



Family Handbook 2023-24



[Welcome from the Chief Executive Officer, Kim Rockers](#)

Dear Milestones Families,

On behalf of our faculty, I would like to welcome all our new and returning Milestones families to the 2023-2024 school year.

Milestones is a community that takes great pride in celebrating the enormous promise and individualized strengths in our students. Our elementary, middle, high school, and post high school students represent over 40 districts in the greater Boston area and are embraced in our setting with small classes of like peers and a comprehensive team of over 90 multi-disciplinary faculty. From educators, to clinicians, to administrative support faculty, we are committed to employing talented, dedicated, creative and passionate professionals who are driven to guide students in their journey to become ready learners and to maximize their skills, independence, relationships, and self-confidence inside and outside of the classroom.

Within our program, our students strive daily to model our core values of Safety, Respect and Responsibility. At the same time, our faculty team prioritizes collaboration with students' families, sending districts, outside providers, community partners, and each other to best support our students holistically. As an organization, we believe that students will succeed if they are afforded the appropriate environment, enrichment, and tailored strategies, and this optimism and tenacity is embedded in our culture and practices.

Each year we recognize graduates who successfully transition to college and employment settings, frequently having earned college credit while at Milestones, and we successfully prepare a subset of younger students to return to public school and independent programs. A sample of recent organizational outcomes include that Milestones completed a second large building expansion of our third floor prior to the start of this school year (2023-2024), we extended our long standing history of 100% compliance through a Mid-cycle review audit with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) that was completed this past school year (2022-2023), we began offering parent/guardian support groups both virtually and in person, and we fully resumed offering comprehensive community based instruction and offsite programming across grade levels. Some highlights of our third floor expansion include expanded Post High School classroom and learning lab spaces, a fitness center, assistive technology lab, IT center, Podcasting area, and expanded reading specialist service areas. Milestones also completed a strategic program expansion in 2020 during the height of the pandemic, we were rated as a Boston Family Favorite special education school winner in 2020 and 2021, and we were identified by DESE for a visit by Governor Charlie Baker in 2022 to serve as an example of an approved special education program that had excelled to offer full onsite instruction to students throughout the pandemic. We look forward to continuing to partner with families this upcoming school year to best support our students' growth and success.

We remain privileged and grateful that your family has chosen to join or continue with Milestones, and we look forward to getting the new school year started and reflecting on how far our students have come!

Warm regards,

Kim Rockers

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POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

A copy of Milestones Day School's policies and procedures manual that contains all mandated policies (including our regulatory admission criteria and procedures) is maintained on site at the front desk in the main lobby. This manual is available for any student, parent/guardian, and placing public school district to view prior to admission or any time thereafter. When a student is first accepted into our program, the parents/guardians are notified in writing about our policies and procedures manual, and they receive a copy of our family handbook which is also readily available online on our website. As part of its annual consent form, Milestones includes annual notification to the parents/guardians of all enrolled students that copies of our policies and procedures are available upon request and that the family handbook is readily available on our website. Milestones also sends out annual notification of our Behavior Support and Physical Restraint Policies and Procedures, which are also readily available on our website (Reference # 9.1, 9.1a, and 9.4).

ADMINISTRATIVE AND SOCIAL MEDIA CONTACT INFORMATION

Milestones Day School
410 Totten Pond Road
Waltham, MA 02451

V: 781-895-3200 | F: 781-895-3226 | AdvancingMilestones.com

Should you have questions, please direct them to your child's case manager. You may contact the front desk to be transferred to your child's case manager's phone or you may send an email. Case Managers are involved with our students throughout the day and connect with parents/guardians via email or phone once a week. If your child will be late or absent, please email us at Absent@AdvancingMilestones.com.

Our school's hours of operation for faculty are 7:30 am – 3 pm Monday – Friday (September-June) and 7:30 am – 12 noon (July and August). Student hours are 8:30 am -3 pm Monday – Friday (September-June) and 8:30 am – 12 noon (July and August). Please be advised that Milestones faculty are not expected to check email or voicemail outside of school hours or during vacations. During vacations, if you have a true emergency or urgent update, please contact Alex Smith-Michaels (see contact info below).

Email for all faculty: First Initial Last Name @ AdvancingMilestones.com
(ex: Martha Smith = MSmith@AdvancingMilestones.com)

Facebook: @MilestonesDaySchool
Instagram: @milestonesdayschool
Twitter: @MilestonesMA
LinkedIn: Milestones Day School & Transition Program

Name	Position	Email	Ext
Kim Rockers	CEO	KRockers@AdvancingMilestones.com	x-121
Alex Smith-Michaels	COO/Founder	AMichaels@AdvancingMilestones.com	x-124
Deb Abbott	CFO	DAbbott@AdvancingMilestones.com	x-134
Tim Mahoney	Principal	TMahoney@AdvancingMilestones.com	x-323
Carly Owens	Assistant Principal/Curriculum Director	COwens@AdvancingMilestones.com	x-325
Taylor Hollenbeck	Registered Nurse	THollenbeck@AdvancingMilestones.com	x-137
Gillian Warwick	Special Education Administrator	GWarwick@AdvancingMilestones.com	x-113
Dillon Longmoore	Administrative Assistant	DLongmoore@AdvancingMilestones.com	x-110

Milestones Day School's Family Handbook is provided annually to students' families who are enrolled at our school. This handbook will help you become familiar with our culture, policies, and traditions. Along with annual consents, parents/guardians/students (over the age of 18) who have shared or sole guardianship will be asked to sign an acknowledgement that you have read the Family Handbook in its entirety. In this handbook, some policy references are excerpts. All of Milestones' Policies and Procedures in their entirety can be found at the reception desk and the manual is available upon request for parents/guardians to review.

CALENDAR 2023-2024

SPECIAL DAYS VACATION DAYS - NO SCHOOL **HALF DAYS - 12 NOON DISMISSAL** REGULAR HOURS

8:30AM – 3:00PM

JULY 2023 (19 days)					AUGUST 2023 (14 days)					SEPTEMBER 2023 (19 days)				
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
3	4	5	6	7		1	2	3	4					1
10	11	12	13	14	7	8	9	10	11	4	5	6	7	8
17	18	19	20	21	14	15	16	17	18	11	12	13	14	15
24	25	26	27	28	21	22	23	24	25	18	19	20	21	22
31					28	29	30	31		25	26	27	28	29
July 1-4: No school July 7, 14, 21, and 28: Half days-noon dismissal					August 4, 11, and 18: Half days-noon dismissal August 21-24: Staff PD days August 21-31: No school					Sept 1-4: No school Sept 20: Half day-noon dismissal-PDP Sept 28: Back to School Night				
OCTOBER 2023 (21 days)					NOVEMBER 2023 (20 days)					DECEMBER 2023 (16 days)				
2	3	4	5	6			1	2	3					1
9	10	11	12	13	6	7	8	9	10	4	5	6	7	8
16	17	18	19	20	13	14	15	16	17	11	12	13	14	15
23	24	25	26	27	20	21	22	23	24	18	19	20	21	22
30	31				27	28	29	30		25	26	27	28	29
Oct 6: Half day – noon dismissal Oct 9: Indigenous Peoples' Day - no school Oct 18: Half day – noon dismissal - PDP					Nov 10: End of 1 st quarter Nov 10: Veterans Day recognition: Half day – noon dismissal Nov 22: Half day – noon dismissal Nov 23 & 24: Thanksgiving - no school					Dec 13 – Half day-noon dismissal - PDP Dec 22: Half day – noon dismissal Dec 25-29: No school				
JANUARY 2024 (21 days)					FEBRUARY 2024 (16 days)					MARCH 2024 (21 days)				
1	2	3	4	5				1	2					1
8	9	10	11	12	5	6	7	8	9	4	5	6	7	8
15	16	17	18	19	12	13	14	15	16	11	12	13	14	15
22	23	24	25	26	19	20	21	22	23	18	19	20	21	22
29	30	31			26	27	28	29		25	26	27	28	29
Jan 1: New Year's Day holiday – no school Jan 15: MLK Jr. Day recognition: no school Jan 17: Half day – noon dismissal – PDP Jan 19: End of 2 nd quarter					Feb 14: Half day – noon dismissal - PDP Feb 19-23: No school					March 20: Half day – noon dismissal - PDP March 29: End of 3 rd quarter				
APRIL 2024 (17 days)					MAY 2024 (22 days)					JUNE 2024 (10 days) * 6/17-6/18, 6/20-6/21, & 6/24 reserved for snow days				
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	6	7	8	9	10	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	13	14	15	16	17	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	20	21	22	23	24	24	25	26	27	28
29	30				27	28	29	30	31					
April 15-19: No school					May 8: Half day – noon dismissal – PDP May 24: Half day – noon dismissal May 27: Memorial Day – No school					June 7: End of 4 th quarter June 13: Moving Up Day June 14: Last Day of School June 17-28: No school June 19: Juneteenth –no school				

*Report cards (for academic instruction) are mailed two weeks after the last day of the marking period.
IEP progress reports are sent every three months based upon your child's IEP date.

MILESTONES OVERVIEW

Our History – Written by Our Founder, Alex Smith-Michaels

I'm a dreamer as well as an entrepreneur. I saw a problem and created a solution. I'm also a person with a disability that changed the way students with disabilities are educated today. Growing up I experienced the worst of the educational and psychiatric systems and never wanted another child to be treated the way I was. Therefore, when I was 24 years old in 1994, I created an agency dedicated to helping people with disabilities and vowed to change the way they are viewed. Instead of exclusively looking at a student's challenges I saw what was positive and engaging about these students. I saw potential.

Milestones, Inc. (AKA Milestones Day School) started in the kitchen in my cramped apartment in Cambridge, MA in 1994. After earning my degree, I consulted to various towns' special education programs to meet their students' needs within their district. This involved designing programs from the ground up starting with planning a budget, finding funding sources, designing the physical classroom space, designing curriculum, hiring and training faculty, writing and monitoring Individual Education Plans, and most of all providing program oversight. All students were treated with respect and dignity.

After a short while of consulting to school districts my phone was ringing off the hook. I couldn't keep up with the requests for consultation, so with the support of my family, I decided to hire faculty. Eventually my apartment became too small and unrealistic to run a company from, so I rented approximately 2500 square feet of space to continue and expand the consultations. Consulting alone was still not enough to really help all the students I encountered. Milestones opened several divisions including home-based therapies (ABA/Floortime/DIR) and a summer camp program where we focused on pragmatics for 130 children each year. While these programs were successful, I knew the only way to really make a difference was to establish a year-round, special needs school. In 2005, I opened a school of my own where an intense pragmatic curriculum melded with robust academic programming, and Milestones Day School was born! I rented additional space and employed ideal interventions. The school filled up rather quickly. We started with 1 student and now provide services to up to 92 students and plan to expand our facility to approximately 60,000 square feet.

Mission Statement | Statement of Purpose

Milestones cultivates the potential of every student and young adult by providing individualized academic and therapeutic support based on their strengths, unique needs, and learning differences.

Vision

Our vision is to ensure that each individual reaches their highest level of success by empowering them to achieve greater independence, self-confidence, and meaningful relationships at school and beyond.

Milestones Culture and Core Values

While most of our students struggled in traditional school settings, we are inspired by their tremendous potential which is allowed to flourish in a customized and nurturing environment. The natural consequence of this practice is evident in their increased self-esteem, decreased frustration, friendships, and confidence even beyond our school walls. Each member of our extensive multidisciplinary team at Milestones is devoted to joining our students and their families on this very important journey toward fulfillment both educationally and socially.

1. Our 5 P's we bring with us every day: **Potential, Perseverance, Positivity, Partnerships, and Best Practices.**
2. Through our universal implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), our faculty model, and students practice, our core values of **safety, respect, and responsibility.**
3. Milestones believes a key to success is to embrace a strong, collaborative partnership between students/parents/guardians, school districts, and Milestones faculty.
4. We embrace students' courage, tenacity, humor, and optimism. We believe students are always trying their best to behave but, at times, are missing valuable skills which causes distress. Through our integrated model, students learn missing academic and therapeutic skills which help them overcome obstacles and feel supported. Each day, our students are building skills to interact, communicate, and

learn more effectively. Each student has undeniable potential. We are fierce advocates for highlighting students' strengths and capabilities while celebrating milestones of progress and achievement.

Organizational Structure

Milestones Day School is overseen by its Board of Directors. The school's daily operations are overseen by Milestones' Chief Executive Officer (Kimberly Rockers), Founder and Chief Operations Officer (Alex Smith-Michaels), and Chief Financial Officer (Deb Abbott). Milestones' academics are overseen by the school's principal (Tim Mahoney) and Assistant Principal/Curriculum Director (Dr. Carly Owens) and Grace Little (Language-Based Curriculum and Instruction Specialist). Our therapeutic curriculum is overseen by the Director who also oversees the clinical department (Alex Smith-Michaels) in conjunction with the two Assistant Clinical Directors, Dr. Bill Salloway and Casey Martin.

Accreditation and Memberships

Milestones Day School and Transition Program is licensed and accredited by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Our certification is posted in the Milestones' lobby. Milestones participates in a program review every three years. Results can be found on our website.

Milestones participates in an independent annual financial audit and submits an annual financial report (UFR) as required by the Operational and Services Division for the State of Massachusetts. mass.gov/orgs/operational-services-division.

We are also members of the Massachusetts Association of Approved Special Education Schools. MAAPS.org

Inclusion

Milestones Day School celebrates diversity, and we teach students to take into consideration others' perspectives by respecting their various beliefs. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, disability, handicap or homelessness.

Professional Development Philosophy

Milestones believes strongly in lifelong learners by furthering our faculty's education and honing their craft. Faculty may take courses throughout the year, attend seminars, participate in their trade organization's workshops, and learn from Milestones therapeutic and educational masters. Milestones schedules several faculty professional development days throughout the year to expand our faculty's knowledge and skills to add to their toolbox.

ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

School Profile

Milestones provides services to up to 92 co-ed students ranging in ages from 5-22. We are a state-of-the-art, year-round (216 days) therapeutic day school focused upon embedded multidisciplinary therapeutic programming (academics, occupational therapy, psychological therapy, speech therapy, and pragmatics). Milestones has a high faculty-to-student ratio to ensure student success. Our older students have the option of attending and earning college credits through either dual enrollment with one of our local college partners and/or taking advanced placement courses in certain years. Older students can also partake in internships and/or job shadowing, as well as therapeutic community outings. Younger students thrive with our robust elective program. All our programming yields a comprehensive learning experience that enriches academic, intellectual, physical, emotional, and social growth.

Admissions Criteria

Students must be at least 5 years of age through age 22 and have a diagnosis of a neurocognitive disability (autism spectrum disorder, nonverbal learning disabilities, obsessive-compulsive disorder, Tourette's Syndrome, anxiety disorders, attention deficit disorder, sensory integration dysfunction, disruptive mood dysregulation disorder, learning disabilities, and other neuro-cognitive disorders) as their primary concern. Students must have a full-scale IQ that is generally 90 or above, must be verbal and toilet trained (barring any medical issues), found eligible for special education and be on an approved Individualized Education Program (IEP). In addition, all students proceed through the admissions process below to ensure that the admissions team believes prospective students will make successful progress at Milestones.

Services Provided

All students receive weekly group Occupational Therapy, Speech-Language Therapy, and Psychological Services. Some students, depending upon their profile, may also receive consultation from Board Certified Behavior Analysts and individual or small group reading and/or math services.

Facility Description

Milestones Day School is located on three floors of a 4-story building. All classroom spaces have interior and exterior windows. The colors of the facility were specifically designed to create a calming environment. The facility is primarily carpeted to decrease sound (increasing the student's ability to pay attention and decrease sensory stimuli).

All spaces, including floors, ceilings, and walls, are clean, well maintained & ventilated, and free from safety hazards. All classrooms are maintained at a comfortable temperature that is not less than 68 degrees nor above 80 degrees; Milestones has central air conditioning. We have two conference rooms for meetings with families and other outside visitors.

