



**NORTHSHORE
EDUCATION
CONSORTIUM**

Topsfield Vocational Academy

**248 Boston Street
Topsfield, MA 01983
1-978-887-8881**

**STUDENT AND PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK
2026 / 2027**



August 3, 2026

Dear Parent(s) and / or Guardian(s);

Welcome to Topsfield Vocational Academy for the 2026 - 2027 school year. We have had a great summer working, going on some community based field trips, and engaging in learning. I am looking forward to seeing everyone on September 2.

Over the last few years, we had the opportunity to expand our vocational opportunities and requirements and provide multiple off grounds job based opportunities for students. As a true vocational school with therapeutic support, our goal is to make sure we set students up for success. I want to remind all students and guardians that the Vocational program is a requirement at TVA. All students must work and are expected to meet the expectations of the program. We are incredibly unique in the fact that we allow students to earn money, earn vocational skills and employment opportunities for the future, and earn their high school diploma.

Every year, we have some exciting changes. Last year, we welcomed our new Woodshop Teacher, Brian Fitzgerald. This year, we had to say goodbye to our Vocational Specialist Geoff Green. Geoff Green was an essential staff member at TVA. He has worked here for a long time behind the scenes, making sure your students got paid and making sure they were provided with a variety of off grounds job opportunities. He coached the students, communicated with the off grounds supervisors regularly, and made sure that the students were provided proper training and skills at their internships. We will miss Geoff and wish him the best of luck in his retirement.

With Geoff's retirement comes some exciting changes at TVA. Teacher Brian Ross will be replacing Geoff Green and will take on the role as Vocational Coach. He will continue to support students at their off grounds internships, help facilitate additional off grounds opportunities, and work with the other staff to make sure students have full access to vocational opportunities that help them build capacity for success after graduation. Lindsey Theberge, TVA Math teacher will be moving into Brian's classroom role working closely with Michaela Lucas and teaching Math and Science. Michelle Butterworth, who was the SSC Coordinator will move over to the classroom side and teach Math this coming year. A lot of changes are happening, and they are all exciting and great opportunities for staff and students.

Other reminders and expectations: please also make sure to review the information in this handbook

- Students are required to turn in their cell phones and other electronic devices when they arrive: no exceptions
- Morning meeting is a requirement of the school day, especially if students would like to attend field trips
- In order to participate in our off grounds trips and activities, students must be in good standing
- There is absolutely NO Vaping allowed on school property
- Students need to dress appropriately for school and work
- We are a "hands off" school

Please be sure to read through our Student Handbook with your student and completely fill out and sign off on all the required information. In order to start school, we need to have all the forms from the intake packet signed and returned, along with a copy of your child's most recent physical. I am looking forward to seeing you all soon.

Our first school event will be our Open House on Thursday September 24 from 4:30-6:30. A successful school involves all of us working together to support our students. It is going to be a great school year! Any questions or concerns please feel free to call or email me.

Be well,
Lynsey Page, Principal Topsfield Vocational Academy

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Contact Names/Numbers/Email

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Paula Purcell	School Nurse	1525	ppurcell@nsedu.org

REFERRAL and ADMISSION PROCESS

STUDENTS ATTENDING TOPSFIELD VOCATIONAL ACADEMY ARE IN ARE GRADES 9 THROUGH 12

To be considered for admission, a referral will be made by the Department of Special Education of the student's sending school district. The referral packet generally includes a current IEP, psychological and academic testing results, applicable school reports, including discipline, attendance, and transcripts, a psycho-social history, pertinent medical information, and reports from other collaterals (i.e. Programs, Therapists, DCF, DMH, DYS, etc.) This information is beneficial in evaluating the appropriateness of placement in our school.

After a thorough review of materials, if it is deemed that TVA may be an appropriate placement, an interview with the student and family/guardian/program will be scheduled.

