



MAP ACADEMY

POLICY REGARDING SUBSTANCE USE PREVENTION

All policies in this handbook align with:

Mass. General Laws chapter 71, section 96 (as amended by [St. 2016, c. 52, s. 15](#)):

Section 96. Each public school shall have a policy regarding substance use prevention and the education of its students about the dangers of substance abuse. The school shall notify the parents or guardians of all students attending the school of the policy and shall post the policy on the school's website. The policy, and any standards and rules enforcing the policy, shall be prescribed by the school committee in conjunction with the superintendent or the board of trustees of a charter school.

The department of elementary and secondary education, in consultation with the department of public health, shall provide guidance and recommendations to assist schools with developing and implementing effective substance use prevention and abuse education policies and shall make such guidance and recommendations publicly available on the department's website. Guidance and recommendations may include educating parents or guardians on recognizing warning signs of substance abuse and providing available resources. Guidance and recommendations shall be reviewed and regularly updated to reflect applicable research and best practices.

Each school district and charter school shall file its substance use prevention and abuse education policies with the department of elementary and secondary education in a manner and form prescribed by the department.

Goals

In alignment with the Map Academy mission and charter, the substance abuse policy at Map Academy:

- Provides students with meaningful opportunities to learn, think, and discuss the short and long term impacts of using drugs and alcohol through research based, personalized substance abuse curriculum.
- Meets students where they are at by providing substantial support to students and families whose lives have been impacted by substance abuse.
- Engages students struggling with substance by using research-based restorative that include physical, mental, emotional, social, and family/community supports.

This policy is organized according to the six elements of a Safe and Supportive Schools Framework: *Leadership; Professional Development; Access to Resources and Services; Academic and Non-Academic Strategies; Policies, Procedures, and Protocols; and Collaboration with Families.*

I) Leadership

Fostering a safe and supportive learning environment explicitly aligns with the mission of Map Academy to re-engage off-track youth. At all levels of leadership, Map Academy has integrated members with deep knowledge of substance use prevention and abuse education. The Map Academy Board of Trustees includes a member of the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office with deep ties to community organizations and extensive experience working with high risk youth. At the school level, staffing includes a Student Support Team with years of experience working with off-track youth, vulnerable students, and children and families struggling with addiction. The Student Support Team is comprised of a the Co-directors, an Outreach Coordinator, two Social Workers, a Special Education Teacher, and a .5 School Nurse. This leadership structure results in strong links between local resources and quality prevention program curriculum implemented at Map Academy.

The Student Support Team oversees the implementation of a comprehensive substance use prevention programs that involves the use of multiple strategies, including education and training; social competency skill development; social norms with expectations for behavior; policies, procedures and protocols; and problem identification and referral services.

Members of the Student Support Team will meet weekly to monitor students at risk for substance abuse and annually to review the Substance Use Prevention Policy, taking into consideration feedback from community resources, students, and families, in order to create a policy that best meets the needs of all students.

II) Professional development

Map Academy creates a climate and culture that fosters support and respect for and between all individuals—students, staff, and families. All students at Map have an Anchor teacher with whom they spend the first and last hour of each day working. By building strong relationships with students through meaningful interactions on a daily basis, staff are often able to recognize changes in student performance, demeanor, and appearance that indicate a student may be at risk. Consequently, all staff, including teachers, support staff, and administrators are provided training on school policies, procedures, and protocols for prevention, intervention, and follow-up in preventing and responding to substance use and abuse. During weekly professional development meetings, all faculty and staff are provided training on the early warning signs and behaviors that indicate a student may be experiencing substance use problems, and work with the Student Support Team to identify next steps for individual students.

Additionally, members of the Student Support Team are provided professional development on administering the verbal screening tool that will be used annually to screen pupils for risk for substance use related problems. The Student Support Staff will also serve as a resource for all school personnel and provide in-house professional development to all staff who are responsible for implementing substance use prevention curricula, including specific training and professional development on implementing evidence-based programs and effective strategies for preventing substance use. As needed, Map Academy will also utilize external trainers and resources for professional development around issues related to student, family, and community substance abuse and addiction education.

III) Access to resources and services

Map Academy has extensive ties to the local community and numerous connections with substance abuse prevention programs and recovery resources and facilities. The Student Support Team will play a key role in identifying and referring students with substance use related problems and fundamental to the Map Academy policy is working with their families and home support systems. Map Academy will work in collaboration with substance use counseling professionals and mental health specialists to meet the needs of those students most at risk.

Through fostering deep connections with students and creating a safe and supportive environment, Student Support Team members will have access to information and strategies necessary to facilitate referrals to community services for the wide variety of mental health problems that students experience, including substance use. Map Academy through its participation with the Plymouth Youth Development Collaborative

will maintain a public resource list for the network of services available through the agencies in the greater Plymouth area.

In line with personalizing the experience of each student at Map Academy, staff will work collaboratively with community behavioral health providers in order to address student-specific issues, including interventions such as small group, individual supports, and school re-entry plans. While Map Academy has a highly competent staff with extensive experience and qualifications in working with students struggling with addiction, on both a general and an individual-case basis, the school will work regularly and collaboratively with community resources to best meet the needs of students and their families.

