



## ELEMENTARY HANDBOOK

Dear Families,

The Abington Elementary Schools administration and staff welcome you and your child to the Abington Public Schools. We are pleased to offer your child a wide variety of educational opportunities provided at the highest professional level. We take great pride in Abington's educational heritage and special pride in our Vision Statement, Core Values, Guiding Principles, and District Level Goals, which can be found on the district website at [www.abingtonps.org](http://www.abingtonps.org).

Communication with the home is a top priority in the Abington Elementary Schools; hence, the purpose of this guide. It contains rules and regulations, as well as the rights and responsibilities of your child. It also contains many of the answers to questions asked routinely of school personnel. Please keep this handbook as a reference.

State law requires that the Student Handbook include the rules pertaining to the conduct of students, as well as the policies and procedures to be followed in administering these rules. These rules and policies, derived from our federal and state laws, are more particularly delineated in *Massachusetts General Laws*, Chapter 71, Section 37H, 37 H ½ and 37 H ¾. They attempt to define both the rights and responsibilities of students in our schools.

These rules refer to matters that can occur both inside and outside the school. They refer to everything from the most serious offenses to the least serious issues that are nevertheless important for good order and discipline of the school. These rules explain the process due to students when disciplinary problems occur. "Due process" is required under the circumstances of each case.

The Abington School Committee has approved policies on a variety of topics. Many of these policies are referenced or summarized in the student handbook. To read a full text of these policies, please visit [www.abingtonps.org](http://www.abingtonps.org). Unless otherwise indicated, all policies cited in this handbook were approved by the Abington School Committee on June 25, 2018.

We wish you and your child a happy and successful educational experience in Abington.

Sincerely,

*Elementary Administration and Staff*

**Translations Available:** Please note that a translated version of this handbook is available upon request.

Requests should be addressed to the building principal.

# ***DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES***

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*The mission of the Abington Public Schools is to provide all students with relevant, challenging educational experiences to prepare them to be engaged, responsible citizens and members of the global community.*

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

*We believe in:*

- making decisions in the best interests of students.
- supporting all students in achieving success.
- fostering the physical, intellectual, technological, social, emotional, and artistic development of our students.
- creating a safe, tolerant, supportive, organized, and equitable learning environment.
- providing challenging educational experiences that build character.
- developing self-discipline and personal responsibility
- promoting creativity, problem solving, effective communication, and critical thinking skills.
- cultivating the educational partnership among home, school, and community
- nurturing a culture of collaboration, collegiality, and mutual respect.
- encouraging staff initiative and innovation.
- implementing professional development that is essential for effective instruction and improved student learning.
- reviewing and updating curriculum, instruction, and assessment in a regular cycle.
- recognizing that effective and appropriate technology is essential for teaching and learning.
- inspiring all students to become life-long learners.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

The Abington Public School District, in partnership with families and the community, is a model school system that provides opportunities for all students to think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, and act responsibly to achieve their highest potential in academics, arts, and athletics.

We are dedicated to providing state of the art resources for teaching and learning, technology, and facilities in an environment that is safe and supportive, enabling students to become life-long learners.

Our students are prepared to face the challenges of the future in an ever-changing world.

# SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOALS

## ABINGTON EARLY EDUCATION PROGRAM:

- Goal 1:* Investigate and pilot thematic units of study utilizing developmentally appropriate, evidence based curricular materials and activities integrating available technology into daily instructional practice
- Goal 2:* Maximize the opportunities and resources afforded by the co-located preschool, middle school, and high school at 201 Gliniewicz Way
- Goal 3:* Explore Opportunities for Early Education Accreditation
- Goal 4:* Strengthen parent and community involvement and engagement
- Goal 5:* Continually monitor and improve safety of physical environment and processes i.e pick up/drop off, traffic patterns

## BEAVER BROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

- Goal 1:* Improve writing proficiency of all students
- Goal 2:* Improve supports and outcomes for students' social emotional needs
- Goal 3:* Increase opportunities for all families to engage in school community

## WOODSDALE SCHOOL

- Goal 1: **Teaching and Learning:*** To improve student performance in reading and math through curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
- Goal 2: **Facilities:*** To provide state-of-the-art facilities that promote a healthy and safe learning environment.
- Goal 3: **Community Learning:*** Broaden our students' awareness of their responsibility to participate within their school community and build strong partnerships with the Abington Community.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from Administration	1
<a href="#">Mission/Vision Statements</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">School Improvement Goals</a>	<a href="#">3</a>
<b><a href="#">BASIC INFORMATION</a></b>	<b><a href="#">6</a></b>
Central Office Personnel, School Committee, and Building Administration	6
School Hours	7
Emergency Preparedness	7
Student Welfare	7
Emergency Closings/School Cancellations	7
School Entrance Requirements	8
Nondiscrimination	8
PPRA Notice & Consent	8
Sexual Harassment	9
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy	9
Hazing	9
Audio-Video Recording	9
Media Release	10
Press & Media Guidelines	10
Acceptable Internet/Network Use	10
Electronic Equipment	10
Observations of Special Education Programs	11
Visitors/School Volunteers	11
Tobacco Use On School Grounds	11
Animals In School	12
<b><a href="#">ACADEMICS</a></b>	<b><a href="#">13</a></b>
Field Trips	13
Homework	14
Homework Guidelines	15
Promotion and Retention	15
Classroom Placement	15
Student Attendance	16
Standardized Testing	16
Support Teams	16
Referral To Special Education	17
<b><a href="#">CODE OF CONDUCT</a></b>	<b><a href="#">18</a></b>
Student Discipline Policy	18
Behavior Expectations	18
Disciplinary Procedure	18
Playground/Recess	19
Cafeteria Expectations	20
Drug/Alcohol Policy	20
Student Complaints & Grievances	20
APS/Abington Police Memorandum of Understanding	20
<b><a href="#">STUDENT LIFE</a></b>	<b><a href="#">21</a></b>
Dress Code	21

