



## Somerset Berkley Regional School District Somerset Public Schools

---

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

During inclement weather, the Superintendent may implement a delay ranging from 60 to 120 minutes depending on the circumstances. Morning Preschool will be cancelled.

We understand that a decision to open, close, or delay in bad weather has a large effect on families. We also understand that our students are better served –academically and socially – by being in school. But as always, our top priority is the safety of our students and staff.

Please understand that the decision to open, close, or delay in bad weather is based on a careful analysis of all relevant factors, including:

- Information on road conditions from our bus contractor, highway department and police;
- Amount of snow and ice accumulated;
- Whether precipitation is continuing or expected to continue;
- Building conditions (such as whether we have electricity and heat);
- Parking lot conditions;
- Temperature and wind chill;
- Weather predictions; and
- What other area school districts are doing (contact with area superintendents).

As Superintendent, I will weigh these factors and take action to close schools or delay the opening of schools. Such decision will only be made after consultation with public works and public safety authorities, and with school officials from neighboring towns. The decision to delay or close schools will be made at the earliest possible time.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Schoonover  
Superintendent of Schools



## Somerset Berkley Regional School District Somerset Public Schools

---

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The following materials are being forwarded in accordance with regulations in support of laws affecting the rights of students, their parents or guardians, and of school department employees relative to the 2019-2020 school year. Please review these notices and become familiar with the information provided.

Should you have any questions, please contact your child's principal.

<u>School</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Principal</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Chace Street School	538 Chace Street	Mr. Timothy Plante	508-324-3160
North Elementary School	580 Whetstone Hill Road	Dr. Paula Manchester	508-324-3170
South School	700 Read Street	Dr. Daniel Hanneken	508-324-3180
Middle School	1141 Brayton Avenue	Dr. Pauline Camara	508-324-3140
High School	625 County Street	Mr. David Lanczycki	508-324-3115

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Schoonover  
Superintendent of Schools



# Somerset Berkley Regional School District

## Somerset Public Schools

---

### **RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES**

#### **Non-Discrimination Against Students**

Chapter 76, section 5 of the Massachusetts General Laws provides, in pertinent part, that: “[no] person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.” The Somerset Public Schools and the Somerset Berkley Regional School District are committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment in which all students can learn and access all activities related to their education.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has enacted regulations, found at 603 CMR 23.00, to ensure that Massachusetts public schools do not discriminate against students, and that all students have equal rights of access and equal enjoyment of the opportunities, advantages, privileges, and courses of study at public schools across the state. These regulations address five areas of special policy: school admissions, courses of study, guidance services, course content, and extracurricular and athletic activities.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding M.G.L. c. 76, s. 5 or 603 CMR 26.00, and how either affect your child, please do not hesitate to contact the principal at your child's school. Copies of the law and regulations can be obtained online or from the:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
75 Pleasant Street  
Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906  
(781) 338-3000

#### **Non-Discrimination Statement**

The Somerset Public Schools and Somerset Berkley Regional School District do not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities:

- on the basis of race, color or national origin (Title VI of the Civil Right Act of 1964 (Title VI));
- on the basis of sex (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX));
- on the basis of age (Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1975 (Age Discrimination Act));
- on the basis of domicile (Title VIIB of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001);
- on the basis of native language (No Child Left Behind Act of 2001);



## Somerset Berkley Regional School District Somerset Public Schools

---

- on the basis of disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as amended by the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008);
- on the basis of sexual orientation or religion (Mass. Gen. Laws, Chapter 71 and 151B); or
- on the basis of gender identity (Mass. Gen. Laws, Chapter 4, Section 7);
- on the basis of pregnancy or pregnancy-related condition.

### **COMPLIANCE OFFICERS AND REPORTING**

The following individuals have been designated and are available to address questions or concerns regarding the districts' non-discrimination policies with respect to educational activities.

