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INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The Freetown-Lakeville School Committee believes that materials appropriate to the needs of the school program must be available to each student and teacher. These will be furnished by the School Committee subject to budgetary constraints.

The task of selecting instructional materials for programs will be delegated to the professional staff of the school system. Because instructional programs and materials are of great importance, only those that meet the following criteria will be approved by the committee:

1. They must present balanced views of international, national, and local issues and problems of the past, present and future.
2. They must provide materials that stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic and ethical values.
3. They must help students develop abilities in critical reading and thinking.
4. They must help develop and foster an appreciation of cultural diversity and development in the United States and throughout the world.
5. They must provide for all students an effective basic education that does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, sex, physical disabilities or sexual preference.
6. They must allow sufficient flexibility for meeting the special needs of individual students and groups of students.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:48; 71:49; 71:50

CROSS REF.: KEC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Material that is challenged usually belongs to one of the three basic categories: religion, ideology, or profanity/obscenity. Board policies regarding these areas shall be as follows:

Religion -- Factual, unbiased material on religions has a place in school libraries.

Ideologies -- Libraries should, with no thought toward swaying reader judgment, make available a balanced collection of primary and factual material, on the level of their students on various ideologies or philosophies which exert or have exerted a strong force, either favorably or unfavorably, in government, current events, politics, education and other phases of life.

Profanity/obscenity -- Materials shall be subjected to a test of literary merit and reality in context using the criteria established.

When a problem concerning instructional resources in a school arises, the disposition of the problem will be made in a reasonable period of time using District adopted procedures.

In accordance with the statement of philosophy, no questioned materials shall be removed from the school pending a final decision. Pending the outcome of the request for reconsideration, however, access to questioned materials can be denied to the students of the parents making the complaint, if they so desire.

If the decision of the School Committee is that the questioned instructional resource be retained, the District will not convene a Review Committee relative to the same complaint for a period of three years. If a substantially different point of view is advanced, it will be investigated. (The period of three years does not apply in this instance).

If an individual or a group undertakes action to keep material from the shelves by checking it out and failing to return it, or by taking turns in keeping it checked out so that it is not available for student use, the Superintendent shall request, in writing, the return of the material. If it is not returned within thirty (30) days, a bill for the current replacement cost of the item shall be rendered to the party holding the item.

After the School Committee has adopted new materials or approved certain methods, that decision will not be reconsidered for a period of three years beginning with the end of the school year when the adoption is made.

SELECTION AND ADOPTION OF TEXTBOOKS

1. Pursuant to Chapter 71, Sec. 50 Change of School Books, which states that: "A change may be made in the school books used in the public schools by a vote of two-thirds of the whole committee at a meeting thereof, notice of such intended change having been given at a previous meeting.
2. The School Committee's will adopt textbooks that incorporate the educational philosophy, goals, course content, and student learning objectives of each approved curriculum area.

Textbooks shall be defined as any books which are used as main or supplemental teaching resources to implement the approved curriculum.

Textbook Review Initiating Process

The following procedures shall be implemented prior to the Superintendent of Schools' review of any recommendation for a new textbook:

1. No formal evaluation of a new textbook may begin without the approval of the Principal.
2. If the Principal feels that a new textbook should be formally evaluated, he/she may initiate the evaluation process.
3. If the Central Office Administration (e.g., Superintendent, Director of Instructional Services, Director of Special Education) feels that a new textbook should be formally evaluated, they shall initiate the process through the Principal.
4. Notification of any textbook review process should be sent to the Director of Instructional Services or the Director of Special Education.

Textbook Review Committee

To be considered for recommendation to the Superintendent, a textbook must be reviewed by a Textbook Review Committee. Each school shall have its own Textbook Review Committee and the Principal shall appoint the individuals who will sit on these committees. Each committee must have no fewer than the following numbers: Principal or designee, two teachers, at least one parent, and if relevant/appropriate, one teacher who proposed the textbook.

Following a review and evaluation of the proposed textbook or textbooks, a formal recommendation shall be made through the Principal to the Superintendent of Schools (see attached report form). The recommendation shall include the textbook review committee's choice and reasons supporting the choice. The reasons must include the textbook's relationship to the curriculum's approved philosophy, goals, course content, and student learning objectives. The unit price of each textbook, and the number of textbooks required, must also be included in the recommendation.