Food Service Policy	21
Home Schooling	21
Student Publications	21
Health Services and Requirements	22
Physical Examination of Students	22
Administering Medications to Students	23
Inoculations	24
Concussions	25
Latex Policy	25
APS Wellness Policy	25
<b><i>STUDENT RECORDS</i></b>	<b><i>26</i></b>
Application of Rights	26
The Student Record	26
Parent/Student Access	27
Authorized School Personnel Access	27
3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Access	28
Non-Custodial Parent Access	28
<b><i>TRANSPORTATION</i></b>	<b><i>29</i></b>
Mandated Paid Transportation	29
Non-Mandated Transportation	29
Two Mile Limit	29
Application, Fees, and Deadlines	29
New Residents	30
Bus Tags	30
Bus Stops & Routing	30
Safety	30
Bus Conduct	30
Student Transportation in Private Vehicles	31
<b><i>INTEGRATED PRESCHOOL ADDENDUM</i></b>	<b><i>32</i></b>
<b><i>BEAVER BROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ADDENDUM</i></b>	<b><i>36</i></b>
<b><i>WOODSDALE SCHOOL ADDENDUM</i></b>	<b><i>38</i></b>
<b><i>APS HOMEWORK ADDENDUM</i></b>	<b><i>39</i></b>

## **BASIC INFORMATION**

### **CENTRAL OFFICE PERSONNEL, SCHOOL COMMITTEE, AND BUILDING ADMINISTRATION**

#### ***Superintendent of Schools***

Peter Schafer

Office: 781-982-2150

[peterschafer@abingtonps.org](mailto:peterschafer@abingtonps.org)

#### ***Assistant Superintendent***

Dr. Felicia Moschella

Office: 781-982-2150

[feliciamoschella@abingtonps.org](mailto:feliciamoschella@abingtonps.org)

#### ***Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment***

Dr. Christopher Basta

Office: 781-982-2150

[chrisbasta@abingtonps.org](mailto:chrisbasta@abingtonps.org)

#### ***Director of Student Services***

Dr. James Robbins

Office: 781-982-2175

[jamesrobbins@abingtonps.org](mailto:jamesrobbins@abingtonps.org)

#### ***School Committee:***

Christopher Coyle, Chairperson - [christophercoyle@abingtonps.org](mailto:christophercoyle@abingtonps.org)

Danielle Grafton, Vice Chairperson - [daniellegrafton@abingtonps.org](mailto:daniellegrafton@abingtonps.org)

Heidi Hernandez, Secretary - [heidihernandez@abingtonps.org](mailto:heidihernandez@abingtonps.org)

Julie Groom, Member - [juliegroom@abingtonps.org](mailto:juliegroom@abingtonps.org)

Melanie Whitney, Member - [melaniewhitney@abingtonps.org](mailto:melaniewhitney@abingtonps.org)

#### ***Building Administration:***

*Abington Early Education Program, Out of District Coordinator*

201 Gliniewicz Way

Annie Robinson, Director

Office: 781-982-2195

[annierobinson@abingtonps.org](mailto:annierobinson@abingtonps.org)

#### ***Beaver Brook Elementary School (Grades K-2)***

One Ralph Hamlin Jr., Way

Julie Thompson, Principal

[juliethompson@abingtonps.org](mailto:juliethompson@abingtonps.org)

Melanie Savicke, Assistant Principal

[melaniesavicke@abingtonps.org](mailto:melaniesavicke@abingtonps.org)

Office: 781-982-2185

#### ***Woodsdale School (Grades 3-4)***

120 Chestnut Street

Jennifer Barresi, Principal

Office: 781-982-2180

[jenniferbarresi@abingtonps.org](mailto:jenniferbarresi@abingtonps.org)

## SCHOOL HOURS

Woodsdale Elementary School  
8:40 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Beaver Brook Elementary School  
9:00 a.m. – 3:05 p.m.

Early Education Program  
8:20 a.m. – 10:55 a.m.  
11:35 a.m. – 2:10 p.m.

## SCHOOL HOURS – Scheduled Half Days

Woodsdale Elementary School  
8:40 a.m. – 11:40 p.m.

Beaver Brook Elementary School  
9:00 a.m. – 12:05 p.m.

Early Education Program  
AM Session Only

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

### ***Emergency Responses:***

Fire drills at regular intervals are required by law. Additional drills such as evacuation, enhanced lockdown, and reverse evacuation are conducted on a regular basis. All staff and students are trained yearly on these emergency procedures.

### ***Automated External Defibrillators (AED):***

Each of our school buildings are equipped with AEDs, which are located in accessible areas throughout the building. These AEDs are inspected and maintained weekly.

## EMERGENCY CLOSINGS/SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS

As an alternative to closing school for a full day, the Abington School Committee has in place a 90-minute delayed opening schedule. This schedule may be used on days when it appears as if the weather and/or road conditions will improve enough in the early morning to allow schools to open. If the decision is made to delay the opening of school by 90 minutes or to cancel school, the message will be delivered via automated phone call and made available through local television/radio news stations and online where possible.

### **90-minute Delayed Opening Schedule (*No morning Preschool sessions*)**

<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>CLASSES START</b>	<b>CLASSES DISMISSED</b>
Woodsdale Elementary School	10:10 a.m.	2:45 p.m.
Beaver Brook Elementary School	10:30 a.m.	3:05 p.m.
Abington Early Education Program	No AM session Afternoon PK session- 11:35 a.m.	2:10 p.m.

## STUDENT WELFARE

There is no supervision provided for students in Grades Preschool to 4 before the beginning of the school day. Therefore, the school department cannot assume responsibility for students who arrive prior to that time. Students will be permitted to enter school buildings 20 minutes prior to the start of the school day. No children are permitted in the buildings unless under supervision of the classroom teacher or other school personnel. Students are to leave the buildings and school grounds promptly at the close of school, unless engaged in school-supervised activities.

## SCHOOL ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

### **Screening: \*AEEP ONLY**

A preschool screening program for 3 and 4-year-olds, as mandated by Chapter 766, will be conducted each spring. This program is designed to identify children with developmental delays and/or disabilities and is used by teachers and administrators for educational purposes. It is not a complete diagnostic assessment.

Parents/Guardians can expect to receive the screening results within one week. If additional testing is indicated, you will be notified in writing.