After review of written materials and the interview a decision regarding admission will be made by the TVA team. Notice of acceptance or refusal will be communicated as soon as possible to both the family and the referring school district. Upon acceptance, the student's parent/guardian is asked to fill out a school permission packet and submit medical information including a recent physical and the student's immunization records. A student may start school after all required documents have been completed and submitted.

The above referral process is also applicable to all students being referred to our 45-day educational assessment program, as well as to our summer school program.

Please note that TVA does not accept students who are siblings.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Topsfield Vocational Academy is to build a respectful, responsible, and inclusive community dedicated to each student's academic, vocational, social-emotional, and personal success. Through individualized instruction, therapeutic supports, and meaningful vocational experiences, we empower students to develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to achieve their goals.

We are committed to creating a clear vision for every TVA graduate by supporting students in developing career-ready skills, accessing comprehensive transition services, and meeting the Massachusetts high school graduation requirements.

Our goal is for every student to graduate with a high school diploma, a pathway to meaningful employment or postsecondary education, and the independence, resilience, and self-advocacy needed to thrive in their communities.

In order to support Topsfield Vocational Academy's mission, the program contains the following components:

- A responsibility to creating a strong vocational background to gain important skills for success and maintaining employment
- Opportunities to explore internship opportunities in a variety of employment fields before working on a transition plan for life after graduation
- Small, structured classrooms with a low student to staff ratio
- Individualized attention and programming within the context of the student's known and evolving academic, social, and emotional needs
- Student support services aimed at promoting academic success, life skills, vocational experience, and personal development
- Clear and constructive school rules and expectations, with ongoing modeling by, and feedback from, caring, dedicated, trained professional staff
- A team approach to student success, which includes input from students, families, community collaterals as well as staff

ABSENT LINE: (978) 887-8881 ext. 1521

Arrival

Students are expected to arrive at school between 8:00 and 8:15 a.m.

- Students are considered in school the moment they arrive on campus (by bus, foot, car or bicycle). All school rules apply from the moment a student arrives on campus in the morning until they leave campus at the end of the day
- If a student is going to be absent, the parent/guardian needs to call the school to excuse the absence **NO LATER** than **11AM** on the day of the absence in order for it to be considered excused
- Parents/Guardians should also contact transportation if the student is going to be absent from school
- If the student has an official appointment such as a medical appointment, court, or other documented absences, please make sure to send a note in to the school to officially excuse the absence

Transportation

Student transportation needs are arranged through the Special Education department of your sending school district.

- Students are expected to take the bus transportation provided to them by their sending school district. Any alternative plans for transportation (parent/guardian drop off) must be communicated prior to the start of the day so transportation can be notified
- Students who exhibit problematic/unsafe behaviors on their bus/van will be subject to consequences such as short or long term loss of bus privileges
- Students are not allowed to drive themselves to school unless they have been approved, signed off on the student contract, and had a meeting with the principal

- Parents/guardians who transport their children to school are asked to drop the student at the front door and wait until the student enters the building. At dismissal, parents/guardians should line their cars up in the middle parking lot (not in the line used for the numerous buses and vans)
- Parents/guardians who drop their student off or pick them up at school are responsible for calling transportation to let them know of the change

Student Driven Automobiles

Driving to school is a privilege for students and students must meet the requirements in order to be approved. A student car approval form must be filled out and approved before a student brings a car to school. This form is a contract stating the expectations for driving to school and the requirements necessary to maintain that permission. In addition, students must present a valid driver's license and registration. Failure to do so will result in the loss of permission to drive to school. These forms are available in the main office. Students who fail to demonstrate safe operating procedures may lose their driving privileges. Additionally, student drivers may not transport any other student from school.