All spaces within Milestones are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including the kitchen and its appliances. We have a single stall handicapped bathroom on the second floor and there are handicapped bathrooms on the first and third floors. Milestones values students' privacy and to the best of our ability will stay out of the bathroom while occupied by a student. However, if a student is suspected or confirmed to be exhibiting unsafe or questionable behavior or a student is taking a concerning amount of time in the bathroom then 2 faculty members will enter and help the student.

There is an elevator available for use by a person with limited mobility or in a wheelchair.

Milestones Day School has bright and inviting classroom spaces and smaller learning areas to provide individual & small group instruction as well as related services. Milestones Day School has 18 classrooms, a multitude of ancillary spaces, several office spaces designated for faculty usage, four kitchens (1 for faculty and 3 for students), two sensory spaces, a gym, science lab, library, art room, nurse's office, vocational space, a small fitness center, and administrative offices. Students in Middle, High, and Post-High School are assigned a homeroom and academic grouping classroom(s). Elementary students are only assigned a homeroom.

Milestones has 8500 sq feet of outdoor space consisting of a playground, grass area, and black top area including a basketball court. In addition, Milestones abuts Prospect Hill Park where students can partake in hiking and larger field activities.

Student Profile

All our students have complex profiles. Milestones employs approximately over 90 faculty, and our expertise is educating students with disabilities that may affect academic achievement, social communication, executive functioning, sensory regulation, and coping skills. Some common diagnoses students carry include one or a combination of the following diagnoses: autism spectrum disorder, nonverbal learning disabilities, social (pragmatic) communication disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, Tourette syndrome, anxiety disorders, attention deficit disorder, sensory integration dysfunction, bipolar, depression, disruptive mood dysregulation disorder, specific learning disorder, and other neuro-cognitive disorders.

Our students tend to have uneven profiles but fall under the low average to superior range of intelligence. Our students display various deficits in the following domains: language production and processing, social skills, sensory processing, visual spatial and motor skills, executive functioning and organization, theory of mind, and many are also diagnosed with comorbid learning disabilities such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia.

School Pride

Milestones' school colors are blue, white, and gray. Our mascot is a bulldog. Milestones has two ways of supporting our school pride by purchasing custom merchandise designed by students through our student run school store or through an external vendor, Squad Locker.

- Gateway Student Store: gatewaycafe@advancingmilestones.com
- Squad Locker: <https://teamlocker.squadlocker.com/#/lockers/milestones-bulldogs>

Typical School Week

There are 6 blocks in each school day / 30 in each week throughout the school year (September – June). Students engage in group academics, therapeutic activities, art/music, health, physical education, and electives. Some students also receive individual therapies and/or reading/math services.

During the summer (July-August), students participate in field trips and/or swimming (generally twice a week) and the rest of their blocks are filled with some academics and therapeutic services as well as electives. To foster generalization of skills, due to the community outings academic and therapeutic services are generally cut in half during the summer.

Throughout the school year and summer, older high school and Post High School students also partake in Community Based Instruction on a weekly basis to address their functional daily living skills and therapeutic generation of skills.

ADMISSIONS AND ORIENTATION

All students who attend Milestones have engaged in a thorough admissions process which includes a record review, conversations with the student's family, sending district, student, and other applicable people, followed by an intake and visit to the student's proposed classroom.

Once a student is admitted to Milestones Day School parents/guardians will be sent a welcome packet which includes this Family Handbook, parent directory, Parent Advisory Group (PAG) information, your child's Case Manager's name, names of team members, class schedule, and a cheat sheet regarding important information. Additionally, a "meet and greet" is scheduled by your child's Case Manager and occurs within 3 weeks of the student's start date. This informal meeting typically happens before school and is for the purpose of sharing information, feedback, and introducing parents to their child's multidisciplinary team. At the parents' discretion, outside providers or team members from the previous school setting can be invited.

When a student is accepted and chooses Milestones as their placement, 5 things occur prior to starting.

(1) Prior to admission, Milestones provides to the parents and district a written copy of the following information.

1. The school's statement of purpose;
2. The type of services provided;
3. Admission criteria;
4. Parents' rights as described in 18.05(4);
5. Health care policy, including provisions for emergency health care and/or hospitalization as described in 18.05(9);
6. Planning for both foreseen and emergency terminations as described in 18.05(6), (7);
7. Methods of behavior support, violence prevention, discipline, management of harmful behavior by a student to himself/herself or others, and proper use of restraints as described in 18.05(5);
8. Activities related to daily living skills;
9. Contractual obligations with regard to payment for services. The school shall inform in writing any party, other than a local school district, responsible for placement of a student that said party is financially responsible for any costs incurred as a result of any placement not made pursuant to the requirements of 603 CMR 28.00;
10. Clothing requirements;
11. A description of normal daily routines;
12. Any specific treatment strategy employed by the facility;
13. A description of any normally occurring religious practices;
14. Visiting hours and other procedures related to communication with students and the faculty as described in 18.03(9);
15. Name and telephone number of a faculty person whom the parents may contact on an ongoing basis;
16. A description of a procedure which the parents or student may use to register complaints regarding the student's education and care at the facility; and,
17. A copy of the approved calendar.

(2) Documents are signed including a contract with the district, placement page which changes the student's school to Milestones, and a new "grid sheet" reflecting the student's services at Milestones (more information about Milestones' grid sheets can be found later in this document).

(3) A "meet and greet" is scheduled where parents/guardians and the district are provided an opportunity to meet the faculty their student will be working with.

(4) Parents/guardians submit the student's last physical (including immunization records, COVID vaccines, if applicable, and dental checkup (within the past 12 months of a start date.)

(5) Consent forms are signed. Parents/guardians will receive this handbook to reference and all signatures are completed electronically via DocuSign. Parents may contact the Admissions Department with any questions.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

Academic Curriculum

Milestones has four academic administrative leaders (Principal, Assistant Principal/Curriculum Director, Special Education Administrator, and Language-Based Curriculum and Instruction Specialist) who foster best practices in teaching and differentiated instruction. Milestones selects specific programs for academic instruction that best suit our population of learners and are aligned with the Massachusetts Frameworks Curriculum and Common Core. As our students have varying skills and needs, academics are differentiated by our special educators, and students are grouped accordingly.

Grading and Academic Progress Reports

Students will receive academic progress reports four times per year. Quarter 1 (September-November), quarter 2 (November-January), quarter 3 (January-March), and quarter 4 (April-June). There are no academic reports during the summer as our program works on remedial academics and generalizing therapeutic skills. Grades are based upon acquisition of knowledge (assessed by oral, written, and hands-on projects and more traditional tests/quizzes), class participation, effort, and homework (if applicable). All non-academic subjects are graded on a pass/fail scale (ex: social skills, occupational therapy, emotional regulation, physical education, electives, etc.)

**Grading Scale for Elementary School (grades 2nd-5th)*

Elementary students use Standards Based Grading. There are 4 different performance levels which your child will be graded on his/her/their academic performance.

- 1=emerging understanding and application
- 2=partial understanding and application
- 3=functional understanding and application
- 4=thorough understanding and application.

**Grading Scale for Middle (6-8th) & High School (9-12th)*

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
97-100	94-96	90-93	87-89	84-86	80-83	77-79	74-76	70-73	67-69	64-66	60-63	<59

**Post High School (Age 18-22)*

Post High School does not have academic report cards or grading. They do continue to receive IEP progress reports. Students who participate in dual enrollment college courses will receive grades as assigned by our partnering community college.

Homework

All Milestones Day School students may receive reasonable homework (unless otherwise stipulated in their IEP) to help practice independent application of academic instruction and prepare for academic success once students transition from MDS. Specific homework assignments and expectations vary across grade levels. Academic programming is highly technological using Google for Education, Smart Boards, Ipads, and E-textbooks for some middle and most high schoolers.

Incomplete Work Due to Absences

Keeping up with academic content is important to move up to the next grade and for graduation requirements. Students may not have more than 5 unexcused absences in a quarter (such as electing to stay home, excessive vacation time, etc.). This does not include things such as illness, covid, doctor's appointments or taking a long weekend vacation. Should the student have more than 5 unexcused absences, the student will be required to make up missed work. Teachers for each class will determine which assignments need to be completed to fulfill the requirements for their respective classes. We will hold a meeting with parents/guardians to review

expectations and create a plan. Students will have two weeks from the end of the quarter to complete any outstanding assignments. To receive credit, this work will be assigned as additional homework to be completed at home. There may also be the opportunity for the work to be completed during the school day during the "extension block". If the work is not completed by the end of the quarter, the student will receive an incomplete. At the conclusion of the two weeks, any assignments not completed will receive a grade of zero which may result in the student earning a failing grade. Since the therapeutic classes cannot be recreated, students who attend less than 60% of those classes will earn an "F" for the quarter.

Academic Honesty

MDS expects that each student will produce and submit his/her own work and to clearly reference any sources or information used in his/her work that was generated by someone else. Cheating, copying, plagiarism, or use of a student's previously submitted materials constitutes a behavior infraction and will result in a zero for the project or assignment.

State and District Wide Assessments | Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)

All publicly funded students, which includes students at Milestones, are required by state law to take the MCAS assessment. Students may take the traditional MCAS or the Alternative MCAS (MCAS-ALT) to demonstrate their depth and breadth of learned academic content. How the student takes MCAS will be determined at a team or IEP meeting.

Every student at Milestones has accommodations which will be listed in the student's IEP under PLEP A. Accommodations that are provided throughout the year (ex: a scribe, computer, etc.) are generally transferable to the MCAS assessment (except as excluded by state law). All Milestones academic and therapeutic faculty receive training on how to implement a student's accommodations. According to Massachusetts regulations students need to pass only the tenth grade exams (math, English, and science) as a requirement for graduation with a diploma. Students who do not pass their tenth grade MCAS will be given additional opportunities to try to pass. If a student does not pass and is ready to graduate, they will be given a certification of completion instead of a diploma from Milestones and their home district.

Granting High School Diplomas

Milestones coordinates with the student's district to determine which courses the student is required to take in order to receive a high school diploma from both the student's district and Milestones Day School. Milestones ensures all its course offerings align with public school districts. In order to receive a diploma students must both pass their coursework and pass the tenth grade math and English MCAS with a score of 220 or higher. Should a student not meet state mandated requirements for graduation, the student will receive a Certification of Completion from the student's school district.

In accordance with MGL c.71B, s.1, "...any student with a disability who requires special education is entitled to receive publicly funded special education until s/he/[they] turns 22 or attains a high school diploma or its equivalent."

SATs/PSATs

Milestones offers high school students the option to take the PSATs and SATs each year at our facility. For any student who requires accommodations, Milestones will inform the family of how to apply to the College Board, but it is the parent's obligation to apply. Documentation for accommodations may take up to 6 months for approval from the College Board, therefore it is important for families to inform Milestones if your child plans to take any of these tests.

THERAPEUTIC PROGRAMMING

Milestones' therapeutic model starts with explicit instruction through small classes and embeds the therapeutic curriculum throughout the day in all classes. This allows for the generalization of skills through practice and exposure, rather than isolated lessons alone. All Milestones students benefit from our therapeutic curriculum including Occupational Therapy, Speech-Language Pathology (pragmatics), and Psychological Services. All students access these services each week as part of our therapeutic programming. Our Clinicians provide weekly lessons as well as join the classroom instruction of other professionals. Clinicians' lessons are presented in multi-modalities such as discussion, PowerPoint presentations, viewing movie/TV/Internet clips, group activities, and lectures. Below is a glimpse of what content is taught.

Speech-Language Pathologists (social skills/pragmatics): Our speech language pathologists have two main roles. The first is providing social-pragmatic and community-based instruction groups. These groups focus on topics such as understanding what is expected in different social situations, how our behavior should change based on the situation, using clues to figure out how people are feeling and what they are thinking, perspective taking, problem-solving, self-advocacy, and conversation skills. The second is providing services for specific speech, language, and social needs (only some of our students require this service). These services may be delivered within the classroom or in one of our therapy rooms. Many skills may be targeted during these sessions. Examples include comprehension, note-taking strategies, inferencing, grammar, story-telling, articulation, and speech fluency. In addition, the SLPs are available to meet with students when they need support in a class or with a social situation. One example of programs the SLPs use is Social Thinking.

Occupational Therapists (coping & regulation, motor, daily living skills): Occupational Therapy is the therapeutic use of self-care, work, and play activities to increase independent function and enhance development. It includes both skill development and adaptation of task or environment to achieve maximum independence and to enhance the quality of life. Areas of focus for both group and individual services include Activities of Daily Living (ADLs), community traveling and participation, fine and gross motor skill development, endurance, sensory processing and regulation, attention, organizational skills, ocular motor skills, visual perception and motor skills, and technology support. Outside of the classroom, the OTs utilize a student kitchen and laundry area to teach functional skills. Finally, Milestones offers two large sensory rooms where students learn to embed the use of sensory breaks for optimal regulation throughout the day. Therapy also focuses on sensory processing and how a student's senses influence the way he or she participates in school. Therapists also work with the teacher and student to modify the classroom and adapt learning materials to facilitate success. Examples of programs the OT's use are called the "Zones of Regulation" and the "1-5 scale."

Psychologists: Our psychologists provide a range of clinical services supporting emotional and behavioral regulation and cognitive flexibility. These services include psychologically informed therapy groups, individual psychotherapy counseling, consultation to parents/guardians and school faculty, neuropsychological testing, and crisis management. Groups cover a range of topics promoting healthy emotional growth and are crafted considering the specific developmental needs of the population. Topics range from how do you convey friendship to understanding your diagnosis and what it means to you. Psychologists are also available on an as-needed basis for students who are experiencing heightened emotions, having difficulty solving an emotional or interpersonal problem, or need support managing a specific situation. This support might be done in a one-on-one meeting or might take the form of pushing into the classroom to provide additional support to that student. Some discussions include mental health and diagnoses, education around issues involved in dating and friendships, discussions regarding transition to adulthood and a moral dilemmas debate group. Milestones uses multiple approaches including Collaborative Problem Solving which is an evidenced-based approach designed to address the needs of children with behavioral and emotional dysregulation. The approach is based on the belief that children struggle not from a lack of motivation or desire to do well, but rather due to a lack of executive functioning and self-regulation skills, specifically those related to problem-solving, flexibility and frustration tolerance. Collaborative Problem Solving avoids the use of control and motivational procedures and focuses instead on building empathic working relationships to solve problems and teach the skills that the students need to be successful.

Board Certified Behavior Analysts: Our BCBA's focus on the social and emotional development of the students with relation to their behaviors. They collect data and track student progress; write comprehensive functional behavioral assessments; create behavior intervention plans; train faculty on behavioral protocols and implementation; attend IEP meetings and develop behavioral goals; offer consultation to faculty on best practices and proactive strategies including PBIS; collaborate with parents/guardians and outside providers; and participate in behavior support protocol training.

Milestones' Vocabulary

At Milestones, we have designed our own curriculum based upon best practices and a collaboration of ideas from our own experts and leading experts in the field. Some terms your student may come home with may not be familiar to you, so we have provided a glossary to assist you (several of these terms come from the work of Michelle Garcia-Winner's Social Thinking). To help your child generalize these concepts we strongly encourage you to use similar language at home.

