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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN COHASSET PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE COHASSET POLICE DEPARTMENT

Statement of Purpose

We agree that student violence, alcohol and other drug abuse are national and societal problems reaching into our community of Cohasset. To maximize the effectiveness of our efforts to achieve a violence-free and drug-free community, we recognize that the coordination and cooperation of the community as a whole are essential. Therefore, the Chief of Police, with the support of the Cohasset Board of Selectmen, and the Superintendent of Schools with the support of the Cohasset School Committee, pledge to follow the agreed-upon procedures for communicating incidents of verbal and physical assault, intimidation, bullying, threats, harassment, hate crimes, sex crimes, possession of weapons and the use, possession and/or distribution of drugs and alcohol.

We agree:

- to establish and assign a Cohasset Police Officer as the School Resource Officer to the Cohasset Public Schools.
- to establish an effective *year-round* line of communication between the school and police department.
- to establish a clear procedure regarding the reporting of hate crimes, sex crimes, the possession of weapons, and the use, possession, and distribution of drugs and/or alcohol within the schools, on school grounds, and at school-sponsored events.
- to guide teachers and administrators in reporting a serious criminal matter.
- to re-affirm with parents, students and the public that violence in schools will not be tolerated and that culpable individuals will be held responsible to the full extent of the law.

- to coordinate our efforts, when appropriate, with the District Attorney for Norfolk County and the Massachusetts Department of Education
- *to collaborate on a school safety plan and drug-free initiative.*

Procedures for conducting searches will be established through collaboration between the Cohasset Public Schools and the Cohasset Police Department.

An agreement such as this is necessary since administrators, teachers, and other staff members are increasingly relied upon to recognize and to report incidents of violent behavior or use, possession or distribution of alcohol and drugs. The role of the police officers, school officials, parents and students in working toward our goal of a violence-free and drug-free community must be clearly understood by all parties.

Reportable Acts

This Memorandum of Understanding addresses the reporting by school officials *and the Cohasset Police Department* of reportable acts which they determine rise to the level of requiring police involvement. The reportable acts shall include, but are not limited to: threats to commit violent acts, verbal and/or physical assaultive behavior (e.g. intimidation, bullying, threats, harassment, hate crimes, sex crimes), possession of weapons, property destruction or thefts and any situation in which there is a reasonable suspicion to believe the following:

- A student, regardless of age, is under the influence of drugs, including alcohol or steroids.
- A student, regardless of age, is in possession of any controlled substance (G.L. c94C), including prescription drugs (without specific permission of the school principal or his/her designee) and alcohol.
- A student, regardless of age, has sold, offered for sale, distributed, or possessed with intent to distribute any controlled substance (G.L. c94C), including prescription drugs and alcohol.

Reportable acts will be communicated between the Cohasset Schools and the Cohasset Police Department School Resource Officer. Appropriate administrative action will also be taken by local school officials. The need for further criminal or legal action will be determined by the Cohasset Police Department and/or Norfolk County District Attorney's Office.

It should be noted here that certain school officials are not protected under the confidentiality statutes of the Commonwealth and, if called on to testify in court, they would be obligated to reveal any information relating to violence or drugs and alcohol.

This Memorandum of Understanding also concerns the response of law enforcement agencies in a school setting to acts of delinquency within the scope of G.L. c119: Section 52 and to incidents which constitute reportable acts as defined herein.

Procedures and Responsibilities

- 1.0 The Superintendent of Schools designates the school principal or his/her designee as the responsible school official in each school for handling reportable *acts*, and the Chief of Police designates the School Resource Officer for handling all reportable acts. (The term „drugs” as used herein, shall include controlled substances as provided by M.G.L. c94C, including drug paraphernalia and alcohol.)

- 2.0 The parties and personnel referred to in this Memorandum of Understanding agree to the following:
 - a. All school personnel are required to report any and all reportable acts, as defined herein, by students to the building principal or designee.
 - b. The school principal or his/her designee will be responsible for reporting reportable acts to the School Resource Officer and the parents/guardians of the student/students involved as soon as possible. All emergency reports will continue to be handled by calling 911.
 - c. When the School Resource Officer is not available, the principal(s) or his/her designee will, on these occasions, follow the procedures developed by the school and police departments for notification. A response will be made by the police department to the location of the incident as soon as possible.
 - d. Reports of findings from a police investigation involving students or staff in Cohasset Public Schools will be forwarded to the Superintendent of Schools at the conclusion of that investigation in conformance with police department policy and juvenile law.
 - e. In accordance with M.G.L. ch.71, section 37H1/2, The Cohasset Police Department will notify the School Department when they receive information that a felony complaint or felony delinquency complaint has issued against an enrolled student or an enrolled student has been convicted of a felony or has been adjudicated or has admitted in court of guilt with respect to a felony or felony delinquency.
 - f. To maintain open and clear lines of communication in school-related matters, a press liaison will be assigned for each department. Either the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee and the Chief of Police or his designee will respond to the press on school-related matters. Please note: School administration may be prohibited by law from giving answers to press questions on highly newsworthy matters.
 - g. The Cohasset Police Department and Cohasset Public Schools agree to review on an annual basis this Memorandum of Understanding and each school's Comprehensive Safety Plan.

and school representative.

For details regarding our drug and alcohol policies and due process procedures, please refer to the Student/Parent Handbook.

Disciplinary action pertaining to substance abuse, sale and/or possession may be taken against students under Chapter 766, in connection with participation in educational programs and activities. As is permitted, circumstances may require a drug/alcohol-testing program as a component of delivery of education services.

- 4.2 The Cohasset Public Schools Administration in collaboration with the Cohasset Police Department, in order to maintain a drug/alcohol free environment, may utilize breathalyzers for an accurate breath alcohol analysis of students attending a school sponsored event or activity.
- 4.3 In accordance with M.G.I. ch.71, section 37H, 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 G.L. c94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- 4.4 Participation in our athletic program, as well as class/club activities is a privilege extended to our students, not a right. Please refer to the Cohasset High School Student-Parent handbook for details regarding MIAA as well as school rules and regulations regarding athletes and/or students involved with club or class activities, including student leaders.
- 4.5 For incidents involving drug/alcohol use beyond school property at non-school supervised events, the Cohasset Police Department will report any incident where the police conclude that probable cause exists to believe that an enrolled student in the Cohasset Public Schools has possessed or consumed alcohol or drugs. Notification will be made to the superintendent of schools and the principal of the student's respective school. Such notifications shall be in conformance with all applicable school and police policies and juvenile laws.


Cohasset Superintendent of Schools

Date:


Cohasset Chief of Police

Date:

6/3/16