Dismissal

Students will be **dismissed at 2:00 p.m.**

Early Dismissal Procedure

- Please report any changes in your child's dismissal (i.e. early dismissal for an appointment or a change in transportation) to the school as soon as possible, via a written note stating the reason for and time of early dismissal and preferably with 24 hours notice. Please leave the information with the front desk and it will be directed toward the appropriate staff
- We ask that if your student is to be dismissed early please enter the main office, and the student will be called for dismissal and appropriately sign out of school
- If someone other than the parent or guardian is picking up the student, please indicate this on your note. Identification will be required if office personnel do not know or recognize the person picking up your student. Please note that all individuals who pick up students must be 18 years of age or older
- If a student walks out of school and/or off school property prior to dismissal and/or without the appropriate permission, disciplinary action could occur

COURSES/ CREDITS/ GRADING

Course Offerings:

TVA offers classes based on the grade level requirements outlined in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Core classes include Math, Science, Social Studies/History, and English Language Arts. TVA also offers a Life Skill class which supports students in essential daily living skills, financial literacy, and vocational preparation. Elective classes are provided and have previously included Health, Technology, Art, and Physical Education, to allow students to be exposed to a well-rounded education. Students that may need more academic support in a smaller environment and less transitions during the day, have access to classrooms that provide this support.

Credits

Students receive credit/grades on a quarterly basis for any subject for which a grade of 60% or above is achieved. If the student's final grade at the end of the year is 60% or above, the student will receive credit or a passing grade for the full year.

Additional credit earning opportunities are available via Mentoring, Independent Studies, Volunteering, and Internships.

Grades

All grades take into account attendance, class participation, test and quiz grades, applicable project grades, completion of class assignments, and conduct.

Community Service

Students are required to do community service every year as part of their graduation requirements. A minimum of 5 hours each year (20 total for all 4 years of high school). Multiple opportunities will be offered to students throughout the course of the school year and during ESY. Community service is not a Vocational Opportunity and students will not be paid.

Field Trips and Off Grounds Opportunities

Students take occasional field trips by van for recreational and learning purposes. All field trips should be considered a school "class" occurring off campus, and all school rules and expectations will remain in place. Students will be searched before they leave campus for an off grounds field trip opportunity. Staff will review any changes in expectations with the students and, as needed, with parents/guardians, before the trip. A permission slip for field trips is enclosed in the Student Information Packet. This will provide permission for all field trips for the school year. In addition, all students who have medication will be required to bring it off grounds. The TVA nurse must have these devices such as an inhaler and Epi-Pen in the office for each student to bring off grounds.

Progress Reports

IEP progress reports are sent home on a quarterly basis.

Report Cards

Report cards are sent home and to the sending district at the close of each quarter. Grade equivalents, credits, and attendance data are outlined on the report cards.

School Records

Student record regulations ensure parents/guardians and students the right to confidentiality, inspection, amendment and destruction of student records.

Graduation Requirements

In order for students to receive a diploma, they must meet the graduation requirements of the state and their sending school district. Our guidance staff work closely with sending school districts around any necessary modifications. Students graduating from Topsfield Vocational Academy will receive a certificate of completion from TVA and an official diploma from their sending school district.

Transcripts

Official transcripts, necessary for college and other post high-school opportunities, are available through the guidance department of your sending school district. Your school counselor can help your district compile a final transcript.

BREAKFAST/ LUNCH

Breakfast

TVA offers a free breakfast each morning. The breakfast program runs from 8:00 am to 8:15 am.

Lunch

- TVA provides lunches to students free of charge. There is a charge for desserts and a \$3 charge for seconds
 - Refrigerators are available for students who choose to bring lunch
 - Microwaves are available to heat items as needed
-

PERSONAL PROPERTY / ELECTRONICS

Cell phones: Must be handed in each morning, unless the student is going to work off grounds

- Cell phones must be turned into staff each morning and placed in the phone box
- Students may also give their phone to a counselor or the principal to charge during the day
- Students must not give their phone to a teacher or IA to hold for the day
- If students are working off grounds, they are allowed to take their phone with them for emergency purposes
- Students must NOT be on their phone at any time while in the building or at work

This is a requirement for all students and a student could be subject to disciplinary consequences for not complying.