#### **Section 504 Compliance Officer**

To file a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment by Somerset Public Schools or Somerset Berkley Regional School District on the basis of disability, or to make an inquiry concerning the application of **Section 504** and the **ADA/ADAAA** and their respective implementing regulations, please contact:

Director of Special Education  
Somerset Public Schools/Somerset Berkley Regional School District  
580 Whetstone Hill Road  
Somerset, MA 02726  
Telephone: (508) 324-3100 – Ext: 2

#### **Title IX Compliance Officer**

To file a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment by Somerset Public Schools or Somerset Berkley Regional School District on the basis of sex, or to make an inquiry concerning the application of **Title IX** and its respective implementing regulations, please contact:

Director of Special Education  
Somerset Public Schools/Somerset Berkley Regional School District  
580 Whetstone Hill Road  
Somerset, MA 02726  
(508) 324-3100 - Ext: 2

#### **Civil Rights Compliance Officer**

To file a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment by the Somerset Public Schools or Somerset Berkley Regional School District on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, domicile, native language, sexual orientation, religion, gender identity or pregnancy or pregnancy related condition, or to make inquiry concerning the application of any of the above laws or regulations, please contact:



## Somerset Berkley Regional School District Somerset Public Schools

---

Director of Special Education  
Somerset Public Schools/Somerset Berkley Regional School District  
580 Whetstone Hill Road  
Somerset, MA 02726  
(508) 324-3100 – Ext: 2

All written complaints should state in detail the basis of the complaint, the names of the persons involved and any dates relevant to the specific complaint.

These inquiries may also be referred to:

U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Civil Rights (OCR)  
5 Post Office Square, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 021109  
(617) 289-0111

### **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

#### **Policy Statement**

It is the policy and obligation of the Somerset Public Schools and the Somerset Berkley Regional School District to provide a free and appropriate public education to each qualified student with a disability within its jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. Further, it is the intent of both districts to ensure that students who are disabled within the definition of Section 504 are identified, evaluated, and provided with appropriate educational services.

Under the districts' Section 504 policy, a disabled student is one who:

- a) Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, including learning;
- b) Has a record of such an impairment, or;
- c) Is regarded as having such an impairment.

Students may be disabled under Section 504 and this policy even though they do not require services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

#### **Notice of Rights Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

The following is a description of the rights granted by federal law to students with disabilities. These rights may be enforced by a student's parents/guardians, or the student if he or she has reached the age of majority (which in Massachusetts is age 18):

You have a right to:



## Somerset Berkley Regional School District Somerset Public Schools

---

- have your child take part in, and receive benefits from, public education programs or activities without discrimination based on his/her disability;
- be notified by the school district of your child's rights under Federal law (this document provides that notice);
- receive notice with respect to identification, evaluation or placement of your child;
- have your child receive a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. This includes, to the maximum extent possible, the right to be educated with children who are not disabled, and the right to reasonable accommodations that allow your child an equal opportunity to participate in school-related activities, including nonacademic and extracurricular activities. Parents/guardians are responsible for the same costs as the parents/guardians of children who are not disabled;
- have your child educated in or have access to services, facilities and activities comparable to those provided to nondisabled students;
- have evaluation, educational, and placement decisions made based on a variety of information sources, and by persons who know your child and who are knowledgeable about the evaluation data and placement options;
- to have your child receive special education and related services if he/she is found eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act;
- review relevant educational records related to your child that are maintained by the school. You may also obtain a copy of educational records at a reasonable cost unless the fee would effectively deny you access to the records;
- a response from the school district to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of your child's records;
- present a grievance or complaint to the school district's Section 504 Compliance Officer. The district's Section 504 Compliance Officer is: Director of Special Education, 580 Whetstone Hill Road, Somerset, MA 02726 (Phone: (508) 324-3100);
- to contest an action taken by a Section 504 team by means of an impartial due process hearing. A Request for Hearing must be submitted to: Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA), One Congress Street, 11<sup>th</sup> floor, Boston, MA 02114, or by fax to the BSEA at 617-626-7270 (A copy of the written request for hearing must also be provided to the districts' Section 504 Compliance Officer); and
- to file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights of the United States Department of Education, 5 Post Office Square, 8<sup>th</sup> floor, Boston, MA 02109-3921; Phone: (617) 289-0111 or Fax: (617) 289-0150.



## Somerset Berkley Regional School District Somerset Public Schools

---

### **SUMMARY OF REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO STUDENT RECORDS**

The **Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education** has adopted regulations pertaining to student records. These regulations, 603 CMR 23.00, apply to all public elementary and secondary schools, and are designed to insure parents' and students' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of student records and to assist school authorities in their responsibilities for the maintenance of student records.