Superintendent's Recommendation

Following the Superintendent's study of the textbook review committee's recommendation, one of the following decisions may be made:

1. To recommend that the School Committee approve the textbook recommended by the Textbook Review Committee.
2. To request that the Textbook Review Committee meet again to continue the textbook evaluation process.
3. To recommend that the School Committee approve the field testing of the textbook recommended by the Textbook Review committee. Field testing may take place by no more than two teachers per textbook, in each designated school, with field results being presented to the Superintendent by the end of the third marking term. The results shall be used to formulate the Superintendent's final decision to recommend a textbook to the School Committee for approval.

Approval Process

Following the Superintendent's decision to accept the Textbook Review Committee's recommendation for a specific textbook the Superintendent will:

1. Place the textbook on the School Committee's agenda for review and consideration. Copies of the recommended textbook shall be available for each School Committee member to analyze.
2. Place the textbook on a subsequent School Committee's agenda for approval.
3. Request that the Principal, if the textbook has been approved, to purchase and incorporate the textbook into the curriculum.

LEG REFS: 71:48; 30B:7 71:50
 603 CMR 26:05

CROSS REFS: KEC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The Freetown-Lakeville School Committee recognizes that knowledge is changing and expanding and that it may be necessary to use various types of supplementary materials in addition to the basic and fundamental textbooks.

For the purpose of this policy, supplementary materials shall be defined as any instructional materials other than textbooks including, but not limited to, books, periodicals, newspapers, pictures, diagrams, maps, charts, slides, filmstrips, films, records, audiotapes, and suitable technological applications which relate directly to the adopted curriculum.

The School Committee believes that teachers and administrators should have a large role in selection and recommendation of supplementary materials. Teachers are encouraged to use a wide range of learning aids, provided the expense incurred in purchasing these aids remains within the limits of the budget.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION POLICY

It is the responsibility of the librarian to see that the collection of books and other media meets the requirements of the various curricular areas and provides for all levels of ability. Materials also must be provided to meet the independent interests and research needs of the students.

The librarian will evaluate and select books for the library on the basis of reviews, recommended lists and standard bibliographic tools. It is the responsibility of the librarian to get the best buy for the money available. The quality of the collection should be a major consideration. It is also the responsibility of the librarian to keep in mind the whole collection and see to it that books are purchased in all areas and that no gaps develop because one department is less aggressive than another.

Teachers and other staff members will be encouraged to participate in the shaping of the collection. This may be done by suggesting specific titles using want cards furnished by the library, or it may be done through discussions with the librarian indicating types of books or certain areas which should be added or strengthened.

Students will be encouraged to suggest titles and wherever possible the library staff will make a point of adding these titles. It should be remembered that the library staff is ever alert to the needs of the students. Special emphasis is placed on buying books that fill these needs, whether in response to a specific request or because someone on the staff notes that we do not have a book to answer some of the questions being asked in certain areas.

To summarize the above, we might say that the library strives to maintain a well-balanced collection of quality materials, keeping in mind the needs of both students and teachers.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

The primary objective of the library/media center is to implement its resources to enrich and to support the educational program of the school.

Definition of Library Resources

Library resources are those materials both print and nonprint, found in school libraries, which support curricular and personal information needs. Print items include books, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, microfiche or microfilm. Nonprint items include films, disc records, filmstrips, slides, prints, audiotapes, videotapes, CDs/DVDs, and computer software.

Criteria for Selection of Library Resources

The criteria for selection of library resources in the District are:

Needs of the individual student

Based on knowledge of students.

Based on requests of parents and students.

Needs of the individual school

Based on knowledge of the curriculum of the school.

Based on requests from the professional staff.

Provision of a wide range of materials on many levels of difficulty with a diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view.

Provision of materials of high artistic quality.

Provision of materials with superior format.

Reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids are consulted as guides.