- **Stay on Topic:** Students are asked to consider if what they have to say is related to the group's conversation.
- **Show that you care:** Asking a question using information you know about a person or making empathic statements.
- **Bubble Thought:** A thought we should keep in our head so that we do not hurt someone's feelings or offend them.
- **Equal talking time:** Making sure everyone has a chance to talk in a conversation.
- **Stuck or "Rock Brain":** When a student is constantly thinking or talking about the same topic over and over.
- **Oops:** Something that the student didn't expect to happen ("that's an oops")
- **Glitch:** Minor problem (i.e., if a student drops his snack, this is a glitch vs. a major disaster)
- **Level of the problem:** Using a 1-5 scale, we determine the level of the problem and the appropriate reaction based upon that level.
- **Whole body listening:** Using your whole body to attend to the speaker (i.e., facing forward, eye contact, calm body, good attention)
- **Social Fake:** Giving a socially acceptable response even when your true reaction is negative ("thanks for the socks for my birthday")
- **Social Smarts:** Using your brain not just for school smarts (the things we learn/know) but also to think about those around you. How are you making others feel and how can you show you are interested in them?
- **Big picture:** Getting the "gist" of something, not just focusing on minor details.
- **Flexible thinking:** Able to consider another's point of view or way of doing something; doing something even if you don't want to
- **Expected vs. Unexpected:** Every environment has a set of unwritten rules that people expect to be followed, such as talking when it's your turn, respecting personal space, etc... When people follow these rules, some of which are not always explained to the student, then he/she is considered to be doing "what is expected". Students who don't follow the rules are doing what is "unexpected" and people may have "weird thoughts" about them.
- **Take a Break:** Go into the sensory room or other area to help you get more energy, get rid of your energy, or cope with your emotions.
- **Fidget:** A small hand-held object that helps keep students regulated
- **I statements:** When a person feels that they are being blamed—whether rightly or wrongly—it's common that they respond with defensiveness. "I" statements are a simple way of speaking that will help students avoid this trap by reducing feelings of blame. An "I" statement takes responsibility for one's own feelings, while tactfully describing a problem.
- **Emotion Exploration Scale:** We use this scale to describe a particular emotion, its warning signs, and how it progresses from low to high intensity. Students begin by choosing an emotion, such as sadness, anger, or anxiety. Next, they will describe the thoughts, behaviors, and symptoms they

experience as the emotion progresses along a scale from 1 (low intensity) to 10 (high intensity). This scale is helpful for thoroughly exploring an emotion, or more specifically to learn about warning signs.

- **Grounding Techniques:** Grounding techniques work by focusing attention on the present moment, and bringing attention back to reality.
- **The Anger Iceberg:** Represents the idea that, although anger is displayed outwardly, other emotions may be hidden beneath the surface. These other feelings—such as sadness, fear, or guilt—might cause a person to feel vulnerable, or they may not have the skills to manage them effectively.
- **Deep Breathing:** Deep breathing is a popular relaxation technique that helps to control the symptoms of stress, anxiety, and anger.
- **The 3 F's:** When a person perceives the threat of harm—whether emotionally or physically—their body will automatically initiate a survival response. Heart rate elevates, palms begin to sweat, breathing becomes rapid, and thoughts race. These changes are all part of the fight-or-flight response, which prepares the person to either confront, freeze, or flee from the threat.
- **Emotion Thermometer:** The Emotion Thermometers handout is a tool for helping children put a name to their feelings and rating their intensity. The colorfully illustrated faces help children recognize each emotion, and the simple rating scales allow them to indicate how intensely they feel each one. Children may color thermometers to their desired level or make a single mark.
- **Mindfulness:** Teaching mindfulness to students can help shape three critical skills developed in early childhood: paying attention and remembering information, shifting back and forth between tasks, and behaving appropriately with others. These abilities are known as executive functions and they are essential for more advanced tasks like planning, reasoning, problem-solving, and positive social relationships.
- **Stress Tolerance:** Stress tolerance is the threshold at which an individual can effectively and consistently deal with and manage stressful situations. This is typically taught in high school emotional regulation classes.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) AND PLACEMENT

All students at Milestones come with an Individualized Education Program generally from their current placement. Upon admission, your child's IEP Service Delivery Page (aka "grid sheet") will be updated to reflect his/her/their new service delivery. Once Milestones faculty have an opportunity to evaluate your child (formally and/or informally over a 6-8 week period), an IEP meeting will be held to revise the document. Prior to that meeting, Milestones' Administrator of Special Education will send parents/guardians a document to fill out which outlines the student's history as well as your current concerns. This document is vital, so we don't miss an area of concern. Once you complete this document, please send it back to Milestones' Administrator of Special Education via email.

Testing/Evaluations

To prepare for an upcoming reevaluation meeting, Milestones completes various assessments based upon your child's needs and parent and/or district concerns. Testing may occur in the areas of occupational therapy, speech-language pathology/language, psychology, behavior (if applicable), independent living skills (age dependent), and/or academic skills. If outside testing was completed less than a year ago, testing the student again could be considered invalid. Therefore, the clinician will determine what assessment, if any, would be administered while considering past assessments. All assessments also include informal observations. The consent for this testing comes from your child's district, not Milestones.

All Milestones' clinicians are highly qualified and experienced with our population. Testing/evaluations at any given time are determined by a clinician's caseload. The person assessing your child may not necessarily be the clinician who provides therapeutic services to your child. The clinician will review your child's records, speak with your child's Milestones providers, and observe your child to gather valuable information.

Outside Evaluations

Milestones welcomes collaboration of outside clinicians. Once the evaluation is shared, the Team will meet to review the testing and recommendations.

IEP Meeting

Milestones in coordination with your child's school district holds IEP meetings once per year. Every three years we will have a reevaluation meeting by law to determine if your child continues to meet disability criteria and continues to require an IEP. Milestones always conducts testing prior to a 3-year reevaluation meeting, but, in general, does not test students before an annual IEP.

At the age of fourteen, students are invited to attend their team meeting. Prior to the meeting, the student's case manager will meet individually to discuss the student's input including concerns, vision statement, benchmarks, IEP, etc. Massachusetts law establishes age eighteen as the age of majority. One year prior to the student turning 18, the Team discusses the transfer of rights. This means the student is a legal adult and competent to make their own decisions including those regarding their special education services unless it has been deemed by a court of law that guardianship falls to a designated adult. On their 18th birthday (or close to it), we will meet with the student and review the Age of Majority paperwork (shared decision, delegate decision, or acting on their own behalf).

The student's team including Milestones, the district, parents/guardians, and the child, if 14 or older, create the IEP together, but the actual IEP document is generated by your child's district. Milestones is a 12-month program and operates year-round. During the summer months, Milestones provides both academic programming and field trips to provide further opportunities for generalization of learned skills.

IEP Progress Reports

Parents/guardians and districts will receive quarterly reports on their child's progress towards reaching IEP goals and benchmarks. The quarters are based upon the signed IEP dates and not a calendar or school year. All reports are sent electronically.

Therapeutic Grid Services (starting in 2023-24)

The profile of students that Milestones services all generally require our therapeutic programming that is part of, and embedded into, our general curriculum (ex: OT, SLP, and Psychological Services). In an effort to provide the highest level of communication and generalization of skills, starting in August 2023 Milestones will be providing additional quarterly informational letters to all families regarding what therapeutic information students were exposure to including goals, vocabulary words, and general information and a quick preview of what they will be exposed to for the following quarter.

Placement – 12th grade and Post-High School

Each late winter/early spring Milestones Day School will send out a notification to 12th grade and post-high school families to let us know if their child will be graduating, returning for the upcoming school year (July 2024), or moving on to a different placement. All notifications are due back by April 15, 2024. If we do not hear from your family, an administrator will outreach to you and your child's district to confirm if you are intending for your student to move on to another school so that we can plan accordingly for our student enrollment and potential vacancies for new Admissions starting in July of the upcoming school year. If you would like to speak with someone about your child's current placement, please contact your child's case manager, Gillian Warwick (Special Education Administrator), or Alex Smith-Michaels (Founder/COO).

TRANSITION PLANNING

Planning for the future is a part of all students' education. For students with disabilities, this includes individualized transition services designed to provide support as they move from school to adult life. Milestones' embedded therapeutic programming focuses on transition and provides each student with the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully complete college courses, certificate or workplace training programs, or enter the workforce. Our community and employment exposures begin with self-awareness and exploration and culminate with immersion for each student through tailored planning and assessment. Transition planning begins no later than when the student is 14 years old.

Middle School:

- Provide opportunities for students to learn and practice self-determination skills
- Conduct age-appropriate transition assessment for student to identify their academic strengths and abilities, post-school interests and abilities, and community activities
- Offer guidance to parents to look toward the future and desired outcomes including access to curriculum and development of functional skills

Age 14:

- Student is invited to attend IEP meeting and participate as appropriate
- Age-appropriate transition assessment is used to develop the Transition Planning Form (TPF) required by Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
- Integrate transition needs and activities within IEP
- Begin college & career awareness

Ages 15 & 16:

- All subsequent IEPs must reflect student needs to address issues related to his/her disability with regard to transition
- Conduct ongoing transition assessment based on student's current preferences and needs
- Update TPF annually
- Discuss anticipated date of graduation
- Begin Community-Based Instruction (Grade 10)
- Begin college & career exploration
- Discuss College Board accommodations (PSAT & SAT)
- Apply all transition requirements from age 14

Age 17:

- Discuss Age of Majority notice
- Discuss guardianship options (if appropriate)
- Discuss Chapter 688 referral
- Discuss post-high school programming (if appropriate)
- Continue college & career exploration, including tours and volunteering
- Focus on disability awareness & disclosure of disability
- Apply all transition requirements from ages 14-16

Age 18:

- Sign Transfer of Rights
- College & Career Immersion, including dual enrollment and work-based learning options

- In the spring, students are paired with a student mentor from Post-High School

Transition to Next Steps (up to age 22):

- Participate in post-high school programming, if determined appropriate
- Plan transfer to adult service agency, if necessary

Milestones' Transition Program (age 18-22)

Milestones offers individualized, multi-year (age 18-22) programming designed to prepare students as they transition from high school to post-secondary education and/or employment. Students will discover and develop their individual strengths, become effective self-advocates, acquire a broader repertoire of social competencies and independent living skills, and become active members of the community. With a focus on self-determination, self-advocacy, and increased independence, students receive direct instruction in six core competencies: *Independent Living Skills, Community Participation, College & Career Readiness, Therapeutic Support, Executive Functioning Skills, and Preparation for Next Steps*. Programming takes place in a variety of settings. Our specially designed program space provides a natural environment to learn and practice skills. Work-based learning opportunities provide authentic experiences to develop employment skills based on career interests and strengths. Community based instruction occurs in many natural community settings and promotes generalization of skills. On campus learning at MassBay Community College provides students with the opportunity to participate in higher education while receiving individualized guidance and instruction on accessing supports in a college setting. Each of these real-world experiences provides students with the skills needed to create their own meaningful adult life.

WORK-BASED LEARNING & INTERNSHIPS

Creating and maintaining strong workplace learning opportunities is an essential part of Milestones' transition planning. Our work-based learning programming provides students with authentic opportunities to develop employment and transition skills based on their career interests and strengths. Targeted job coaching supports are provided with fading support as needed in order to maximize independence. These opportunities can take the form of community service projects, volunteering, work trials, and/or internships. Following the Massachusetts Work Based Learning Plan, students receive direct instruction and opportunities for generalization in the following employability skill areas:

- Attendance & punctuality
- Motivation & initiative
- Communication
- Teamwork & collaboration
- Critical thinking & problem solving
- Workplace policy, culture, and safety

Communication at Post-High School

Parents/guardians are important and valued members of a student's Team. Working together ensures a positive school experience for students. PHS faculty communicate regularly with parents/guardians to share student-specific information. These updates may occur through a variety of formal and informal ways including meetings, emails, and phone calls. Parents/guardians will receive a minimum of two contacts per month from a member of the student's Team. Parents/guardians will also receive a monthly newsletter of program highlights as well as a weekly email update from their student. We encourage parents/guardians to contact faculty with any relevant information.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

PARENTS' RIGHTS

Milestones has a Parent Advisory Group that advises the school on matters that pertain to the education, health, and safety of the students in the program (see PAG for more details).

Communication with Families

Milestones Day School is committed to teaming with parents and districts to help our students thrive. In the case of a student who is in the legal custody of only one parent or guardian, a copy of the legal agreement must be on file at MDS. Custody agreements may also affect the release of information, such as school reports. Parents should notify the school if this is the case for their child.

Communication occurs in several ways:

- **Overall Communication:** All students are assigned a Case Manager upon admission for ongoing parent/guardian communication, and you will receive your child's Case Manager's name, email, and phone number for ongoing contact. The Case Manager's responsibility is to keep abreast of your child's academic and therapeutic highlights. You may call or email anytime, but please note that our Case Managers spend much of the day in classrooms and therapeutic meetings, so we ask that you are patient in hearing back from them. If you have a true emergency, please call the front desk and our Administrative Assistant, Dillon, will direct you to the correct person. Case Managers may change from time to time (ex: when a student moves from middle to high school, etc.), and families will be notified if there is a change in your student's assignment. **2nd-12th Grades** - Weekly Phone Conferences or Email with Case Managers (called "weeklies"): Parents may request either a weekly email or brief phone call to hear about your child's highlights for the week. This is a good time to discuss any concerns you may have. **Post High School** – Communication: families receive a weekly newsletter, a bi-weekly email or phone call with their student's case manager, and a weekly communication from their student about highlights from their week.
- **Meetings:** Because we want to focus on the student's therapeutic progress and education, if you have questions or issues you would like to discuss that will take more than 1-2 minutes, please save the question for your weekly phone check-in, send an email, or make an appointment with your student's Case Manager or Principal if appropriate.
- **Parent Conferences:** Milestones' faculty look forward to meeting at your child's yearly IEP and/or 3-year reevaluation. Outside of these meetings, parent/guardian conferences may be held upon your request. Please contact your child's Case Manager to arrange.
- **Parent Support Groups:** Milestones offers one virtual and one in person support group each month that are open to all parents/guardians. The groups are run by psychologists, Dr. Carrie Fryzel and Dr. Bill Salloway. More information will be forthcoming by September 2023.

Parent Advisory Group (PAG)

The PAG is a group of parents/guardians who work collaboratively to help guide and advise Milestones' programming. All families/guardians are invited to join the PAG. Members have input into relevant program matters that pertain to the students' education, health, and safety. Notice of meetings including the parent training agenda topics are sent home prior to the scheduled meeting, and dates for each school year's meetings are communicated with all families each fall. Each meeting involves programmatic discussions as well as mini workshops with topics generated by the Milestones' parent/guardian community in an annual customer service survey.

The Chief Executive Officer, Kim Rockers, is designated as the PAG liaison. She hosts and attends the quarterly meetings (*typically held in November, January, March and June*), which are open to all parents/guardians of our school, and we welcome participants to attend as often as they are able.

In addition, the Milestones PAG has a vital role in supporting our community. Members may take on specific roles such as helping to identify appropriate speakers and training topics for families, planning for outside of school activities, fundraising, organizing faculty appreciation activities, contributing to school surveys, and identifying potential partnerships (ex: clubs for students). There are PAG Leader/Co-Leader roles, a Boxtops for Education Coordinator, and opportunities for parent/guardian representatives to volunteer to lead or collaborate on social planning and initiatives.

The job of the PAG liaison (and designated Milestones collaborators) includes, but is not limited to:

- Notification of meetings and development of written agendas. PAG leaders/co-leaders also contribute to the development of meeting agendas and approve all meeting minutes.
- Facilitation of PAG meetings
- Providing members with resources and materials, as needed
- Providing ongoing training during PAG meetings
- Maintaining a list of parents/guardians in attendance and following up on various generated ideas and/or concerns generated at the meeting
- Communicating issues, needs, and recommendations to appropriate program administrators.
- Messages from the CEO, Principal and designees: Kim Rockers (CEO), Tim Mahoney (Principal) and other administrators send various communications about happenings in the school periodically to parents/guardians that offer reminders and updates about school-wide events and highlights certain activities that have taken place in the classroom and community.

School-Wide Newsletters: Milestones produces a quarterly newsletter highlighting big events that occurred. This newsletter is sent out via Constant Contact and is also posted online. Our students are proud to share their work!

Social Media: Milestones maintains a Facebook page (“Milestones Day School and Transition Services”), Twitter account, Instagram, and LinkedIn account that members of the community have the option to follow.

Document Translation

When students first enter Milestones Day School, the parents/guardians fill out an application. This application asks if the primary language spoken in the home is a language other than English and what the language is. If a family’s primary language is not English, Milestones Day School will at the family’s request translate all our documents into the family’s native language including, but not limited to the Family Handbook, our application, any consent forms, any school announcements, and/or other documents required. In addition, at the parent’s request, interpreters shall be provided for translation.

