presents a clear and present threat to the health and safety of him/herself or others", SSEC will follow the procedures required under 603 CMR 28.09(12). SSEC will not terminate enrollment of a student even in emergency situations until the enrolling district is informed orally and in writing and assumes responsibility for the student. At the request of the school district, SSEC will delay termination of the student for up to two weeks to allow time for the school district to convene an emergency TEAM meeting or conduct other appropriate planning discussions prior to the student's termination. With the mutual agreement of SSEC and the sending district, termination may be delayed longer than two weeks. **(Please reference the SSEC Suspension Policy and Procedures 2024 in Appendix B)**

### **Weapons**

The possession of weapons on school property, during transportation to and from school, or at

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any school related events, is prohibited. Any student found to be in possession of a weapon will receive due process disciplinary action. Parents/guardians and police personnel will be notified immediately of any weapons issue.

The term "weapon" includes firearms, knives of any size, explosive devices, chains, or any object that is carried with the intent to cause harm to others. Any student suspected of carrying or concealing a weapon will be asked to submit to a search. Refusing to comply will result in appropriate discipline. Parent/guardian and police personnel will also be notified regarding any suspicion of weapon possession

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# APPENDICES

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Safety \* Respect \* Relationships \* Growth

## A. SSEC Bullying Policy & Prevention and Intervention Plan 2023-2025

### South Shore Educational Collaborative Bullying Policy 2023 - 2025

The South Shore Educational Collaborative is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying.

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

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

"Cyber-bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a:

- wire
- radio
- electromagnetic
- photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying shall also include 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 definition of bullying.

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents and families are expected. For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying, or cyber-bullying.

Bullying is prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;

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- 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 the South Shore Educational Collaborative.

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 the South Shore Educational Collaborative if the act or acts in question:

- create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

### **Prevention and Intervention Plan**

The Executive Director and/or his/her designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

The Program Director/Coordinator is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school.

### **Reporting**

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

Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

A member of a school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the program director or their designee.

### **Investigation Procedures**

The program director or their designee, upon receipt of a report, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

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The program director or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber-bullying Report Form which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

Support staff shall assess an alleged target's needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.

Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

If the program director or a designee determines that bullying has occurred he/she shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the Principal shall consult with the Executive Director who may consult with the local law enforcement to determine if criminal charges are warranted.

The investigation shall be completed promptly from the date of the report. The parents or guardians shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken. At a minimum the Principal or his/her designee shall contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis.

Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and a file shall be maintained by the Principal or designee. A monthly report shall be provided to the Superintendent.

Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law.

### **Retaliation**

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

### **Target Assistance**

The South Shore Educational Collaborative shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as necessary.

### **Training and Assessment**

Annual training shall be provided for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated

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into the curriculum for all K to 12 students.

### **Publication and Notice**

Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms.

Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the South Shore Educational Collaborative website

LEGAL REFS.: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended

Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission Title IX of the Education

Amendments of 1972 603 CMR [26.00](#) M.G.L. [71:37O](#); [265:43](#), [43A](#); [268:13B](#);

[269:14A](#)

REFERENCES: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

CROSS REFS.: [AC](#), Nondiscrimination

[ACAB](#), Sexual Harassment

[JBA](#), Student-to-Student Harassment

[JICFA](#), Prohibition of Hazing

[JK](#), Student Discipline Regulations

Approval by SSEC Board of Directors: 12/08/2023

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## B. SSEC Suspension Policy and Procedures 2024

# South Shore Educational Collaborative Suspension Policy and Procedures

Updated Spring 2024  
Board Approval: 5/17/2024

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Safety \* Respect \* Relationships \* Growth

## SSEC Suspension Policy

The South Shore Educational Collaborative (SSEC) has enacted the following policy and procedures governed under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Sections 37H, 37H1/2, and 37H3/4 and 603 CMR 53.00. The purpose of this policy and the procedures is to ensure that every SSEC student participating in the program is provided procedural protections in school discipline matters. The SSEC staff work diligently to ensure the success of all students including implementing a number of universal and individualized proactive positive supports and antecedent management strategies throughout the day. There are times where students are not able to access their supports to de-escalate. This can lead to conduct which could result in a school suspension. The Program Director/Coordinator in collaboration with the student's team will determine if a suspension is the appropriate course of action based on the current code of conduct and any other pertinent information.

*\*Students who are 18 years and older who are not under full guardianship will be a part of all decisions and agreements.*

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## **SSEC Procedures for Suspension of Up to 10 Days and After 10 Days ((DESE Criteria 9.5, 9.6 & 9.7)**

Different types of suspension:

1. In-school suspension (ISS)
2. Emergency removal (up to 2 days)
3. Short-term suspension (less than 10 days)
4. Long-term suspension (10 days or longer)

Definitions:

In-School Suspension (ISS): Student is removed from their class schedule and remains in an assigned room in school for the time period of the in-school suspension for no more than 10 consecutive school days, or no more than ten school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during a single school year. Classroom assignments and work are provided in the ISS room with staff support available and all accommodations provided as indicated in the IEP.

Emergency removal: A school can remove a student for up to two school days for non-serious offenses, if the principal decides:

1. That the “student poses a danger to persons or property”, or “materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school,” and,
2. There is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

The school must communicate with the parent as soon as possible about the emergency removal (i.e. why the student is being removed and make sure the student can get home safely). The school must also provide the family with the opportunity for a hearing before the end of the two-day emergency removal period. The principal must decide (and communicate to the parent) whether the student will continue to be suspended by the end of the two-day period. A written decision must be issued the following day. The student rights during this hearing depend on whether the school is considering an in-school suspension, short-term suspension (less than 10 days) or a long-term suspension (more than 10 days) for the student conduct.

Short-term Suspension: The student is removed from the school premises and their typical classroom for no more than 10 consecutive school days or 10 days cumulatively for multiple infractions in a single school year.

Long-term Suspension: If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes.

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Alternatives to suspension under M.G.L.603 CMR 53.05.

#### Alternative Remedies

The Program Director/Coordinator shall consider methods to re-engage the student in the learning process when deciding disciplinary consequences for the student. Specifically, the Program Director/Coordinator will consider and use alternative methods including but not limited to:

- mediation
- conflict resolution
- restorative justice
- collaborative problem solving
- updating current behavioral support plan (individually and/or school based supports)
- requesting a team meeting to discuss the need for a functional behavioral assessment if one has not been recently completed
- changes in level of privileges
- increase focus on skill development in the areas of mindfulness and self-regulation/monitoring
- developing a student contract with specific goals
- restitution or peer mentoring.

The use and results of such alternative remedies will be documented in writing. The Program Director/Coordinator will consider, use to the extent possible, and document in writing such alternative remedies before the Program Director/Coordinator may suspend or expel a student. The Program Director/Coordinator will also implement school or district models to re-engage students in the learning process, including positive behavioral intervention, support models and trauma informed practices. The Program Director/Coordinator will not implement such models in direct response to a specific incident.

The Program Director/Coordinator will document specific reasons where alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive. The Program Director/Coordinator will document specific reasons in situations where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm on another while in school.

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## Notice of Suspension

The Program Director/Coordinator (except as provided in 603 CMR 53.07) may not impose a suspension as a consequence to a behavioral event without first providing the student and the parent/guardian oral and written notice, and providing the student the opportunity to be heard and the parent the opportunity to participate in such hearing.

The Program Director/Coordinator shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct the hearing without the parent present, the program Director/Coordinator must document reasonable effort to include the parent/guardian which is defined as three separate attempts to communicate through the channels identified by the parent/guardian at the beginning of the school year as documented on the emergency contact forms. This should include at a minimum:

1. one phone call to the preferred phone number
2. written notice
3. one other attempt.

Written notification to the parent/guardian can be completed through hand delivery (in-person), first-class mail or through an email provided by the parent with the attached notification. Other methods may be possible and should be coordinated between the parent/guardian and the Program Director/Coordinator.

The written notification includes;

- Disciplinary offense
- Basis for the charge
- Potential length of the suspension
- Opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the Program Director/Coordinator concerning the proposed suspension, and for the parent/guardian to attend the hearing
- Date, time and location of the hearing
- For any suspension greater than three days, the parent/guardian will be requested to attend a re-entry conference to review the reason for the suspension and to construct a support plan to address the behavior.

## Notice of long-term suspension

For a long-term suspension, the notice must also contain the following:

1. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;

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2. The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
3. The right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and
4. The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; and
5. The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording provided to the student or parent upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
6. The right to appeal the decision to the Executive Director.

The SSEC SRO and the police may be notified regarding incidents involving drugs, weapons, destruction of property, physical assault and persistent harassment. For out of school short-term suspensions, the student is not allowed on school property during the period of the suspension.

A student serving any type of suspension will have access to academic work as outlined in the individualized education plan. In addition, any student who has received a suspension may be given additional time and support to make-up work not completed during that time.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have the opportunity to receive education services that will provide the opportunity for the student to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements. The Program Director/Coordinator shall notify the parent/guardian and the student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension.

#### Procedures for Suspension of Students with Disabilities when Suspensions Exceed 10 Consecutive Days

When it is known that the suspension, of a student with an identified disability and has been determined eligible to receive special education services (IEP), will accumulate to 10 days of suspension in a school year, the TEAM will need to convene within 10 days to make the following determinations (known as “manifestation determinations”):

- Was the child's behavior caused by, or did it have a “direct and substantial relationship to” the child's disability? or

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- Was the behavior the direct result of a failure on the part of the Collaborative to implement the student's IEP?

If the TEAM determines that the answer to either question is yes, then the student may not be suspended for more than 10 cumulative days in the school year. The IEP team will meet to consider conducting a functional behavioral assessment (FBA), modifying the IEP or any other programs or services designed to address the student's needs. Following parent/guardian and/or student approval, the plan will be implemented immediately.

If the TEAM determines that the answer to both questions is no, then a student may be suspended beyond the 10 cumulative days. If the parent/guardian and/or student disagrees with the determination that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the parent/guardian and/or student may request an expedited hearing. Pending the scheduling and result of any hearing, the student must remain in the current educational setting unless the parent/guardian and/or student and State agency or local educational agency agrees otherwise.

## In-School Suspensions and Due Process Procedure

In-School Suspension defined as; The removal of the student from their class schedule while remaining in an assigned room in school for the time period of the in-school suspension for no more than 10 consecutive school days, or no more than ten school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during a single school year.

### Due Process

If a student is reported for committing an offense that could result in an in-school suspension (ISS), the Program Director/Coordinator will abide by the following due process;

- **Notice** and opportunity to respond orally & in writing
- Inform the student of the offense and the basis for it.
- Provide the student with an opportunity to respond.
- **Decision:** If it is deemed that the student committed the offense and ISS is warranted, the Program Director/Coordinator will inform the student of the length of the ISS. ISS can be for no more than 10 school days, cumulatively or consecutively in a school year.

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- **Reasonable Effort for Initial Notification:** On the same day as the decision, the Program Director/Coordinator will make reasonable effort to notify the parent/guardian and student of the offense and the length of ISS. Reasonable effort means that there are minimally two documented attempts to reach the parent/guardian.
  - First notification is completed orally and documented.
  - Second notification is done in writing and must relay the reason for determining that the student committed the offense and the length of the ISS.
- **Written Notification:** On the same day ISS is served, written notification is sent with the reason and duration of the ISS to the parent/guardian. In this notification is an invitation to meet to discuss the student's behavior, academic performance, strategies for engagement and possible responses/supports for the behavior. Such a meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible.

#### Short-Term Out of School Suspension and Due Process Procedure

Short-term out of school suspension (ST-OSS) is defined as the student's removal from the school premises and their typical classroom for no more than 10 consecutive school days or 10 days cumulatively for multiple infractions in a single school year.

##### Due Process

If a student is reported for committing an offense that could result in a ST-OSS, the Program Director/Coordinator will abide by the following due process:

- **Notice:** The Program Director/Coordinator will provide the student and parent/guardian oral and written notice prior to the removal from school that includes:
  - the details of the offense,
  - basis for the charge
  - potential consequences
  - the opportunity to have an informal hearing
  - the date and time of the hearing
  - the right to have an interpreter if needed.

\*Written notice must be in English and the primary language spoken at home.

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- Oral and written notice must use the word “hearing”

\*The Executive Director and the Director of Student Services must be notified of any ST-OSS suspension for students in kindergarten through 9th grade. Notification will be in the form of email and a phone call.

- **Informal Hearing:** The Program Director/Coordinator will make a reasonable effort to notify parents/guardians and/or the student of the opportunity to attend the hearing. Reasonable effort means that there were minimally two documented attempts. Hearings can take place using the phone or web-based meeting.
- During the hearing, the Program Director/Coordinator will discuss the offense, basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information.
- During the meeting the student and/or parents/guardian have the opportunity to present information including mitigating facts.
- The Program Director/Coordinator should consider other remedies and consequences as a result of the hearing.
- **Decision:** The Program Director/Coordinator will provide written notice the student and parent/guardian of the decision and reason(s) for it.
- If a ST-OSS is imposed, the duration of the suspension, and the opportunity to make-up assignments and other school work must be included in the written notice.
- **Written notice** can be in the form of an update of the original notice.

\* If the student is in a preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Program Director/Coordinator shall send a copy of the written determination to the Executive Director and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

## Long-Term Out of School Suspension and Due Process Procedure

Long-Term Out of School Suspension (LT-OSS) is defined as, the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than 10 consecutive school days or cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in a school year.

Except for students disciplined under §37H or §37H1/2, no student may have a long-term OSS for more than ninety school days in a school year. No LT-OSS shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which the LT-OSS was imposed.

The statute requires the provision of educational services for all students excluded from school for any offense for more than 10 consecutive school days. Educational services

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must be consistent with academic standards and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Education services may include but are not limited to; tutoring, virtual learning, and remote learning.