In accordance with the District's policy of providing instructional materials on opposing sides of controversial issues, it should be noted that neither the media centers nor the District serve as advocates for the ideas expressed in any materials, nor does the presence of any material indicate automatic endorsement of the ideas expressed therein.

Disclosure of Information/Privacy of Circulation Records

Circulation records shall not be made available to anyone except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized by law.

Re-evaluation (Weeding) of Library Resources

The continuous review of library/media center materials is necessary as a means of maintaining a useful and active collection. As new materials are selected and added, some older materials are withdrawn. The responsibility for determining which materials are to be withdrawn rests with the professional staff.

Among the reasons for withdrawing an item are the following:

- Curricular changes have rendered superfluous some materials (or multiple copies of materials) formerly used but no longer in demand.
- Some materials contain factual material which is no longer accurate nor current.
- Some materials intended for recreational reading have become dated or unattractive and are no longer in demand. (Some such books which are deemed "standards" or "classics" will be retained even though they rarely circulate).
- Some materials have become worn out, damaged or physically deteriorated and have lost utility and/or appeal.
- Some materials have been superseded by newer items which present the same information but in superior format.

Withdrawn library/media center materials are processed in one or more of the following ways:

Made available to be used as resource or supplementary material by teachers.

- Offered to other media centers in the District, as it is possible that a material which lacks utility in one building may have some usefulness in another.
- Contributed to appropriate charitable or educational agencies.
- Discarded, when warranted.

Continuing evaluation is closely related to the goals and responsibilities of library/media centers and is a valuable tool of collection development. This procedure is not to be used as a convenient or expedient means to remove materials presumed to be controversial or likely to be disapproved by segments of the community. Materials are not to be proscribed or removed because of actual or potential partisan or doctrinal disapproval, nor because of the origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation

Freetown and Lakeville Public Schools
INTERNET SAFETY/ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY – TECHNOLOGY

Purpose:

The Freetown and Lakeville Public Schools shall provide access for employees and students to the computer network, including access to external networks, for limited educational purposes. Educational purposes shall be defined as classroom activities, career and professional development, and high quality self-discovery activities of an educational nature. The purpose of the computer network is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work by providing access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with others. The computer network will be used to increase communication (staff, parent, and student), enhance productivity, and assist staff in upgrading existing skills and acquiring new skills through a broader exchange of information. The computer network will also be used to provide information to the community, including parents, governmental agencies, and businesses.

Availability:

The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the district's computer network for instructional and administrative purposes.

Access to the computer network, including external networks, shall be available to employees and students for instructional and administrative purposes and in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures.

The Freetown and Lakeville Public Schools use *Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA)* certified upstream filtering to block sites that have no educational value, or may contain visual depictions deemed to be obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors. For adult usage, the filtering may be disabled for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Access to the computer network is a privilege, not a right. All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations and procedures governing use of the system and shall agree in writing to comply with such regulations and procedures. Noncompliance with applicable regulations and procedures may result in suspension or termination of user privileges (other than in connection with directly supervised use during classroom instruction) and other disciplinary actions consistent with the policies of the Freetown and Lakeville Public Schools. Violations of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the Freetown and Lakeville Public Schools.

Acceptable Use:

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with the purposes and mission of the Freetown and Lakeville Public Schools as well as with law and policy governing copyright.

Monitored Use:

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of electronic resources by students and employees shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use for instructional and administrative purposes. Copies of all information created, sent or retrieved are stored in the school's backup/archive files. While the administration does not intend to review back-up files on a regular basis, it reserves the right to access and monitor all messages and files on the computer system as it deems appropriate in the ordinary course of its business, including but not limited to ensuring proper use of resources and conducting routine maintenance. Where appropriate, communications including text and images may be disclosed to law enforcement and other third parties, without prior consent of the sender or receiver.