IV) Academic and non-academic strategies

Substance use prevention and education is integrated into Map Academy through an evidence-based substance abuse prevention curriculum that is developmentally appropriate and demonstrates cultural competency for the diverse youth served at Map Academy. Map Academy believes in meeting young people where they are socially, emotionally, academically, and motivationally. Consequently, the school does not implement a single substance abuse curricula for all students regardless of experience and impact related to substance use and abuse, but personalizes evidence-based programs and practices for students. These substance abuse and mental health interventions may be drawn from those available in the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) and therefore reviewed by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Additionally, the Student Support Team, comprised of the school-based mental health professionals, work directly with young people in the Map Academy community who are identified as being at risk. Map Academy believes in wrap-around supports, meaning students will have access to Student Support Team members both within the traditional school day and year, as well as during extended days, after school, vacations, and at home. Capitalizing on the Social Workers and Outreach Worker on staff, Map Academy will provide students who are impacted by substance use and addiction significant support systems in all aspects of their lives and connect them with accessible resources within their communities.

V) Policies and protocols

In adherence to Massachusetts and Federal Law, Map Academy is a drug free campus. Students are prohibited from using illicit substances on school grounds, and at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds. Map Academy also believes in a research-based restorative approach to substance use. If a staff member believes that a student may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs not prescribed by a doctor and monitored by the School Nurse, the student will be referred to meet with a member of the Student Support Team for further evaluation. After evaluation, the Student Support Team may convene to hold an intervention meeting with the student and the people involved and impacted by the

substance use. This conference is a research-based restorative practice guided by a trained professionals from the Student Support Team aimed at maintaining a trusting relationship between staff and students while helping students struggling with substance use to get support both within the school and from outside providers. At the end of the conference, an agreement will be formed that includes next steps for the student and a staff member who will supervise the terms of the agreement. While Map Academy maintains the right, as consistent with M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H, to suspend or expel students found on school property or at school sponsored events in possession of controlled substances, the school will make every effort to implement a restorative approach and first provide students with the resources needed to address the issue of substance use and abuse.

The Student Support Team will balance maintaining confidentiality with fostering a supportive learning environment by limiting information that is shared with other staff. Throughout the processes of addressing substance use concerns, parents/guardians will be notified and home support systems will be put in place that best serve students. Map Academy is a competency-based education with personalized curriculum, therefore any student who has been absent will be able to re-integration of students of students who have been absent and/or in recovery can be done with no disruption to the student's academics. Socially and emotionally, the student will be supported extensively both by their Anchor teacher and the Student Support Team, as well as by external resources in the community for recovery. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Student Support Team, with input from students, families, and community members.

State law provides that public schools shall utilize a verbal screening tool to screen students annually, at two different grade levels, for substance use disorders. This verbal screening will be administered by trained staff comprised of member of the Student Support Team and School Nurse.

Mass. General Laws chapter 71, section 97 (as amended by [St. 2016, c. 52, s. 15](#)):

Section 97. (a) Subject to appropriation, each city, town, regional school district, charter school or vocational school district shall utilize a verbal screening tool to screen pupils for substance use disorders. Screenings shall occur on an annual basis and occur at 2 different grade levels as recommended by the department of elementary and secondary education, in consultation with the department of public health. Parents or guardians of a pupil to be screened pursuant to this section shall be notified prior to the start of the school year. Verbal screening tools shall be approved by the department of elementary and secondary education, in conjunction with the department of public health. De-identified screening results shall be reported to the department of public health, in a manner to be determined by the department

of public health, not later than 90 days after completion of the screening.

(b) A pupil or the pupil's parent or guardian may opt out of the screening by written notification at any time prior to or during the screening. A city, town, regional school district, charter school or vocational school district utilizing a verbal screening tool shall comply with the department of elementary and secondary education's regulations relative to consent.

(c) Any statement, response or disclosure made by a pupil during a verbal substance use disorder screening shall be considered confidential information and shall not be disclosed by a person receiving the statement, response or disclosure to any other person without the prior written consent of the pupil, parent or guardian, except in cases of immediate medical emergency or a disclosure is otherwise required by state law. Such consent shall be documented on a form approved by the department of public health and shall not be subject to discovery or subpoena in any civil, criminal, legislative or administrative proceeding. No record of any statement, response or disclosure shall be made in any form, written, electronic or otherwise, that includes information identifying the pupil.

(d) The department of elementary and secondary education shall notify each school district in writing of the requirement to screen students for substance use disorders pursuant to this section. School districts with alternative substance use screening policies may, on a form provided by the department, opt out of the required verbal screening tool. The form shall be signed by the school superintendent and provide a detailed description of the alternative substance use program the district has implemented and the reasons why the required verbal screening tool is not appropriate for the district.

(e) No person shall have a cause of action for loss or damage caused by an act or omission resulting from the implementation of this section.

VI) Collaboration with families

Families and home support networks are essential partners in Map Academy's efforts to prevent substance use. Parental input, particularly from parents of students with substance related-problems, will help identify and prioritize the needs of the school community. Therefore, Map Academy will regularly seek input from parents and the community on substance use policy, interventions, and education.

Map Academy supports wrap-around services for students and acknowledges the importance of school-community-home collaborations in weaving together the resources for comprehensive, multifaceted approaches to preventing substance use and abuse. Throughout the year, Map Academy will provide parents/guardians with information regarding the district's and school's substance use prevention and abuse education policies, as they play a key role in their success. This information will be

distributed to parents/guardians annually as policies on substance use prevention and abuse education will be regularly updated.

Additionally, Map Academy will integrate evidence-based prevention curricula specifically designed for parents/guardians and other actively involved family members. This outreach can help parents/guardians and family members to keep students safe from substance use, by modeling skills and attitudes at home, thereby supporting the prevention component of the school initiative.

Map Academy will post this policy will be posted on the school website.