#### Due Process

If a student is reported or committing an offense that could result in a LT-OSS, the Program Director/Coordinator will abide by the following due process:

- **Notice** The Program Director/Coordinator will provide the student and parent/guardian oral and written notice prior to the removal from school that includes:
  - the details of the offense
  - basis for the charge
  - potential consequences
  - the opportunity to have an informal hearing
  - the date and time of the hearing
  - the right to have an interpreter if needed.
- This notice will also contain the following:
  - opportunity to review the student record
  - right to be represented by counsel
  - right to produce testimony and witnesses on their behalf
  - right to cross examine witnesses
  - right to appeal that the hearing be recorded
  - the right to appeal the decision to the Executive Director.

\*Written notice must be in English and the primary language spoken at home

- Oral and written notice must use the word “hearing”

\*The Executive Director and the Director of Student Services must be notified of any LT-OSS for students in Kindergarten through 9th grade. Notification will be in the form of email and a phone call.

- **Hearing:** The Program Director/Coordinator will make reasonable effort to notify parent/guardian of the opportunity to attend the hearing.
- Reasonable effort means that there is a minimum of two documented attempts to reach the parent/guardian.
- Hearings can take place over the phone or by virtual meeting platform or in-person.
- Hearings can be recorded. Recordings are part of the student record.
  - Recordings will be saved on SSEC’s secured server and labeled accordingly for retrieval purposes.
  - The recording must be documented in the student’s record that the recording exists and where it is stored.
  - SSEC’s recording shall serve as the official recording of the hearing.

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- All meeting participants shall be notified of the intent to record the hearing prior to starting the recording.
- All participants must give their consent prior to starting the recording.
- All recordings will be managed by the Program Director/Coordinator with support from the IT Director.
- During the hearing, the Program Director/Coordinator will discuss the offense, basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information.
- During the hearing, students and/or parent/guardian will have the opportunity to present information including mitigating facts.
- The Program Director/Coordinator should consider other remedies and consequences as a result of the hearing.
- **Decision:** The Program Director/Coordinator will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to LT-OSS, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a LT-OSS.
- **Written Determination:** If the decision is made to suspend the student on a long-term basis, the program Director/Coordinator will send written determination that includes the following:
  - Details and facts that led to the determination
  - Details regarding the hearing, including the date, time, those present, etc.
  - Conclusion reached
  - Details of the suspension including length, start date, etc.
  - Notice of the student's opportunity to receive educational services to maintain academic progress during the period of the LT-OSS.
  - Right to appeal and what that process is.

\*If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Director/Coordinator shall send a copy of the written determination to the Executive Director and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension for the long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

- **Appeal:** LT-OSS can be appealed to the Executive Director or designee. The student's suspension remains in effect unless/until the Executive Director or designee decides to reverse the decision.
- Hearings with the Executive Director or designee must be scheduled within three school days of the request.
- Written notice of the hearing to appeal must be sent in a timely manner.
- Determination regarding the appeal of a LT-OSS must be issued within 5 school days of the appeal hearing.
- Written notice of the determination from the appeal hearing must be sent in a timely manner.

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## Student Charged with a Felony or Convicted of or Pleads Guilty to a Felony

MA General Law chapter 71, section 37H1/2 allows the “principal” (Program Director/Coordinator), to expel a student who is convicted of or who pleads guilty to a felony charge if said principal determines that the student’s continued presence in the school will have a substantial detrimental effect on the welfare of the school.

The statute requires the provision of educational services for all students excluded from school for any offense for more than 10 consecutive school days. Educational services must be consistent with academic standards and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Educational services may include but are not limited to; alternative placement, online or distance/remote learning.

### Due Process: Student Charged with a Felony

Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint or felony delinquency complaint of a student under M.G.L. c. 71, §37H1/2 that could result in an out of school suspension or expulsion, the Program Director/Coordinator or their designee will abide by the following due process:

- **Notice:** The Program Director/Coordinator will provide the student and the parent/guardian written notice of the charges and reason for the out of school suspension prior to the suspension taking place.
- The student and parent/guardian shall receive written notice of their right to appeal and the process for appealing such a suspension.
- The Executive Director must be notified of any out of school suspension under these circumstances. Notification will be in the form of email; and a phone call.
- **Appeal:** Suspension or expulsion resulting from violations of §37H1/2 can be appealed to the Executive Director.
- The student’s suspension remains in effect prior to the hearing with the Executive Director.
- The student and/or parent/guardian must notify the Executive Director in writing no later than five school days following the effective date of the suspension of their desire to appeal the suspension.
- Hearings with the Executive Director or designee must be scheduled within three school days of the request.
- At the hearing, the student and/or parent/guardian shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on their behalf and they have the right to counsel at their expense.
- The Executive Director has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Program Director/Coordinator, including the recommendation for an alternative educational program for the student.
- Determination regarding the appeal of suspensions based upon §37H1/2 must be issued within 5 school days of the appeal hearing.

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- The decision from the appeal to the Executive Director is the final decision of SSEC with regard to the suspension.

#### Due Process: Student Convicted of or Plead Guilty to a Felony

- **Notice:** The Program Director/Coordinator will provide the student and parent/guardian written notice of the charges and reason for the expulsion prior to the expulsion taking place.
- The students and parent/guardian shall receive written notice of their right to appeal and the process for appealing the expulsion.
- **Appeal:** Expulsions resulting from violation of §37H1/2 can be appealed to the Executive Director. The student's expulsion remains in effect prior to the hearing with the Executive Director.
- The student and/or parent/guardian must notify the Executive Director in writing no later than five school days following the effective date of the suspension of their desire to appeal the suspension.
- Hearings with the Executive Director or designee must be scheduled within three school days of the request.
- At the hearing, the student and/or parent/guardian shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on their behalf and they have the right to counsel at their expense.
- The Executive Director has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Program Director/Coordinator, including the recommendation for an alternative educational program for the student.
- Determination regarding the appeal of suspensions based upon §37H1/2 must be issued within 5 school days of the appeal hearing.
- The decision from the appeal to the Executive Director is the final decision of SSEC with regard to the suspension.

#### Weapons, Drugs, Assault on Staff

(a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Program Director/Coordinator.

(b) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Program Director/Coordinator.

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses

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at said hearing before the Program Director/Coordinator.

After said hearing, a Program Director/Coordinator may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Program Director/Coordinator to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(d) Any student who has been expelled pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Executive Director. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Executive Director of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Executive Director. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

#### Termination of Student Placement: Planned or Emergency Termination

SSEC is committed to supporting every student in meeting their academic goals as well as growing socially, emotionally and increasing their independence in all areas. SSEC programs consistently communicate with families and other stakeholders to address student needs while supporting the student in directing their education and goals for the future. Creative programming and a variety of supports are used to facilitate opportunities for success. It is important to recognize that SSEC may not be the right educational environment for a particular student. When sustained efforts to problem solve have been exhausted and depending if specific circumstances exist, including serious safety concerns, termination of the program may be necessary.

##### Planned Termination:

In the case of a planned termination, SSEC will follow the procedures required in accordance with 603 CMR 18.05 (7). Except in emergency cases, SSEC will,

- Notify the school district of the need for an IEP review meeting.
- The school district will arrange such meeting
- SSEC will provide notice of this meeting (10) days in advance of the intended date of the meeting to all parties including the district, the parent and if appropriate, the student.
- The meeting shall be held for the purpose of planning and developing a written termination plan for the student.
  1. The written termination 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.
  2. The school shall thoroughly explain termination procedures to the student, the parents, the Administrator of Special Education and officials of the appropriate human service agency.
  3. The written termination plan shall be implemented in no less than (30) calendar days unless all parties agree to an earlier termination date.

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### Emergency Termination:

In the case of an emergency termination, which is defined as “circumstances in which the student presents a clear and present threat to the health and safety of him/herself or others”, SSEC will follow the procedures required under 603 CMR 28.09(12). SSEC will not terminate enrollment of a student even in emergency situations until the enrolling district is informed orally and in writing and assumes responsibility for the student. At the request of the school district, SSEC will delay termination of the student for up to two weeks to allow time for the school district to convene an emergency TEAM meeting or conduct other appropriate planning discussions prior to the student’s termination. With the mutual agreement of SSEC and the sending district, termination may be delayed longer than two weeks.

### Additional Recording of Suspensions

SSEC records suspensions in our SchoolBrains student data system. This is in addition to the required documentation and written notifications provided as a part of this process. All documents associated with the suspension and suspension process are filed in the student’s confidential record.

Suspension “logs” are used in all programs (if applicable) to record details of each suspension looking specifically at the number of suspensions, date, reason and any other relevant disciplinary data.

Discipline issues related to transportation such as complaints or incident reports are placed in the student file. The SSEC staff communicate with districts and transportation companies to help address behavioral and discipline issues.

reviewed 7/2025

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## C. SSEC Hazing Conduct Policy

### South Shore Educational Collaborative

#### HAZING CONDUCT POLICY

Revised 8/2024

The South Shore Educational Collaborative (SSEC) forbids hazing in any form. Should an alleged instance of hazing occur, the provision of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 269, Sections 17-19 shall be adhered to. In addition, the Executive Director or Designee and the Police Department shall immediately be notified of the circumstances of the complaint and the action taken.

Any student who has engaged in hazing shall be subject to disciplinary actions. Any employee who has engaged in hazing shall be subject to disciplinary and/or legal action.

The MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS Chapter 269 CRIMES AGAINST PUBLIC PEACE Sections 17-19 are as follows:

##### **CH.269.S.17 Crime of Hazing / Definition / Penalty**

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

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

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

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#### **CH.296.S.18. Duty to Report Hazing**

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such a crime shall, to the extent that such a person can do without danger or peril to himself or others, report such a crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such a crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

#### **CH.296.S.19 Issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; reporting** Statement of Compliance and Discipline Policy

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

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

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

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its duty to inform any student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student

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enrolled of there provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizer, and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution’s policies to its students. The board of regents and, in this case of secondary institutions, the board of education promulgates regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution, which fails to make such report.

**South Shore Educational Collaborative**  
**HAZING POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

In accordance with Chapter 536 of the Acts of 1985-an act prohibiting the practice of hazing, whoever is an organizer or participant in the crime of hazing will be subject to disciplinary action. A disciplinary hearing will be held in accordance with applicable laws or agreements and/or referred to the Police Department for prosecution.

\_\_\_\_\_ I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed, along with my child, the SSEC Hazing conduct policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/guardian signature (student if aged 18 or over)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Student Name

Date\_\_\_\_\_

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D. SSEC Title IX / Sexual Harassment Policy 2023 (Re-adoption Jan 2025)

South Shore Educational Collaborative

## Sexual Harassment / Title IX Policy

SSEC Board approved on 12/8/2023  
SSEC Board Re-Adoption date: 1/24/2025

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## **SSEC Sexual Harassment / Title IX Policy**

### **Definitions**

Under state law, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment under Massachusetts law when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's advancement (quid pro quo harassment);
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions;
- Such conduct interferes with an individual's job duties; or
- The conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Under federal law, sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- An employee of the recipient conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct ("quid pro quo harassment");
- Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the recipient's education program or activity ("hostile environment harassment"); or
- "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v), "dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), or "stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30)

SSEC will promptly investigate all allegations of sexual harassment of which it has actual knowledge and which are alleged to occur in the school's programs and activities, including locations, events, and/ or circumstances in which the school district exercises substantial control, in a way that is not deliberately indifferent.

The following additional definitions apply:

"Actual knowledge" means notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment to any employee of the district, except that this standard is not met when the only official of the district with actual knowledge is the respondent (where the respondent is an employee). Imputation of knowledge based solely on vicarious liability or constructive notice is insufficient to constitute actual knowledge. Complaints will be addressed whenever the district has actual knowledge of the allegation.

"Administrative leave" means placing an employee on leave pursuant to state law. Nothing in the Title IX regulations precludes a recipient from placing a non-student employee respondent on administrative leave during the pendency of a grievance process, provided that Massachusetts laws are followed.

"Consent" means cooperation in act or attitude pursuant to an exercise of free will of a conscious person with informed knowledge of the nature of the act or actions. A current or previous

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relationship shall not be sufficient to constitute consent. Consent will not be found when submission to the act or actions is undertaken due the influence of fear, fraud, forcible compulsion, threats, and/ or the complainant possessed any legal incapacity to consent at the time of the act or actions. Consent is a defense to all types of sexual harassment.

“Complainant” means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

“Deliberate indifference” means a response to sexual harassment that is clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

“Emergency removal” means the suspension or expulsion of a student on an emergency basis, consistent with state law. Nothing in the Title IX regulations precludes a district from removing a respondent from the district’s education program or activity on an emergency basis, provided that the district follows all procedures under Massachusetts law, undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis, determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal, and provides the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal.

Formal complaint means a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment and requesting that the district investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.

“Respondent” means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

“Supportive measures” means non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the recipient’s education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the recipient’s educational environment, or deter sexual harassment. Supportive measures may include counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, campus escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work or housing locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus, and other similar measures. The district must maintain as confidential any supportive measures provided to the complainant or respondent, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair the ability of the recipient to provide the supportive measures. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the effective implementation of supportive measures

### **Complaints and Reports of Sexual Harassment**

Upon receiving actual notice of alleged sexual harassment without a formal complaint, staff members must notify the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will then contact the complainant within five (5) school days of receiving the complaint and do the following:

- Discuss and offer supportive measures;

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- Consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures;
- Explain that supportive measures may be received with or without filing a formal complaint;
- Determine whether the complainant wishes to file a formal complaint; and
- Explain to the complainant the purpose of filing a formal complaint.