### **Registration:**

The following materials are required in accordance with Massachusetts Law and must be completed prior to any child entering school in September for the first time:

1. Proof of Residency & Proof of Occupancy
2. Birth Certificate
3. Health History
4. Physical Examination (must be no sooner than September 1st of the year prior to the student entering Kindergarten or Grade 1)
5. Certificate of Immunization is required regarding diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, (series of 5); measles, mumps, rubella, (series of 2); poliomyelitis, (series of 4); hepatitis B, (series of 3); varicella vaccine or physician's documentation that the child has had chicken pox illness; proof of current lead level testing; and such other communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Public Health.

A copy of the Abington Public Schools registration packet can be found [here](#).

## NONDISCRIMINATION

The Committee's policy of nondiscrimination will extend to all students, all staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business. No individual shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to the District or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. If an individual has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, their complaint should be registered with the Title IX compliance officer, Felicia Moschella (Assistant Superintendent).

## PPRA NOTICE AND CONSENT/OPT-OUT FOR SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. & 1232h, requires Abington Public Schools to notify you and obtain consent or allow you to opt-out your child from participating in certain school activities. These activities include a student survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following areas ("protected information surveys"):

1. political affiliations or beliefs of the student or political affiliations of the student's parents/guardians;
2. mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. sexual behavior or attitudes;
4. illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents/guardians;
8. income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Abington Elementary Schools are committed to maintain a safe, secure, and productive environment for everyone. Students are expected to treat all members of the school community with dignity and respect. It is the policy of the Abington Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, national origin, race, religion, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation in its educational programs, services, activities, or employment practices as required by [Chapter 151B of the General Laws](#), Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971; [Title IX of the State 1972 Educational Amendments](#); and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Violations of civil rights will not be tolerated.

Each person has the right to be free from derogatory or degrading remarks or actions which cause humiliation. All forms of “put-downs”, sexual comments or harassment, or physically intrusive or violent behavior are unacceptable. They detract from a supportive, caring educational environment which we try to promote in our schools. Dr. Felicia Moschella (Assistant Superintendent) has been appointed the sexual harassment grievance officer and is vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all sexual harassment complaints.

## BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION POLICY

The Abington School Committee and the Abington Public School District is committed to providing a safe and civil educational environment for all students, employees, volunteers, and patrons which is free from harassment, intimidation, bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy shall apply to students and members of a school staff, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, paraprofessionals and appointed volunteers. The policy and actions contained within can be found here: [Abington Public Schools Bullying & Intervention Policy](#)

## HAZING

Hazing is prohibited. Any student who feels s/he is being hazed should report such information immediately to a staff member. Hazing is in violation of [Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 269, Sections 17-19](#). Anyone who is aware of hazing and/or is at the scene where hazing takes place is required to report the offense to a school official. Any student who is involved in hazing will be subject to suspension. In all cases relating to hazing, students will receive procedural due process.

## AUDIO-VIDEO RECORDING

The Abington Public Schools have a responsibility to maintain discipline and protect the safety, security, and welfare of our students and staff, while at the same time safeguarding District facilities, vehicles, and equipment. The School Committee policy regarding audio-video/digital surveillance can be found here: <https://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/browse/abingtonset/abington/ECAF>

As part of fulfilling this responsibility, the Abington School Committee authorizes the use of audio- video/digital surveillance cameras in school building common areas, on and around school grounds and on vehicles under the control of the District which are transporting students. Digital or video recorder placements shall be based on the presumption and belief that students and staff have no reasonable expectation of privacy in public areas that occur in plain view of other students, staff, or bystanders.

Signs shall be posted, to notify students, staff, and visitors that video or digital cameras may be in use. Parents and students shall also be notified through the student handbook and/or by other means that cameras may be in use. Students and others will be held responsible for any violations of school rules, District Policies and Procedures, or law recorded by the cameras.

## MEDIA RELEASE

Abington Public Schools may use photographs or videos of school activities. The District posts photographs in local newspapers and provides videos designed for instructional and informational purposes to cable or broadcast stations. Parents/Guardians indicate their consent by signing the media release line on the Student Information Form. If a parent/guardian wishes to opt-out of the media release it must be submitted in writing to your child's school.

## PRESS AND MEDIA GUIDELINES

Consistent with this policy, the School Committee and faculty encourage members of the press and media to visit the schools. The principal will assist, at their discretion, members of the press and media who wish to interview or photograph students or staff so as not to interfere with the education of students.

## ACCEPTABLE INTERNET/NETWORK USE

Abington Public Schools' Technology Network exists solely for educational purposes. Abington Public Schools' Technology Network is not to be considered a resource intended for use as a public forum or for any purpose that is not directly related to the delivery of educational services. In order for a member of Abington Public Schools' community to use the computer network, s/he must read the following rules and sign the version of the User Contract appropriate to the user's grade level. The Abington Public Schools network use policy can be found here: [https://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/browse/abingtonset/abington/IJNDB\\_IJNDB-R](https://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/browse/abingtonset/abington/IJNDB_IJNDB-R)

### ***Disclaimer of Liability:***

Abington Public Schools makes no warranties of any kind for the service they provide. Abington Public Schools will not be responsible for any damages you may suffer. Use of any information and software obtained through the Internet is at your own risk. Abington Public Schools specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services. In addition, it cannot guarantee the efficacy of any firewall or "blocking" software that it might use.

## ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT

Electronic devices, such as cell phones, smart watches, and tablets, must be powered off and put away during the school day unless approved by a teacher, staff member, or administrator. The school cannot be held responsible for the disappearance of or damage to electronic equipment.

## OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

A parent request to observe their child(ren), current program, or a potential placement must be made at least five days in advance with the Director of Student Services or designee and/or Principal.