Liability:

The Freetown and Lakeville Public Schools shall not be liable for users' inappropriate use of electronic resources or violations of copyright restrictions, user's mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users. The Freetown and Lakeville Public Schools shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy or usability of any information found on external networks.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

1. The district will provide each user with copies of the Acceptable Use Policy and Procedures.
2. The district will provide training to users in the proper use of the computer network.
3. Access will be granted to employees with a signed access agreement and permission of their supervisor.
4. Access will be granted to students with a signed access agreement and permission of the building administrator or their designee(s).
5. Account names will be recorded on access agreements and kept on file at the building level.
6. Passwords shall be issued when a network account is created. For staff accounts, the password can be changed at any time by the staff member. For student accounts, the password cannot be changed by the student. Only a network administrator may reset a student account password.
7. Passwords are confidential. All passwords shall be protected by the user and not shared or displayed.
8. Students completing required course work will have priority for after hour's use of equipment.
9. Principals or their designee will be responsible for disseminating and enforcing policies and procedures in the building(s) under their control.
10. Principals or their designee will ensure that all users complete and sign an agreement to abide by policies and procedures regarding use of the computer network. All such agreements are to be maintained at the building level.
11. Principals or their designee shall be authorized to monitor or examine all system activities, including electronic mail transmissions, as deemed appropriate to ensure proper use of electronic resources.
12. Principals or their designee shall be responsible for establishing appropriate retention and backup schedules.
13. Principals or their designee shall be responsible for establishing disk usage limitations, if needed.
14. Individual users shall, at all times, be responsible for the proper use of accounts issued in their name.
15. System users should purge electronic information according to district retention guidelines.

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16. System users may redistribute copyrighted material only with written permission of the copyright holder or designee. Such permission must be specified in the document or in accordance with applicable copyright laws, district policy, and administration procedures.
17. System administrators may upload/download public domain programs to the computer network. System administrators are responsible for determining if a program is in the public domain.
18. Commercial use of the computer network is prohibited
19. Copyrighted software or data shall not be distributed or placed on the district computer network without permission from the holder of the copyright and the system administrator.
20. The computer network may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any activity prohibited by district policy.
21. System users shall not use another user's account.
22. Any malicious attempt to harm, improperly access, or destroy equipment, material data, or programs is prohibited.
23. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance may be viewed as violations of district policy and/or as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.
24. Vandalism will result in the cancellation of system privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with hardware, software, and system restoration.
25. Forgery or attempted forgery is prohibited.
26. Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other users or to interfere with the ability of other users to send/receive electronic mail is prohibited.
27. Use appropriate language; swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs and other inflammatory language is prohibited.
28. Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving messages is prohibited.
29. Transmitting or viewing obscene material or vulgar material that lacks education value is prohibited.
30. Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal identification information (address, telephone number, photographs, etc.) regarding minors is prohibited.
31. The district will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or related to misuse of the district's computer network.

A user who violates district policy or administrative procedures will be subject to suspension or termination of computer network privileges and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and/or prosecution.

*Adoption date: 2/28/08 – Lakeville School Committee
2/28/08 – Freetown Lakeville Regional School Committee
2/28/08 – Freetown School Committee*

***Freetown Public Schools/Lakeville Public Schools/
Freetown-Lakeville Regional School District***

**FREETOWN AND LAKEVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
COMPUTER NETWORK USER AGREEMENT FOR EMPLOYEES**

User Name (Please Print):

Grade Level:

School:

This is to certify that I have been provided with a copy of the Acceptable Internet Use Policy for Employees which has been agreed upon by the Parties, and I agree to abide by the provisions therein. Also, I am aware that such Policy outlines consequences of possible disciplinary action and liability for me arising out of any knowing violation by me of this policy.

Signature:

Date:

Freetown and Lakeville Public Schools

COMMON SENSE RULES OF THE INTERNET

- **Be polite. Do not send abusive messages to others.**
- Use appropriate language. Offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, discriminating, harassing, or inflammatory language will not be tolerated in public or private messages.
- Adhere to copyright agreements.
- Avoid the deliberate or inadvertent spread of computer viruses.
- Do not use another person's files without permission.
- Do not destroy, abuse, modify or improperly access the school's hardware or software.
- Do not illegally distribute software.
- Do not place unlawful information on the Internet.
- Do not use the Internet for commercial purposes, product advertisement, or political lobbying.
- Do not access, download, store, or print files that are profane or obscene.
- Do not post personal information. This includes yours or another person's home phone number, address, and photographs.
- Keep your password private.
- Do not interfere with, harm or modify the work of other users.
- Do not discuss highly sensitive or confidential school information in e-mail communications.