WEATHER AND SCHOOL CLOSURES

Snow Cancellations and Delays

Milestones aligns our decision regarding whether to stay open, close or delay the start time of school due to snow with the decision made by Waltham Public Schools. The Waltham superintendent makes decisions surrounding school closings in collaboration with several safety offices and other superintendents in the area, and Waltham's cancellation and delay information is broadcast on WBZ TV Channel 4, WCVB TV Channel 5, WHDH TV Channel 7, WFXT TV Channel 25, WBZ Radio AM 1030, and Waltham's WE-TV. The Waltham school district's website is later updated as soon as possible. Milestones will use our emergency automated call system and email to notify families of closings or delays once a decision has been confirmed by Waltham public schools, but families will be able to reliably anticipate Milestones' decision at the earliest opportunity by following Waltham's plans.

- *School Cancellation:* If Waltham Public Schools closes due to snow, Milestones will close for the day.
- *One Hour Delayed Opening:* If Waltham Public Schools announces a 1 hour delay, Milestones will open to students at 9:30AM.
- *Two Hour Delayed Opening:* If Waltham Public Schools announces a 2 hour delay, Milestones will open to students at 10:30AM.

Please note that if there were ever to be a circumstance when Waltham and Milestones decide to remain open, but conditions worsen once the school day has started, Milestones would separately evaluate our plan for the remainder of the day. We recognize the great difficulty families and transportation companies face when schools close unexpectedly early, so we would reserve our own discretion in such circumstances. In the event that Milestones were to determine for safety reasons that an early dismissal is warranted, we would contact all families to notify you about our need to close early and to ensure appropriate transportation and coverage for each student.

A note about transportation: Milestones recommends that families contact their local districts to determine if district transportation will be provided or delayed on dates when Milestones is open, but a student's local district is closed or delayed. In addition, Milestones requests that parents/guardians please notify our main office if students will be absent or have late arrivals. *Our main office phone number is: 781-895-3200 and our email address for reporting absences is: absent@advancingmilestones.com.*

Emergency Midday Closing

In the event of unavoidable incidents, school will remain open as long as safety permits. The closing of the school is at the sole discretion of one of Milestones' Directors or their designee. In the event of an unavoidable circumstance that requires us to close our doors, every effort will be made to contact parents/guardians to come and get their student. Such circumstances may include: fire, natural disaster, loss of heat/air conditioning, loss of power, or loss of water. If we are required to evacuate, all students will walk to Building 460 within our office park or the Hilton Garden hotel accessible via the Milestones parking lot. Should Waltham be evacuated, all students will be transported to a designated location by local authorities. If the parents/ guardians cannot be reached, we will refer to the student's emergency contact sheet. All students are required to have a minimum of two current, local emergency contacts on file. Should we be unable to reach the family/guardian or emergency contact, the student will remain with a faculty member until the family or emergency contact can be reached.

Additional Information Regarding School Closing or Delay *(see the section on snow cancellation and delays above for weather related changes)*

At times, Milestones may close or delay for non-weather-related emergencies (ex: flood, no heat, etc.). Milestones will use our automatic call system and email to notify families if scheduling changes need to occur. If Milestones cancels school, even if your town is open for weather or other related reasons, there will be no school. There may be times that Milestones is open, but your town is closed. If this occurs, most transportation companies will not transport your child to school. In this case you are welcome to drive your child to school. If there is a snow delay in your town, generally the transportation companies will also delay picking up your child. Please check with your child's individual transportation company for their specific policies. It's important to check ahead of time, because on a snow day they might be very busy and not be able to answer the phone in a timely manner.

MEDICAL & HEALTH CARE

Milestones employs a full-time registered nurse to address any medical needs that may arise on a day-to-day basis with students. Should the nurse be absent, Milestones will reach out to substitutes who can fill in. Should a substitute be unavailable, a select few of Milestones' faculty are trained to administer medication according to the doctor's orders. Milestones also has a consulting pediatrician, Dr. Hackett, who is located in Waltham, MA and our school nurse also consults with the Waltham Board of Health, DESE, and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for ongoing issues (ex: COVID).

Training

All faculty members receive training in first aid, CPR, and AED, on a regular basis as stipulated by the American Red Cross. In addition, annual training also includes diabetes management, seizures, and antipsychotic medications.

Annual Medical Consent Forms

All parents/guardians will receive annual consent forms, which include permitting Milestones to treat your child in case of an emergency (please see our emergency consent forms for additional details). These forms are sent out every spring and are required to be returned in June prior to the start of the next school year.

DESE Mandated Physical and Dental Evaluations

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education requires that your child has both an annual physical and a dental exam. When a student first enrolls at Milestones and does not have a physical within the past year, Milestones will make provisions for the student to have a physical within 30 days of enrollment. Thereafter, each student is required to have an annual physical and dental exam, which must be submitted to Milestones Day School. If an appointment is not able to be scheduled until after the last physical or dental exam expires, parents/guardians are responsible for providing Milestones with the date of the upcoming appointment in writing by sending an email to our school nurse. While Milestones strongly encourages all families to seek regular dental care for their child, we will accept notification in writing that a family has opted out of a dental exam. Physicals may **not** be opted out of, by DESE regulation.

Annual Screenings

Each year, Milestones will conduct annual hearing, postural, body mass index (BMI), and vision screenings per the Department of Public Health's schedule. If you have any concerns about your child's health, please speak directly with his/her/their pediatrician.

Immunizations

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has established guidelines regarding immunizations to protect the health of all young students. All students are required to have up to date immunizations and we must have your student's updated health record prior to school starting each fall. We strongly recommend all students receive COVID vaccines and boosters as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Milestones requires that all students be immunized to be admitted to school. There are two situations in which children who are not appropriately immunized may be admitted to school:

1. a medical exemption is allowed if a physician submits documentation attesting that an immunization is medically contraindicated.
2. a religious exemption is allowed if a parent or guardian submits a written statement that immunizations conflict with their sincere religious beliefs.

Medical and religious exemptions must be presented in writing at the beginning of each school year. The law in Massachusetts does not allow philosophical exemptions, even if signed by a physician. Should your student not be vaccinated due to religious or medical objections, you must sign a statement of your preferences and release of liability prior to, or during, registration.

Epidemic/Pandemic Plan

Should there be an outbreak of infectious disease deemed an epidemic or pandemic by the World Health Organization, Milestones will follow guidance from the WHO, State and Federal agencies (ex: Board of Health), our consulting physician, DESE, and legal counsel. Milestones' Board of Directors along with the Milestones Task Force will be responsible for making decisions to keep our students and faculty safe.

Mask Policy

As of May 2022, Milestones is a mask optional school. It is up to a family's decision or student if over the age of 18 to determine what works best for their family, and all choices will be supported and respected. Milestones reserves the right to change our requirements and re-implement mask use at any time (schoolwide or in specific areas of the school) if State guidance for schools were to change based on updated public health information. (Please note that DESE has put forth that students with special needs may not be able to mask due to their disability. If a mask policy were to be reinstated in the future, Milestones would treat each student as an individual and would decide with his/her/their team in accordance with DESE guidelines).

General Illness

Faculty and students are expected to be in good health. Faculty or students who have vomited, had diarrhea, or a fever over 100 degrees, should refrain from attending for 24 hours after the last episode. In the case of fever, faculty and students should not return until they have been fever free for 24 hours without the aid of fever reducing medications. If one is fever free and well enough to be onsite but still exhibiting airborne/respiratory symptoms, a mask is recommended to prevent transmission to others. If community members have questions or concerns regarding illness and school clearance guidelines, please contact our School Nurse.

Contagious or Communicable Diseases Excluding COVID-19

Any person with a contagious or communicable disease will need to stay home until he or she is no longer contagious and/or has been on antibiotics for 24 hours. Any person with a severe cough, excessive nasal discharge, or green mucus should remain home until symptoms have improved and they have been cleared by the School Nurse to be onsite. If a student is diagnosed with a communicable disease such as mono, chicken pox, strep throat, conjunctivitis, head lice, flu, RSV, or a skin infection, please contact the School Nurse for clearance instructions.

COVID-19 Protocols:

- Symptoms and Isolation:
 - If a student or faculty member tests positive for COVID-19, they should notify the School Nurse, and remain out of school until meeting the state guidelines specified here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-isolation-and-exposure-guidance-for-children-and-faculty-in-child-care-k-12-out-of-school-time-ost-and-recreational-camp-program-settings>. Remote access for virtual learning is available for students who are isolating at home due to COVID-19.
 - Testing for COVID-19 when symptoms start is encouraged, and if a test is negative it is still recommended to test again at day 5 of symptoms. As long as students and faculty test negative, they can be on campus (a mask is recommended if airborne symptoms are present). However, if negative and symptoms persist, it is recommended to see a healthcare provider to be tested for other respiratory illnesses.
- Quarantine: Quarantine is no longer recommended for people who are exposed to COVID-19 as long as one is not exhibiting symptoms. If symptoms arise, testing is advised.
- Health and Safety Mitigation Protocols: Guidance encourages hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, and providing adequate ventilation to decrease the contaminants spreading through air and on surfaces. Milestones receives ongoing daily cleaning during and after

school hours from a third party. Contactless sinks and ample hand sanitizer are readily available. Our building utilizes MERV-13 filters for ventilation, which are maintained in accordance with recommended guidelines. Beginning in 2023-2024, Milestones is no longer issuing notifications for all individual cases of COVID-19. However, if Milestones were to experience a high volume of cases schoolwide or clustered in a specific area of the school, we will collaborate with the Waltham Board of Health and update faculty and families.

- **Vaccination:** Milestones implemented a COVID-19 vaccine policy for faculty in December, 2021 and has hosted multiple free onsite vaccination clinics for students, faculty, and families. Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year, Milestones is recommending but no longer requiring COVID-19 vaccines for nonexempt faculty based upon the public health state of emergency ending in May, 2023. We reserve the discretion to reinstate a policy if public health guidance changes.

Medical and/or Psychiatric Emergency

If your child has a medical or psychiatric emergency, we will immediately inform the child's parent(s) or legal guardians (or DCF, if appropriate). If we are not able to reach you, we will call your emergency contact number, which is listed on our emergency forms that you will fill out annually. It is very important that you provide updated contact information. ***If your numbers or emergency contact changed during the school year, please let us know immediately.*** Should an emergency arise, students are generally transported by our vans or ambulance to the nearest emergency room. In general, if the student is being transported from our facility, the nearest emergency room is *Newton-Wellesley Hospital located at 2014 Washington Street, Newton, MA 02462 / 617-243-6000*. Parents/guardians will be called immediately should the need for emergency transport occur.

Taking Prescribed Medication While at School

Any student requiring medication (prescription or over the counter) to be administered at school must have the following:

- A written order from the physician, dentist, or practitioner-stating his/her name, address, phone number, student's name, reason for the medication, medication, time, duration, and dosage to be given by the school is required, along with the parent/guardian signature.
- Medication must be in a pharmacy-labeled container with the most current prescription date. Any over the counter medication must be in the original box and sealed when we receive it (we cannot administer over-the-counter medication that has previously been open. However, once we open it we can re-administer as needed). Any prescription that does not match the physician's order will not be administered.
- Medications must be delivered to the school by a responsible adult in a container labeled by the physician or pharmacist. Parents/guardians must either provide medication in person or call Milestones Administrative Assistant in the morning to let him/her know that a responsible adult will be delivering medication. If a parent/guardian is calling, please leave the following information: Name of student, name of medication, medication amount [i.e., # of pills], and consent form (which includes quantity of medication). Consent forms can be downloaded from Milestones' website. Parents/guardians are responsible for the medication until we are in receipt of it. All medication will be counted at the time of receiving and signed off by the School Nurse or the COO (or designee) and you will receive an email that we are in receipt of it. If there is a discrepancy in any information, we will call immediately. Milestones reserves the right to opt not to administer a specific medication to a student if we feel the medication is dangerous or harmful in anyway, regardless of physician orders.

FOOD RELATED POLICIES

Free and Reduced Breakfast/Lunch Program

Milestones participates in the free and reduced meal program should a family financially qualify, or their district provides free meals to all students. For more information, please contact your home school district. Applications are available for those who qualify for free or reduced lunch and need to be filled out annually upon enrollment or by September 30th of the current year. Free and reduced breakfasts/lunches are offered to families who qualify financially according to the National School Lunch Program standards. Students who are on the free/reduced breakfast/lunch program do not need to set up an account at MySchoolBucks.com. For breakfast, Milestones offers a variety of cereals, oatmeal, and milk.

Lunch/Snacks from Home

Milestones encourages families to send healthy meals, snacks, and drinks. Students may not heat items up in the microwave so we strongly suggest sending food in a cooler or meals that can be consumed at room temperature. When sending food from home, please observe our nut free-nut conscious policy which can be found in this section of the handbook.

Purchasing Lunch at School

Milestones works in collaboration with the Waltham Public Schools to provide a healthy lunch (according to the Department of Agriculture) to all students who wish to purchase lunch. These lunches are consistent with the nutritional guidelines set by the Federal Government.

Parents/guardians can sign up for a school lunch account by going to the website [MySchoolBucks.com](https://www.myschoolbucks.com). From there, parents/guardians can create an account using Milestones Day School for the district and their child's name. Parents/guardians can load money via the website and the student's account will be debited when they purchase lunch. Each week during homeroom students who wish to purchase lunch will be asked to fill out a lunch form. Monthly, Milestones posts our school's lunch options on the website (at the bottom of the page under Find it Fast). Students fill out a weekly menu with the lunch options. Students are welcome to bring their own lunch and snacks, including drinks, from home.

Cooking at School

Milestones' students engage in regular cooking activities which help them to learn and generalize daily living skills, math, and executive functioning. Faculty do their best to take allergens or food restrictions into account, however, because many of our students have food allergies or restrictions and some are allergy opposed (meaning, the substitute that one child can have may cause allergies for another child), every meal prepared may not be appropriate for every child. Students with allergies or food restrictions, may opt out of cooking for those particular meals.

Allergies and Nut Conscious Environment

Milestones Day School will protect all students from exposure to foods, chemicals, or other materials to which they are allergic. Please note, Milestones Day School is a nut conscious environment. We request that parents/guardians and faculty do not send to school items that contain peanut and/or tree nut products.

Prior to intake, a child's parents/guardians are required to complete an application for admission which includes a medical information section. Contained in this section is a question related to any known allergies the child may have. A page in the intake form is used to identify the allergens, reactions, remedy, and accommodations as needed. Upon entry to our school for a student with known allergies, the school wide Allergy and Medical Information sheet is updated.

All relevant faculty members are required to attend a medical orientation program which will include student-specific information, proactive and reactive, pertaining to allergies as well as the use of emergency interventions (i.e., Epi-Pen). If a student has allergies, all faculty members who have direct service contact with the student will be notified and the student's allergies will be posted in the classroom, by the kitchen, and any other area that

might have an allergen. Faculty will be trained in the student's specific allergies and emergency procedures should the student accidentally come in contact with an allergen.

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNITY OUTINGS

Pick Up / Drop Off:

Milestones has a designated bus line at the side/private entrance to our facility; students are dropped off one at a time and only when a Milestones faculty member is present. If you are driving your student to and from school, we request that you please drop your student off at 8:30 am and pick up at 3:00 pm each day by joining the bus line. Please do not leave your child unattended before or after school.

Drop Off Late/Pick Up Early:

If your child arrives after the school day has begun or needs to be picked up early from school, please go to the reception area (2nd floor) and sign your child in/out. We respectfully request that if your child is going to be late or leave early due to an appointment, please notify your child's Case Manager in advance.

Transportation to and from School:

Milestones does not provide transportation to and from school. This is the responsibility of the sending school district or family. If your student is transported by the town's bus/ van and you have a problem with transportation, please contact your town or the bus company directly, as Milestones is not contracted to oversee transportation issues. If bus companies drop off a student after 8:30 am, the bus driver is responsible for escorting the student to the upstairs main lobby (2nd floor).

Late Dismissal

If a student's bus has not arrived by 3:05 pm, a Milestones faculty member will contact the transportation company to get information regarding an estimated time of arrival and reason for tardiness. A faculty member will contact a parent/guardian on their preferred contact phone number to inform them of the late departure from school.