- Parents' request to observe their child(ren), current program, or a potential placement must be made in advance with the Director of Student Services or Principal.
- The Director of Student Services or Principal will contact the parents for an initial scheduling conversation upon receiving the parents' request.
- The Director of Student Services or Principal will discuss the goals of the observation with the parent and the length of time needed to accomplish the goals. Lengthy visits may, at times, interrupt the integrity of the program, so observation periods will be limited, and the start and end times will be stated in advance.
- There may be times during a school day when schedules include activities that may breach another student's right to confidentiality and privacy. Classroom visits will not be scheduled during these times. On behalf of all students, the school professionals will make this judgment call.
- The Director of Student Services or Principal will select a date and time for the observation in which the parent is available and minimizes interference on the program
- In order to maintain confidentiality, no information will be provided about other students and their educational needs, performance, and programs.
- If the observer is not the parent or guardian, then the parent or guardian must sign a release to allow this individual to observe.
- The observer is not to interfere with the educational environment in the classroom. If the number of observers or behavior of observers presents a problem in the learning environment, then the observation will be discontinued.
- The observer must not disclose confidential or personally identifiable information relating to other children. Staff will make every effort to remove materials which may be part of a students' records from plain view. In the event that removal is not possible, then the observer may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.
- A school administrator or designee will accompany the observer throughout the observation. The administrator or designee will ensure adherence to the observation schedule, answer the observer's questions when possible, and may also take notes of the observation.

## VISITORS/SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

The staff and administration of Abington Public Schools welcome parents/guardians to our schools. Visitors must report to the office to sign in and provide a positive ID. Anyone wishing to volunteer in a classroom, on field trips, or at PTO events MUST have a current CORI on file with the Abington Public Schools. Video surveillance cameras are in use within and outside each of the school buildings.

## TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

The Smoke-Free Workplace Law prohibits smoking in all enclosed workplaces, including public and private schools. In addition, Massachusetts requires that all public schools through high school prohibit smoking on school grounds, on school buses, and at school sponsored events. The law is commonly referred to as the "Education Reform Act" ([MGL ch. 270, §22\(b\)\(2\)](#); [MGL c. 71, §§2A, 37H](#); c. 90, §7B(10)).

## ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

No animal shall be brought to school without prior permission of the building principal. School principals, in consultation with the Health Services Providers in each building, shall utilize the Massachusetts Department of Public Health publication, "[Animals in the Classroom: Recommendations for Schools](#)," and review student health records to determine which animals may be allowed in the school building. The decision of the Principal shall be final.

### ***Educational Programs:***

Use of animals to achieve specific curriculum objectives may be allowed by the building Principal provided student health and safety are not jeopardized and the individual requesting that the animal be brought to school is responsible for adhering to the "Animals in the Classroom: Recommendations for Schools" and any other conditions established by the Principal to protect the health and well-being of students.

### ***Service Animals (Guide or Assistance Dogs):***

The Abington Public School District's School Committee does not permit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including those who require the assistance of a service animal. The District will comply with Massachusetts law concerning the rights of persons with guide or assistance dogs and with federal law and will permit such animals on school premises and on school transportation. If, in the opinion of the school Principal or authorized designee, any service animal is not in the control of its handler, or if it is not housebroken, the service animal may be excluded from the school or program. The service animal can also be excluded if it presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school.

### ***Requests:***

Student requests for service animal accommodations, including requests to have a service animal accompany a student in classrooms are determined by the section 504 Team or the special education Team meeting process. Employee requests for disability accommodations, including requests to have a service animal at work, are handled through the appropriate disability accommodation policy and procedures of the ADA act and Abington Public School District policy. Service animals accompanying individuals with disabilities are welcome in all areas of the schools that are open to the public (except in situations noted in the full policy). Specific questions related to the use of service animals on the Abington Public School District properties by visitors should be directed to the ADA Coordinator or the Administrator of Special Education and Pupil Personnel Services.

# **ACADEMICS**

## **FIELD TRIPS**

The Abington School Committee (School Committee) recognizes that first-hand experiences provided by field trips and school-sponsored trips (field trips) are an extension of the classroom experience that expand and reinforce concepts learned in the classroom and can provide new and unique experiences not available in the classroom setting. As it is widely acknowledged that not all children learn in the same way, field trips allow students the opportunity to expand their learning in ways different from those typically available in the classroom.

### ***Purpose and Scope:***

A field trip is student travel away from school premises that is approved by the school district through established procedures for the purpose of curriculum-related study, co-curricular activities, or interscholastic programs. The various types of field trips are described in the Field Trip Policy. In the planning of field trips, the health and safety of the students and the compliance with the requirements of state laws and regulations is paramount. Matters to be considered are spelled out in the Field Trip Policy. The school principal or designee is responsible for ensuring that a teacher(s), advisor(s), or other school staff member(s) proposing a field trip plans, implements, and assesses the trip within the criteria listed in the policy.

### ***Transportation:***

Use of leased vans and privately owned vehicles for field trips is prohibited, with the exception of the Abington Public Schools' owned van, except in the case of a bona fide emergency. Nothing in this field trip policy should be construed to prohibit field trips where students travel by means of walking.

### ***Approval:***

Approval for all trips requiring School Committee approval must be sought no less than four (4) weeks prior to the scheduled trip departure date. The approval process for a trip must be completed prior to promoting, advertising, or making any preparations for the trip, including, but not limited to, taking deposits from students, engaging students in fundraising activities or making contractual arrangements. All field trips must be approved in writing by the appropriate authority as specified in the policy.

### ***Cancellation:***

The Superintendent of Schools has the authority to cancel any field trip until the time of departure for any reason. In such event, school officials will make a reasonable effort to obtain a refund of monies paid by students and parents. However, such refunds are not guaranteed.

### ***Non-School Sponsored Trips:***

Teachers, advisors and other school staff sometimes privately conduct trips and events involving the participation of Abington Public School students. The School Committee neither sanctions nor prohibits such activities, nor assumes any responsibility for them. Teachers, advisors and other school staff are prohibited from soliciting students for privately run trips through the school system. Teachers, advisors and other school staff are expected to clearly state that such trips are not school-sponsored and that the Abington School Committee and the Abington Public Schools do not sanction the trip or assume any responsibility.

## HOMWORK

Homework is any assigned activity done outside school, which relates to any phase of learning. It can be enrichment, a refinement, or a reinforcement of learning activities. It is hoped that the guidelines, which follow, will assist teachers assigning homework and aid parents/guardians in understanding homework assignments. On the last page of this handbook is a form that may be sent to teachers explaining why homework was not finished and the area the student needs additional teaching to understand.