The regulations apply to all information maintained by the Somerset Public Schools and Somerset Berkley Regional School District on individual students. Cumulative records are divided into two (2) sections:

1. The Transcript
2. The Temporary Record

The student record shall consist of the transcript and the temporary record, including all information--recording and computer tapes, microfilm, microfiche, or any other materials--regardless of physical form or characteristics concerning a student that is organized on the basis of the student's name or in any way that such student may be individually identified and that is kept by the public schools of the Commonwealth. The term as used in these regulations shall mean all such information and materials regardless of where they are located, except for the information and materials specifically exempted by 603 CMR 23.04.

The transcript shall contain administrative records that constitute the minimum data necessary to reflect the student's educational progress and to maintain District operations. This data shall be limited to the student's name, address, phone number, and birth date; the parent or guardian's name, address, and phone number; course titles, grades (or the equivalent when grades are not applicable), course credit, grade level completed, and the year completed.

The temporary record shall consist of all information in the student record which is not contained in the transcript. Such information may include standardized test results, class rank (when applicable), extracurricular activities, and evaluations by teachers, counselors, and other school staff.

The following is a summary of parent/guardian and student rights regarding student records as provided by the regulations pertaining to student records (603 CMR 23.00):

#### **INSPECTION OF RECORD (603 CMR 23.07)**

A parent or student, who has entered the ninth (9th) grade or is at least fourteen (14) years old, has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be made available to the parent or student no later than two (2) days after the request unless the parent or student consents to a further delay.



## Somerset Berkley Regional School District Somerset Public Schools

---

The parent and student have the right to receive copies of any part of the record although a reasonable fee may be charged for the cost of duplicating the materials.

The parent or student may request to have parts of the record interpreted by a qualified professional at the school or may invite anyone else of their choosing to inspect or interpret the data.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS (603 CMR 23.07)**

With a few exceptions, no individuals or organizations except the parent, student, 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 or the student.

### **AMENDMENT OF RECORD (603 CMR 23.08)**

The parent and student have the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written materials to the student record. In addition, the parent and student have the right to request information in the record be amended or deleted. The parent and student have the right to a conference with the school principal to make their objections known. Within one (1) week after the conference, the principal must render a decision regarding the request for amendment in writing. If the parent and student are not satisfied with the decision, the regulations contain provisions through which the decision may be appealed to the superintendent of schools.

### **DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS (603 CMR 23.06)**

The regulations require that certain parts of the student record, such as the temporary record, be destroyed five (5) years after the student leaves the school system. School authorities are also allowed to destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information in the record from time to time, while the student is enrolled in the school system. Before any such information may be destroyed, the parent or student must be notified and have an opportunity to receive a copy of any information before its destruction.

### **NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS ACCESS TO RECORDS (603 CMR 23.07(5))**

A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless:

1. The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
2. The parent has been denied visitation, or
3. The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
4. There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted. In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal. The school will then notify the



## Somerset Berkley Regional School District Somerset Public Schools

---

custodial parent of the request via certified and first class mail that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access.

The school will delete all information relating to either the work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records will be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.

Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to **Mass. Gen. Laws, Chapter 71, Section 34H**, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

The above is only a summary of some of the more important provisions of the Regulations Pertaining to Student Records that relate to student and parent rights. If more detailed information is desired, a copy of the regulations may be obtained online or from:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education  
75 Pleasant Street  
Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906  
(781) 338-3000



## Somerset Berkley Regional School District Somerset Public Schools

---

### **TEACHING STUDENTS ABOUT ALCOHOL, TOBACCO and DRUGS**

In accordance with state and federal law, the Somerset Public Schools and Somerset Berkley Regional School District provide age and developmentally appropriate drug, alcohol, tobacco and substance abuse education and drug prevention programs in all grades. These programs address the legal, emotional, psychological and social consequences of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, with an emphasis on non-use by school-age children. The districts' programs seek to: educate students about healthy decision-making and the consequences of substance use and abuse; prevent, delay, and/or reduce alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among children and youth; and teach students self-management and refusal skills so that they are better able to resist peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. The districts' programs also provide students with information regarding resources and assistance available if a student believes he or she is at risk for substance use or abuse. A copy of the entire policy (IHAMB) can be found on each school district's website in the Somerset Public Schools and Somerset Berkley Regional School District Online Policy Manual.

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 97 provides that each school district is required to use a verbal screening tool to screen students for substance use disorders. Districts are expected to conduct screenings on an annual basis at two different grades levels (grades 7 and 9 in our districts), notify parent/guardian of the students who will be screened before the screening takes place and permit a student or student's parent/guardian to opt out of the screening at any time by given written consent.