Bus Safety and Emergency Contacts for Dismissal

Milestones' faculty reserves the right to determine whether for any reason, riding the bus home is not safe for your child. This determination will happen by 2:30 pm. Should this occur, the student's parents/guardians will be called to pick up their child. If a Milestones faculty has not received confirmation by 3:00 pm that a parent/guardian is picking the student up, the emergency contacts will be called. We expect that parents/guardians or their emergency contact will pick up their student no later than 4 pm. **For this and other reasons, it is imperative that families keep their emergency contact information up to date. All families are required to provide at least 2 local emergency contacts.**

Transportation During the School Day

Students may leave Milestones during the day for several reasons to enhance learning and generalize skills (a field trip, community outing, internship, community college, etc.). Students will be transported either in one of Milestones' vans (driven by an approved faculty member) or hired chartered buses.

Student expectations: Students are to keep hands, head, and all other parts of the body inside the bus/van (do not hang out the window) and stay seated while the vehicle is moving. If riding on the van, all students must wear seat belts while the van is moving and keep feet out of the aisles. Additional rules include: do not lean into the aisles, do not bring food or drink onto the bus/van, do not throw anything out of the bus/van or in the bus/van, screaming or other disruptive behavior that distracts the driver is not permitted, and do not place any items in the front of the bus that will block the doorway. All items brought on the bus must be taken to a student's seat. Any items left on the bus after final departure may not be retrievable.

Field Trips

Students at Milestones Day School take various field trips during the year to practice social skills, daily living skills, employment, academic skills, and generalization of therapeutic skills. During the summer, our students leave school approximately twice a week. In June of each year, families will receive a calendar of summer events. High School Seniors have a week of fun prior to graduation. Milestones pays for admission for field trips, but we

request 12th grade parents/guardians contribute to Senior Week. All activities are previewed with students by our academic and clinical faculty. Prior to going on a field trip, we request that families.

- Please remind and review the field trip with your student.
- Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. Even if it is an indoor field trip, we might be outside for part of the time.
- Please make sure to pack your student snacks, drinks, and a lunch that doesn't need to be heated or require preparation.
- Please DO NOT send your student with money unless otherwise specified by faculty. Students are not permitted to purchase items at gift shops.

Community Based Instruction (CBI)

CBI is embedded through the programming of our students' milieu but can be specifically seen during OT/SLP classes, along with any transition-led groups for the 10th, 11th and 12th grade. Students in the upper high school and Post High School program enjoy community trips as part of their regular curriculum. These trips are designed to help them learn functional independent living skills and to navigate their world in a small group supported setting. Trips may include a variety of tasks including, but not limited to shopping for groceries, taking public transportation, and visiting a bank.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION STRATEGIES (PBIS)

Milestones is proud to be a “PBIS School.” PBIS facilitates best practices, which is an evidence-based program used in schools nationwide. PBIS is used as a framework for supporting universal teaching for responses to expected behaviors throughout the school in all areas of the day. Fostering students to extend to their highest potential is reinforced by best teaching practices across the school, creating a sense of community, and raising school spirit. Classroom PBIS strategies are important tools to decrease disruptions, increase instructional time, and improve student social behavior and academic outcomes. This is critical as schools are held to greater accountability for student outcomes and teacher effectiveness. PBIS fosters the optimal environment for learning, growth, independence, and success. At Milestones PBIS will better allow the majority of our students to best access our interventions and supports in their daily environment. In addition, PBIS allows a school to grow as a community and establishes a positive culture through school spirit and identity. Faculty and students are proud that Milestones is the home of the Bulldogs, our mascot, and believe in the school's core values of respect, responsibility, and safety throughout the school environment.

Reflection Sheets: All students in 9th grade and below use “reflection sheets”, these are both electronic and paper-based forms that support students in demonstrating the core values across their school day (academic, therapeutic, and leisure blocks each day). Students can earn up to 3 points per core value (Safety, Respect, Responsibility), as well as a point for a personal goal (a goal the student has identified to work towards). Students have a brief moment of processing at the end of each block focusing on strengths and strategies or interventions to use in the next block for best success. These earning sheets are part of our positive reinforcement procedures and incorporate our integrated and ongoing processing to support student growth. Reflection sheets also tie into a current school-wide rewards system through our school store.

PBIS Rewards: PBIS Rewards is a program that interfaces and works in tandem with our school’s universal systems and implementation of PBIS and SWIS (School Wide Information System) data collection. The program itself is an electronic program that faculty and students use (available on both computers and phone applications) to input earned reflection sheet points. Students have the opportunity weekly to ‘cash out’ their earned points in the school store or to continue saving. Rewards have been a great positive incentive and allow for both individual, cohort, and school-wide challenges and games!

GENERAL SCHOOL POLICIES

Lost and Found

There is a lost and found box on the first floor side entrance where students are dropped off and picked up by buses. This box is emptied before the December and June breaks. Any items not claimed at the end of each quarter will be donated to a charitable organization.

Library

Milestones houses a library which students are encouraged to use. Students may take out books from this library. Milestones also makes books available in other ways such as downloading e-textbooks on the computer or using websites that provide the same materials. Milestones has several subscriptions to audiobooks for students with dyslexia, language-based learning disabilities, or students who simply enjoy audiobooks.

Attendance

As an educational institution, Milestones' instructional program time is crucial for a student's success. We respectfully encourage families to take time off for vacations when school is closed, (December, February, April, June and August). A student is expected to attend school when school is in session.

Absences from school are acceptable only when there is illness, or severe illness/death in the family, exposure to contagious disease, religious holidays, extremely inclement weather (even if MDS is open), reasonable family vacations, or school related activities for which participation has been granted by the school. In addition, many districts require advanced notice and approval for extended planned absences and it is the family's responsibility to proactively communicate with their sending district and Milestones. Absences for other reasons, including out-of-school suspension are considered unexcused absences.

Reporting an Absence or Late Arrival

If your child is absent, please email: Absent@AdvancingMilestones.com. If you know in advance that you will be away, please email your child's Case Manager so we can plan accordingly. To assist with our attendance tracking and health monitoring, we kindly request that parents/guardians include the reason for the student's absence or tardiness (ex: illness, offsite appointment, vacation, etc.)

Service Dogs

From time to time, faculty with certified service dogs may bring their dog to work with them provided students involved in the program are not allergic or afraid of the dog.

Supervision of Students

Milestones ensures all students are appropriately supervised within our DESE ratios at all times. Most students are permitted to travel in the hallways and to the bathrooms independently which helps address goals of daily living (but Milestones may exercise discretion to provide faculty support for operational or individualized reasons). For our older students in 12th grade or Post High School, they are permitted to have independence while at college and/or in the community or onsite internships.

Emergency Drills

Fire drills are held at regular intervals, are required by state regulations, and are an important safety precaution. It is essential that when the first signal is given, everyone promptly clears the building by the prescribed route in an orderly fashion or remains in their classroom as directed. The teachers in each classroom will give the exact directions. Milestones also conducts additional emergency drills throughout the year. Milestones understands that these drills can be dysregulating for some students, and we will work closely with students to help them re-regulate during the drill and once it is over.

Visitors

Milestones has visitors throughout the year to observe the general program. We offer onsite tours throughout the year for prospective students, parents/guardians, professionals, and community members. Of course, identifying information is always kept confidential. Additionally, from time to time, your child's district and the Department of

Elementary and Secondary Education may also visit as Milestones has contractual obligations to permit visitors/observations with them. We kindly request that parents/guardians and other professionals pre-schedule visits in advance. Please contact your child's case manager should you have a request to visit or for a visitor to observe. For the health and safety of our students and faculty, we kindly request that if any pre-approved visitor is feeling ill or has been recently identified as a close contact to someone who tested positive for COVID-19 that they please reschedule their visit to a future date. Masks are optional.

Volunteers and Interns

Milestones Day School may utilize student interns and members of the community to augment existing faculty members and to further its mission and endeavors. Their support and assistance help to create a broader network and provides greater opportunities for those serviced. Student interns and volunteers will all be required to consent to and have a criminal record check and fingerprinting and participate in required trainings. Any student interns or volunteers who have been convicted of a crime against children will not be permitted to work, volunteer, or intern at Milestones Day School. CORI checks are repeated every three years for all faculty, volunteers, and interns.

What to Bring to School

As part of our standard school procedures, students typically have an assigned locker where they can keep their personal belongings. Students should regularly keep available at school a sweatshirt or jacket and bring a pair of sneakers if the student wears other types of shoes. Please be advised, that students should not bring in clothing that is special as Milestones cannot be responsible for it; every year some clothing is accidentally lost.

What Not to Bring to School

Milestones cannot be held liable for lost items. From time to time we do accidentally lose a sock, or sweatshirt, so please do not permit your student to bring anything with emotional attachment or monetary value to school. This includes, but is not limited to expensive equipment / toys, money, jewelry, etc. Depending upon the student's individual support plans, Milestones may permit the use of electronic equipment; however, we cannot be responsible if something happens. We respectfully request that any game or materials that contain inappropriate content (i.e., violent, sexually explicit, or inappropriate language) should be left at home; parents/guardians should monitor what items their child is taking to school.

Cell Phones and Portable Electronic Devices

Many students have cell phones or portable gaming/computer devices. When entering school these devices must be turned off, unless otherwise approved by Program Managers (ex: for communication or travel training use by Post High School students during community based instruction etc.). Cell phones must be kept in the student's pocket or locker and all gaming devices must be kept in the student's locker for the entire school day (students may opt to put a lock on their locker). Text or other messaging is never permitted. If a student is unable to keep the item in his/her pocket or locker, the administrative faculty will need to collect it each day upon arrival and return it upon dismissal or might ask the student not to bring the item at all. Students who wish to call their parents/guardians in the middle of the day, may use Milestones' main telephone unless approved by a Milestones Program Leader for programmatic and age-appropriate reasons. In addition, please note that we sometimes become aware of students' communications with one another outside of the school day, but we are not responsible for overseeing students' peer interactions outside of school.

Birthdays/Holiday Celebrations

Milestones Day School celebrates diversity, and we teach students to take others' perspectives by respecting their various beliefs. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, disability, handicap or homelessness. For this reason, we celebrate various holidays and birthdays, but our school does not subscribe to any religious practices. Should your student have a birthday during the year we welcome you to coordinate with your child's case manager for how to celebrate! For the safety of our students, please be mindful that Milestones does not permit peanut/tree nut products at school.

Dress and Hygiene Code

Students are expected to engage in regular hygiene such as showering, washing hair, hands, and face, and brushing teeth. All clothing must be clean. Students are also expected to dress appropriately. Students must wear appropriate and safe footwear; students are not permitted to wear high heeled or open toed shoes including flip flops to physical education/sports/fitness activities. They may not wear extreme or ostentatious apparel to school. Students may not wear lewd or suggestive attire or apparel that advertises, glorifies, or symbolizes gangs, obscene words, sexual acts, illegal items/substances, racial epithets, sexual preference, or harmful action. If there is doubt about a particular item of apparel, the student should contact their child's Case Manager for a decision prior to wearing the clothing to school. If a student comes to school wearing inappropriate clothing s/he/they will be asked to change. If the student does not have an alternative article of clothing with them, a director or designee will call the student's family and have them bring an appropriate article of clothing or the student will be sent home for the day. Clothing which overexposes the body is unacceptable. If Milestones goes swimming, all swimwear must be well fitting, secure, and provide FULL coverage of all private areas as we are still in a school setting (ex: no revealing swimwear such as: men's speedo swim briefs, thongs, or string bikinis).

Smoking

The Education Act of 1993, Section 49, Subsection 37H, expressly prohibits the use of any tobacco products within school buildings, school facilities, school grounds, and school buses by any individual, including school personnel. This also includes vaping and E-cigarettes. No student shall use or possess any tobacco related products on school grounds, school related business, field trips or other school sponsored events. Parents/guardians, faculty, and other adults may not smoke on any school related premises including anywhere in the building which we are located, the parking lot, vehicles, field trips, or other school sponsored events.

Contractual Obligations and Funding

Milestones Day School is funded by local school districts, state agencies, and private families. Our tuition is inclusive of all services that we provide. Should an individual situation arise, and a Team has determined that an individual service is needed that goes above and beyond what Milestones provides and is not covered under our tuition (i.e., parent training in the home, physical therapy, etc.) Milestones Day School shall inform, in writing, any person or agency responsible for the associated costs incurred as a result of any placement not made pursuant to the requirements of 603 CMR 28.00.

Each year every enrolled student at Milestones has a written and executed (signed) contract between Milestones and the sending district (or family, if the student's tuition is paid for by the family) that is signed prior to the student's admission. For expiring contracts, Milestones will maintain a record of efforts to obtain new contracts. Each contract includes, but is not limited to the following information:

1. Milestones Day School (the out-of-district placement) shall comply with all elements of the IEP for the student and shall provide, in writing, to the Administrator of Special Education detailed documentation of such compliance through completion of required student progress reports.
2. Milestones Day School (the out-of-district placement) shall allow the sending school district to monitor and evaluate the education of the student and shall make available, upon request, any records pertaining to the students to authorized school personnel from the school district and the Department in accordance with 603 CMR 23.00: *Student Records*.
3. Milestones Day School (the out-of-district placement) shall allow the placing school district and/or the Department to conduct announced and unannounced site visits and to review all documents relating to the provision of special education services to Massachusetts students at public expense. Access to documents for the placing school district shall include general documents available to the public, documents specifically related to the student placed by such district, and other documents only to the extent they are necessary to verify and evaluate education services provided at public expense.

4. Milestones Day School (the out-of-district placement) shall afford publicly funded students all the substantive and procedural rights held by eligible students, including but not limited to those specified in 603 CMR 28.09, and shall comply with all other applicable requirements of 603 CMR 28.00 and applicable policy statements and directives issued by the Department.
5. No school district shall contract with any out-of-district placement that discriminates on the grounds of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, disability, handicap, or homelessness.

Student Records and Confidentiality

Confidential student records are maintained by Milestones for all publicly funded and enrolled Massachusetts students in its program and management of such files are consistent with the Massachusetts Student Record Regulations 603 CMR 23.00 and M.G.L. c. 71, 34H.

Parents/Guardians or students over the age of eighteen (18) are permitted to have access to the student's record if a request is made in writing. The student record includes, but is not limited to, all official records, files, data, test scores, psychological or auxiliary service records, any record transferred to us from another facility/individual, and internet communications.

Student records will be released without consent of the parent/guardian or student only if the student is over the age of eighteen (18), if requested by the Sending school district/ agency (if the student's education is funded by your local town/school and/or another agency), Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, independent or state Auditors, or other official government personnel. To comply with Massachusetts state regulations, Milestones Day School participates in program reviews and/or audits as required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Operational and Services Division, as well as other governmental agencies.

Other than the student's school district or state agencies, Milestones will not share information with any outside party without express written consent from the student's family.

Work Relationships with Milestones' Faculty

Unless otherwise pre-approved by the CEO, Milestones generally does not permit faculty to participate privately in outside of work hours activities including, but not limited to babysitting, tutoring, behavioral, clinical or transition services with any current or former families due to potential conflicts of interest. (Please note, however, that Milestones may hire faculty to conduct after school tutoring or programming when specified in students' IEPs or may support unique arrangements that are agreed upon in a team meeting).

Consent

Families are asked to sign yearly consent forms for various aspects of this handbook and other Milestones' policies. Some examples include, but are not limited to, consent for website/media, videotaping or photographing students, swimming, family directory, health education, research, movies, etc. Consent for discretionary choice items marked as yes/no choices will have NO effect on student admission or standing. Parents/guardians may elect these consents without any repercussions. If families elect not to sign field trip/transportation consent, students will be permitted to attend school, but the student will not be permitted to attend field trips or be transported for any reason except for a medical emergency. Students will be monitored by office personnel on days when there is a scheduled field trip. Students will be kept safe but will not receive academic programming during the field trip duration. If a parent or guardian withdraws consent at any time for participation/liability, coordination, and collaboration with public schools (only if your district is paying for the placement is this consent state mandated), and research (again, state mandated), the student will be considered as no longer able to participate in our programming, and we will initiate placement discussions with the family and sending district. In addition, our policies surrounding Behavior Support, Physical Restraint, Student Separation from a Group Resulting from Physical Restraint, Anti-Bullying and Anti-Hazing are notifications only (as consent is not permitted by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education). Milestones distributes consent forms to all families and must have completed forms on file for all returning or new students in June prior to the start of the next school year that begins on July 1st.