### ***Purpose of Homework:***

- to supplement and reinforce school learning by providing further practice and application
- to stimulate initiative, independence, responsibility, and self-direction
- to enrich the student's school experiences
- to foster the growth of permanent lifetime interests in learning
- to teach ability to budget time and organize one's materials
- to provide opportunities to use skills and knowledge learned in school in creative ways outside school

### ***Role of the Teacher:***

- to design homework to accomplish a specific purpose clearly related to the curriculum for the grade level
- to assign the homework, carefully making sure the assignment is clear
- to assess homework consistently and provide feedback to students about their success on homework
- to assist students in learning how to study
- to communicate with students and parents/guardians when problems concerning homework arise
- to vary types of assignments so as to hold the students' interest and to meet different needs
- to insist on high standards of work done on home assignments, especially in terms of neatness and accuracy
- to individualize homework assignments to the extent possible. (Some students may be able to do more and some less within the established time guidelines)
- to post homework assignments so they can be clearly visible and available to students during the day
- to establish guidelines for students to follow in completing long term assignments

### ***Role of the Student:***

- to be responsible for the completion and return of assignments on the due date
- to confer with parents/guardians and/or teachers if assignments are unclear or too difficult

### ***Role of Parents/Guardians:***

- to establish the importance of homework and to encourage the child to accept responsibility for completing home assignments
- to assist the child when the teacher and parent have conferred and agreed that this assistance would be helpful
- to notify the teacher if an unforeseen occurrence prevents the child from completing an assignment. (An unforeseen occurrence may include a variety of circumstances, such as trauma or illness.)
- to insist on high standards of work on home assignments by providing a quiet and distraction-free location and by eliminating television, radio, telephone, and other stimuli
- to supervise the homework but allow students to complete the assignments independently
- to monitor the time utilized by their children to complete homework assignment (Too little or too much time spent on homework on a regular basis – guidelines below – should be a cause of concern and should be communicated to the teacher)
- to assign their own reading, writing or academic task when their children do not bring home a school assignment (This will promote the habit of doing homework on a regular basis whether or not the child brings a homework assignment from school.)

## HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

Homework at Grades K-4 should not normally be given during weekends, holidays, or vacations except for occasional long-term assignments or make-up due to absence. Long-term assignments are those that are due to be passed in some time in the future. A book report, for example, which was assigned in September and due to be passed in October 15th, is considered a long-term assignment. Long-term assignments may involve a number of steps, so in the event the entire assignment has not been completed, credit may be given for the portion of the assignment which was submitted.

**Kindergarten:** Up to 10 minutes, up to 4 times per week, at the discretion of the teacher

**Grade 1:** Up to 10 to 20 minutes, up to 4 times per week, at the discretion of the teacher

**Grade 2:** Up to 20 to 30 minutes, up to 4 times per week, at the discretion of the teacher

**Grade 3:** Up to 30 minutes, 4 times per week

**Grade 4:** Up to 40 minutes, 4 times per week

## PROMOTION AND RETENTION

The School Committee is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

Students typically progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, they are in the best educational interest of the student. Notification and explanation will be provided to the parent/guardians of the student. However, the final decision will rest with the building principal.

## CLASSROOM PLACEMENT

Many factors are considered in student placement such as the social, emotional, and academic well-being of the student. Placement decisions for each child are determined by a team of teachers with additional input from specialists. Parent input is solicited annually via an online form. Requests for specific teachers may not be honored. Class placements into Grades K-4 will be emailed from each school approximately two weeks prior to the opening of the new school year. Final placement decisions will rest with the building principal.

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE

Student absences adversely affect the learning process. Parents must notify the school if the child is to be absent, tardy, or dismissed. In addition, upon the child's return to school, a written note must be submitted for each absence stating the date and reason for the absence.

We strongly encourage families to plan vacations during the regular school vacation schedule. It is our practice not to give homework or in-class assignments in advance to students who are on vacation when school is in session. Work missed during such absences must be made up within a week after a child returns to school. Chronic unexcused absences, tardies, and dismissals are monitored by the principal and may result in the following actions:

- phone notification to parent/guardian
- a letter mailed home & placed in student's file
- 51A report of suspected abuse or neglect filed with DCF

### ***Absences:***

Absences will be excused (with a parental note) for the following reasons: Student illness, Death in family, Observance of religious holidays, Appearance in court, Temporary relocation due to unforeseeable circumstances; e.g., fire, flood, hospitalization of parent, etc., Necessary business which cannot be reasonably transacted when school is not in session, medically documented absences, special circumstances as approved by the building principal and/or assistant principal. All other absences that do not meet the criteria for excused are considered unexcused. Parents/Guardians will be notified when a student has accrued five or more unexcused absences.

### ***Tardiness & Dismissals:***

Tardiness and dismissals are highly disruptive and should be limited to extenuating circumstances. Absences, tardiness, and dismissals will be carefully monitored by the principal and/or designee.

## STANDARDIZED TESTING

Standardized tests for elementary students may include:

### ***Grades K-2***

- Early Screening Inventory (K)
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)
- ACCESS (Limited English Proficient Students)

### ***Grades 3-4***

- Annual MCAS Schedule: ELA Reading Comprehension; Mathematics
- ACCESS (Limited English proficient Students)
- MCAS Alternate Assessment (Students with Significant Disabilities)
- Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)

## SUPPORT TEAMS

Support teams are in place at each school to help address the needs of students who may be having difficulty in the regular education program. IST & SST teams are in place to help address concerns with both academic and social-emotional needs, respectively. These teams meet on a regular basis and seek to establish positive changes in student performance and can serve as pre-referral processes. These teams are comprised of administrators, staff, and support personnel such as special educators or mental-health staff.

## REFERRAL TO SPECIAL EDUCATION

Students may be referred for an evaluation for Special Education when the student is suspected of having an Educational Disability. Parents or guardians may request that their child be evaluated to determine if an Educational Disability is present. In order to initiate the evaluation process, the parent or guardian must make a verbal or written request. Parents or guardians may also submit a request for an evaluation from a family physician, a social worker, or judicial officer. Upon receipt of the request for an evaluation, a member of the school staff will contact the parent or guardian to clarify the nature of the concerns to ensure that the student is evaluated in all suspected areas of disability. School staff will issue an evaluation consent form within five school days that itemizes the proposed assessments. Once school staff receive the parent's consent for the proposed evaluation, the assessments will be completed within 30 school days of receipt and the Team will convene to review the results within 45 school days of receipt.