SCHOOL AND DISTRICT WEB PAGES

The Freetown and Lakeville Regional School District realizes the limitless potential for information and communication provided by the World Wide Web. The availability of this communication vehicle provides an opportunity for students and staff to access and contribute to the world of information related to curriculum, instruction, school, District, and school community related activities. Therefore, the Freetown and Lakeville Regional School District will use the Internet as an effective, efficient and timely source of information, method of communication and vehicle for resource collection. In order to take advantage of the opportunities the Internet provides, the Committee authorizes the creation of school and/or District Web pages on the Internet.

Only those web pages maintained in accordance with Committee policy and established procedures shall be recognized as official representations of the District or individual schools. All information on a school or District Web page must accurately reflect the mission, goals, policies, program, and activities of the school and District. The Web pages must have a purpose that falls within at least one of three categories:

1. Support of curriculum and instruction – intended to provide links to Internet resources for students, parents and staff in the District.
2. Public information – intended to communicate information about the schools and District to students, staff, parents, community, and the world at large.
3. District technology support – intended to provide and respond to instructional and administrative technology needs of students and staff.

The Superintendent shall designate an individual(s) to be responsible to maintaining the official District web page and monitoring all District Web page activity. A building Principal shall make such designation for an individual school. Schools or departments that wish to publish a Web page must identify an appropriately qualified publisher and/or author.

As with any instructional materials or publication used by or representing the school or District, the building Principal or Superintendent, respectively, are ultimately responsible for accuracy and appropriateness of the information made available at the Web site. Concern about the content of any page(s) created by students or staff should be directed to the building Principal or to the Superintendent's office when related to the District Web site.

Web sites developed under contract for the Freetown and Lakeville Regional School District or within the scope of employment by Freetown and Lakeville Regional School District employees are the property of the Freetown and Lakeville Regional School District.

Due to the dynamic nature of the World Wide Web, this policy is to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis or more frequently if required.

FIELD TRIPS

Policy:

ALL field trips will be defined and approved in the following manner:

ROUTINE - Field trips which fall within the daily bus schedule. Approved by the building administration.

SPECIAL - Field trips outside or beyond the regular school hours or daily bus schedule (but within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts), including overnight trips and trips on non-school days.

Approved by the building administration and Superintendent.

EXTENDED - Field trips which are out-of-state and other exceptional cases. Approved by the building administration, Superintendent and/or School Committee

Guidelines:

Trips for purposes of educational study are considered to be a vital part of the curriculum. These trips should - to the extent possible - occur during the normal school day.

School transportation vehicles, chartered busses, or other approved transportation will be furnished for all trips. Privately owned vehicles (P.O.V.s) will not be used

Provisions will be made for adequate supervision of students by school employees or parents on all school approved trips.

The following criteria shall guide the decision on all field trips:

1. The educational value of the trip, as related to the goals and objectives of the Freetown-Lakeville Regional School District.
2. The safety of the participating students.
3. The degree of infringement upon other instructional programs within the school.
4. The adequacy of planning and the amount of supervision provided.
5. The cost to the participating students.
6. The opportunity available for financially handicapped students to participate.
7. Parent permission slips are required of each participating student. The slips must be signed by a parent/guardian granting permission for the student to participate, and must be presented prior to departure.
8. Participating teachers shall submit an evaluation report to the Principal.

CROSS REF.: JH, Student Travel

DELEGATION OF MEDICATIONS FOR FIELD TRIP AND OTHER SHORT-TERM SPECIAL SCHOOL EVENTS

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Freetown, Lakeville and Freetown-Lakeville Regional School Committee to allow the Superintendent to develop a plan whereby district-wide delegation of medications for field trips and other short-term special school events will be permissible. This plan will follow specific criteria set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

PROCEDURES:

- A. A designated nurse, chosen by the district nurses, shall send a request in writing to the regional school health advisor, on behalf of the district, applying for the option of delegating medications for field trips and other short-term special school events only. The school district agrees to comply with the Massachusetts General Law Chapter 94C and the Department of Public Health Regulations 310.005 (E) (1) (0), which require development of a plan for medication administration during field trips and special school events (unique one-time events which are not part of the regular school schedule and involve travel from the school site). Every effort shall be made to obtain a nurse or school staff member trained in medication administration to accompany students at special school events. When this is not possible the school nurse may delegate prescription medication to another responsible adult. Written consent from the parent or guardian for the named responsible adult to administer the prescription medication shall be obtained. The school nurse shall instruct the responsible adult on how to administer the prescription medications to the child.