Research, Experimentation, Fundraising, Publicity, and Observations

Milestones sends annual consents which must adhere to the following protocols:

Research: Milestones shall send out a description and consent form of intended research projects we may potentially become involved with. Parents/guardians always have the option to opt out without recourse.

Experimentation: Milestones does not involve students or faculty in experimentation.

Fundraising: From time to time the PAG and/or students fundraise. Some examples include coordinating a faculty Appreciation Week Luncheon, raising money for adopt-a-family during the winter holiday times, raising money for a field trip, etc. Milestones does not fundraise to support salaries or general Milestones' expenses.

Publicity: Milestones sends out annual consents to photograph/video tape our students. This consent serves multiple purposes such as advertising, annual yearbook, social media posts, etc. Parents/guardians always have the option to opt out without recourse.

Observations: Districts, state agencies, and prospective families/districts tour Milestones on a regular basis. Parents/guardians may also request someone in particular observe their child (e.g., an outside psychologist, etc.). Milestones will have the parents' consent to any person who is specifically observing your child that is not part of your child's school district and/or state agency (ex: DESE).

School Supplies

Milestones provides the basic school supplies for all students. For students who participate in higher-level math, we may ask your family to purchase a scientific calculator or other related items. During the first month of school, your child may receive a list of any school supplies required. Parents/guardians do not need to purchase organizational items for your student, as Milestones has a school wide system to help students with executive issues.

Depending upon the student's grade, s/he/they may be issued "e-textbooks" or hard copy textbooks both of which can be accessed from home for homework. Students will be responsible for these books and will be required to pay for the cost of replacement in the event one is misplaced or lost. Should you wish to keep a copy at home, you may purchase duplicate textbooks (please contact your child's case manager to place an order).

Students will also have access to a computer which will be loaded with appropriate software. It is important for students to understand that these computers are the property of Milestones, and Milestones is permitted to review students' usage of these computers, as appropriate. Students may be permitted to take home a laptop computer to work on homework assignments with Principal's approval. Should the need for a student to borrow a computer arise, a request should be submitted to the principal and approval given before this will be permitted. In addition, bringing home laptops is a privilege and we expect that students will respect school property. This privilege may be revoked at any time. Students may not load or download programs or games on school computers. Anything that needs to be loaded must be done by our IT department.

When the student no longer attends Milestones Day School or at the request of school personnel, all materials shall be returned in good working condition. Should materials, except textbooks, be returned in subpar condition or in need of repair, the student's family is responsible for the cost of repairing or replacing the equipment.

Internet Access and Social Media

Access to the internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards and to communicate with individuals throughout the world. Milestones has an internet content filter to help block web sites that educators believe are inappropriate for students. Internet resources are intended to further educational goals and objectives, but students may find ways to access materials that contain illegal, defamatory, pornographic, inaccurate, or potentially offensive information. Students who use any technology in an inappropriate manner and/or not as directed by the school are in violation of school policy and subject to discipline, up to and including

the loss of the right to use the technology. The use of our technology is a privilege, not a right and may be revoked at any time. All students are provided with Milestones' "Technology Acceptable Use Policy". Students are expected to review and sign on an annual basis for their student file. Consequences for violating such policies will be based around the specific circumstances of the event. The Principal, CEO, and School Operations Manager will discuss and determine the appropriate course of action.

Student Acceptable Use Policy – Technology

Introduction: Computer access is available to qualifying students, teachers, faculty, and administrators. These resources are provided and maintained at the school's expense and are to be used by members of the school community with respect for the public trust through which they have been provided. Our goal is to promote innovation and educational excellence by using technology tools for research, worldwide resource sharing, communication, and storage of student work.

Internet services provide access to electronic mail, public shareware of all types, and massive databases at universities, government agencies, and private industries. Students are assigned a Google Apps for Education account and that service is hosted on many Google servers off campus. Students must remember that accounts are not private and can be viewed at any time by Milestones faculty. In order to ensure the appropriate use of the network, Milestones reserves the right to monitor, access, and disclose files contained, stored, or transmitted using school equipment.

Issues: The primary purpose is to deliver educational programming. *Milestones Day School is using a content filtering system to comply with CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act) regulations. The filtering is designed to block websites that educators believe are inappropriate for students.*

Responsibilities: Student responsibilities require ethical, efficient, and legal use of the network resources. If a student user violates any of these terms and conditions, his/her/their network/Internet access may be terminated and future access could be denied. The signature(s) at the end of this document is (are) legally binding and indicate(s) the party (parties) who signed has (have) read the terms and conditions carefully and understand(s) their significance and agrees to abide by these terms.

Terms and Conditions – Milestones Day School

Privileges: Network/Internet use is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a loss of network privileges, disciplinary action, and/or referral to legal authorities. At the direction of the district administration, student user access and /or accounts may be denied, revoked, or suspended as a result of misuse of network privileges.

Netiquette: Students are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include (but are not limited to) the following: Be polite. Do not be abusive in your messages to others. Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other language inappropriate in a school setting. Have the ringers turned off. Access to personal electronics (cell phone, ipod, ipad, etc) may only be used during instruction with the permission by faculty and all devices will be put away when asked to do so.

Unacceptable uses of the school network:

- Attempts to obtain access to restricted sites, servers, files, databases, etc. are prohibited.
- Students may not record or post still images, moving images, or voice recordings of students or faculty members to online websites without permission.
- Unauthorized access to other systems from computers (e.g. "hacking") is prohibited. Use of peer-to-peer (P2P) downloading services to download non-approved software (World of Warcraft, Bit Torrent, etc.) is not allowed.
- Use of social forums & social sites (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat & google+).
- Transmission of any material in violation of any law is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secrets. Use of school network to communicate personal addresses, phone numbers, and/or financial information is not allowed.

- Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, including any intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, also called cyberbullying, is not acceptable.

Acceptable Use (Privacy and Safety)

- Network/Internet use must be consistent with the educational objectives of the school. Students will use only their school assigned username and password to gain access to the computer network & google apps.
- Google Apps for Education (Apps) is primarily for educational use.
- Students will use technology only to complete assignments that are related to the instructional lesson.
- Students will only send text messages, pictures, or video messages to others outside of Milestones with permission from faculty if related to the lesson or course content.
- Students will post only appropriate text, audio, and visual media to online websites as directed by the faculty if related to the lesson or class content.

Milestones Day School Guidelines for Access and/or Accounts

Student user accounts will become inactive upon leaving Milestones. This agreement is formalized through the student and parent's/guardian's signatures on the Milestones annual consent form.

Property Destruction

If students were to engage in property destruction while off campus in the community or onsite, families may be required to cover or contribute to any related expenses. The amount a family is required to cover will be determined by members of the school's administrative team. The team will take a variety of factors into consideration when making a decision. These factors include, but are not limited to the severity of the damage, the circumstances surrounding the incident, the frequency of incidents, the age of the student, and her/his/their duration of time at Milestones.

RIGHTS AND PROHIBITED ACTIONS

Students who attend Milestones Day School have not had optimum experiences in other educational settings. At Milestones Day School, the student is a part of our community and as such is expected to follow, cooperate, and fully participate in the rules of our school. These regulations were created to keep students safe, happy, and healthy.

Sexual Harassment Policy

Milestones Day School is committed to maintaining an environment in which all employees and students are free from unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures. We will not tolerate sexual harassment that is directed towards employees or students. If students feel they are being sexually harassed they should report the allegation to any faculty member in which they feel comfortable disclosing the information, however it is always preferable that they go directly to their principal, or a director immediately.

Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct, which undermines the sense of safety and ability to learn. Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments. It refers to behavior that is not welcomed and is personally offensive. That behavior debilitates morale and, therefore, interferes with the work effectiveness of students. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, unwelcome touching and other inappropriate oral, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to or toleration of such conduct is made a term or condition of receiving preferential treatment
- Submission to or toleration of such conduct is made a term or condition to avoid an unpleasant or threatening situation
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for academic decisions affecting that individual

Transgender, Gender Fluid, and Gender Non-Conforming Students' Rights

When a student or /guardian notifies Milestones of a student's gender identity, the school will begin treating the student consistent with the student's gender identity and using pronouns and names consistent with the student's gender identity. Additionally, should the student feel harassed, Milestones will address harassment based on gender identity through our harassment and discrimination procedures, ensure that transgender students will be able to access the restrooms consistent with their gender identity, or have the option of using individual-user facilities. Milestones will also not disclose a student's transgender status, including their birth name or sex assigned at birth, without the consent of the student's parents or the student (if of age).

Title IX Policy and Process

Please see the attached Appendix for Milestones' Title IX Policy and Investigation Process.

Aggressive/Assaultive Behavior (Physical or Verbal)

Aggressive or assaultive behavior in threat, jest, or action will not be tolerated at Milestones Day School. We expect students will utilize learned coping skills or ask for help if they are unable to remain calm. Any student who engages in aggressive/ assaultive behavior, be it verbal or in action, shall be subject to ramifications up to, and including, detention, suspension, or expulsion. See behavior section for more details.

- **Threatening Behavior (bomb, intent to harm, etc.)** No student shall be permitted to engage in any threatening behavior regarding any relation to the school both on and off school premises. These behaviors include but are not limited to anything related to a bomb, fire, offense, catastrophe, or other emergency knowing that the report is false or baseless. Anything related to a weapon (physical or chemical). Anything related to injuring or assaulting another person. See behavior section for more details.
- **Items Not Permitted on School Premises or Events**
 - **Weapons:** It is our position that all weapons (real or simulated) are prohibited at Milestones Day School or any school sponsored event. A weapon in a student's vehicle is considered to be in his possession. The following items are examples, but not exclusive examples of what constitutes a weapon: knife (including pocket knives), razor, box cutter, ice pick, gun, ammunition,

explosive/firecracker, mace, pepper spray, hand held laser pointers, chemicals, switchblades, screwdrivers, chains, bricks, rocks, ropes, water guns, incendiary devices, lasers, wallet chains, or any other object that reasonably can be considered a weapon or dangerous instrument by the school, on school grounds, on school buses or vans, or at any school-sponsored event, during or after regular school hours. The penalty for possession is an automatic suspension and may include a recommendation for expulsion. As a parent/guardian it is imperative that you be sure that your student does not bring anything that could be considered a weapon to school.

- *Alcohol or Drugs:* In an effort to create a healthy environment for students and faculty members, Milestones Day School prohibits the possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs and/or alcohol on school property or as a part of any school activity. Prohibited substances shall include any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or other controlled substance, or beverage containing alcohol or intoxicant of any kind. Students are not permitted to carry medication (prescription or over the counter) with them at any time. This policy applies to any student who is on school property, who is in attendance at school or at a school sponsored activity, or whose conduct at any time or in any place interferes with or obstructs the mission or operation of the school. Compliance with this policy is mandatory. Any person found to be doing one of the following shall be subject to disciplinary action: selling, supplying, or giving, or attempting to sell, supply, or give to any person any illegal or prohibited substances or medication. To possess, procure, or purchase, to attempt to possess, procure, or purchase, to be under the influence of (legal intoxication not required), or to use or consume or attempt to use or consume, the substances listed in this policy. Controlled substances may be possessed and used by a student who has a prescription for the substance, provided the substance is approved by the school's nurse, and remains in the container in which it was obtained from the pharmacist. Any medication, controlled or not controlled, shall not be shared and shall only be used as directed by the prescribing physician.

BEHAVIOR SUPPORT PROTOCOLS, ANTI-HAZING, AND ANTI-BULLYING POLICIES

All policies under the Behavior section of the Family Handbook are approved by Milestones' Board of Directors and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. All policies can be found on our website under the family section. Additionally, a hard copy of all Milestones' Policies and Procedures can be found in the reception area on the 2nd floor at the Administrative Assistant's desk. Please note, Milestones can print out a hardcopy of these policies as well. Please contact the Chief Operating Officer, Alex Smith-Michaels, if you would like to be provided a paper copy.

Behavior Support Policy

To review our full policy and procedure for behavior support, which is approved by Milestones' Board of Directors and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, please visit the "Parents" tab on Milestones' website. This policy also contains our procedures for time out and using the safe space.

Student Separation Resulting from Behaviors

To review our full policy and procedure for a student separation resulting from behavior support, which is approved by Milestones' Board of Directors and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, please visit the "Parents" tab on Milestones' website.

Time Away

Students at Milestones are provided with opportunities to leave the classroom either on a voluntary basis or at the request of a faculty member. Examples of this would include a student requesting to take a break and go for a walk, or a faculty member asking the student to step outside into the hallway for a private conversation. Many times, this time outside of the classroom is designed to help a student remain regulated. There are times though when a more concerning event involving a student may occur and the student is directed to leave the classroom. These incidents are typically a result of concerns arising related to the health and safety of the student, the student's peers, and/or faculty. In those instances, Milestones has a *Time Away* procedure to ensure everyone's safety and to provide the student with the necessary support and opportunity to process.

When faculty deem that a situation warrants time away for the student, she/he/they moves out of the classroom to a designated area. In instances in which the student does not comply with the request to leave the classroom, the class is relocated to both provide the student with privacy and to allow the lesson to continue. There are times when a student demonstrates imminent safety concerns to themselves or others. In those situations, a student may be physically restrained using CPI protocol.

The following is the process faculty will follow during this time away.

- The student's safety is the immediate priority. This may require the student to spend time in the safe space or in an adjacent area designated for these purposes. Internally, we refer to it as our 'admin area'. Students are always supervised by Milestones faculty.
- Once the student is de-escalated, a faculty member will begin to process with the student. This processing will begin with a completion of a social behavior map or processing sheet. Just as in our classrooms, we provide our students with the necessary level of support to assist them with processing.
- As a part of processing, faculty will work with the student to preview and discuss if any peer of faculty repair is necessary given her/his/their actions prior to leaving the classroom. An example of this would be writing an apology note.
- While in this time away, the student will complete any classwork that may have been missed.
- Once these steps have been completed, a school administrator or a designee will meet with the student and faculty member to ensure that the student is prepared to return to class.

When a student has been in a Time Away, there is a one school day restriction put upon her/his/their ability to participate in any off-campus activities. Meaning, if the student were to be in a Time Away on a Friday, the student would not be eligible to go off-campus until the following Tuesday. This protocol is put into place to ensure that the student can again demonstrate the ability to be safe within our community prior to being out in the larger community. It also provides the student with a realization that actions have consequences.

Physical Restraint Policy

To review our full policy and procedure for physical restraint, which is approved by Milestones' Board of Directors and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, please visit the "Parents" tab on Milestones' website.

Anti-Hazing

To review our full policy and procedure for anti-hazing, which is approved by Milestones' Board of Directors and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, please visit the "Parents" tab on Milestones' website. All middle and high schoolers are required by DESE to sign this policy annually.

Bullying

To review our full policy and procedure for bullying, which is approved by Milestones' Board of Directors and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, please visit the "Parents" tab on Milestones' website.

Student Aggression

The safety of our students and faculty is of the utmost importance to Milestones Day School. As a program, we work with students through direct instruction to follow the school's Core Values of - *Safety, Respect, and Responsibility*. Students attending Milestones may have difficulty with regulating their emotions and responses to various situations. This dysregulation is not uncommon. All faculty are trained in Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) practices to verbally process and de-escalate students. We support our students in moments of heightened emotional state through the use of nonviolent crisis intervention.

While supporting students with their dysregulation is a component of the program, Milestones does not tolerate when that behavior leads to aggression towards peers. Student-on-student aggression, verbal or physical, is grounds for processing with administrators and a student's family and suspension or expulsion depending upon the severity of the incident, may apply.