The Title IX Coordinator will document in writing the supportive measures offered/provided or why no supportive measures were offered/provided. Complainants and respondents will be offered supportive measures even if they do not file a formal complaint.

If the complainant declines to file a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator must consider whether to sign a formal complaint and start an investigation despite the complainant's preferences. This decision may be appropriate when safety or similar concerns lead the district to conclude that a non-deliberately indifferent response to actual knowledge of Title IX sexual harassment could reasonably require the school district to investigate and potentially sanction a respondent. A Title IX Coordinator's decision to override the complainant's decision not to file a formal complaint will be documented in writing along with an explanation of why this decision was necessary in order to avoid deliberate indifference.

Formal complaints may also be filed directly with the Title IX Coordinator by a complainant in person, by mail, by email, or by telephone at any time, including during non-business hours. The contact information for the Title IX Coordinator is:

Erin Holder  
 75 Abington Street, Hingham, MA 02043  
 781-749-7518 extension 1619  
[eholder@ssec.org](mailto:eholder@ssec.org)

The complaint may be written by the complainant, or it will be reduced to writing by either the school employee who receives the complaint, the program Director/Coordinator, or the Title IX Coordinator. Whether the complaint is reduced to writing by a student, parent, or staff member, the written complaint should include the name of the complainant, the name of the alleged victim (if different), the name of the respondent, the location of the school/program and general area(s) where the alleged discriminatory action occurred, the basis for the complaint, witnesses (if any), and the corrective action the complainant is seeking. This information will be made on or transferred to a discrimination/ harassment complaint form maintained by SSEC.

There is no time limit or statute of limitation on timing to file a formal complaint. However, at the time of filing a formal complaint, an alleged victim must be participating or attempting to participate in a program or activity of SSEC. Additionally, SSEC has discretion to dismiss a formal complaint where the passage of time would result in SSEC's inability to gather evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility, or when SSEC loses responsibility for the respondent (e.g., the respondent no longer attends or is employed by SSEC).

If the conduct alleged in the formal complaint would not constitute sexual harassment as defined in

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this policy even if proved, did not occur in the school district's education program or activity, or did not occur against a person in the United States, then SSEC must dismiss the formal complaint under these procedures, but could investigate it under other policies and procedures. SSEC will send written notice of any dismissal.

Investigations to allegations of sexual harassment will be prompt and the formal process will be completed within a sixty day timeframe where feasible. There may be a temporary delay of the grievance process or the limited extension of time frames for good cause with written notice to the complainant and the respondent of the delay or extension and the reasons for the action. Good cause may include considerations such as the absence of a party, a party's advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity; or the need for language assistance or accommodation of disabilities.

### **Written Notice**

Before any investigation can begin, SSEC must send written notice to both parties including sufficient details. Sufficient details include the identities of the parties involved in the incident, if known, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident, if known. The written notice includes a statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process. The written notice informs the parties that they may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney, and may inspect and review evidence. It is important to note that SSEC's written notice informs the parties that knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process. Additional action and/or investigation may be needed should knowingly misleading statements either verbally or in writing be made.

If additional allegations are added during the course of the investigation, further written notice must be provided.

### **Informal Resolution**

Where appropriate, after notice has been issued, the Title IX Coordinator must consider offering the parties an option for informal resolution (e.g., mediation). Informal resolution may only be offered after a formal complaint is filed, and the parties must give written consent to engage in this process. Informal resolution may not be used if the allegation is against an employee respondent. Facilitators of informal resolution will be designated by the Title IX Coordinator and must not be biased against any of the parties.

Informal resolution is entirely voluntary. Complainants may elect to pursue formal procedures at any step in the process of making their complaint, even if informal resolution has already begun. Similarly, respondents may elect to follow formal procedures and decline informal resolution.

If the complainant and the respondent feel that their grievances have been sufficiently addressed via informal resolution, then no further action needs to be taken. This voluntary conversation must occur within ten (10) days of the written agreement to enter mediation, unless both parties agree otherwise. The results of an informal resolution shall be maintained by the facilitator, and located in

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a locked file at the SSEC administrative offices.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution from the informal process, or if they do not choose informal resolution, then they can begin the formal complaint procedure described below.

### **Investigation**

If informal resolution is not offered to or accepted by the parties, the Title IX Coordinator will designate an investigator and a decision maker, who may not be the same person. The Title IX Coordinator is free to cast themselves in either role, where appropriate.

The investigator must not be biased against any of the parties at the outset of the investigation. The investigator will be responsible for interviewing parties and witnesses, finding facts, and making determinations related to credibility, all of which will go into a written report. The investigator must avoid all questions that are protected by legal privilege, unless the privilege has been waived, and should avoid asking about the complainant's sexual history unless it is directly relevant to prove consent to the conduct at issue or to prove that the conduct was committed by someone other than the respondent.

Prior to completion of the investigative report, the school district will send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy, and the parties must have at least 10 days to submit a written response, which the investigator will consider prior to completion of the investigative report.

The investigator must avoid making any final determinations of responsibility for sexual harassment.

Findings are written in a factual way in an investigative report. Credibility determinations may not be based on an individual's status as complainant, witness, or respondent.

During the investigative process and any further hearings, complainants and respondents have a right to have advisors of their choice participate in all aspects of the proceedings. SSEC will provide both parties with written notice of investigative interviews, meetings, and hearings, with sufficient time to prepare.

### **Findings of Responsibility**

After the investigator has completed the investigation, the designated decision-maker will be assigned to determine final responsibility or lack thereof for violating Title IX. The decision-maker must not be biased against any of the parties at the outset of this process.

Before the district can determine responsibility, an investigative report will be sent to the parties and the decision-maker will offer both the complainant and respondent the opportunity to submit proposed relevant, written questions to ask of any party or witness, to respond to questions posed by another party, and to offer additional limited follow-up. Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other

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than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent. The decision-maker(s) must explain to the party proposing the questions any decision to exclude a question as not relevant.

After this process is complete, the decision-maker will create a written determination regarding whether sexual harassment has occurred using a preponderance of the evidence standard.

A "preponderance of the evidence" means that it is more likely than not that the alleged conduct occurred. The decision-maker shall further recommend what action, if any, is required. If it is determined that sexual harassment occurred, SSEC will take steps to prevent the recurrence of the harassment and correct its discriminatory effect on the complainant and others if appropriate. Such remedies may include supportive measures.

The written determination must be issued to both parties simultaneously and must include:

- A. Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment;
- B. A description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, methods used to gather other evidence, and hearings held;
- C. Findings of fact supporting the determination;
- D. Conclusions regarding the application of the recipient's code of conduct to the facts;
- E. A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions the recipient imposes on the respondent, and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the recipient's education program or activity will be provided by the recipient to the complainant; and
- F. SSEC's procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal (a copy of, or direct reference to, this policy will suffice).

Formal disciplinary actions may be imposed in the event that the preponderance of the evidence indicates a violation of this policy, up to and including expulsion or termination. Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with due process rights under State law and any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

As indicated above, these procedures do not limit SSEC from removing a student or employee from a program or activity on an emergency basis based on immediate threats to people's physical health or safety or placing an employee on administrative leave during the pendency of the investigation.

### **Records**

A record will be maintained for a period of seven years of any actions, including supportive measures, taken in response to a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment and district staff will document the basis for SSEC's conclusion that its response was not deliberately indifferent.

### **Training**

SSEC will ensure that Title IX Coordinator(s), investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, receive training on the definition of sexual harassment, the scope of the recipient's education program or activity, how to conduct an investigation and

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grievance process including hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes, as applicable, and how to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias.

SSEC will ensure that decision-makers receive training on any technology to be used in interviews and on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant.

SSEC also must ensure that investigators receive training on issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence.

Any materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, must not rely on sex stereotypes and must promote impartial investigations and adjudications of formal complaints of sexual harassment.

These training materials will be posted on the school district's website.

### **Appeals**

Any party may appeal the decision in writing to the SSEC Board of Directors within five (5) school days of receipt of the findings of the formal procedure or a dismissal on the following bases:

(A) Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;

(B) New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; and

(C) The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter.

SSEC will notify the other party in writing when an appeal is filed and implement appeal procedures equally for both parties. Both parties will have a reasonable, equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome.

The current chair of the SSEC Board of Directors or designee, as a further impartial decision-maker, will review the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the investigation and the conclusions, and issue written findings to both the complainant and respondent within thirty (30) school days of the appeal.

Contact information for **2024-2025 Chair of the SSEC Board of Directors:**

Jeffrey Szymaniak, Superintendent  
Whitman-Hanson Regional School District  
610 Franklin Street, Whitman, Ma 02382  
Phone: 781.618.7000  
Fax: 781.618.7099

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## **External Grievance Procedure**

Any student, parent or employee who chooses not to use SSEC's internal grievance procedures or who is not satisfied with SSEC's internal grievance procedures may file a complaint of discrimination or harassment with an appropriate state or federal agency.

For complaints related to discrimination/harassment of students:

The Office for Civil Rights, US Department of Education

5 Post Office Square, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor

Boston, MA 02109-3921

Telephone: 617-289-0111, FAX: 617-289-0150, TDD: 877-521-2172

OR

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination

One Ashburton Place

Sixth Floor, Room 601

Boston, MA 02108

Phone 617-994-6000, TIY: 617-994-6196

For complaints related to discrimination/harassment of parents:

The Office for Civil Rights, US Department of Education

5 Post Office Square, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor

Boston, MA 02109-3921

Telephone: 617-289-0111, FAX: 617-289-0150, TDD: 877-521-2172

For complaints related to discrimination/harassment of employees:

The Office for Civil Rights, US Department of Education

5 Post Office Square, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor

Boston, MA 02109-3921

Telephone: 617-289-0111, FAX: 617-289-0150, TDD: 877-521-2172

OR

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination

One Ashburton Place

Sixth Floor, Room 601

Boston, MA 02108

Phone 617-994-6000, TIY: 617-994-6196

OR

The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission

John F. Kennedy Federal Building

475 Government Center

Boston, MA 02203

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Phone: 1-800-669-4000

### **Referral to Law Enforcement, Other Agencies**

Some alleged conduct may constitute both a violation of District policies and criminal activity. The building Principal, coordinator, Superintendent, or designee will refer matters to law enforcement and other agencies as appropriate under the law or District policy, and inform the complainant/alleged victim of the right to file a criminal complaint.

### **Retaliation**

Complainants and those who participate in the complaint resolution process or who otherwise oppose in a reasonable manner an act or policy believed to constitute discrimination are protected from retaliation by law and SSEC policy. The coordinator or designee will inform all involved individuals that retaliation is prohibited, and that anyone who feels that they have experienced retaliation for filing a complaint or participating in the resolution process should inform the coordinator. The coordinator will investigate reports of retaliation and, where retaliation is found, take separate remedial and disciplinary action.

Important links to file a complaint, address retaliation or dissatisfaction with a decision:

Title IX Complaint form:

<https://forms.gle/qssGgeKtRLesjqH96> (updated 11/2023)

Retaliation & Dissatisfaction (Grievance) Form: (updated 11/2023)

<https://forms.gle/LzFgZdQqfSQFEGcb9>

If you have difficulty with either link, please email the Title IX Coordinator/Director of Student Services, or the Executive Secretary. Contact information can be found on the SSEC website and the form(s) will be shared directly.

SSEC Board of Directors Approval: 12/08/2023

SSEC seeking re-adoption from SSEC Board of Directors on 1/14/2025

reviewed 7/2025

E. SSEC Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Procedures EXCEPT for Title IX  
- 2024

South Shore Educational Collaborative

# **Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Procedures Except for Title IX**

Updated May 2024  
Board Approval: 5/17/2024

reviewed 7/2025

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## **SSEC Non-Discrimination And Anti-Harassment Policy and Procedures Except for Title IX**

It is the policy of The South Shore Educational Collaborative (“SSEC”) to maintain a learning environment that is free from harassment or discrimination of any kind, including sex-based harassment. It is a violation of this policy for any member of the school community to harass or discriminate against another individual as outlined in this policy. Sexual harassment will be addressed through a separate Title IX procedure/policy, but sex-based harassment or discrimination will be addressed through this policy. Any allegation of harassment or discrimination will be investigated, and, if a violation of this policy is substantiated, disciplinary action will be taken. All reports of harassment or discrimination shall be investigated promptly, impartially and in a manner which will preserve the confidentiality of all concerned to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

Any employee, student or third party who believes that he or she has experienced harassment or discrimination on the basis of his or her actual or perceived race, color, creed, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex/gender, homelessness, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or age or who has witnessed or learns about the harassment or discrimination against, another person in the school environment, should inform the Program Administrator of the relevant program or appropriate discrimination/harassment complaint official immediately or as soon as possible. For complaints based on sexual harassment, please follow the SSEC’s Title IX policies and procedures. SSEC further does not deny equal access to or a fair opportunity to meet, or discriminate against, any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America, or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society

Harassment and discrimination is banned not just at school, during school hours, but also before or after school hours on all school property, including the school bus, school functions, or at school events held at other locations. The policy also applies to any off-campus conduct that causes or threatens to cause a substantial and material disruption at school, or interferes with the rights of students or employees to be free from a hostile school environment taking into consideration the totality of the circumstances on and off campus.

Problems and complaints regarding discrimination and harassment should be resolved in a prompt and equitable manner. When possible, such problems and complaints should be resolved in an informal manner.

### **I. Reporting Responsibilities**

Everyone in the school community is responsible for immediately reporting incidents of harassment, discrimination and/or retaliation, by anyone, in any form, that are directed at or witnessed by them at school or at a school sponsored event or of which they

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otherwise learn. Failure to cooperate with an investigation of such an incident will result in disciplinary action. Deceptive reporting may also be subject to a disciplinary response.