School staff may also initiate the Special Education Referral process for a student. State and federal Special Education regulations mandate that school districts identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities in the district who require special education and related services. Prior to seeking an evaluation for a student, school staff will pursue a referral to the Student Support Team or Instructional Support Team and trial targeted interventions to determine if the student's needs can be met with general education supports. At times, a significant event in a child's life may prompt school staff to seek a Special Education Referral. While school staff may recommend a Special Education Referral for a student, the parent or guardian must provide consent before the evaluation process begins.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

*Within the [Abington Public Schools Student Discipline Policy](#), laws, regulations, and procedural expectations are outlined in detail.*

## BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Each student will be expected to display appropriate behavior while in school, in all areas (hallway travel, specialists, classrooms, cafeteria, bathrooms, etc.). Students have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a way that demonstrates a respect for all individuals, their rights, and their property. Such behavior is expected at school events, school-sponsored trips, traveling to and from school, and those times when school buses or other school-provided transportation is used.

Violations of school rules and expectations can result in a corrective action by the teacher and/or principal. Continued violations of school rules will be met with a response that represents progressive disciplinary actions. Unacceptable behavior which merits corrective action defined below.

### **A. Categories:**

1. Violence
2. Vandalism
3. Disruption
4. Disrespect

### **B. Unacceptable Actions:**

1. Fighting/hitting or other physical altercations
2. Possessing or using a weapon at school, including but not limited to a toy
3. Using an object as a means of physical harm
4. Vandalizing or stealing another's property at school or enroute to and from school
5. Stealing or damaging school property
6. Verbally or physically abusing, insulting, or threatening any individual
7. Cursing, swearing, making obscene gestures or remarks
8. Disrupting the teaching/learning process
9. Cheating
10. Entering or leaving the building or classroom without permission (except in a situation of emergency or threatening emergency)
11. Acting in a way that endangers the health or safety of students or other members of the school community
12. Using, possessing, or distributing illegal drugs or controlled substances
13. Smoking (INCLUDING E-CIGARETTES/VAPES)

## DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

Students who have violated major school rules, or in instances in which student behavior has not been remedied at the classroom level, students may be referred to the school principal. Disciplinary measures are confidential and may not be shared with anyone other than a student's family. The school principal, or her/his designee, will have the option of taking any of the following courses of action after meeting with the offending student and communicating with their parents:

- Writing a note of apology to the offended party
- Writing a letter of explanation to her/his parents/guardians
- Loss of school-related privileges, including (but not limited to) participating in recess, eating in the cafeteria, etc.
- Loss of participation in special school activities, such as field trips, programs, and/or after-school activities, etc., only with the principal's permission
- School suspension according to the procedures established by the Abington School Committee

## IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES:

1) A student may be removed from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for up to ten (10) consecutive school days or up to ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year.

(i) Students who are placed in in-school suspension shall have the opportunity to earn credits missed, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the in-school suspension.

2) A student who is unable to consistently adhere to acceptable classroom standards in a particular class may be removed from the class permanently and assigned to a different class at the discretion of the principal and/or designee. Notice of In-School Suspension:

3) The principal and/or designee shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student with an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident.

(i) If the principal and/or designee determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal and/or designee shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

4) On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal and/or designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reason for concluding that the student committed the offense, and the length of the in-school suspension.

5) On the day of the suspension, the principal and/or designee shall send written notice by hand-delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, or e-mail to the student and parent including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension and inviting the parent to a meeting if the meeting has not already occurred.

(i) The notice shall be in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student, or by other means of communication where appropriate.

## PLAYGROUND/RECESS

According to the Abington Public Schools Wellness Policy, "all elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment." School behavior expectations are to be upheld at recess and on the playground. The following guidelines are in place during recess:

- Unless excused by a teacher, nurse, or principal, every child is to participate in recess periods and to remain outside for the entire recess period. No child may re-enter the building without permission from an adult on duty
- Children must remain within the play area at all times
- Children are expected to interact with each other in the same manner as they would in the building: unexpected hands-on behavior (hitting, pushing, kicking, etc.) and disrespectful actions (swearing, put-downs, etc.) will not be tolerated

## CAFETERIA EXPECTATIONS

All students are escorted to the cafeteria by their classroom teacher or designee. While in the cafeteria, students are expected to use appropriate behavior, be responsible for their meal (monitoring their own trash, waste, etc.), and respond to staff appropriately. Students who cannot conduct themselves accordingly may lose cafeteria privileges or be subject to related disciplinary measures.

## DRUG/ALCOHOL POLICY

Please see the following link for the Abington Public Schools drug/alcohol policy:

[https://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/browse/abingtonset/abington/JICH/z2Code\\_JICH](https://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/browse/abingtonset/abington/JICH/z2Code_JICH)

## STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

The School Committee recognizes that there may be conditions in the school system that are in need of improvement and that students should have some means by which their concerns may be effectively expressed, considered, and dealt with fairly. Such means, if well-conceived and understood in advance, can do much to maintain harmonious relationships among the schools and the students and community.

The traditional "open door" policy in the public school system will be continued. Students--and their parents and/or guardians--who believe that a student has received unfair treatment may bring forward their grievance. Appeals of individual disciplinary cases will be required to follow the district's policy on student discipline. Any applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws or federal law will be followed by school officials in conducting hearings and reviews of student grievances. In general, procedures will begin with the authority imposing the penalty (for example, Principal or teacher) and may ultimately be referred to the Superintendent and on to the School Committee if applicable.

Every attempt will be made to seek a satisfactory solution to any legitimate grievance in a friendly and informal manner.

## ABINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS/ABINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Please see the policy in full, linked here:

<https://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/browse/abingtonset/abington/KLG-E>

# **STUDENT LIFE**

## **DRESS CODE**

Appropriate dress reflects positively on the school community; therefore, students will be prohibited from wearing any clothing that detracts from the learning process or otherwise compromises health, safety, or cleanliness (such as clothing displaying vulgar writing or symbols, or any other inappropriate references, clothing that doesn't cover student bodies appropriately, etc.). We encourage students to wear clothing and footwear that ensures comfort for all opportunities throughout the school day (classroom learning, physical education, etc.).