Verbal Aggression: Given the nature of our students' disabilities, unexpected comments from students occur at times. When this occurs, faculty work to provide timely feedback to students. Interventions may be put into place to support students in an effort to model expected and appropriate comments and help educate students by increasing their own internal awareness of the significance of their comments. While there are many teachable moments for students, statements that threaten the safety of a peer or are targeted towards the race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, disability, handicap, or homelessness of another student will be deemed to be a violation of the school's handbook. When these violations take place, the school may respond with administrative processing, additional interventions and supports, discussions with families and district, and/or at times suspensions or expulsion.

Physical Aggression: Peer-to-peer physical aggressions will not be tolerated at Milestones. A physical aggression may include, but not be limited to, any of the following: spitting, pinching, kicking, slapping, punching, striking with an object, or inappropriate touching. When these violations take place, the school may respond with administrative processing, additional interventions and supports, discussions with families and district, and potential suspension.

Suspension Policy & Termination of Enrollment

Milestones prioritizes utilizing therapeutic approaches to teach skills during learning opportunities. By regulation, Milestones is required by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to have in place procedures for the provision of suspensions (when necessary) as well as processes for terminating enrollment in exceptional circumstances.

3-5 Day Suspension

Milestones Day School works with students to provide behavior prevention through antecedent control and therapeutic processing. Should a student exhibit highly unsafe or destructive behavior to faculty, peers, or property (such as punching, using a sharp object, bringing a weapon to school, running away, using technology in an unsafe manner, etc.) Milestones will consider a 3-5 day suspension, depending upon

the incident. When a student is suspended, Milestones Day School shall immediately notify the parents/guardian, public school district, or human service agency responsible for the placement. Within 24 hours, Milestones Day School shall send a written statement and/or incident report explaining the reasons for the suspension to the parents and public school district. Within 48 hours we will also speak with the parents and district to create an action plan for re-entry. Students shall not be suspended unless a responsible adult is available to receive the student. Once a student has been suspended for three consecutive school days or five nonconsecutive school days in a school year, Milestones, parents/guardian, and the public school district, consistent with federal requirements, shall explore together all possible program modifications within the school in an attempt to prevent more lengthy suspension of the student from our program. Milestones Day School has procedures in place to record and track the number and duration of suspensions, including suspensions from any part of the students' IEPs (including transportation). We have and keep incident forms and meeting notes with the family and district should an incident arise. **Sending a student home "early" or an in-school suspension of a student who is not receiving instruction from either a licensed teacher or paraprofessional who is being supervised by a licensed teacher is considered a suspension if the student's IEP does not allow for the modification of learning time requirements of DESE.

10+ Day Suspension

Milestones Day School has a 10+ day suspension policy which can be found in our student handbook on our website. When a student is accepted to Milestones Day School, parents, the sending district, and/or other agency who placed the student is directed to this (and other) policies. Milestones Day School provides extensive antecedent preventative interventions for all students and robust behavior plans for those students who exhibit difficulty with behavior control. Milestones uses the CPI model which focuses on verbal de-escalation and uses restraints as a last resort.

Milestones Day School implements the following procedures when suspension exceeds ten (10) consecutive school days, or it is one of a series of suspensions that constitute a pattern under 34 CFR 300.536. Students who are sent home early or receive in-school suspensions where the student is not receiving instruction from either a licensed teacher or paraprofessional who is being supervised by a licensed teacher is considered a suspension if the student's IEP does not allow for the modification of learning time requirements of DESE.

A suspension is a change of placement when (1) It exceeds 10 consecutive school days or (2) It is one of a series of suspensions that constitute a pattern under 34 CFR 300.536. Should this occur, a request is made of the student's responsible school district to convene a IEP Team meeting prior to a suspension that constitutes a change in placement of a student with a disability.

The program participates in the Team meeting:

- To develop or review a functional behavioral assessment of the student's behavior and to develop or modify a behavior intervention plan
- To identify appropriate alternative educational setting(s), and to conduct a manifestation determination (e.g., to determine the relationship between the disability and the behavior)
- If the Team determines that the behavior is ***not*** a manifestation of the disability, the school may suspend or terminate the student consistent with policies applied to any other student in the program. The responsible school district must, however, offer an appropriate education program to the student that may be in another setting
- If the Team determines that the behavior ***is*** a manifestation of the student's disability, the Team takes steps to modify the IEP, the behavior intervention plan and/or the placement.

Should a 10-day suspension occur, a request is made of the student's responsible school district to convene an IEP Team meeting, which includes representation from Milestones Day School prior to a suspension that constitutes a change in placement of a student with disabilities.

Milestones Day School will work with the sending district and family to:

- Help to develop or review a functional behavioral assessment of the student's behavior and to develop or modify a behavior intervention plan
- Identify appropriate alternative educational setting(s)
- Conduct a manifestation determination (e.g., to determine the relationship between disability and the behavior). To do this the Team asks questions including: Is the IEP appropriate? Is the placement appropriate? If there was a behavior plan, was it implemented? Does the student understand the impact and consequences of his/her/their behavior? Can the student control his/her/their behavior?

If the Team determines that the behavior is **not** a manifestation of the student's disability, Milestones Day School may suspend or terminate the student consistent with policies applied to any other student in the program. The responsible school district must, however, offer an appropriate education program to the student with disabilities that may be in some other setting.

If the Team determines that the behavior **is** a manifestation of the disability, the placing district, in coordination with Milestones Day School, takes steps (with the parents' consent) to modify the IEP, the behavior plan, and/or the placement.

Using the school suspension log, Milestones Day School will track the number and duration of student suspensions that constitute a change in placement. Should suspensions leading to a change in placement occur, Milestones Day School will reconvene the Team including the sending school district and family/guardian to notify them in writing with a request that the student's responsible school district convenes an IEP Team meeting prior to suspension that constitutes a change in placement of a student with a disability.

****Sending a student home "early" or an in-school suspension of a student who is not receiving instruction from either a licensed teacher or paraprofessional who is being supervised by a licensed teacher is considered a suspension if the student's IEP does not allow for the modification of learning time requirements of DESE.**

Re-Entry Meeting After a Suspension or Clinical Treatment

Milestones works to ensure a smooth transition back into the program for any student who has been absent from school for reasons beyond general sickness. Examples would include, but not be limited to, a student being suspended from school, needing to leave school to assess her/his/their health and safety, or participation in a full or partial hospital program. In these instances, a re-entry meeting must be held prior to the student returning to school. If the student missed school due to a hospitalization, a discharge summary needs to be made available to the internal team for review prior to the meeting being held.

The purpose of the re-entry meeting is multi-faceted. It is designed to:

- review why the student was out of school.
- discuss what, if any, supports need to be in place for the student to have a successful transition.
- evaluate the student's readiness to return to school.

The nature of the student's absence(s) will inform which individuals will participate in the meeting. Milestones faculty who may participate include: school Principal and/or administrators, case manager, special education administrator, and/or school psychologist. In addition, the student's parent/guardian participates, and the district will be notified and invited to attend.

Termination

Transitioning from Milestones, Milestones Day School approaches students' termination in a consistent and deliberate fashion. Given the overall needs of the population served by Milestones Day School, planning and predictability are essential to maximize a student's potential for success. For students who have mastered our curriculum and are ready to move on, at the annual IEP or other team meeting, the

team will determine the transition timeline and prospective school(s) the student will be transitioning to. Milestones Day School Faculty has expertise in transitioning students and is eager to be involved in this process.

When a student is unable to stay at Milestones (planned termination): Milestones Day School shall notify the sending district and family/guardian of the need for an IEP review meeting and provide notice of this meeting to all appropriate parties ten school (10) days in advance of the intended date of the meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be to develop a clear and specific termination plan for the student that shall be implemented in no less than thirty (30) days unless all parties agree to an earlier termination date.

When a student is unable to stay at Milestones (emergency termination): In circumstances where the student presents a clear and present threat to the health and safety of himself/herself/their self or others, Milestones Day School shall follow the procedures required under 603 CMR 28.09(12)(b) and immediately notify the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Milestones Day School shall not terminate the enrollment of any student, even in emergency circumstances, until the enrolling sending district is informed and assumes responsibility for the student. If Milestones is unable to reach the contact person at the sending district, Milestones will contact the Superintendent or DESE. At the request of the public school district, Milestones Day School shall delay termination of the student for up to two calendar weeks to allow the public school district the opportunity to convene an emergency Team meeting or to conduct other appropriate planning discussions prior to the student's termination from the special education school program. With the mutual agreement of Milestones Day School and the public school district, termination of enrollment may be delayed for longer than two calendar weeks.

Runaway

Milestones considers a student as having bolted any time a student leaves the property or grounds without authorization. The student will be considered a runaway if they are unable to be located within five (5) minutes. If a student leaves the building without authorization, a faculty member will follow the student and work with the student to encourage him/her/them to return. If the student has run away:

- The Director of the Day (CEO, CFO, COO, or Operations Manager) will be immediately notified of the student's absence by the faculty involved. If the Director of the Day is unavailable, that person's designee will be notified.
- An immediate search of the building, grounds, and nearby streets will be conducted. Faculty conducting the search should use a cellular phone or walkie-talkie to communicate. The Director of the Day will assign faculty to conduct the search.
- Police will be notified within the first five (5) minutes of the reported absence. The length of time may vary depending on the nature of the incident and the individual student involved. Weather conditions must be considered. If a student is on seizure control medication and/or has diabetes or runs away during the winter months, the police are to be contacted immediately.
- A complete description of the student, and any other pertinent information, will be provided by the Director of the Day or designee, with assistance from the faculty, when possible.
- The parents/guardian will be notified immediately following notification of the police by the Director of the Day.
- The Director of the Day shall notify the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education immediately via a Form 2 and followed by a written report within twenty-four (24) hours.
- Upon return of the student, the police, parent/guardian, and DESE will be immediately notified.
- An incident report will be completed, and copies forwarded to the parent/guardian, DESE, and the school district.

COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES PROCEDURES AND RESPONSE

Complaints Surrounding Behavior Support or Restraint Procedures

If any family has concerns surrounding behavior support or restraint procedures, please visit our approved behavior support policy and restraint policy on our website. Both are posted on the website, and each contains specific instructions regarding filing related complaints and grievances as well as Milestones' required follow-up procedures. Hard copies of these policies are also available, by request, and any questions may be directed to the School Operations Manager.

Other Complaints/Grievances (Not Related to Behavior Support or Restraint Procedures)

Milestones strives to alleviate parents' concerns at our first opportunity. Parents are encouraged to notify their case manager and/or principal if you have general concerns regarding your student's programming. At times, parents or guardians may identify that they have a concern that warrants a higher level of attention. Additionally, if any of our employees, students, or families believes that s/he/they has a general complaint that warrants the attention of the Founder or CEO or believes s/he/they have been subjected to sexual harassment or any other harassment, the employee, student, or family has a right to file a formal complaint with Milestones. All complaints are taken seriously and given equal regard.

COMPLAINTS:

Milestones does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, disability, handicap, or homelessness.

Reporting Complaints

If any of our students or families/guardians believes that the person has been subjected to sexual harassment, any other harassment, or has a general complaint (including educational complaints), the student or family/guardian has a right to file a complaint with Milestones Day School. All complaints are taken seriously and given equal regard. As a first step, please contact your child's case manager/Principal regarding your concern.

If you wish to file a complaint, you may do so by putting your complaint in writing within 10 school days of the incident's occurrence and sending to:

Kimberly Rockers, Chief Executive Officer
Milestones Day School
410 Totten Pond Road
Waltham, MA 02451
KRockers@AdvancingMilestones.com

Complaint Investigation:

When Milestones Day School receives a complaint, we will investigate within 20 school days 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. Our investigation will include an interview with the person filing the complaint and may include interview(s) with witnesses or other individuals who we believe would be useful to obtain information such as the alleged accused and potential witnesses.

These persons listed below are available to provide information about this policy and about our complaint process, which is: all interviews and reports will be documented, and an open investigation file created and maintained by Kimberly Rockers (CEO) and Alex Smith-Michaels (Founder/COO) for the duration of the investigation. When we have conducted our investigation, we will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and/or the person alleged to have committed the misconduct (if applicable) of the results of the investigation within five days both in person and in writing. The person filing the complaint will have the opportunity to discuss options for proceeding forward and recommendations for resolution.

Disciplinary Action in Cases of Harassment or Misconduct

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by one of our employees, Milestones executive administrative faculty will take action as is appropriate under the circumstances. Action may range from a written warning to counseling to termination of employment.

Recourse and Appeals

Parents/guardians wishing to challenge Milestones Day School's decision or course of action as it pertains to addressing their complaint shall notify Kimberly Rockers (CEO) in writing within 5 school days of receiving the complaint investigation findings. Kimberly Rockers (CEO) and Alex Smith-Michaels (Founder/COO) will consider any additional steps that may be applicable and appropriate to the situation. Milestones Day School will issue its final resolution to the complaint in writing and via meeting, should the person filing the complaint desire. Within 10 school days the appeal will be reviewed by Kimberly Rockers (CEO) and Alex Smith-Michaels (Founder/COO) and a resolution will be issued. The appeals process will include reviewing documents provided and interviewing or re-interviewing (if necessary) any additional people noted in the complaint.

GRIEVANCES:

Should a student or family/guardian have a grievance or feel discriminated against (including, but not limited to race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, disability, handicap or homelessness) they can file a written complaint. As a first step, please contact your child's case manager/Principal regarding your concern. The grievance will be investigated immediately and written notification regarding the grievance will be generated within 20 school days from the time of grievance filed.

Recourse and Appeals

Parents/guardians, wishing to challenge Milestones Day School's decision or course of action as it pertains to addressing their grievance shall notify Kimberly Rockers (CEO) in writing within 5 school days of receiving the grievance investigation findings. Kimberly Rockers (CEO) and Alex Smith-Michaels (Founder/COO) will consider any additional steps that may be applicable and appropriate to the situation. Milestones Day School will issue its final resolution to the complaint in writing and via meeting, should the person filing the grievance desire. Within 10 school days the appeal will be reviewed by Kimberly Rockers (CEO) and Alex Smith-Michaels (Founder/COO) and a resolution will be issued. The appeals process will include reviewing documents provided and interviewing or re-interviewing (if necessary) any additional people noted in the grievance.

STATE AND FEDERAL REMEDIES FOR BOTH COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to harassment, you may file a formal complaint with the respective State agency and/or the EEOC. Using MILESTONES' complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each agency has a short time period for filing a claim. (EEOC-180 days; Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination-6 months)

The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
One Congress Street, 10th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
617-565-3200 / TDD 617-565-3204

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
One Ashburton Place, Room 60
Boston, MA 02108
617-727-3990

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Milestones appreciates the opportunity to work with a community of amazing students, collaborative families, and talented faculty. Thank you for your partnership with us to best support your students' success!

Appendix: Title IX Policy and Process

I. Title IX Compliance Statement

Milestones (“Milestones” or the “School”) strives to adhere to all federal and state civil rights laws barring discrimination, including, but not limited to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

Milestones is committed not only to compliance with these mandates, but to promoting a culture that is in line with the values these civil rights laws envision. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination based on sex in educational programs and activities in the United States and Milestones has developed policies and procedures that prohibit such sex discrimination in all of its forms.

II. Applicability and Scope

A. Scope

Title IX prohibits Sexual Harassment, including Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Stalking, all as defined below in accordance with the regulations promulgated under Title IX, if that conduct occurs in the United States and within Milestones’ Programs or Activities (defined below) (collectively, “Title IX Harassment”).

This policy applies to all members of the Milestones community, including teachers and faculty, students, recognized groups, and anyone who is attempting to participate in Milestones’ Programs or Activities. This Policy also applies to alleged Title IX Harassment by third parties when their conduct is directed toward or otherwise affects or may affect Milestones’ community members participating in the Milestones’ Programs or Activities, though the ability of Milestones to respond to third-party conduct may be limited by Milestones’ relationship with the third party.

In most cases, attempts to engage in conduct prohibited by this policy will be treated as instances of Title IX Harassment under this policy.

