



ANDOVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

"Every Child, Every Day, Every Way"

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Marinel D. McGrath, Ed.D.

Superintendent of Schools
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PRESS RELEASE

Date: November 30, 2011

From: Marinel D. McGrath, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Subject: Press Release regarding violations of district's anti-bullying and anti-hazing policies

I am writing to you regarding the alleged violations of the school district's anti-bullying and anti-hazing policies. The allegations that the policies had been violated by a number of our students, and in particular the nature of those alleged violations, are both disappointing and disturbing since the purpose of these policies is to protect our students and to provide them with a safe and supportive learning environment.

A thorough investigation has been completed and submitted to me. I am saddened to report that the investigation has concluded that there were violations of the policies. As a school district, we will take appropriate action in accordance with our district policies and state law. While I fully understand and appreciate that the community is legitimately interested in the outcomes for the violations of these policies, I am prohibited by federal and state laws from disclosing information about individual student discipline. I can tell you, however, that in the case of violations of our anti-bullying and anti-hazing policies, our school district policies permit a range of disciplinary actions which include suspension and expulsion from school. You have my assurance that I intend to strictly enforce these policies based upon the evidence and to the extent allowed by our policies and laws. We will address, separately, the involvement by any Andover Public Schools employees in connection with these allegations

As you know from a statement I released previously, Andover Public Schools has zero tolerance with respect to violations of these policies and we immediately commenced an investigation into the reported allegations. While student privacy laws restrict the level of detail I am able to share, Andover High School Principal Tom Sharkey, Athletic Director Christopher Bergeron and I will use all tools available to us to enforce our policies and to protect our students. We remain committed to maintaining an atmosphere free from bullying and hazing for all of our students, whether they are on or off school property.

I thank our community for its support and patience throughout the investigative process which has been very difficult on our students, staff, families and community. At this stage, it is critically important that our community and more importantly, our students, understand that we will hold individuals accountable, but also provide them with an opportunity for them to learn and grow from this experience. As a school and as a community, we must now begin to go forward and help our students refocus on school and their extracurricular activities. I assure you that together we can restore a sense of safety and protection to our students and the community's belief in its public schools.

Andover High School

Athletic Department
“Home of the Golden Warriors”

Christopher R. Bergeron, CAA
Director of Athletics

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Date: November 30, 2011
To: Andover Parents, Guardians, and Community
From: Christopher R. Bergeron, CAA
Director of Athletics

After consultation with Superintendent Marinel McGrath and Andover High School Principal Thomas Sharkey, I intend to suspend student-athletes from participation in the Andover High School 2011-2012 athletic program for varying periods of time due to apparent violations of Andover High School athletic policies and rules. Any student-athletes who may be subject to possible suspensions have certain procedural rights which must be honored and I will be following that process. The Athletic Department is committed to the best interests of all student-athletes who participate in its programs and will rigorously protect those interests. As stated in the rules, which apply to all athletic programs, participation in the AHS Athletic Program is a privilege, not a right, and the highest standards of conduct will be enforced.