## **FOOD SERVICE POLICY**

The Abington Public Schools Food Service Program provides breakfast and lunch for students, following guidelines set forth within the district's [Wellness Policy](#) as well as government guidelines.

Families can apply for free or reduced lunch options by visiting the district's Food Service page ([https://www.abingtonps.org/central\\_office/food\\_services.php](https://www.abingtonps.org/central_office/food_services.php)).

For the district's full Food Service Policy, please visit the following link:

<https://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/browse/abingtonset/abington/EF>

## **HOME SCHOOLING**

A student being educated in a home-based program within the District may have access to public school activities of either a curricular or extracurricular nature upon approval of the Superintendent. For further information regarding the district's home schooling policy, please visit the following link:

<https://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/browse/abingtonset/abington/IHBG>

## **STUDENT PUBLICATIONS**

Within the school setting, students enjoy the constitutional right of freedom of expression, including the right to express their views in student publications, provided such expression does not cause, or threaten to cause by reasonable forecast by school officials, any disruption or disorder in the school. Additionally, such constitutional right of freedom of expression does not include expression which is obscene, defamatory, or advocates violence or illegality where such advocacy is imminently likely to incite the commission of such acts to the detriment of school security, or which can reasonably be forecast to cause substantial disruption or material interference with school activities.

Each student publication shall contain the following: "Pursuant to state law, no expression made by students in the exercise of such rights shall be deemed to be an expression of school policy and no school officials shall be held responsible in any civil or criminal action for any expression made or published by the students."

The time, place and manner of distribution of literature will be reasonably regulated by the Principal.

## HEALTH SERVICES & REQUIREMENTS

The Health Office is available to students during the school day. A registered nurse is available for health counseling, emergency health services when a student is ill, and for intervention regarding any student's health concerns.

When a student becomes ill, s/he should obtain permission from a teacher and go to the Health Office. If the nurse is not available immediately, the student should report to the School Office. If a student is significantly ill, the parent or guardian will be notified, and the student will be dismissed to the parent/guardian/designated adult. Parents/guardians should notify the school nurse of all extended illnesses so the nurse can be the medical liaison between the home and school and make any necessary accommodations. Students should present a certificate from their physician after recovery from a communicable disease before re-entering school. Students also may be required to present a doctor's certificate after an absence of five or more consecutive days occasioned by illness.

State law requires all students to have current immunizations to be able to attend school. A parent who does not have the required immunization documentation for a student will be notified of the status, and the student will be excluded from school and school activities until the documentation is obtained. We request that anytime a child receives an immunization from a source outside school, the parent provides the school Health Office with a copy of the immunization from the physician.

Accident reports are filed by staff members and are submitted to the office when an accident requiring medical attention occurs. If a student is injured after school on school grounds, the accident should be reported to the nurse as soon as possible after the accident.

The Abington Public Schools will comply with these regulations as set forth by the MA Department of Public Health and:

- Provide educators, parents, and health care providers with this information before and, if requested, after the screenings
- Improve the health and well-being of our school age children
- Identify children who may be at risk for health problems

This program compliments the APS wellness initiative. Screenings will take place throughout the school year. Further information will be posted on the Abington Public Schools website, [www.abingtonps.org](http://www.abingtonps.org)

## PHYSICAL EXAMINATION OF STUDENTS

Every student will be examined for screening in sight, hearing, BMI, and for other physical problems as provided in the law and regulation. A record of the results will be kept by the school nurse. Vision Screening is done at entry to school with Massachusetts requiring physicians to conduct vision screening and stereopsis testing prior to or within 30 days after school entry to kindergarten. Screening is conducted annually thereafter through grade 5, once in grades 6 through 8. Hearing Screening is conducted annually through grade 3 and once in grades 6 through 8.

Height and Weight Measurement is done with those students in grades 1 and 4 at the elementary level. Notice is provided at the beginning of the school to parents about the screening program. Parents are given an opportunity to not have their child participate in this screening by providing the school nurse with a written letter at each grade where the student is to be screened. Body Mass Index (BMI) score and percentiles are calculated, and information is maintained in the student's health record beginning of the school year. All screenings are done in a manner to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of the student. Parents/guardians may request in writing and that they receive this information or that it be shared with persons or providers of their choice.

The District shall provide to the Department of Public Health aggregate data on results by grade, gender, and BMI category as specified in guidelines established. No personally identifiable information is shared without the written consent of the parent or legal guardian.

Physical Examination information is to be submitted upon registration to the Abington Public Schools, done within one year prior to school entrance or within 30 days after school entry and at intervals of 3 to 4 years thereafter.

Physicals are to be submitted: at entry to school in the case of Pre-School, at entry to Kindergarten, and in Grade 4 at the elementary level.

## ADMINISTERING MEDICATIONS TO STUDENTS

All medication should be given at home whenever possible. In the event that medication needs to be given during the school time, the student may do so after consent forms, available in the health office, are completed by the students' physician and parent and/or guardian. Any medication to be given for more than ten (10) school days must have a signed physician order form. Medication must be in a labeled prescription bottle from a pharmacy and brought in by the parent and/or guardian. In the event that a parent wants their child to receive Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Tums, etc. for pain, headaches, etc. a consent form must be signed for the nurse to administer these medications.

No student is allowed to carry any medication with them during school hours or functions, with the exception of those students who have completed consent forms to 'self-administer'. Abington Public Schools shall not prohibit students with asthma or other respiratory disease from possessing and administering prescription inhalers or students with life-threatening allergies from possessing and administering epinephrine in accordance with Department of Public Health regulations concerning students' self-administration of prescription medications.

A written medication order from the licensed prescriber is required prior to the administration of any prescription medication within the school.