If alleged conduct that falls within the scope of this policy (and any conduct arising out of the same facts and circumstances) would also violate other Milestones policies, Milestones may elect to address all the conduct under the procedures set forth in this policy or may elect to address that conduct under the other applicable policy or policies, provided, however, that Milestones may not discipline a student or employee for conduct that may constitute Title IX Harassment before that conduct is addressed under the grievance procedures or informal resolution process described in this policy.

B. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms have the meanings given to them below. Some of these terms may have different meanings in other contexts, such as criminal statutes and other Milestones policies, and conduct may fit within more than one definition below.

Conduct that does not meet definitions of this policy may be adjudicated under the Milestones Sexual Misconduct Policy.

- a. Title IX Harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:
 - i. 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;
 - ii. 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;

- iii. Sexual Assault, which is defined as any sexual act directed against another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent;
- iv. Dating Violence, which is defined as violence committed by a person—
 1. who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and
 2. where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
 - a. The length of the relationship.
 - b. The type of relationship.
 - c. The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
- v. Domestic Violence, which includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
- vi. Stalking, which means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to—
 1. fear for his or her safety or the safety of others; or
 2. suffer substantial emotional distress.

b. Consent is the clear and voluntary agreement to engage in specific acts of sexual contact or activity, communicated through mutually understandable words or actions. Consent is always freely informed and actively given. Silence or lack of resistance cannot be assumed to imply consent. Consent must be ongoing, and it may be withdrawn at any time. Consent for one sexual act does not imply consent for any subsequent sexual activity. If confusion or ambiguity arises during a sexual interaction, it is imperative that the behavior stop and the person initiating the activity has the other person's consent to continue.

Consent may never be obtained:

- from an individual who is incapacitated;
- through the use of coercion or force;
- from a person who is under the legal age to give consent (16 years of age in Massachusetts);

Definitions of incapacitation, coercion and force include:

c. Incapacitation is the inability to make informed, rational judgments and decisions. Without exception, a person who is asleep or unconscious is incapacitated. A person can also become incapacitated through the use of alcohol or drugs. If alcohol or drugs are involved, incapacitation may be assessed by evaluating how the substance has affected a person's decision-making capacity, awareness, ability to make informed judgments, capacity to appreciate the nature and quality of the act, and the person's level of consciousness. The impact of alcohol and drugs varies from person to person; however, warning signs of possible incapacitation include slurred speech or word confusion, unsteady gait, impaired coordination, inability to perform personal tasks such as undressing, inability to maintain eye contact, disorientation or confusion about time and place, combativeness, vomiting, and emotional volatility. A person who is incapacitated may not be able to understand some or all of the following questions: Do you know where you are? Do you know how you got here? Do you know what is happening? Do you know whom you are with? If incapacitation of the complainant is in question, the School will consider whether the respondent knew, or whether a sober person in the Respondent's position reasonably should have known under the circumstances, that the complainant was incapacitated. A respondent's intoxication or incapacitation will not excuse the respondent from the obligation to obtain consent as described in this policy.

d. Coercion is verbal or physical conduct, including manipulation, intimidation, isolation, confinement, undue pressure, and express or implied threats of physical, emotional or other harm, that would reasonably place an individual in fear of harm and that is used to compel someone to engage in sexual activity.

e. Force is the use or threat of physical violence or intimidation to overcome an individual's freedom to choose whether to engage in sexual activity.

f. Complainant means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment. A complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in a Program or Activity at Milestones at the time the complaint is filed.

g. Respondent means an individual who has been accused of conduct that could constitute Sexual Harassment.

h. Program or Activity includes locations, events, or circumstances over which Milestones exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the Sexual Harassment occurs, including any building owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by Milestones. Program or Activity broadly includes all operations of Milestones in the United States including "any academic, extracurricular, research, occupations training, or other education program or activity operated" by Milestones. Program or Activity additionally includes computer and internet networks, digital platforms, and computer hardware or software owned or operated by, or used in the operations of, Milestones.

III. Reporting Options and Confidentiality

Disclosure to Milestones

If Milestones is notified, the Title IX Coordinator will promptly contact the Complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures (defined below), consider the Complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.

Reporting Options

Our Title IX Coordinator is: Grace Little, Milestones' Language-Based Curriculum and Instruction Specialist/SLP (Milestones Day School and Transition Program, 410 Totten Pond Road, Waltham MA 02451) and can be contacted at: glittle@advancingmilestones.com and the main office phone line: 781-895-3200.

Requests for Confidentiality

Pursuant to Department of Education Regulations, a Complainant may remain anonymous for the purposes of receiving Supportive Measures (defined below). However, upon the filing of a formal complaint alleging sexual harassment triggering a grievance process (described below), the process must commence with both parties receiving written notice of the pertinent details of the incident under investigation, which will include the identity of the Complainant, if known.

IV. Supportive Measures, Student with Disabilities, and Emergency Removal

Supportive measures are 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 Milestones' 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. Milestones will maintain as confidential any supportive measures provided to the Complainant or Respondent, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair Milestones' ability to provide the supportive measures. The Title IX Coordinator or their deputy are responsible for coordinating the effective implementation of supportive measures.

Students with Disabilities. Given our student population, any sexual violence towards any of our students may require additional assistance and support. Any sexual conduct may also fall under other federal civil rights laws (Rehabilitation Act of 1973- Section 504 and Title II of the American Disabilities Act of 1990). We will work with our students to help them better understand our sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination prevention policies and procedures. If a student does experience sexual violence, we will report to the appropriate protective service agencies as needed, and we will provide supports and assistance.

Emergency Removal. Milestones at all times retains the authority to remove a Respondent from Milestones or the School's Program or Activity on an emergency basis when it has been determined that the Respondent poses an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any individual (including the Respondent) arising from the allegations of Title IX Harassment, including threats of physical self-harm. An emergency removal is not limited to cases involving an alleged Sexual Assault, but may also be warranted in matters arising from alleged Sexual Harassment, including verbal harassment. Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to limit the School's ability to remove a student on an emergency basis under other applicable Milestones policies.

If at any time before or after a Formal Complaint is filed, the Title IX Coordinator believes that a physical health or safety issue may exist, the Director or designee will conduct a prompt individualized safety and risk analysis, in consultation with other appropriate administrators. This individualized analysis will consider the particular Respondent and the specific circumstances, and the finding will be based on whether (1) there is an immediate threat justifying an emergency removal; (2) the threat is to the physical health or safety of one or more individuals; and (3) the emergency situation specifically arises from the allegations of Title IX Harassment. In performing this analysis, the Milestones will consider the applicability of disability laws and the appropriateness of other Supportive Measures in lieu of removal.

Milestones will provide the Respondent with notice and an opportunity to appeal an emergency removal decision immediately following the removal.

A decision to remove a Respondent from the School's Program or Activity on an emergency basis is not a determination of a Respondent's responsibility with respect to the allegations of Title IX Harassment and will not have bearing on the resolution of a Formal Complaint. No employee of Milestones who is involved in performing the safety and risk analysis or who hears any appeal of a removal decision may serve as an Investigator, Decision-Maker, or Advisor (all as defined below) in connection with a Formal Complaint arising out of the same allegations.

Administrative Leave of Employees. After a Formal Complaint has been filed, Milestones retains the authority to place teacher and faculty Respondents on administrative leave during the process of investigating and adjudicating the Complaint. If a Respondent is both a student and an employee of Milestones, the Respondent's removal from campus will be addressed under the procedures for emergency removal above.

V. **Filing a Formal Complaint**

A Formal Complaint is a document filed and physically or digitally signed by a Complainant (or otherwise showing that the Complainant is the one filing the document), or signed by the Title IX Coordinator, alleging sexual harassment against a Respondent and requesting that the recipient investigate the allegation of sexual harassment. A formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, to the Title IX Coordinator, Grace Little, Milestones' Language-Based Curriculum and Instruction Specialist/SLP. Where the Title IX Coordinator signs a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator is not a complainant or otherwise a party.

Once a Formal Complaint is filed, the Title IX Coordinator will discuss with a Complainant their options to (a) request an informal resolution process; or (b) proceed with a formal grievance process.

Dismissal of Formal Complaint. If the conduct alleged in a formal complaint would not constitute Sexual Harassment even if proved; did not occur in Milestones' Programs or Activities; or did not occur in the United States, Milestones must dismiss the Formal Complaint for purposes of sexual harassment under Title IX. Conduct that is so dismissed may be adjudicated under the Milestones Sexual Misconduct Policy.

In addition, Milestones may dismiss a Formal Complaint if, at any time during the investigation:

- the Complainant notified the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the Complainant would like to withdraw the Formal Complaint or any allegations therein;
- the Respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by Milestones; or
- specific circumstances prevent Milestones from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or any allegations therein.

VI. **Informal Resolution**

A complainant who files a Formal Complaint may elect, at any time, to address the matter through the Institution's Informal Resolution Process. All Parties to a Formal Complaint must agree to enter the Informal Resolution Process through an informed written consent. The Informal Resolution Process is not permitted in cases where an employee is the Respondent and a student is the Complainant.

VII. **Formal Grievance Process**

a. Time Frame

Milestones will conduct a timely review of all complaints and will endeavor to complete review and resolution in a reasonably prompt time frame from receipt of the complaint to notification of outcomes.

Any formal grievance process complaints will be completed as expeditiously as possible. Investigations and subsequent questioning may take longer when (among other things) initial complaints fail to provide direct firsthand information or when Milestones is not in session. Milestones may, but shall not be obligated to, delay its processes when criminal charges on the basis of the same behaviors that invoke this process are being investigated. Milestones action will not be altered or precluded on the grounds that civil or criminal charges involving the same incident have been filed or that charges have been dismissed or reduced.

In each case, Milestones will strive to adhere to time frames suggested by this policy and related procedures. Milestones may, for good cause, need to extend these time frames. In the event that such time frames will not be met, the parties will be provided written notice of the delay or extension and the reasons for such action.

b. Notice of Allegations

Notice of allegations of Sexual Harassment will be provided to the Parties following the filing of a Formal Complaint. This notice will include sufficient details to allow for the Parties to respond prior to the commencement of any investigative procedure, including, but not limited to:

- 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.

c. Advisor of Choice

The parties may each be advised by one (1) advisor of their choice (e.g., student, teacher member, family member, attorney, etc.). Advisors serve as a support person for the parties during investigative meetings. If either party requests it, the Title IX Coordinator will connect the party with a teacher or faculty member who can act as an advisor during the investigatory process. Advisors are not permitted to interfere with or obstruct the investigation or to testify in place of a party during any investigative interview. In the event either party is under the age of 18 and taking part in a Milestones Education program, that party's parent/guardian may also attend any and all meetings.

Milestones reserves the right to remove an advisor from any proceeding should these expectations and guidelines be violated. The advisor's name and relationship to a party should be disclosed to the investigator at least two (2) days prior to any meeting.

Although proceedings are not generally delayed or rescheduled due to an advisor's availability, the investigator will consider reasonable requests made to reschedule a meeting or other proceeding and will make the final determination with respect to that request.

d. Investigation

Investigator

The Title IX Coordinator will conduct or appoint a trained, impartial individual(s) to conduct the investigation (ex: Assistant Principal and/or Assistant Clinical Director).

Evidence Collection

The investigator will interview the parties, as well as all relevant witnesses, and gather any relevant evidence (such as texts/emails, social media postings, surveillance video, photos), and consider all relevant evidence. The investigator retains discretion to determine how to conduct the investigation and what information is necessary and relevant. Although formal rules of evidence will not apply, the investigator will not consider character evidence, incidents not directly related to the possible violation unless they tend to show a pattern, past sexual history, or sexual character of either party, unless such information is determined to be highly relevant by the Title IX Coordinator. The investigation will be thorough, impartial, and fair, and all individuals will be treated with appropriate sensitivity and respect.

During the investigation, the parties will have an equal opportunity to share information and request that witnesses, including both fact and expert witnesses, be interviewed. The parties will *not* be interviewed together.

Prior to the completion of the investigative report, the parties will have an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in the Formal Complaint, including any evidence upon which Milestones does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility. The Parties and their advisors will each be sent in hard copy or electronic format the evidence for review, and will have 10 days from the date of receipt to provide the Investigator with any response.

Upon receipt of the written responses to the evidence by the parties, if any, the investigator will prepare an investigative report which will be sent to the parties and their advisors.

e. Opportunity for Questions

Following receipt of the investigative report, the parties and their advisors will have 10 days to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants to ask of the other party or any witness. A Decision Maker (defined below)

will review the questions, determine which, if any questions are not relevant, and ask all remaining questions of the party or witness to whom they are directed. The Decision Maker will then provide all answers back to the inquiring party. Limited follow-up questions will be permitted from all parties. In the event that questions asked are determined not to be relevant, the Decision Maker will explain the same to the inquiring party.

The Decision Maker. This process will be overseen by a Decision Maker, who is also responsible for making a determination of responsibility. The Decision Maker is an individual who (a) is not the Title IX coordinator or the investigator; (b) is free from conflict of interest or bias, including bias for or against complainants or respondents; and (c) who has been trained on topics including how to serve impartially, issues of relevance, including how to apply the rape shield protections provided for complainants. The Decision Maker may include: Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer and/or Principal.

Determining Relevance. In determining whether a question is relevant, the Decision Maker will focus on evidence pertinent to proving whether facts material to the allegations under investigation are more or less likely to be true. Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless (1) such questions and evidence about the complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, or (2) 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. This bar on questions and evidence about a complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior does not apply to Respondents, and any such questions, if deemed relevant, may be asked.

f. Sanctions

Title IX Coordinator. The investigation will be thorough, impartial, and fair, and all individuals will be treated with appropriate sensitivity and respect.

i. *Possible Sanctions and Remedies*

- For teachers and faculty: Discipline up to and including termination, including
- For students: Discipline up to and including expulsion

ii. *Determination of Sanctions*

Sanctions will be determined by the /Title IX Coordinator in consultation with the Decision Maker, the Superintendent, and others as may be appropriate.

In general, in determining the appropriate sanctions, the Title IX Coordinator will be guided by a number of factors, including but not limited to restoring or preserving equal access to the Milestones' Program or Activity; the nature, severity, and circumstances of the violation; disciplinary history and previous acts of similar misconduct; the need for sanctions to bring an end to and prevent recurrence of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation; the need to remedy the effects of the discrimination, harassment, or retaliation on the Complainant and the community; and any other factors deemed relevant.

The Title IX Coordinator may consult with the Investigator, Decision Maker, and/or deputy for equity investigations on any sanctioning decisions. For faculty responding parties, the director of employee relations will also be consulted and may make recommendations. For teacher responding parties, a dean or other individual designated by the provost will be consulted in an advisory or consultative capacity.

g. Written Determination

A written determination will include the following:

- Identification of the allegations potentially constituting Title IX Harassment;
- A description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including (1) any notifications to the parties; (2) the identity of the investigator; (3) dates of interviews with parties and witnesses; (4) dates and locations of any site visits; (5) methods used to gather other evidence, (6) dates of hearings held, and (7) account for any actual or perceived procedural issues, including delay for good cause;

- Findings of fact supporting the determination (e.g. an analysis of what findings of fact support the determination of responsibility or non-responsibility; this need not require the Decision Maker's written determination to include "all" evidence presented in the investigation, or even to grapple with facts not supporting the determination.);
- Conclusions regarding the application of the recipient's code of conduct to the facts;
- 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 Milestones' Program or Activity will be provided by Milestones to the complainant; and
- Procedures and permissible bases for the complainant and respondent to appeal.

Once complete, the parties will receive simultaneous notification of the outcome.

VIII. Appeal

The Complainant and the Respondent have equal rights to an impartial appeal.

Appeals will be heard solely on the following grounds:

- Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
- 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;
- 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.

IX. Retaliation

Retaliation from the perpetrator or any individual from our school in response to a complaint is prohibited under Title IX. Prohibited retaliation includes any retaliation against any individual who filed the complaint or any individual participating in the Title IX investigation or proceeding. The school will ensure that individuals are not intimidated, threatened, coerced or discriminated against for engaging in this process.