### **NOTICE REGARDING CURRICULUM CONTENT**

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, the Somerset Public Schools and Somerset Berkley Regional School District hereby notify parents that curriculum which "primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues" may be included in approved district curriculum each year.

Parents have the right to exempt their children from said programs and may have access to all related curriculum materials upon request.

Parents should contact the building principal with respect to any information regarding this matter.



## Somerset Berkley Regional School District Somerset Public Schools

---

**Parent and Guardians:** Please note that the school has the authority to release relevant student record information without your prior consent, or the consent of the eligible student, in certain circumstances including:

- To the **Department of Children and Families** in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect **(603 CMR 23.07(4)(c))**.
- To federal, state and local education officials whose duties require access **(603 CMR 23.07(4)(d))**.
- To appropriate parties in connection with a health or safety emergency, including weapons reports **(Mass. Gen. Laws, Chapter 71, Section 37L; 603 CMR 23.07(4)(e))**.
- To a student's new school. Consistent with the **Education Reform Act**, schools have the authority to transfer a student's complete record to the new school, without prior consent, as long as notice is provided that the school the student is leaving forwards student records. **(603 CMR 23.07(4)(g))**. **This document is your notice that the Somerset Public Schools and the Somerset Berkley Regional School District forwards student records to schools in which a current or former student seeks or intends to enroll.**

Inquiries regarding departmental compliance with any of the above laws may be directed to:

Jeffrey Schoonover  
Superintendent of Schools  
Somerset Public Schools  
Somerset Berkley Regional School District  
580 Whetstone Hill Road  
Somerset, Massachusetts 02726-3700

Telephone (508) 324-3100 – Ext: 5



## Somerset Berkley Regional School District Somerset Public Schools

---

### **STUDENT INSURANCE**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Somerset School Committee and Somerset Berkley Regional School Committee have authorized the expenditure of funds for the purpose of insuring all students enrolled in the Somerset Public Schools and Somerset Berkley Regional School District. This insurance is designed to supplement any other accidental insurance plan you may have and will provide coverage for every student during the school day. This School-Time Plan will provide coverage for interscholastic athletics, intramurals, field trips, and other school-related activities under the authorized supervision of a Somerset Public Schools and/or Somerset Berkley Regional School District employee.

Questions regarding insurance matters can be directed to:

Ronald Tarro  
Director of Business and Finance  
Somerset Public Schools/Somerset Berkley Regional School District  
580 Whetstone Hill Road  
Somerset, MA 02726-3700  
Phone: (508) 324-3100  
Fax: (508) 324-3104



# Somerset Berkley Regional School District

## Somerset Public Schools

---

### **TITLE I PARENTS RIGHT TO KNOW INFORMATION**

Your child's school receives Federal Title I funds to assist students in meeting state achievement standards. This letter lets you know about your right to request information about the qualifications of classroom staff working with your child and information about student assessments given during the school year.

Title I schools must meet federal regulations related to teacher qualifications as defined in the ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act). These regulations allow you to learn more about your child's teachers' training and credentials. At any time, you may ask:

- If the teacher meets state qualifications and certification requirements for the grade level and subjects he/she is teaching;
- If the teacher is teaching has received an emergency or conditional certificate through which state qualifications were waived;
- What undergraduate or graduate degrees the teacher holds, and major(s) or area(s) of concentration; and
- Whether your child receives help from a paraprofessional, and if so, his/her qualifications.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which was signed into law in December 2015 and reauthorizes the ESEA, contains additional parent right to know requests, including:

- Information on policies regarding student participation in assessments and procedures for opting out
- Information on required assessments including:
  - subject matter tested
  - purpose of the test
  - source of the requirement (if applicable)
  - amount of time it takes students to complete the test
  - time and format of disseminating results

All of the above information can be requested through your school principal.

The Somerset Public Schools and Somerset Berkley Regional School District are committed to providing quality instruction for all students and do so by employing the most qualified individuals to teach and support each student in the classroom. Our reading staff is fully committed to helping your child develop the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in school and beyond. We appreciate your support and partnership as we work to provide the best education for your child.

If you would like to receive any of the information listed above for your child's teacher, please contact:

Jeffrey Schoonover  
Superintendent of Schools  
Somerset Public Schools/Somerset Berkley Regional School District  
580 Whetstone Hill Road  
Somerset, Massachusetts 02726-3700  
Telephone (508) 324-3100 – Ext: 5