This expedited registration for field trips covers the administration of epinephrine (e.g., epi-pens) or other emergency medication of the field trip.

- B. Upon approval of the application, each district nurse will be responsible for:
1. Complying with the policy and inform the buildings staff that such policy exists
 2. Working in collaboration with the school physician and school health advisory committee when necessary
 3. Determining which unlicensed person may give the medication
 4. Training the identified person(s)
 5. Supervising the unlicensed person(s)
 6. Managing the medication administration program
 7. Monitoring the program.
- C. Staff member submits the Field Trip Request form to the Principal. (please see revised form attached)
- D. The staff member sends the Parental Permission form home for approval by parents (please see revised form attached')
- E. Upon the staff member's receipt of all Parental Permission forms, the staff member will review the forms and inform the Principal of the following:
1. There are no Special Medical Needs.
 2. Special Medical Needs exist for number of students.

- F. If there are no Special Medical Needs, the form will be completed by the Principal and the field trip will be held.
- G. If Special Medical Needs are required for some students, the field trip will be held and the Principal and/or Nurse will contact the parents to seek resolution for each youth's participation on the field trip.
- H. School Nurse will be notified of each field trip in advance where either medications are to be administered or skilled medical interventions are required. Completed forms of all those students involved are to be given to the nurse no later than 48 hours before the event.
- I. Field trip first aid kits, available through each buildings nurse's office, should accompany all field trips.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

It is the policy of the Freetown-Lakeville School Committee to encourage volunteer efforts in the schools. Parents, business representatives, senior citizens, and other community volunteers are recognized as important sources of support and expertise to enhance the instructional program and vital communication links with the community. The volunteer program will be coordinated in cooperation with building administrators.

All volunteers are required to undergo a Criminal Offenders Record Information (CORI) check prior to providing services to the school district.

CROSS REF.: ADDA, C.O.R.I. Policy

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The philosophy of the Freetown-Lakeville School Committee concerning academic achievement, as well as children's social growth and development, is based on the premise that children have diverse capabilities and individual patterns of growth and learning.

Therefore, the Committee feels it is important that teachers have as much and as accurate knowledge of each student as possible in order to assess his needs, his growth, and make instructional plans for him. A sharing of information among parent, teacher, and student is essential.

The Committee supports staff efforts to find better ways to measure and report student progress. It will require that:

1. Parents be informed regularly, and at least four times a year, of the progress their children are making in school.
2. Parents will be alerted and conferred with as soon as possible when a child's performance or attitude becomes unsatisfactory or shows marked or sudden deterioration.
3. Insofar as possible, distinctions will be made between a student's attitude and his/her academic performance.
4. At comparable levels, the school system will strive for consistency in grading and reporting except as this is inappropriate for certain classes or certain students.
5. When no grades are given but the student is evaluated informally in terms of his own progress, the school staff will also provide a realistic appraisal of the student's standing in relation to his peers.
6. When grades are given, the school staff will take particular care to explain the meaning of marks and symbols to parents.

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The Freetown-Lakeville School Committee recognizes the school's obligation to give periodic reports of a student's progress and grades. The School Committee further recognizes that these reports are a vital form of communication between the schools and parents. The School Committee also believes that all progress reports must be based upon full information, accurately and honestly reported with the proper maintenance of confidentiality.

A report depicting the student's progress will be issued periodically following an evaluation by the appropriate teacher, teachers, or other professional personnel.

In addition to the periodic reports, parents will be notified when a student's performance requires special notification.

Grading and promotion will be based on improvement, achievement, capability of the student, and the professional judgment of the teacher and principal.