An individual may report to either the Program Administrator of the relevant program site or appropriate discrimination/harassment complaint official at his or her discretion. Students may additionally report incidents that they believe involve harassment or discrimination to their guidance counselor, any teacher, administrator or any member of the support staff, and the staff member will refer the complaint to the Program Administrator or the discrimination/harassment complaint official. If a School Guidance or Adjustment Counselor, School Nurse, or any member of the teaching staff, is contacted concerning a complaint or possible complaint, he/she should refer the matter to the Program Administrator immediately. Staff who observe conduct which violates this policy are to report the conduct to the Program Administrator immediately.

Employees who need help or wish to talk about harassment should contact their Program Administrator, the appropriate discrimination/harassment complaint official, the perpetrator's immediate supervisor or any other school administrator immediately.

If one of the discrimination/harassment complaint officials is the person alleged to be engaged in discrimination/harassment, the complaint may be filed with one of the alternate officials or any other school employee the student or employee chooses.

The discrimination/harassment complaint official for SSEC is for the following:

- Title II/ Section 504 (disability)
- Title VI (race, color, national origin) and Title VII (employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin)
- Title IX (sex)
- Age Discrimination/Boy Scouts
- Homelessness

The discrimination/harassment complaint official for SSEC is:

Erin Holder

75 Abington Street, Hingham, Ma 02043

781.749.4519 [eholder@ssec.org](mailto:eholder@ssec.org)

Program/ building level coordinators for these categories are:

The SSEC Program Administrators

## **II. Procedures for Investigating**

The procedures set forth in this policy may be invoked even if other appeals and adjudication procedures have been provided by state law or federal law. Retaliation in any form for the filing of a complaint or reporting of harassment or discrimination is prohibited and will result in serious disciplinary action.

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When a complaint of harassment or discrimination is received by the SSEC, that allegation will be promptly investigated in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances and to the extent consistent with the law and collective bargaining agreements. SSEC will not issue any gag orders against the alleged victim or alleged aggressor. The grievance officer or discrimination/harassment complaint official will inform witnesses and others involved in the resolution process of the importance of maintaining confidentiality.

The investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. The investigation will also include an interview with the person alleged to have committed the harassment or discrimination. Each party will have the opportunity to provide evidence and witnesses.

In certain cases, the harassment of a student may constitute child abuse under state law. SSEC will comply with all legal requirements governing the reporting of suspected cases of child abuse and will report suspected criminal activity to the appropriate authorities.

The specific procedures to be followed in conducting the investigations are set forth more fully below.

1. Any staff member who receives a complaint verbally or in writing concerning harassment or discrimination or observes conduct which he/she believes may constitute harassment or discrimination is required to document the complaint and refer it to the Program Administrator or discrimination/harassment complaint official immediately. Although SSEC encourages a written complaint, use of a formal reporting requirement is not required. Oral reports will be considered complaints as well. The principal or discrimination/harassment complaint official shall ensure that the report is documented in writing within two (2) days of receiving the complaint. The principal must send copies to the relevant discrimination/harassment complaint official within two (2) school days.
2. If the alleged victim or the alleged perpetrator chooses not to utilize the informal procedure, or feels that the informal procedure is inadequate or has been unsuccessful, he or she may proceed to the formal procedure. The informal process is completely voluntary and individuals can opt-out at any time.
3. The informal process will be a voluntary conversation between the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator, which is facilitated by a school employee or by a designated discrimination/harassment complaint official. If the alleged victim or alleged perpetrator is a student under the age of eighteen (18), the facilitator **will** notify the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) if, after initial consultation with the student, it is determined to be in the best interest of the student. If the alleged

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victim and the alleged perpetrator feel that a resolution has been achieved, then the conversation remains confidential and no further action needs to be taken. The voluntary conversation must occur within five (5) workdays after receiving the complaint of discrimination or harassment. The results of an informal resolution shall be maintained by the facilitator, in writing.

4. If the alleged victim does not want to deal directly with the alleged perpetrator, or if the matter is not resolved informally, the complainant should immediately notify the Program Administrator or the discrimination/harassment complaint official for formal resolution.
5. For a formal complaint, the alleged victim (or complainant, if not the alleged victim) will be asked to complete the incident form which begins the formal investigation process conducted by the Program Administrator or the discrimination/harassment complaint official. If the alleged victim is not able to complete the form, the principal or discrimination/harassment complaint official will complete it and ask the alleged victim to sign it. If requested, a Guidance / Adjustment Counselor, a School Nurse, or a School Psychologist may assist a student in completing the incident form.
6. During the investigation, the Program Administrator or discrimination/harassment complaint official will:
  - Keep the investigation group as small as possible to protect the rights of all parties and to prevent the investigation from becoming overly publicized and to protect the alleged victim (in addition to the complainant, if not the alleged victim) from retaliation.
  - Complete the investigation as soon as possible from the date that it is reported, but no later than thirty (30) work days from the date of the complaint or report, unless impracticable. The investigation will include interviewing the complainant, the alleged victim (if different than the complainant), the alleged perpetrator and such other person(s) named by the complainant, alleged victim (if different than the complainant), or the alleged perpetrator who may have witnessed or have information pertaining to the incident. An opportunity will be provided for all parties to be heard and present witnesses.
  - Throughout the investigation SSEC will maintain on-going contact with the alleged victim. In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the Program Administrator or discrimination/harassment complaint official shall consider the age and level of understanding of the student(s) involved, surrounding circumstances, any relevant documents, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved, and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of SSEC's policy

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prohibiting discrimination or harassment based on the actual or perceived protected class status of a student, employee or third party, requires a determination based on all of the facts and surrounding circumstances. Given that victims often experience continuing effects of harassment in the educational setting, during the investigative process SSEC will consider off-campus conduct to determine whether there is a hostile environment on campus.

7. After completing the investigation, the Program Administrator or discrimination/harassment complaint official will conclude whether a violation of the policy has occurred or not; complete the written investigation report form and send copies of the report to the discrimination/harassment complaint official, if the Program Administrator is conducting the investigation, the Executive Director, the alleged victim (in addition to the complainant, if not the alleged victim) and the alleged perpetrator. The report shall include:

- A statement of the allegations investigated;
- A summary of the steps taken to investigate the allegations;
- The findings of fact based on a preponderance of the evidence gathered;
- SSEC's conclusion of whether discrimination or harassment did or did not occur;
- The disposition of the complaint;
- The rationale for the disposition of the complaint; and
- If SSEC concluded discrimination or harassment occurred, a description of SSEC's response.

The Program Administrator or the discrimination/harassment complaint official shall determine whether the allegations have been substantiated as factual and whether they appear to be violations of this policy, using a preponderance of the evidence standard. A "preponderance of the evidence" means that it is more likely than not that the alleged conduct occurred.

If the complaint is supported, the report should recommend what action, if any, is required and will identify what steps SSEC is going to take to prevent recurrence of any discrimination or harassment and to correct its discriminatory effects on the complainant and others, if appropriate.

8. Formal disciplinary actions shall be imposed in the event that the preponderance of the evidence indicates that the alleged conduct occurred. Any disciplinary action will be in accordance with due process rights under State law and any applicable collective bargaining agreement. The seriousness of the offense, including the nature and degree of harm caused, shall be considered when deciding the appropriate disciplinary action.

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- If the person alleged to have violated this policy is a staff member, possible discipline includes, but is not limited to, letters of reprimand, reassignment, and other disciplinary actions, including suspension or job termination.
- If the person alleged to have violated this policy is a student, possible discipline includes reprimand, classes or instruction on appropriate behavior, counseling, class transfer, detention, suspension or expulsion, consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.
- Any discipline of students will focus on changing behavior and ensuring that students learn about the impact of their behaviors and attitudes. Possible remedial action includes:
  - o Interventions for the alleged victim, such as counseling, academic support, health services, assigning an escort to allow the student to move safely between classes, and instruction on how to report other incidents of harassment or discrimination.
  - o Training or other interventions for the larger school community to ensure that students, staff and parents understand the types of behavior that constitute harassment or discrimination, and how to report it.
  - o Interventions for the individual who engaged in the conduct, such as parent notification, counseling, guidance, education about the impact of the conduct, positive behavior support, referral to a student success team, transfer to alternative programs, denial of participation in extracurricular or co-curricular activities or other privileges, and discipline.
- If it is established that the conduct involves a violation of law, report the matter immediately to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

## 9. Appeal Procedure

- The parties have the right to appeal the decision of the Decision Maker to either the current Executive Director of SSEC or the Chair of SSEC's Board of Directors (depending if the Executive Director acted as decision maker) in writing within ten (10) calendar days after the decision is formally made. The Executive Director or Chairperson of the Board will offer the other party an opportunity to respond in writing and then will send the parties a decision within thirty (30) calendar days.

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- Contact information is listed below. All current contact information can also be found on the SSEC website.

<b>SSEC Executive Director</b>	<b>Chair of the SSEC Board of Directors:</b>
Through June 30, 2024	Through June 30, 2024
Rick Reino, SSEC Executive Director 339 201 4518 rreino@ssec.org	Judith Kuehn, Superintendent Hull Public Schools <a href="mailto:jkuehn@town.hull.ma.us">jkuehn@town.hull.ma.us</a> Phone: 781-925-4400 x:1118
<b>Effective July 1, 2024</b>	<b>Effective July 1, 2024</b>
Michael Losche, SSEC Executive Director 339 201 4518 mlosche@ssec.org	Jeffrey Szymaniak, Superintendent Whitman Hanson Public Schools <a href="mailto:Jeffrey.Szymaniak@whrsd.org">Jeffrey.Szymaniak@whrsd.org</a> Phone: 781-618-7411

### III. Interim Measures

SSEC shall take immediate steps to protect the alleged victim, alleged perpetrator, witnesses, and the larger school community pending the completion of an investigation or the informal process and address any ongoing harassment or discrimination.

Examples of interim measures include, but are not limited to:

- Providing counseling services via the school adjustment counselor and/or school psychologist for both the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator;
- Providing academic support services;
- Ensuring no contact between the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator in District programs and activities (e.g., through stay away orders); SSEC will take care to minimize the burden of such steps on the alleged victim;
- Providing an alternate schedule to ensure that the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator do not attend the same classes;
- Informing the alleged victim of how to report any recurring conduct or retaliation;
- Providing the alleged victim with alternative movement between classes and activities; and
- Making community based referral to medical and counseling services.

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If the circumstances suggest a threat to others, the Program Administrator or the discrimination/harassment complaint official will ensure that SSEC informs relevant members of the school community. This may include, for example, notifying employees of areas where harassment or discrimination frequently occurs.

#### **IV. Referral to Law Enforcement and Other Agencies**

Some alleged conduct may constitute both a violation of District policies and criminal activity. The Program Administrator or the discrimination/harassment complaint official will refer matters to law enforcement and other agencies as appropriate under the law or District policy, and inform the complainant of the right to file a criminal complaint.

The Program Administrator or the discrimination/harassment complaint official will follow this procedure regardless of whether the alleged conduct is also being investigated by another agency, unless the fact finding process would impede a law enforcement investigation. In such cases, the Program Administrator or the discrimination/harassment complaint official will determine whether interim measures to protect the well-being of the complainant and the school community and prevent retaliation are needed while the law enforcement agency's fact-gathering is in progress. Once notified that law enforcement has completed its gathering of evidence (not the ultimate outcome of the investigation or the filing of any charges), the Program Administrator or the discrimination/harassment complaint official will promptly resume and complete the investigation.

Additionally, several behaviors listed as harassment may also constitute physical abuse. Thus, under certain circumstances, alleged harassment may also constitute physical abuse under Massachusetts law. Such harassment or abuse is subject to the duties of mandatory reporting and must be reported to the Department of Children and Families within twenty-four (24) hours of the time the educator becomes aware of the suspected abuse. All school personnel are identified as being mandatory reporters.

#### **V. Conflict of Interest**

If there is a conflict of interest with respect to any party affected by this policy, appropriate accommodations will be made, such as, but not limited to, appointing or contracting with a neutral third-party investigator to conduct the investigation, or recusing from the process the person for whom a conflict or potential conflict of interest exists.

#### **VI. Retaliation**

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Retaliation in any form for the filing of a complaint, the reporting of discrimination, including harassment, or participating in an investigation is prohibited. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment. If retaliation is established, it can be considered grounds for disciplinary action. Any allegations of reprisal will be subject to the same kind of investigation and disciplinary action as described above. The Program Administrator or the discrimination/harassment complaint official will inform all involved individuals that retaliation is prohibited, and that anyone who feels they have experienced harassment, coercion, intimidation, or discrimination for filing a complaint or participating in the resolution process should inform the Program Administrator or the discrimination/harassment complaint official.

## **VII. Right to Alternative Complaint Procedures**

In addition to the remedies set forth above, if you believe you have been subjected to harassment or discrimination, you may file a formal complaint with the government agency or agencies set forth below. Using the SSEC complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim.

### **A. Students**

If you believe you have been subjected to harassment or discrimination, you may file a formal complaint with:

- Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Program Quality Assurance Services  
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906  
Phone: (781) 338-3700  
FAX: (781) 338-3710  
Email: [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu)  
The time period for filing a claim is one year from the action.
- United States Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights("OCR")  
5 Post Office Square  
Boston, MA 02109  
tel. (617) 289-0111  
The time period for filing a claim with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights is 180 days.

### **B. Employees**

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If you believe you have been subjected to harassment or discrimination, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below:

- United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC")  
JFK Federal Building, Room 475  
Boston, MA 02203  
tel. (800) 669-4000  
The time period for filing a claim with the EEOC is 180 days.
- Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination ("MCAD")

<u>Boston Office</u>	<u>Springfield Office</u>
One Ashburton Place, Rm. 601	436 Dwight Street, Rm. 220
Boston, MA 02108	Springfield, MA 01103
(617) 994-6000	(413) 739-2145
The time period for filing a claim with the MCAD is 300 days.	