Other Electronic Devices:

- Students are provided with a chromebook to use in school each day. A permission form is required for each student to sign off on accepting responsibility for appropriate use, and any loss of damage
- Chromebooks are not to be brought home with students
- The use of headphones is subject to the specific program and classroom expectations and may vary based on the individual needs of the student
- Students may not use Meta Glasses, Apple or other Smart Watches connected to their phones while at school

Other Valuables

- Students are discouraged from bringing valuable items to school. This includes jewelry, large amounts of money, MP3 Players, Gaming devices, etc. Students should not bring items to school to sell, trade or buy. In addition, we strongly discourage lending or borrowing of valuables
- Students who bring valuables to school do so at their own risk

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Inclement Weather/School Closing

- NEC schools will be closed if the Town in which they are located closes school due to a weather emergency
- NEC may choose to close ALL NEC schools even if not all host towns are closed
- If an NEC school is open, but some towns are closed, those towns may choose not to transport students. This is the town's decision and is considered an excused absence. Parents/Guardians can choose to bring their child to school if the school is open
- Given the fact that our schools are in multiple locations and students come from multiple towns, we generally DO NOT do late starts or early releases due to weather, even if districts do so. Please be aware that this may affect your child's transportation
- Communication regarding school closures will take place primarily via automated email, text, and voicemail alerts, so it is essential that we have the correct information on file. In addition, we will post on WBZ and our website

Medical Policies: please review the NEC Handbook for general information regarding our Medical Policies. In addition, for TVA:

- Parent/Guardians should not send a student to school if they have thrown up or had a fever within 24 hours
- TVA requires all students to have medications on site for students that need it, along with an Action Plan from the doctor
- If a student needs to be dismissed by the nurse for a medical reason parent/guardian must coordinate transportation for their child's dismissal

Telephone Usage and Messages –

- If a parent/guardian needs to reach their student during the school day, please call the main office staff.
978-887-8881

Ext. 1522 (Principal)

Ext. 1521 (Main Office)

Change of Address

Please notify the school as soon as possible with any change in home/program address or telephone number. For student safety it is critical that we have accurate information regarding contact names and numbers in case of emergency.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT AND SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

TVA Attendance Policy

Absence Excused from School

- Student is exempt from class participation grade
- Student is able to make up the work for 100% of the grade
- If a student is Absent Excused for 10+ a quarter, counselor will reach out for a check in meeting and a plan for improvement will be discussed

Absent Unexcused from School

- Student receives a zero class participation
- Student is not able to make up work
- If a student has 5 or more unexcused absences in a quarter, the district is informed and a meeting/check in will occur
- If a student is at risk of failing a class due to unexcused absences, a meeting will be scheduled to discuss a plan
- Students will lose points in Kickboard

Absent from class; with a counselor for check in

- Student is exempt from class participation
- Student is able to make up 100% of the work

Absent from class; doing school work in SSC

- If student does not go to class first and check in: Student receives a zero class participation, unless there are extenuating circumstances or an excuse from counselor or PLP
- If student goes to class first and checks in with teacher: student receives full credit for class participation
- Student is able to get 100% credit for the classwork
- Student is responsible for following up with their teacher and turning in their work
- Student will lose attendance point in Kickboard
- After 5 absences from class, a meeting with the counselor and the teacher will be held

Absent from class but refusing to do school work: student is in the SSC, sleeping, or not excused by counselor

- Student receives a zero for class participation
- Student is not allowed to make up work
- If this behavior becomes a pattern a check in meeting will be held
- Student will lose a class attendance point and a class work point in Kickboard

If student is working in a shop and quits work

- Student will receive partial credit for work (supervisor determines and inputs grade)
- Kickboard points will be entered
- Depending on the circumstances, the student will either return to class or spend the day in the SSC

If student quits work in a shop before even starting

- Student gets a zero for work
- Kickboard points will be entered
- Depending on the circumstances, the student will either return to class or spend the day in the SSC

Out of school suspension

- Student will have access to Google classroom and other work to do while out
- When student returns, they will have 2 weeks to make up any missed work for full credit