Major changes in the reporting system shall be preceded by a cooperative study and evaluation by teachers, principals, parents, and the Superintendent, who will submit the proposal to the Freetown-Lakeville School Committee for consideration and approval.

HOMEWORK

The term "homework" refers to an assignment to be prepared during a period of supervised study in class or outside of class.

The purposes of homework are to improve the learning processes, to aid in the mastery of skills, and to create and stimulate interest on the part of the student.

Homework is a learning activity which should increase in complexity with the maturity of the student. With increased maturity, learning should become an independent activity. This should be established through consistent assignments which encourage students to investigate for themselves and to work independently as well as with others.

Homework assignments should be consistent in terms of the amount given each day and the time required for each assignment so that a pattern of meaningful homework can be established by the teacher and/or the student.

The information for any homework assignment should be clear and specific so that the student can complete the assignment.

Homework assignments should take into consideration individual differences of students such as health, ability, conditions at home, and educational resources at home. Homework should not require the use of reference materials not readily available in most homes, school libraries, or the public library, and should require the use of those materials only when the student has had instruction in the use of them.

There are many other learning activities in the life of a student besides homework. Such things as participating in school activities, pursuing cultural interests, participating in family living, and exploring personal interests should be considered by teachers when planning consistent assignments. Homework is not to be used as a form of punishment under any circumstances.

Specific information on homework is contained in each of the respective Student Handbooks.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The Freetown-Lakeville School Committee is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

In evaluating student achievement, each teacher will make use of all available information, including results of teacher-made tests and other measures of skill and content mastery, standardized test results, and teacher observation of student performance. The Principal will direct and aid teachers in their evaluations and review grade assignments in order to ensure uniformity of evaluation standards.

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved. Exceptions will only be made after prior notification and explanation to each student's parents, but the final decision will rest with the building Principal.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

As required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, students must pass state-required MCAS tests in order to receive a high school diploma.

To meet the Freetown-Lakeville Regional School District's requirements for a diploma, a student must have earned a minimum of 110 credits.

As part of the 110 credits, the following subjects must be taken and passed:

1. Four years of English;
2. Three full years of Social Studies, including United States History;
3. Three years of Mathematics. Accounting I can be substituted for a third year of Mathematics;
4. Three years of Science (each from a different science area);
5. One semester of Technical Communications;
6. One additional computer course;
7. Four semesters of Physical Education;
8. One semester of Health.

Revised and Approved: January 16, 2002

GRADUATION

Graduation exercises may be held only for students completing the curriculum required at the Apponequet Regional Senior High School. There are to be no formal graduation exercises or awarding of diplomas below the senior high school level.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS STUDYING ABROAD

Requirements for graduation may be waived for those students who accomplished satisfactory study abroad subject to the judgment of the administration of the high school as to the adequacy thereof and as certified thereto by the records from the host school.

EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

The Freetown-Lakeville School Committee considers comprehensive and objective evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum to be of primary importance. The Superintendent will provide for the translation of the stated instructional goals into objectives and for appraisal of their implementation in order to:

1. Determine educational needs and provide information for planning.
2. Indicate instructional strengths and weaknesses.
3. To check on the suitability of programs in terms of community requirements.
4. Show the relationship between achievement and the system's stated goals.
5. Provide data for public information.

Elements of this evaluation process may include:

1. Testing programs such as nationally standardized general achievement tests, nationally standardized tests in specific subject areas, and tests administered by other agencies.
2. Study of school achievement records.
3. Study of students' high school and drop-out records.
4. Use of outside services, participation in regional research studies, contracted evaluation services; evaluation services at cost to the school system must be approved in advance by the School Committee.
5. Teacher and parent evaluation of student behavior.
6. State Department of Education specialists and services.
7. Evaluation by the regional accrediting association.
8. Evaluation by other agencies.

An evaluation of the curriculum and its effectiveness will be made periodically and reported to the Committee by the Superintendent.

DISTRICT PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS

A district program of testing for assessment/evaluation shall be coordinated throughout the school district by the appropriate administrator who shall be responsible for scheduling, disseminating, and collecting tests and for reporting and interpreting all group test results.