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F. SSEC Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures2024

# South Shore Educational Collaborative

## Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures

Updated Spring 2024  
Board Approval: 5/17/2024

reviewed 7/2025

Safety \* Respect \* Relationships \* Growth

### **Physical Restraint Policy** (Criteria 9.4)

South Shore Educational Collaborative (SSEC) has enacted the following policy and procedures governed under 603 CMR 46.00: Prevention of Physical Restraint and Requirements If Used. The purpose of 603 CMR 46.00 and the SSEC policy is to ensure that every SSEC student participating in the program is free from the use of physical restraint that is inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00 and SSEC policy. 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 should only be used when the student's behavior constitutes a threat of serious, imminent harm to self or others.

SSEC personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:

1. to administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm
2. to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.

Nothing in 603 CMR 46.00 and the SSEC policy precludes any staff member from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious physical harm.

### **Use and Administration of Restraint**

#### **Physical Restraint:**

Physical restraint shall mean direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

- Physical restraint is prohibited in the following circumstances:
  - As a means of discipline or punishment;

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- When the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;
- As a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a public education program rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm; or
- As a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.

\*Mechanical restraint, medication restraint, prone restraint and seclusion **are also prohibited**.

1. Mechanical restraint: Mechanical Restraint shall mean the use of any device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement. The term does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student that have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related services professional, and are used for the specific and approved positioning or protective purposes for which such devices were designed. Examples of such devices include: adaptive devices or mechanical supports used to achieve proper body position, balance, or alignment to allow greater freedom of mobility than would be possible without the use of such devices or mechanical supports; vehicle safety restraints when used as intended during the transport of a student in a moving vehicle; restraints for medical immobilization; or orthopedically prescribed devices that permit a student to participate in activities without risk of harm.
2. Medication Restraint: Medication Restraint shall mean the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior. Medication prescribed by a licensed physician and authorized by the parent for administration in the school setting is not medication restraint.
3. Prone restraint: Prone restraint shall mean a physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in the face-down position.
4. Seclusion: Seclusion shall mean the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a break as defined by a behavioral support strategy in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During breaks, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for breaks must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Breaks shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.

Physical restraint shall be limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary to protect a student or others from assault or imminent, serious physical harm. (Minimum Impact)

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Nothing in the regulations or SSEC policies prohibits:

1. The right of any individual to report to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or other individual.
2. Law enforcement, judicial authorities or school personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including the physical detainment of a student or other person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk.
3. The exercise of an individual's responsibilities as a mandated reporter. Nothing within this policy shall be used to deter any individual from reporting neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency.

Only school personnel who have received required training pursuant to this policy shall administer physical restraint on students. Whenever possible, the administration of a restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint. The training requirements shall not preclude a teacher, employee or agent of the school from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. A person administering a physical restraint shall use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm.

A person administering physical restraint shall use the safest and least restrictive method available and appropriate to the situation. Floor restraints may be administered by staff who have received training in this specified restraint and for specific students from whom it has been specified and/or, when in the judgment of the trained staff member, such method is required to provide safety for the student or others. Prone restraints are not used at SSEC.

All physical restraints will be terminated as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others, or the student indicates that he or she cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress, such as having difficulty breathing, sustained or prolonged crying or coughing. A program nurse is called when a restraint is initiated. The nurse observing the episode can also make the call to release the restraint based on their observations.

Additional safety requirements for the use of physical restraint includes that no restraint shall be administered in a way that the student is prevented from breathing or speaking. SSEC staff will continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin temperature and color, and respiration. Restraint shall be administered in such a way to prevent or minimize physical harm. If the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress including, but not limited to, difficulty breathing, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance. Non-verbal students will have access to communication boards as needed throughout the restraint. If a student is restrained for a period longer than 20 minutes, the staff shall obtain the approval of the Program Director or Designee. The approval will be based upon the student's continued agitation during the restraint justifying the need for continued restraint. All medical contraindications and psychological limitations shall be reviewed and considered by program staff. After the release of a student from a restraint, the program will implement follow-up procedures. These procedures will include:

- reviewing the incident with the student as appropriately needed.
- reviewing what precipitated the restraint
- reviewing the incident with the staff who administered the restraint and to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed and if any follow up is appropriate.

Required Training: SSEC Training and Procedures

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## Training:

SSEC utilizes WELLE ( <https://www.welletraining.com/> ), a behavioral safety support system. WELLE provides training on methods to prevent student violence, self-injurious behavior and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behavior occurring among students at SSEC. All staff are trained to identify behaviors that are off baseline and are therefore able to manage behaviors proactively. Staff are trained in using verbal de-escalation, proprietary behavior scales, praise scales, and the SMART principles. They include:

- **Staying one step ahead;** general awareness, being able to make a plan, being aware of medical and psychological limitations of the students.
- **Moving one step at a time,** slow down and give students a chance to process requests
- **Always make it safer,** what you can do next that will make it safer than it is now.
- **Refocusing Attention**
- **Together/how to work together** to make the environment safe using communication and respect. Always use minimum impact.

All staff are trained to identify different levels of danger and a safe, effective response at each level. Staff uses a common language to limit misunderstandings and ensure staff action as early in the process as possible, which will lead to de-escalation of more threatening behavior. Staff is trained to assess danger which could include the threat of lethal behavior such as suicide or homicide. All staff are trained in defusing techniques with the goal of restoring calm, preventing escalation or re-escalation, and ensuring minimal impact responses. Staff receive guidelines on how to make a clear request, how to keep a conversation on track, offering choices and utilizing defusing techniques. All staff are trained on how to generate cooperation, and assist the students to acquire more outlets for stress and reducing violence. Restraint prevention/avoidance and elimination techniques are part of this training. Staff should be able to anticipate problems and manage stress to minimize the potential for violent outbursts. For a student whose behavior impedes their learning or the learning of others, the team considers the student's behavior, including positive behavioral interventions and the possible need for a functional behavioral assessment.

All new staff/faculty will receive WELLE training which consists of sixteen hours of training with an annual refresher thereafter of six hours. This training will occur within the first month(s) of the school year. Employees hired after the school year begins will receive training within one month of starting their employment.

SSEC maintains our own staff WELLE trainers, trained annually by instructors from WELLE. SSEC's WELLE trainers provide all of the new staff training as well as programmatic recertification training throughout each school year. SSEC WELLE trainers are also available in their respective programs to consult to other staff before, during and after situations that called for the use of WELLE techniques. SSEC WELLE trainers and Program Directors/Coordinators communicate throughout each year in regard to planning and scheduling the annual needs of the programs. Required training for all staff will include the following:

1. Training to include the SSEC restraint policy and DESE regulation 603 CMR 46.00 (to be included in initial new staff WELLE training and reviewed during recertification training each year).
2. Training to include prevention and behavior support policies, including breaks, positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS), de-escalation techniques, alternatives to physical restraint.
3. Training will identify the types of permitted physical restraints

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4. Training to include the simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
5. Training to include instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints
6. Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint.
7. SSEC WELLE trainers will document which staff are certified to proficiently complete specific skills, including physical interventions or if they require additional training to further solidify their knowledge and understanding. This is documented in a training portfolio and sent to WELLE as well as the Executive Secretary at the completion of each initial and recertification training.

### Alternatives to Physical Restraint

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. SSEC program staff participate in continuous conversations, data analysis and intervention strategies to offer alternatives to physical restraint as a first resort and/or whenever possible and appropriate. Alternatives can vary from the use of simple verbal language and/or non verbal language such as sign/gesture to removing the learning activity (both classroom strategies), to environmental modifications to removing the student from the learning activity by choice or by direction (break time /settling time). In WELLE and program specific training, SSEC staff are taught the skills to recognize the need for intervention and to be able to initiate alternative strategies when appropriate.

### Classroom Strategies and team collaboration:

1. The de-escalation of problematic behavior using WELLE techniques such as making clear requests, keeping a conversation on track, offering choices, utilizing defusing techniques, generating cooperation.
2. Relationship building for staff and students promoting respect and open communication
3. Understanding the WELLE Red Behavior Scale and the levels to which a behavior can escalate and therefore identifying and initiating effective responses at each level.
4. Employing WELLE green zone techniques to identify the sources of student coping and strength that can prevent crises and violence in the future. Assist the students to acquire more outlets for stress.
5. Using S.M.A.R.T principles and general safety awareness
6. Environmental modifications
7. Use of both verbal and non verbal language (sign/gesture)
8. Collaboration to develop descriptions and identification of dangerous behaviors on the part of a student that may indicate the need for physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted and what specific alternatives to present first.
9. Collaboration to assess the impact of physical restraint on the student and family, recognizing the act of restraint has impact, including but not limited to

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psychological, physiological, and social-emotional effects.

### Behavioral Support Strategy:

“Break time” or “settling time” is a behavioral support strategy in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. All SSEC programs utilize spaces within their program areas that are clean, safe, sanitary and appropriate for the purpose of calming. SSEC programs have settling/break rooms designated for use at approved times. Each program at SSEC has varying levels of alternative settling and break spaces to offer during varying levels of student need. Settling and break space in each program may vary due to age appropriateness and program need.

During break time/settling time, a student is continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be available at all times and is in close proximity to the student. break time/settling time shall cease as soon as the student has calmed (criteria). Each program determines its “calm criteria” due to each specific student’s needs, age and student’s behavior intervention plan. A program nurse should be alerted of a break time/settling time situation if a student is not able to calm in order to monitor the physical status of a student particularly if there is an underlying medical condition. Program staff are trained and follow guidelines in implementing a behavioral support strategy. The duration of these break time/settling time procedures shall be tracked and recorded. A duration of 30 minutes requires approval from the Program Director or Designee. Other documentation will include:

- length of time
- reason for the intervention,
- who approved the procedure
- who directly observed the student while in time-out.

### Parent/Guardian Communication:

Methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and the use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure include:

- Parents/Guardians are annually notified of the use of Physical Restraint in emergency situations. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requires all special education programs in Massachusetts to send this notification.
  - School personnel shall use physical restraint with two goals in mind:
    - To administer a physical restraint only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm; and
    - To prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.
- The use of restraint is dictated and governed by Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Regulations, 603 CMR 46.00.

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- In addition, parents and/or guardians will be fully informed of all information relevant to physical restraint and behavioral support strategies for their child in his or her native language or other mode of communication.
- There will be reasonable effort to verbally inform the student's parent of the restraint within 24 hours of the event. Reporting requirements and follow-up procedures for reports to parents/guardians will be sent home within three school working days of the restraint. A parent/student comment section is located on the report and parents can respond in writing or orally.

## Complaints:

Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints regarding restraint practices:

Parents and students are encouraged to communicate any concerns or questions they may have about restraint practices. They are welcome to communicate their concerns through the use of physical restraint reports, emails, telephone calls and meetings. They are free to express their concerns at any time to different staff including, but not limited to the Program Director/Designee, Coordinator if not Designee, classroom teacher, behavior specialist, support staff, as well as the Executive Director. In the event that they do not feel their concerns are being addressed adequately, they are encouraged to use the following complaint registration process:

1. Request in writing a conference with the Program Director to make their concerns known.
2. Within one week following the conference, the Program Director will follow-up with a response to the student or parent concerns in writing, including any reasons for the decision made. If the decision supports the student or parent concerns, the Program Director will promptly put the decision into effect.
3. The Program Director will notify and keep the Executive Director informed of the complaint throughout the process.
4. In the event that the student or parent should disagree with any part of the decision made by the Program Director, they may, in writing, appeal the decision to and request a meeting with the Executive Director. The Executive Director will follow-up with a response to the student or parent concerns in writing, including any reasons for the decision made. If the decision supports the student or parent concerns, the Program Director will promptly put the decision into effect.
5. If a student or parent is still dissatisfied with the decision, it is recommended that they then contact the Director of Special Education of their sending district and express their concerns in writing.
6. In the event of an unsatisfactory resolution, the Executive Director will also contact the Director of Special Education of the sending district and inform him/her of the impasse with the student or parent. The Executive Director will work with the Director of Special Education to satisfactorily address the concerns in the best interest of the student.
7. Nothing in this policy is to prevent a parent from exercising his/her right under the Options for Dispute Resolution (Section 28.08) of Massachusetts Special Education Regulations.

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## Permitted physical restraints

- Assist / 2 Person Modified Assist

One staff member is at the student's side and secures any portion of the student's arm following WELLE procedure. A second staff member may secure the other arm if needed. An assist may occur while the student is standing, sitting, or kneeling.

- One-Arm Body Wrap

One staff person follows WELLE procedure and ends up standing behind the student and has secured one of the student's arms above the wrist and on the bicep. A second staff person can secure the student's other arm by utilizing an assist position. The one-arm body wrap position can be utilized if the student is sitting, standing or kneeling.

- Capture Wrap

The student is in the one-arm body wrap. A second staff person engages the student's other arm and, following WELLE procedure, ends up standing behind the first staff person securing the student's second arm.

- Floor Restraint

This restraint begins with two staff holding a student in a capture wrap and is used when a restraint team cannot safely keep the student standing. This is a procedure for slowing the descent to the floor in a safe manner. The student and two staff members follow to the floor and the student is then rolled onto their side. Staff will position the student so that the staff member's arm is under the student and the student's upper body and head is not in contact with the floor. A third staff member may secure the student's legs if needed. The student remains on his/her side throughout the restraint.

- Small Body

For students with a smaller body size, a small body modification to the one-arm body wrap may be used. The staff member will stand behind the student and, following WELLE procedure, will cross the student's arms in front of them, securing the student by holding his/her own wrist with their other hand. This restraint may be used while sitting, standing or kneeling.