- Student gets a zero for class participation
- If a student was scheduled to work on a suspension day, student will not receive Vocational credit
- Kickboard points will be entered

In School Suspension

- Student does work in the SSC
- Student receives a zero for class participation
- Kickboard points will be entered

TVA Vocational Expectations:

The vocational program is designed to help students develop workplace skills, explore career interests, and prepare for employment in the community. Students are expected to actively participate in all vocational learning opportunities as part of their educational program. 9/10 grade students will focus on developing foundational workplace skills through school-based vocational activities and career exploration. 11/12 grade students are expected to participate in community-based vocational experiences, internships, or supported employment opportunities, as appropriate for their individualized goals and readiness.

Student Expectations: All students are expected to represent themselves, the school, and their vocational program in a professional manner, as well as:

- Review and sign off on vocational contract
- Be aware and follow all shop rules and expectations
- Attend all assigned vocational classes and work experiences
- Complete assigned tasks with effort and a positive attitude
- Ask for help when needed and remain engaged in learning

School and Worksite Expectations: While working in a shop on or off grounds, students are expected to:

- Follow all school rules
- Follow the policies, procedures, and safety requirements of the shops
- Respect supervisors, teachers, coworkers, and customers
- Use appropriate language and demonstrate respectful behavior at all times
- Wear required clothing or personal protective equipment (PPE) when applicable
- Stay off their phones, unless it is required by the job or during a scheduled break time

Developing Workplace Skills: Students will work toward building:

- Responsibility and reliability
- Punctuality and regular attendance
- Effective communication skills
- Teamwork and cooperation
- Problem-solving and independence
- Safe work habits
- Professional behavior and a positive work ethic.

Exploring Career Opportunities: Students are encouraged to:

- Participate in a variety of vocational training experiences
- Explore different career pathways and job responsibilities
- Be open to learning new skills and trying new work environments
- Reflect on their strengths, interests, and career goals

Student Conduct

In order to maintain a positive and supportive school community, all students are expected to act in a respectful manner towards peers and staff. Understanding that this can be challenging during times of distress, there are many support services available that can assist the student in learning and using appropriate coping and self-management skills

- **Use Respectful Language**
- **Treat people with kindness, courtesy, respect, and dignity**
- **Never ridicule, embarrass, bully or hurt other people**
- **Accept personal differences and choices**
- **Solve problems without violence**
- **Take responsibility and accountability for your actions and your academic success**

TVA has created certain guidelines and protocols to maintain school safety and the integrity of the program. Students must make sure they adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Morning Meeting is a required meeting for ALL students. Students are expected to be present to hear important announcements. If a student does not have staff permission to miss the meeting, extra curricular (trips) and vocational opportunities could be jeopardized**
- **There is only one student in the bathroom at a time**
- **TVA is a “hands off” school. No wrestling, hugging, or any other hands on physical contact beyond a handshake or high five**
- **There is absolutely NO VAPING in school (please refer to specific Vaping policy below)**
- **If a student hands in a nicotine vape willingly in the morning when they arrive, they may get it back at the end of the day with parent/guardian permission**
- **Students are required to turn in their cell phones every morning, unless they are working off grounds**
- **Students are subject to search if they are suspected to be in possession of an item not allowed in school**
- **Students will be searched when leaving school to go on a community field trip**
- **Student purses and backpacks will be searched in the mornings when students arrive**
- **Students are to use respectful language towards staff and peers. Discriminatory and/or sexualized language will not be tolerated**
- **Students are expected to understand and follow the school rules and policies**
- **Students are required to follow the school’s dress code (see policy)**
- **Students are expected to attend all classes and not wander the hallways; students have access to breaks and counselors when needed**
- **Each Vocational Shop has their own set of rules and expectations. Students need to know what those expectations are and follow them in order to remain in the shop**

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS, RESPONSES AND POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

Our educational program rules and expectations are:

- 1 To promote individual social/emotional growth
- 2 To maintain a healthy and safe school environment

To reach these goals, students receive logical or natural outcomes for their behavior. The outcomes are divided into three categories that relate to the infraction and that also incorporate trauma informed practices, restorative practices, education around the incident, and strategies to help students change the behavior.