Measurements of educational achievement shall be prepared so that data is consistent for comparison purposes within the school district from year to year and with other school districts to the extent required by rules of the State Board of Education.

TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

An important goal of the schools is to help prepare students for intelligent and conscientious participation as citizens in our democratic society. One step toward meeting this goal is to introduce students to reasoned and dispassionate approaches to the analysis of contemporary social and political issues. To insure that these issues can be examined in an atmosphere as free from emotion and prejudice as the times permit, the School Committee establishes the following guidelines for discussion of controversial issues in the schools.

Teacher-Planned Classroom Discussions

1. Controversial issues selected by teachers for classroom discussion must relate directly to the objectives and content of courses approved by the School Committee for inclusion in the curriculum.
2. The teachers' right to introduce controversial issues in classroom presentations does not include the right of advocacy. Teachers must refrain from using their positions to express partisan points of view.
3. The approach to discussion of these issues in the classroom must be objective and scholarly with minimum emphasis on opinion and maximum emphasis on intelligent analysis.
4. Teachers must ensure that the reasoned arguments of all sides of an issue are given equal presentation and emphasis in classroom discussions.
5. Teachers may invite visitors from outside the schools to give presentations on controversial issues when the visitors offer qualifications and resources not available in the schools. All visitors are to be guided by the standards of language usage that prevail in the classrooms and by the standards of scholarly inquiry set forth above. Whenever possible, teachers who invite visitors to present one side of an issue will also invite visitors to present the other side(s).
6. In all cases teachers must obtain from the appropriate principal permission to invite visitors for classroom presentations. Permission must be requested at least 48 hours before the scheduled time of presentation.

Student-Initiated Forums on Controversial Issues

Student groups may request permission to conduct forums on controversial issues in the schools. The principal may grant such requests under the following conditions:

1. Preparation for presentation of a forum will not cause any student or teacher to miss class and will not cause the cancellation of any class.
2. Adequate advance planning must be conducted for each forum. A request to hold a forum must be received by the principal at least three weeks before the scheduled date of presentation. For each request the principal will appoint, after consultation with the requesting student group, an adult advisory group consisting of at least two parents and two faculty members.

3. The standards for approach to discussion, style of presentation, and use of visitors as defined above will apply to student-initiated forums.

Requests from Groups or Individuals outside the Schools

No permission will be granted non-school groups or individuals to make presentations on controversial issues in the schools during school hours. Requests for after-school or evening use will be processed in accordance with the committee's policy on community use of school facilities.

No permission will be granted outsiders for distribution of literature on controversial issues to students in general or to class groups.

A principal may grant an outside group or individual permission to post one notice of a public meeting for discussion of issues if the language of that notice conforms to the standards that prevail in the community. The Principal will determine the appropriate bulletin board for such notices.

SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

The United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Massachusetts and related court rulings clearly establish the concept of "church and state separation" and the "preclusion of sectarian instruction in public schools."

In order to help staff members abide by the spirit and letter of the law, and to avoid compromising any student's religious or conscientious beliefs or freedoms, the following guidelines have been established:

The observance of religious holidays is not the responsibility of the public schools.

While it is recognized that many activities are initiated with the approach of major holidays in order to capitalize on the readiness and interest that is generated at these times, it should be understood that such occasions frequently have religious underpinnings. Care should be taken to relate only to secular aspects of these holidays.

Music programs given at times close to religious holidays should not use religious aspect of these holidays as the underlying motive or theme. Although religious music is appropriate in the schools to the extent that it is sung or presented for musical rather than religious content, its use should not violate the secular nature of the school. Pageants, plays, recitals, and other literary or dramatic activities should not be used to convey religious messages. While the holidays represent a valid source of ideas for meaningful school art experiences, teachers should avoid assigning or encouraging art work that promotes religious aspects of such holidays. If, however, individual students choose to use a religious personage, event, or symbol as the vehicle for an artistic expression, they should be allowed to take this action.

The above statements should not be interpreted to preclude the factual and objective teaching about religions, religious holidays, and religious differences. Such instruction will be permitted in the schools since insights in this area can enhance the mutual understanding needed by all the people in a pluralistic society.

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