- Sitting Modified Body Assist:

While on the floor, staff grasps upper arm, thumbs together and secures upper arm against the student's torso. Staff releases pressure and slides both hands together just above the elbow and secures the upper arm against the student's torso. Staff releases pressure and slides both hands together to just above the wrist and secures the lower arm against the student's upper torso. Staff leans in with their shoulder against the student's shoulder. If the person struggles, the staff allows the person to flex elbow, and then pivots inside hand to maintain grip on the distal end of the forearm, tucking the student's elbow under staff's own armpit and moves the student's arm

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towards the student. If the student is dangerously kicking, staff may hold the feet by wrapping their inside leg over the aggressor's leg while remaining off of joints. If necessary, a third staff can support the student from behind while in a kneeling position.

- **Closing the Gate:**

The aggressor is sitting at a table/desk and staff approach from behind and secures one shoulder with both hands, presses against the aggressor, slides down to just above the elbow, slides down to above the wrist and presses it against the table/desk with their palm facing down flat. Staff should be prepared to implement one arm body wrap if the aggressor escalates.

### Reporting Requirements:

**Program staff** shall report the use of any physical restraint as defined under these regulations.

#### **Reporting to the Program Director or Designee:**

The staff member who administered the restraint shall verbally inform the Program Director/Designee of the restraint as soon as possible and by written report no later than the next school working day. The written report shall be provided to the Program Director/Designee for review of the use of the restraint. The Program Director/Designee shall maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint, which shall be made available for review by the parent or the Department upon request.

#### **Reporting to Parents:**

The Program Director or Designee will make a reasonable effort to verbally inform parents or guardians of the restraint within twenty-four hours. A reasonable effort is documentation of at least three (3) attempts. The documentation will include:

1. what time the Parent/Guardian was called
2. which phone number was called
3. whether voicemail was left.

According to DESE, a written notice will be sent either within three school working days of the restraint to an email address provided by the parent for communications about the student, or by regular mail postmarked no later than three school working days of the restraint. If the program customarily provides a parent of a student with report cards and other necessary school-related information in a language other than English, the written restraint report shall be provided to the parent in that language. The principal shall provide the student and the parent an opportunity to comment orally and in writing on the use of the restraint and on information in the written report.

#### **Reporting to the Department:**

Collect and annually report all physical restraints to the Department. Report all restraint related injuries to the Department within three (3) school working days or postmarked within three (3) school days. Whenever a report is submitted to DESE, the program will also provide a copy of

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the log of physical restraints maintained by the Program Director/Designee for the past 30 days. (There is no requirement to report "break data" to DESE, but SSEC collects this data internally).

Content of Report:

- Name of student
- Names and job titles of the staff who administered the restraint and observers, if any;
- Date of restraint
- Time the restraint began and ended
- Name of the Program Director or Designee who approved continuation of the restraint beyond 20 minutes.
- A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff in the same room or vicinity were engaged immediately preceding the use of physical restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to prevent escalation of behavior, including the specific de-escalation strategies used; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint.
- A description of the administration of the restraint including the holds used and reasons such holds were necessary; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how the restraint ended; and documentation of injury to the student and/or staff, if any, during the restraint and any medical care provided.
- Information regarding any further action that the school has taken or may take, including any consequences that may be imposed on the student.
- Information regarding opportunities for the student's parents/guardians to discuss with school officials the administration of the restraint, any consequences that may be imposed on the student and any other related matter.

## Data Review: Individual Student Review and Administrative Review

### Individual Student Review

The Program Director or Designee shall conduct weekly review of restraint data to identify any students who have been restrained multiple times during the week.

If such student is identified the Program Director or Designee shall convene a review team to assess the student needs. The review team will include the Program Director or Designee, classroom teacher and paraprofessionals and not limited to specialists that work with the student. A record of the review will be kept on file.

The review meeting will include:

- The written reports of restraints.
- Parent/Guardian or student comments on the written notice, if any.
- Analysis of circumstances leading up to each restraint.
- Factors that may have contributed to escalation of behavior.
- A written plan of action to reduce or eliminate future use of restraint.

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## Administrative Review

The Program Director or Designee will conduct a monthly review of school/program wide restraint data. This review shall consider:

- patterns of use of restraints by similarities in the time of day, day of the week, or individuals involved;
- the number and duration of physical restraints school-wide and for individual students;
- the duration of restraints; and the number and type of injuries, if any, resulting from the use of restraint.

The Program Director or Designee shall determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify the school's restraint prevention and management policy, conduct additional staff training on restraint reduction/prevention strategies (such as training on positive behavioral interventions and supports), or take such other action as necessary or appropriate to reduce or eliminate restraints.

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G. SSEC Technology and Electronic Communication Device Responsible Use Policy.

SOUTH SHORE EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE

# SSEC Technology and Electronic Communication Device Responsible Use Policy

SSEC Board Approval, September 2024

reviewed 7/2025

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## SSEC Technology and Electronic Communication Device Responsible Use Policy

The South Shore Educational Collaborative (hereinafter the Collaborative or SSEC) supports the use of technology when used in a responsible, ethical and legal manner. It is understood that students, personnel, and contractors (hereinafter “users”) will use technology solely for educational purposes related to the mission of SSEC and in accordance with the Collaborative’s Responsible Use Policy.

Technology and electronic communication device (ECD) users are responsible for following this policy when accessing technology in the schools. Rules for conduct and communication apply to internet, network use and the use of any school or personal ECD. This includes, but is not limited to computers, scanners, still and video cameras, cell phones, document cameras, SmartBoards, LCD projectors, iPads, iPods, Kindles and all electronic devices. If inappropriate use is suspected, then both school and/or personal ECDs may be examined by school staff or legal officials. Consequences for inappropriate use of any ECD will be determined based on individual student needs and program’s guidelines as taught within their digital citizenry curriculum. Consequences may include, but are not limited to: verbal warning, loss of independent use, required attendance in the next round of digital citizenry curriculum, parent notification, loss of use of ECDs for a predetermined amount of time (several minutes, class period, day, week, etc.), timeout, in-school or out-of-school suspension, termination of technology privileges, and possible notification of law enforcement. Use of non-school ECDs and at non-school locations which violates any of these policies and directly threatens the health and safety of the staff and/or students of SSEC may result in disciplinary action including termination of student placement or staff employment. If the student uses the ECD for communication purposes, consequences will not interfere with a student’s ability to communicate in his/her environment as reflected in the student’s IEP. The South Shore Educational Collaborative will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted within or through the Collaborative’s technology infrastructure.

Personnel and student use of technology will be permitted upon verification of the annual signing of the Technology and ECD Responsibility Use Policy. The program director or designee will maintain signature records, and will be responsible for enforcing the Technology & Electronic Communication Device Responsible Use Policy. The South Shore Educational Collaborative reserves the right to make amendments to the terms and conditions of this policy.

The Massachusetts Public Records Law (MGL c.66 §10) applies to all government records generated, received or maintained electronically, including computer records, electronic mail, video, offsite/cloud storage, and audio files. All books, papers, maps, photographs, recorded tapes, financial statements, statistical tabulations, or other documentary materials or data, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by any officer or employee of any Massachusetts government entity is a public record.

Notwithstanding any other provision contained herein, this policy does not supersede the Collaborative’s policy regarding student records within the meaning of the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) and the regulations pertaining to student records in the Commonwealth of

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Massachusetts, including specifically those set forth at 603 CMR 23.00, et seq. The Collaborative abides by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00, et seq as each pertains to the maintenance of, access to, amendment of and retention of student records.

#### SSEC System Security

All internet or ECD activity including sent and received email is and remains the property of the Collaborative and is subject to the requirements of the Public Records Law. G. L. c. 66. Personnel and students shall not have any expectation of privacy with respect to any data on the Collaborative's system. The executive director, technology coordinator and program directors shall have the right to retrieve any information stored on the system at any time.

#### Appropriate/Inappropriate Use of ECDs

The computer system is not to be used to create or distribute any offensive or disruptive messages. This includes sharing or forwarding any electronic communications that violate this policy (i.e. messages, photos, videos, etc.). Among those considered offensive are any messages that contain sexual implications, slander, racial slurs, gender slurs or insults, or any other comment that offensively addresses someone's age, sex, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin, marital or familial status or disability. The system will not be used to intentionally transmit or display any kind of sexually explicit image or document. Sexual harassment shall be grounds for dismissal in accordance with the Collaborative's formal policy on sexual harassment.

The Collaborative's technology will not be used to further personal interests such as political, religious, or commercial views, or to send threatening or harassing messages. Users will not download, store, create, or forward any information regarding explosives or weapons unless as information for a specific class assignment.

Users will not gain access by using another's credentials or attempt to gain unauthorized access to computers, servers, Google Apps for Education accounts, voicemails or other ECD's. Users will not purposely infect the network or computers with spyware, malware or viruses. Users will not utilize any keystroke loggers or information grabbing software/device. Users will not download any unauthorized software, file or program. Users will not knowingly use the internet to access bandwidth grabbing programs unless authorized to do so. Users will not record audio and/or video without direct consent from all involved parties according to M.G.L. Chapter 272, Section 99 and M.G.L. Chapter 214, Section 1B.

#### Social Networking

Users will be cautious with text, photos and other digital content that may be displayed on any

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social networking site. Access to social networking sites is prohibited through the Collaborative's network/system and ECDs unless under the direction of a teacher or administrative personnel.

SSEC technology will not be used to access material that includes but is not limited to:

- Profane or obscene (pornography) material
- Advocates illegal or violent activities
- Advocates discrimination towards other individuals or groups

#### Personal Use

SSEC strongly discourages the use of SSEC technology for personal use, and may take action against an individual user who does use it for personal reasons in a manner which is contrary to this policy.

Occasional personal emails may be permissible, provided that the personal use does not incur additional cost to the Collaborative. Users understand that all messages transmitted or received on the Collaborative's system remain subject to this policy. The executive director and program directors may restrict or prevent the use of the e-mail system for personal matters at any time. Notwithstanding the allowance of an occasional personal email, as a general rule, the Collaborative's internet connection should not be used for personal communications, to engage in commerce, for entertainment or for any other purpose unrelated to the Collaborative's mission and work.

Non-professional internet chatting is prohibited. Collaborative ECDs will not be used to transmit jokes, chain letters, and similar junk emails. Users will promptly delete such junk emails received on Collaborative ECDs.

#### Personal Safety

Users will not arrange for meetings with anyone they have met online. If someone online attempts to arrange a meeting, users will immediately notify an appropriate person. Users will not reveal personal information about themselves or others online. Personal information includes, but is not limited to the following: name, address, profiles, telephone, date of birth, pictures, etc. Users will promptly disclose to a personnel member any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable. Users will not harass another person or engage in personal attacks, including those prejudicial or discriminatory in nature following the guidelines of the anti-bullying policy.

#### Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

Users will conduct themselves appropriately on the internet and respect the copyrights, software licensing rules, property rights, and privacy of others. Users will respect the rights of all copyright owners, recognizing that infringement occurs when a person reproduces a work that is protected by a copyright. Users will not plagiarize; therefore, they should cite all quotes, references, and sources. Acknowledging the source of a copyrighted material does not substitute for obtaining reproduction rights. Users may reproduce copyrighted works within the limits of fair use, and using proper

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citation. Fair use is explained at: <http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html>. Users of the Collaborative's ECDs will not install pirated software. All users should be aware that disseminating illegally obtained/pirated software is a federal offense which is punishable by imprisonment, fine or both.

#### Return of SSEC-owned ECDs

Upon separation from SSEC, any SSEC-owned ECDs will be returned in condition consistent with its use and age. If an SSEC-owned ECD is not returned to SSEC on the last workday prior to an employee's separation, then funds necessary to replace the ECD will be deducted from the employee's final paycheck. Loaner ECDs will be returned in the specified time frame consistent with the condition in which it was received.

\*SSEC Board of Directors Approval 9/2024

reviewed 7/2025

## H. SSEC Visitor Observation Agreement

### **AGREEMENT REGARDING PROCEDURES & CONFIDENTIALITY**

#### DURING OBSERVATION OF STUDENT CLASSROOMS & RELATED AREAS AT SSEC

I, \_(your name)\_\_\_\_\_, will be observing \_(student's name)\_\_\_\_\_ on (date)\_\_\_\_\_ in special education classes, related service and therapy sessions and unstructured times like lunch and recess. I understand that my observation will provide me access to staff and other students besides the student named above. Also, I understand that the SSEC may terminate the observation at any time at its own discretion.

As an observer, I understand and agree that:

1. I will arrive ten (10) minutes before the scheduled start time of the observation, so I can sign in and follow any other procedures that SSEC requests.
2. I will limit the materials that I bring with me and understand that I cannot bring food, drinks, or electronic devices with me, but I may bring a notepad on which to take notes.
3. In the event personally identifiable or confidential information of students other than the student named above is obtained during the course of the observation, I will not disclose it to anyone to protect the confidentiality of all concerned.
4. The student information of the student named above to which I have access is confidential and may not be shared with any other person except SSEC administrators and/or other SSEC personnel who provide services to said student, to the parents of the said student, or to other third parties with written consent from the student's parents. I may not share any student information with other family members, fellow students, professors, teachers, or with parents of other students without written consent.
5. I may not record or photograph any part of my observations.
6. I may not take notes or collect data on other students or the staff member(s) that I am observing, except to the extent that the student and/or staff member(s) is interacting with or directing said student.
7. I may not initiate conversations with any student during any part of his/her school day while I am observing. If I am a parent I may speak with my own child outside of the classroom.
8. I may not interrupt any staff member who is instructing, prompting, redirecting, correcting, reprimanding or doing any work with any student in the class, therapy room or other space.
9. If I violate any part of this Agreement, then my escort has the right to terminate my observation. I can also be sued for a breach of confidentiality and will not be covered by any insurance policy or other protections offered by the SSEC.