Category 1: behaviors will be managed using Tier 1 interventions. Staff will communicate directly to parent/guardians any concerning classroom behavior

- Inappropriate classroom language
- Inappropriate language directed at a staff or student
- Refusal to work without classroom disruption
- Inappropriate computer usage: videos and language
- Head down/sleeping
- Other distracting behaviors that interrupts peer learning
- Wandering and unsupervised space
- Violation of school policies; bathrooms, phone refusal, dress code violations

Possible Outcomes and Interventions

- Potential loss of assignment credit
- Potential loss of privileges; working and field trips
- PBIS and restorative in class practices
- Education and understanding of triggers and how to avoid the common behaviors
- Behavior plan, if determined by the team
- Anti-discrimination and/or anti-bullying/harassment education

Category 2: behaviors will be managed using Tier 2 Interventions. Counselor or Principal will communicate with parent/guardian

- Verbal assault that makes others feels uncomfortable or upset
- Continuous disruptive behavior that is not responsive to redirection
- Physically touching and violating boundaries and personal space
- Disruption to classroom environment or refusal to work after redirection if disrupting classroom
- Suspicion of being under the influence of Drugs and Alcohol (assessment)
- Wandering and in an unsupervised space
- Violation of school policies; bathrooms, phone refusal, dress code violations

Possible Outcomes and Interventions

- Break/walk
- Check in with the principal/counselor
- Missing class and academic credit for the day

- In-School suspension in the SSC
- A meeting with the teacher before the student returns to class is required
- Mediation between teacher and student or students and student could occur
- Depending on the situation either the counselor or the principal will communicate with families and the district; possible team meeting scheduled
- Education and understanding of triggers and how to avoid common behaviors
- Behavior Plan, if determined by the team
- Anti-discrimination and/or anti-bullying/harassment education

Category 3: behaviors that could result in a possibly 10 day suspension or a longer suspension, and involve restorative practices, Tier 3 interventions, and progress meetings

- Physical Assault on staff or student
- Possession of Drugs and Alcohol: Intent to Distribute
- Possession of Weapons: If pocket knife, tool, etc is unintentionally brought to school and then turned in the morning, potential for no disciplinary action
- Property damage in excess of \$250
- Property damage under \$250
- Bullying and harassment
- Repeated use of discriminatory language against another student or staff (see additional policy)
- Verbal assault: threats and other excessive language towards staff or other students
- Off grounds without permission
- Any behavior that creates a disruptive/unsafe school environment that has been assessed by school staff ie; wandering and unsupervised space use to the extent that it needs to be a removal from the program
- Pulling a false fire alarm
- Excessive violation of school policies; bathrooms, phone refusal, and other school rules and policies

Possible Outcomes and Interventions

- Out of school short term suspension up to ten days
- Investigations; bullying, harassment, discrimination, Title IX
- Nurse and Principal evaluation and assessment
- Threat or safety assessment
- Potential request for evaluation
- Repayment of items damaged and restorative practices to fix damage and repair relationships
- Potential police notification and involvement
- Loss of privileges
- Confiscation of items
- Mediation, if needed
- Diversion
- Education around discrimination, bullying, social media, smoking cessation will also be provided
- Behavior plan, if determined by team
- Anti-discrimination and/or anti-bullying/harassment education

Marijuana/Alcohol/Illegal Substance

Suspicion that student is under the influence:

- Possible Nurse/Counselor Assessment (checklist used)
- Identify if a higher level of care is provided; hospital
- Monitor for an hour in nurse or SSC
 - If no, return to class, search list
 - If yes then student will be in an In-School suspension in the SSC (first offense)
 - If under the influence: Contact parents
 - a possible PASS referral and/or drug and alcohol assessment
- If student has multiple offenses of suspicion; parent/guardian will be contacted
- If a student has a marijuana odor on them and has been cleared for being under the influence, the odor will be addressed as a hygiene concern
- Call home by advocate