**\*Please note: a copy of this form will remain on file with the appropriate program director.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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## I. SSEC Security Camera Surveillance Policy 2025

South Shore Educational Collaborative

# 2025 Security Camera Surveillance Policy

Updated January 2025  
Board Approval: 1/24/202

reviewed 7/2025

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## SSEC Security Camera Surveillance Policy - 2025

South Shore Educational Collaborative authorizes the use of video cameras throughout the main building, internally and externally, at 75 Abington Street, Hingham Massachusetts as well as in all SSEC owned school vans. The purpose of this video surveillance is to enhance school safety both on and off campus. SSEC is committed to providing a safe environment for all students, staff and community members attending, working at or visiting our school.

### **Signage and Notification:**

Signage is posted at school building entrances that notify students, parents, staff and the general public of use of security cameras. Students, parents and staff will receive additional notification at the beginning of the school year regarding the use of security cameras at the Abington Street location and on all SSEC owned school vans. Notification will be through verbal discussion as well as being placed in the parent/student handbook.

### **Camera Placement:**

The security cameras are installed in public areas only. These areas include, but are not limited to: grounds, exterior/interior entrances or exits to the school and large gathering spaces such as corridors and playground. Security cameras are mounted in the front of each SSEC school van. Security cameras will not be used where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy, including but not limited to restrooms, changing rooms, private offices, nurse's offices, or locker rooms.

### **Viewing:**

There will be no monitoring of live recordings, except in the case of a suspected emergency or safety concern. Reviewing the recordings will occur only when a suspected incident is committed/reported. Viewing the data is to be performed by authorized personnel that have been expressly designated by the SSEC Executive Director. A log (electronic) will be kept to record incident details. These details must include; exact date and times of the video clip being viewed, who is viewing the video, the observable details without interpretation of the events (examples include but are not limited to: names of people/students, environmental factors, actions, other relevant details) and if the clip will be saved. If the video clip is saved, it must become an official part of the student(s) record and requires additional documentation (refer to the student record section). No sound is to be monitored or recorded in connection with the video surveillance system. Surveillance system misuse will be investigated by the Executive Director and appropriate action based on the details of the incident.

### **Limited Access to Recordings:**

Any video recordings used for security purposes in school buildings or grounds are the sole property of SSEC. Release of such videos will be made only as permissible pursuant to applicable laws and with the permission of the Executive Director or his/her designee.

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Access to video recordings from security cameras shall be limited to school administrators (Executive Director, Director of Student Services, SSEC SRO, Program Directors, Program Coordinators and other designees. Law enforcement officials (Chief of Police/designee) shall be granted access to video recordings in case of an emergency or upon receipt of a warrant/subpoena or pursuant to a public records request.

#### **Data Storage:**

All video recordings and logs are stored in a secure place to avoid tampering and ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Recordings will be saved for thirty (30) days for internal, external and van cameras and automatically deleted, unless being used in an ongoing investigation.

#### **Student Records Requirements:**

Incidents which have resulted in an investigation which includes the viewing of video surveillance will require additional documentation and separate storage. If video was needed as part of the investigation, this video clip now becomes a part of the official student(s) record. The Director/Coordinator of the program is responsible for notifying the IT Coordinator, the Director of Students Services and the Executive Director that video surveillance was used and saved for a particular incident. The IT Director, SSEC SRO and/or SSEC Director of Student Services can be responsible for creating a file and saving the video clip and labeling it with the following (SASID\_date) and placing this clip into permanent secure storage. The appropriate pages from the log book are scanned and placed in this secure file along with the video. The video that has been stored falls under FERPA as well as state regulations on student records.

**\*Once a video recording becomes an official part of the student record; parents, districts and other personnel with proper authorization may view it. This is true even if the video has more than one student present.**

#### **Consideration**

Video surveillance may be used to support a variety of investigations beyond more generalized student related incidents. Below is a list of some of the other types of investigations that may involve video recordings:

- Critical Incident Form 2 (DESE Form for electronic submission)
- Title IX Investigation
- Bullying Investigation (staff and/or student)
- Harassment (including sexual) of staff or student
- Child Abuse (51A) or DPPC

#### **Federal Department of Education:**

<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/faq/faqs-photos-and-videos-under-ferpa>

reviewed 7/2025

## J. SSEC AI/ GenAI Practice Guidelines 2025

### **Overview Purpose and Scope**

Learning to be a skilled and ethical user of genAI is part of the preparation that students need for the future, and a component of becoming a digitally literate citizen, as described in the commonwealth's Digital Literacy and Computer Science Curriculum Framework. Therefore, the purpose of these guidelines is to support the wise and appropriate use of genAI in the context of teaching and learning to help strengthen staff and students' skill with technology, aid deep learning and creative thinking, and help develop staff and students' ability to ethically engage with the digital world. In addition, while we acknowledge that the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools cannot be completely ethical or risk-free, this guidance is intended to minimize the risks and harms associated with the use of AI.

These guidelines provide a broad guiding framework for responsible, ethical, and creative use of genAI in SSEC by our staff and students who are attending SSEC courses/ classes. It is not comprehensive, and does not anticipate or govern all possible uses of genAI by all people in the SSEC. These guidelines reflect SSEC's internal process of utilizing and implementing AI/ GenAI within the SSEC organization. If SSEC student participate in courses or instruction outside of SSEC (i.e. Community College, Vocational After Dark programs, etc.), they will follow the policy of that organization. These guidelines will be followed unless otherwise noted in the student's individualized educational plan.

### **Define AI and Generative AI**

Artificial intelligence, or AI, is technology that enables computers and machines to simulate human intelligence and problem-solving capabilities. (source: IBM)

Generative AI (genAI) refers to machine learning models that are trained on vast data sets and are intended to create new, similar data. They can be used to generate text, images, code, video, audio and other forms of content. GenAI can come in the form of stand-alone tools such as ChatGPT, Claude and Magic School, or as a component part of another piece of software, such as the image generator in Canva or the "help me write" extension in Chrome. Generative AI systems are also integrated into EdTech products such as Grammarly, Canva, Google, and many others. We expect more and more products to integrate Generative AI technologies.

### **Professional Learning**

The newness of genAI, and the rapidity with which it is changing, means that adults and students alike are (and will be) in the process of learning about its uses, misuses, and best practices. For teachers and paraprofessionals, this means that regular and ongoing resources, training, and/or professional development experiences are needed to help educators explore and understand educational uses of genAI, equity and justice considerations, data privacy concerns, and other relevant topics.

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## **Cheating and Plagiarism Detectors**

SSEC recognizes that AI, like other technology advances that have come before, provide pathways for individuals to engage in behaviors like cheating. Our guidance thus reflects our commitment to academic integrity and honesty.

Teachers may use AI plagiarism detectors that have been vetted and approved for use by SSEC, which includes approval through the SDPC as well. AI plagiarism detectors are notorious for flagging the work of multilingual students and students who use scaffolded supports in their writing due to specific learning differences, so careful consideration must be applied before taking further steps.

If student work is flagged as plagiarism/cheating by an SSEC-approved detector, teachers will:

- Reflect on the student as a learner and consider how the submitted work reflects or deviates from patterns of past academic work.
- Meet with the student to build understanding about how and why the student may have used AI and identify if and how the student used AI tools when completing the assignment.
- If after these considerations, the teacher determines that the student used AI in a way that is inconsistent with our SSEC student handbook, policies, and guidelines have a conversation with the student about appropriate and ethical use of AI.
- The teacher will then use their professional judgment to determine next steps, in alignment with the school and SSEC student handbook, policies, and guidelines.
- Directly copying out of ChatGPT or other LLMs (or directly copying with some changes) is considered plagiarism, whether or not you cite the LLM, without prior approval of the teacher.

## **Curriculum & Planning**

There are many genAI tools available (and under development) designed for teachers to use in support of curriculum, planning and instruction. These tools should be vetted for use by SSEC Assistive Technology/ Tech staff (including through the SDPC) and teachers will be provided with professional development opportunities to support their use.

Teachers are expected to use their professional expertise in reviewing all curriculum suggestions provided by genAI tools, and ensure that instruction aligns to SSEC values, learning objectives, student data privacy, and student needs.

As with all student data and personally identifiable information, teachers are responsible for protecting the privacy of their students when using genAI tools. Never share personally identifiable information (PII) with genAI tools.

- Do NOT use student names, ID numbers, or other identifiers
- Do NOT share or paste text into such systems that include student or staff personally identifiable information
- Do NOT share sensitive data such as social security numbers, grades, medical information, or discipline information with Generative AI systems.

## **Classroom/ Student Use**

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Many publicly available genAI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) have age restrictions and/or do not meet SSEC's requirements related to data privacy and safety. Use of genAI tools in the classroom should be restricted to those tools that SSEC has approved for school use. When teachers use genAI in the classroom, it will be to supplement (not supplant) instruction.

- When educators use genAI for any reason, that use should be transparently disclosed to the relevant students, families, administrators, and colleagues. That disclosure should describe how and why the genAI tool was used.
- Educators will follow all legal and data privacy guidelines to ensure that student data and privacy is not put at risk.
- Students are expected to adhere to SSEC's Responsible use policy and all other relevant behavioral and academic integrity policies/guidelines when using genAI.
- Large Language Models like ChatGPT are not search engines and these models generate content by making predictions based on their training data and the user input or prompt. They do not search for and return content that already exists as search engines do. Because of this, LLMs have the potential of generating (predicting) content that is not factually correct, but sounds very plausible. Students and teachers using generative AI in the classroom will verify information generated by AI tools, such as facts, quotes, statistics and other resources.
- Teachers are permitted to use genAI tools that provide clear citations and the ability to exclude sources that are not considered reliable.
- With prior approval, students are permitted to use genAI tools that provide clear citations and the ability to exclude sources that are not considered reliable.
- GenAI technologies can be used to make learning more accessible, and digitally accessible, for students with diverse learning and communication styles (e.g., transcripts of recorded audio, closed captions for videos, alt text to describe images for blind/visually impaired individuals, interpretations of complex visual data).

### **Data Privacy**

SSEC staff will adhere to data privacy policies and guidance provided in SSEC Staff and Student Handbook, Policies and Guidelines and guided by the SDPC. SSEC cybersecurity policies, procedures and guidelines as laid out in the Employee handbook AUP apply to the use of genAI tools and platforms.

Students will not be asked to create accounts on any AI platform that is not approved by SSEC. In addition, note that:

- All genAI tools endorsed by or used in SSEC will comply with relevant laws and guidelines related to user data, including student data. This includes, but is not limited to FERPA, COPPA, IDEA and PPRA.
- Students and families will be informed of the extent and purpose of any data that is shared with genAI systems.
- If you are using a genAI platform or genAI-enhanced tool, each interaction provides the tool with training data. The ways the information will be used is often not disclosed by the AI system, and thus we assume that information entered can be used and shared in

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unpredictable ways. Be cautious with entering any information about a student into an AI tool (even depersonalized data).

### **Grading & Assessment**

At this time, SSEC does not allow for the use of AI for formative or summative assessments. In the event this changes, these guidelines will be updated with new information.

### **Guidelines Monitoring & Revision**

This policy will be regularly revisited and evaluated to ensure that it remains relevant and up-to-date with the changing technology landscape. Questions and concerns regarding this policy can be directed to the tech team.

reviewed 7/2025

K. SSEC Social Media Policy 2024

# SOUTH SHORE EDUCATIONAL COLLABORATIVE

## SSEC Social Media Policy

reviewed 7/2025

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## **1. Introduction**

This document formalizes the policy for the professional and personal use of websites and social media by South Shore Educational Collaborative (SSEC) employees in a responsible manner. All users, including students, teachers, staff, administrators, and organizations are covered by this policy and are expected to be familiar with its provisions.

For purposes of this policy, "Official Social Media" is understood to be content created by individuals or groups representing South Shore Educational Collaborative, using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the Internet. Examples of Official Social Media include but are not limited to, the Collaborative as a whole, individual programs, clubs, teams, or class websites, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, blogs, YouTube videos/channels, LinkedIn, Snapchat, NextDoor, and Flickr.

For the purposes of this policy, "Personal Social Media" is understood to be content created by individuals for non-work related activities (e.g., a staff member establishing a Facebook page or a Twitter account for his or her own personal use). Collaborative employees should not use personal social media sites to communicate, monitor, or befriend current or former students.

For purposes of this policy, "Content" includes comments, information, articles, pictures, videos, or any other form of communicative content posted on SSEC official or personal social media sites.

## **2. User Responsibilities for Official SSEC Websites and Social Media**

Official SSEC Social Media sites will be used solely for communicating information about the Collaborative and its programs, including projects, events, and services. Examples include announcements; newsletters; emergency notifications; Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), sporting, fundraising, or club events and activities; or meetings. School employees and representatives with website access through organizations such as PTO may not engage in private messaging over official social media accounts. Official Social Media cannot be used to post political information or viewpoints; religious information or viewpoints; commercial information; information pertaining to an employee's or school representative's personal activities, matters, or interests; information that consists of content that is sexual, pornographic, or adult in character; or information which advocates or promotes the use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.

### **A. SSEC Social Media Administrator(s) Responsibilities**

Official Social Media sites for individual programs and PTOs shall be administered and monitored by Program Directors and Coordinators. Usernames for these accounts shall be created using official Collaborative email addresses (@ssec.org) and shall be maintained through the Executive Director and Director of Technology. If a parent group or organization have a site

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currently in use, the following disclaimer must be added to the site: this website/media page does not reflect the views or opinions of SSEC.

Official Social Media sites for classes, other student groups, clubs, and athletic teams shall be administered and monitored by the Program Director or their designees, coaches, club advisors, and their site administrators approved by (the Program Director and Executive Director). Usernames for these accounts shall be created using official school email addresses and shall be maintained through the Executive Director and Director of Technology.

Each administrator of an Official Social Media site will confirm with the appropriate Program Director that they have read and understand this policy and completed the sign-off. It is the responsibility of each Program Director / Coordinator to provide a copy of this policy to their respective users and to have them complete the sign-off prior to starting a Social Media site.

Principals, their designees, and site administrators shall monitor Official SSEC Social Media sites for content requesting responses from the Programs or SSEC as a whole. Site administrators may direct such requests to the director or coordinator for a response. Site administrators shall monitor Content posted on Official SSEC Social Media sites for Content in violation of this Social Media Policy.

If a site administrator has reason to believe that any user is misusing the site, it is the responsibility of the administrator to report that potential misuse of the site to the Executive Director and Director of Technology. The site administrator will also suspend the users access until a comprehensive investigation has been completed.

### **B. SSEC Social Media Educator Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of educators who are using Official SSEC Social Media tools with students to teach students about safe and responsible use of social media (see also SSEC Network and Technology Responsible Use Policy and Internet Safety Policy). Educators are responsible for monitoring students' use of these resources and must intervene if students are using them inappropriately. Educators should make sure that students understand and abide by the Acceptable and Unacceptable Uses as stated [below). It is also the responsibility of the teacher to report any misuse of the Official SSEC Social Media to his/her building administrator.

Each administrator of an Official Social Media site will confirm with the appropriate Program Director and/or Coordinator that they have read and understand this policy.

### **C. SSEC Social Media Student Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of students who are using Official SSEC Social Media tools to learn about safe and responsible use of these sites. They are responsible for using these resources appropriately. They must abide by the Acceptable and Unacceptable Uses as stated in Section 9, Part C of this policy. If a student misuses the resources, educators must follow appropriate

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disciplinary protocols, including but not limited to reporting the misuse to building administrators, who have the right to discontinue a student's access to the official social media.

### **3. Site and Account Requirements**

A. Staff members will treat professional social media space and communication like a classroom or professional workplace. The same standards expected in Collaborative professional settings are expected on professional social media sites. If a particular type of behavior is inappropriate in the classroom or a professional workplace, then that behavior is also inappropriate on the professional social media site.

B. Whenever possible, when establishing professional social media sites, users will consider the intended audience for the site and consider the level of privacy assigned to profile. The profile should be set to private to limit public access.

C. Staff members may only create professional social media accounts (i.e., accounts used exclusively for educational purposes) on Collaborative approved websites and platforms.

D. Staff will obtain their supervisor's approval using the "SSEC Social Media Registration Form" prior to setting up a professional social media presence. The form can be downloaded from:

[Social Media Account Request Form](#)

E. All official SSEC Social Media channels must link to our Disclaimer page, located at  
(Insert link)

F. All official SSEC Social Media sites should link back to the respective page(s) on the SSEC website where relevant information is available.

G. All social media sites are subject to Massachusetts public records and record retention laws, rules, regulations, and policies. Any content maintained in an online format (Social Media/Website) that is related to SSEC Business, including posted communication and communication submitted for posting, may be subject to public disclosure. The site administrators will maintain records in accordance with Massachusetts public records retention laws, rules, regulations, and policies. Site administrators will use the following guidance in order to comply with state and federal laws:

1. Except for inappropriate postings, staff shall not delete any message posted on a social media site, webpage, blog, homework page, etc. In cases of inappropriate postings, a screenshot of the posting is to be sent to an administrator using your Collaborative email account. The posting is then to be deleted from the site.

2. Staff shall save all direct messages and communications conveyed through Collaborative affiliated social media sites. All email sent or received by Collaborative email accounts is archived for a minimum of seven years.

3. Staff shall comply with applicable copyright laws when posting information produced by another person or entity and shall cite all third-party sources of information posted or shared.

4. Staff should not "*FRIEND*" or "*CONNECT*" with the parent(s) of the students in their class or attend a collaborative program.

H. When a School employee or representative responds to a comment, in his/her capacity as a School employee or representative, the employee or representative should do so in the name of the School or organization, and the employee or representative shall not share personal information about himself or herself, or other School employees or representatives except as required for official business.

I. When posting to Social Media sites (including personal), school employees and representatives must do so in a way that is not defamatory. Defamatory communications are those that cause harm to the reputation of another person or cause that person to be ridiculed, held in contempt, or lowered in the estimation of the community. Defamatory statements will not be tolerated. Defamatory statements fall within conduct that is outside the scope of your employment and therefore, the South Shore Educational Collaborative will not defend you from the consequences of your personal actions, nor will the South Shore Educational Collaborative indemnify employees against defamation-like suits that are determined to be in violation of this policy.

J. SSEC employees and representatives may not use Official Social Media to post material which is illegal, which is in violation of federal or state laws regarding discrimination, or which constitutes criminal conduct. SSEC employees and representatives may not use Official Social Media to post material that constitutes an unauthorized disclosure of proprietary or confidential information of SSEC, personnel or student records or non-public labor relations information.

K. Site administrators must ensure that they have the right to post any content being used on Official SSEC Social Media. This includes compliance with copyright laws, and federal privacy laws, particularly for images of students or students' personally identifiable information. Site administrators must ensure that there is the proper permission in the form of a media release for publishing student information.

L. Procurement and ethics laws largely prohibit municipal employees or agencies from endorsing products, businesses, or vendors. In addition, School resources, such as Official SSEC Social Media entities should not be used for political purposes.

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M. To enhance our students' experience and further communication within our community, there is the potential for your child(ren) to be videotaped or photographed by either Collaborative personnel or the news media during classroom activities or events. The pictures/videos may be posted to the Collaborative's website and/or shared via other social media outlets. If you grant permission for your child(ren) to be included in the public broadcast of video or video yearbooks and for publishing photographs in newspapers, school newsletters, or Collaborative publications, or social media outlets, please make sure to complete the media consent located in the SSEC student handbook.

N. Employees or representatives are prohibited from posting communications that could reasonably be construed as creating a hostile environment, defamatory comments, threats, intimidation, or harassment by any member of the public or SSEC employees. Postings must be in conformance with all SSEC Policies, including but not limited to, those concerning harassment, bullying, ethics, and all state and federal law.

O. SSEC reserves the right to deny access to any Official SSEC Social Media sites to any person who violates the Collaborative's Website and Social Media Policy, at any time and without prior notice.

P. Active communication and outreach may lead to increased inquiries from the media. If the site administrator for an Official SSEC Social Media site is contacted directly by a reporter, he or she should refer media questions to the Principal's or Superintendent's office.

#### **4. No Expectation of Privacy within SSEC**

Official SSEC Social Media resources are the property of the South Shore Educational Collaborative and are to be used in conformance with these guidelines. SSEC administration retains the right to inspect any user's Official Social Media account if a suspected violation of the Website and Social Media Policy or any other Collaborative policy has occurred. In keeping with state and federal laws regarding public records, users should be aware that data and messages are regularly archived, even if they appear to have been deleted locally. Use of Official SSEC Social Media resources constitutes consent for school and Collaborative administrators to monitor and/or inspect any files that users create, any messages they post or receive, and any websites they access should a disciplinary or safety situation warrant such access.

#### **5. Violations**

Failure to observe these guidelines may subject users to termination of access to SSEC Social Media and websites. SSEC administrators will be notified of any inappropriate activities by users, and users will be subject to recourse through other existing SSEC policies as applicable. SSEC administrators will also advise law enforcement agencies of illegal activities conducted

through Official SSEC Social Media sites or accounts and will cooperate fully with local, state, and/or federal officials in any investigation related to these activities.

## **6. Disclaimers**

The South Shore Educational Collaborative makes no warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, for Official SSEC Social Media websites and resources. SSEC is not responsible for unauthorized financial obligations incurred through Official SSEC Social Media access. SSEC accepts no liability for users who willfully ignore or violate terms of use on an Internet site or service via a SSEC Social Media account. All provisions of this agreement are subordinate to local, state and federal statutes.

## **7. Personal Social Media Guidelines for Staff**

- A. As a recommended practice, SSEC employees are encouraged to use appropriate privacy settings to control access to their personal social media sites. However, be aware that there are limitations to privacy settings. Private communication published on the Internet can easily become public. Furthermore, social media sites can change their current default privacy settings and other functions. As a result, employees are responsible for understanding the rules of the social media site being utilized.
- B. In order to maintain a professional and appropriate relationship with students, staff may not communicate with students who are currently enrolled in the Collaborative on personal social media sites.
- C. Staff also should not communicate directly with students using the direct messaging features available on certain platforms when utilizing a collaborative approved social media profile.
- D. Communication directly with students related to academic issues should occur in class or be directed through Collaborative-provided email accounts.
- E. It is not recommended that staff members post or tag photos of other employees, volunteers, vendors, or contractors on personal social media sites.
- F. The posting or disclosure of personally identifiable student information or confidential information via personal social media sites, in violation of federal law, state law, or Collaborative policy is prohibited.
- G. SSEC employees should not use the SSEC logo or make representations that their personal social media sites speak in an official SSEC or school capacity.
- H. SSEC recognizes the proliferation of online communication and that such conversation may concur between teachers and students and/or their parents or guardians. However, due to the nature of social networking sites, there exists a risk, without care and

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planning, that the lines between one's professional life and personal life will be blurred. Our staff should always be mindful of how they present themselves to the world, online and otherwise. Notwithstanding, behavioral expectations will not be diminished in these settings and appropriate professional boundaries shall be maintained at all times and through all means of communication. Therefore, the below expectations are for staff members' use of social networks including but not limited to Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, personal email accounts, cell phones/smartphones, texting, use of blogs, and other electronic or technology-based communication systems.

It is acknowledged that there may be instances where communication with personal cell phones or via personal email is warranted. These actions should only occur when necessitated by school-related matters outside of regular school hours and may not be personal in nature. In such limited circumstances, the Collaborative anticipates that teachers will make reasonable use of their cell phones/smartphones to convey time-sensitive information on scheduling issues and the like.

Examples of situations which might be appropriate to involve the provision of a personal phone number to a student and or the collection of one or more student phone numbers are:

- a. A field trip where a teacher might provide one or more students with the number in case a group of students might get separated from the main group.
- b. A coach who needs to contact or convey information to team captains, or send an emergency text message to the team.
- c. At school-sponsored events for which teachers serve as duly appointed advisors and may need to convey messages in a timely manner to students and may not have access to school-based email accounts, school-provided telephones or school-based web pages.

Except as articulated above in this section, teachers are discouraged from using home telephones, personal cell phones/smartphones or personal email accounts to communicate with students. Your communications with students, even if you do not use school resources for such communications, are within the jurisdiction of the school Collaborative to monitor as they arise out of your position as an educator. Any conduct, whether online or not, that reflects poorly upon the school Collaborative or consists of inappropriate behavior on the part of a staff member, may expose an employee to discipline up to and including discharge. Even if you are not using a school telephone, computer, classroom or the like to engage in contact with a students, such contact is not outside the Collaborative's authority to take appropriate disciplinary actions. If your behavior is inappropriate, undermines your authority to instruct or maintain control and discipline with students, compromises your objectivity, or harms students, the school

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Collaborative reserves the right to impose discipline for such behavior. A teacher may also face individual liability for inappropriate online communications with students and/or parents and guardians, as well as exposing the Collaborative to vicarious liability in certain instances.

## **8. Personal Social Media Guidelines for Students**

A. Students using personal social media should be aware of privacy laws and websites' privacy policies. Most information posted digitally can never truly be withdrawn and made private again. Many popular social media sites require users to be 13 or older because they collect, and potentially sell or distribute, data in manners not compliant with federal law (Children's Online Privacy Protection Act) for students under 13. Students should be aware that if a website asks for a birthdate, this is usually a clue that it tracks a significant amount of user data, and that this tracked data may follow them as a digital footprint for years to come.

B. Students who use personal social media to interact with Official SSEC Social Media must adhere to all school handbook policies regarding behavior. Interaction with Official SSEC Social Media is treated as a school setting. This regulation is intended to supplement existing regulations, not to supersede them.

1. Acceptable uses of students' personal social media to interact with official SSEC social media include commenting on posts, posting pictures with permission, "following" official accounts, re-sharing official posts in their original form, and posting content to which students have the rights under copyright law.

2. Unacceptable uses of students' personal social media to interact with Official SSEC Social Media include all negative behaviors noted in SSEC school handbooks, including but not limited to posting communications that could reasonably be construed as creating a hostile environment, defamatory comments, threats, intimidation, or harassment of any member of the public or the SSEC community. Students must not interact with Official SSEC Social Media to post political information or viewpoints; religious information or viewpoints; commercial information; information pertaining to an employee's or school representative's personal activities, matters, or interests; information which consists of content which is sexual, pornographic, or adult in character; or information which advocates or promotes the use of drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.

This policy is in compliance with state and federal telecommunications rules and regulations, including the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act Amendment, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment.

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### **South Shore Educational Collaborative Social Media Account Request Form**

All accounts representing the South Shore Educational Collaborative are the property of the SSEC and may be reviewed as part of any Freedom of Information Act requests. As an employee representing the SSEC, all social media accounts must be approved by the Superintendent's Office. All accounts will be displayed on the SSEC website to enable residents to verify the validity of the social media account.

Any employee requesting a social media account must first read the South Shore Educational Collaborative Website & Social Media Policy.

Location and Program:

Date of Request:

Employee Name:

Social Media Platform(s) (Facebook, Twitter, etc.):

Username of Account:

School Email Address for Account:

Password for Account:

Purpose of Account (be sure to include the club, team, class, or organization that the account will represent).

I have read and will abide by the South Shore Educational Collaborative Website & Social Media Policy

Employee Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date

Superintendent's Signature (if applicable):

Program Director's Signature:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If the account pertains to more than one department at the secondary level, all pertinent directors' signatures are required.

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Safety \* Respect \* Relationships \* Growth