In Possession of/Caught smoking

- Contact parents
- Remove from population (SSC)
- Out of school suspension with option for restorative/educational component
- Referral to the PASS program for first time offense

Nicotine

Suspicion of vaping on school grounds or on a community trip; student turns vape in

- Offer diversion/ resources
- Return to class
- Contact Guardian about return of device and provide an update

Suspicion of vaping on school grounds or on a community trip, student does not turn in voluntarily

- Student searched, if no vape found; diversion offered, student returns to class
- Parent contacted
- If student is suspected of vaping multiple times: Student searched, if no vape found; student will check in with counselor, student added to search list
- Student searched and vape found; vape confiscated
- Possible referral to PASS and also education on the impact of vaping (SSC)

If the vape is found/not passed in and there had been no suspicion prior, then the Vape will be confiscated and a call will go home

Caught in the act of vaping on school grounds or on a community trip

- 1st offense- video/ education in in school suspension, once completed return to class, parent/guardian contacted
- 2nd offense- in school suspension for the remainder of the day, parent/guardian contacted; possible referral to PASS

- 3rd offense- parent/guardian meeting, potential out of school suspension, diversion and education, and possible referral to PASS Program

If your student is suspended from school they will still have access to their school work in google classrooms. They are strongly encouraged to complete their work so that they will not fall behind in their academics.

Bullying and Harassment: please review the NEC bullying policy in the NEC Handbook.

PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited: (i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and (ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited.

Reporting any Bullying or Harassment can be done using the form located in the NEC Policy Manual or by contacting the Principal.

DRESS CODE

We ask everyone to dress in a manner appropriate to a school environment. Students should dress in clothing that is clean and safe. Clothing that is provocative, represents weapons, alcohol and drugs, promoting the use of any illegal substance and represents any form of discrimination, and/or detracts from the learning environment will not be permitted.

Any attire deemed inappropriate by staff will be discreetly addressed and, if the concern cannot be addressed at school, the student may be required to return home to change or have appropriate clothing brought to school. When possible, students will be offered clothing that has been donated to the school.

The following are guidelines regarding student attire

- Please send your student with warm clothing during the winter months (coats, hats, gloves. etc.) so they may spend time outside during break time if weather permits
- Encourage students to dress appropriately given the weather, as well as the school dress code
- If backpacks, coats or other personal items become a distraction to the learning environment, students will be asked to keep these items in their homeroom or the student support center
- Students who bring bags, purses, or backpacks to school will be subject to search each morning

Parent/Guardian Participation

Parents/Guardians are valuable members of our team at the Northshore Education Consortium. Some means of communication with parents/guardians may include emails, written progress reports, report cards, parent meetings, phone calls, home visits and yearly team meetings. We encourage parents to contact us with any pertinent information regarding their child. This may include medication changes, changes in family dynamics or other school/home issues. Parents/guardians are also encouraged to be in contact with their student's team to get updates, address concerns or simply discuss their progress. We believe ongoing communication is vital to the success of students.

Parents/Guardians can request full policy manual and can request translation**Release of Student's Name**

The Northshore Education Consortium does not issue the names, addresses and personal information about students to any outside agencies without the consent of the student and parents in accordance with Massachusetts Law 603 CMR 230.07 (4).

Student Files and Records

The sending school district is the owner of all student's official records. Records requests, application for State Assistance programs, and transcripts must be directed to the sending School District.

Student Handbook Signature Page

I have read and understand all the information provided to me in the Northshore Education Consortium Parent/Student Handbook and the Topsfield Vocational Academy Handbook for the 2026 - 2027 school year.

Student Name (please print)	Date
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Student Signature	Date
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Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
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***This page must be returned to school before a student can begin attending**