### ***Procedure:***

1. The school nurse obtains a written medication order from the licensed prescriber prior to administering any prescription medication
2. The school nurse obtains written authorization by the parent/guardian prior to medication administration
3. The order includes, but is not limited to:
  - Student name
  - Name, phone number and signature of licensed prescriber
  - Name, route, and dose of medication
  - Frequency and time of administration
  - Date of order
  - A diagnosis and any other medical condition(s) requiring medication, if not a violation of confidentiality or if not contrary to the request of a parent, guardian, or the student to keep confidential
  - Specific directions for administration
  - Consent for student self-administration
4. Every effort is made to obtain the following information from the licensed prescriber as appropriate:
  - Any special side effects, contraindications, and adverse reactions to be observed
  - Any other medication being taken by the student
  - Date of return visit, if applicable
5. For short-term prescription medications i.e., those requiring administration for ten (10) school days or fewer, the pharmacy-labeled container is used in lieu of a licensed prescriber's order. If a nurse has a question relating to the order, a request is made for a written order from the licensed prescriber
6. For over-the-counter medications an i.e., non-prescription medication, the school nurse complies with the Board of Registration in nursing's protocols regarding administration of over-the-counter medications in schools. Only medications listed in the APS – Medical Directives and signed by a school physician may be administered. Any and all others require a physician order

7. Investigational new drugs are administered in the school with written order by the licensed prescriber, written consent of the parent/guardian and a pharmacy labeled container for dispensing. If there is a question, the Head School Nurse seeks consultation and/or approval from the school physician(s) to administer the medication in a school setting
8. All medication orders are renewed as necessary, including the beginning of each academic year
9. A telephone order or an order for any change in prescription medication from a physician is received only by the school nurse
10. All verbal orders must be followed by a written order within three school days, or the verbal order becomes void
11. Faxed orders are acceptable with the hard copy remaining on file in the license prescriber's office
12. The written medication order is kept on file as a permanent part of the student's Health Records
13. The school nurse provides the parent/guardian with the Parental Consent for Prescription Medication Form
14. The consent form includes, but is not limited to:
  - Parent/guardian/emergency contact name and phone number
  - List of all current medications, if not in violation of confidentiality
  - Approval for school nurse or personnel designated by the school nurse to administer the prescription medication
  - Name and phone number of prescribing provider
15. The written Parental Consent Form is kept on file as a permanent part of the student's Health Record
16. In accordance with the Standards of Nursing Practice, the school nurse may refuse to administer or allow to be administered any medication, which, based on an individual assessment and professional judgment, has the potential to be harmful, dangerous, or inappropriate. In these cases, the parent/guardian and licensed prescriber are notified immediately by the school nurse and the rationale for refusal is explained. All unresolved issues are reported to the Head School Nurse and to the School Physician

## INOCULATIONS

Students entering school for the first time, whether at kindergarten or through transfer from another school system, will be required to present a physician's certificate attesting to immunization against diphtheria, whooping cough, poliomyelitis, tetanus, measles, and such other communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Public Health. The only exception to these requirements will be made on receipt of a written statement from a doctor that immunization would not be in the best interests of the child, or by the student's parent or guardian stating that vaccination or immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the student or parent.

## CONCUSSIONS

Concussions are considered to be a mild form of a traumatic brain injury and the potential for their occurrence in children is greatest during activities where collisions can occur, such as during physical education (PE) class, playground time, or school-based sports activities. There are also many activities and sports in which children are engaged beyond the school setting where injury can occur. Although most people recover quickly and fully from a concussion, current research shows the time needed is often slower among young children. Students may exhibit a various array of physical, mental/behavioral/emotional symptoms, all of which can have impact on the student in the educational setting.

As the student returns to school following a concussion, the school nurse has a significant role in supporting the student. The school nurse is able to provide on-going monitoring of symptoms, collaborate with parents, teachers, and health care providers, and to establish accommodation plans individualized to meet the needs of the child.

Communication between home and school is critical to the health and safety of any student who has received a concussion. We ask parents to notify the school nurse directly when there has been a significant injury or concussion diagnosed as the brain needs time to rest and that it is a process that cannot be rushed.

## LATEX POLICY

To minimize exposure to latex allergens in the school environment, latex products are not allowed in school. Latex balloons will be prohibited from inside the school and outside on school grounds. Mylar balloons may be substituted.

## APS WELLNESS POLICY

The Abington Public Schools Wellness Policy covers food and nutrition in schools, physical activity, recess, and physical education. The policy can be viewed in its entirety here: [Abington Public Schools Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition](#)

# ***STUDENT RECORDS***

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school system to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student's parents or legal guardian and/or the student in accordance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information.

The Superintendent will provide for the proper administration of student records in keeping with state and federal requirements and shall obtain a copy of the state student records regulations (603 CMR 23.00). The temporary record of each student enrolled on or after June 2002 will be destroyed no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the School District. Written notice to the eligible student and his/her parent of the approximate date of destruction of the temporary record and their right to receive the information in whole or in part, shall be made at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal. The student's transcript may only be destroyed 60 years following his/her graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school system.

The Committee wishes to make clear that all individual student records of the school system are confidential. This extends to giving out individual addresses and telephone numbers.

## **APPLICATION OF RIGHTS**

603 CMR 23.00 is promulgated to ensure parents' and students' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of students' records and to assist local school systems in adhering to the law. 603 CMR 23.00 should be liberally construed for these purposes.

1. These rights shall be the rights of the student upon reaching 14 years of age or upon entering the ninth grade, whichever comes first. If a student is under the age of 14 and has not yet entered the ninth grade, these rights shall belong to the student's parent.
2. If a student is from 14 through 17 years or has entered the ninth grade, both the student and his/her parent, or either one acting alone, shall exercise these rights.
3. If a student is 18 years of age or older, he/she alone shall exercise these rights, subject to the following. The parent may continue to exercise the rights until expressly limited by such student. Such student may limit the rights and provisions of 603 CMR 23.00 which extend to his/her parent, except the right to inspect the student record, by making such request in writing to the school Principal or Superintendent of Schools who shall honor such request and retain a copy of it in the student record. Pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, s.34E, the parent of a student may inspect the student record regardless of the student's age.
4. Notwithstanding 603 CMR 23.01(1) and 23.01(2), nothing shall be construed to mean that a school committee cannot extend the provisions of 603 CMR 23.00 to students under the age of 14 or to students who have not yet entered the ninth grade.

## **THE STUDENT RECORD**

The student record shall consist of the transcript and the temporary record, including all information, recording and computer tapes, microfilm, microfiche, or any other materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics concerning a student that is organized on the basis of the student's name or in a way that such student may be individually identified, and that is kept by the public schools of the Commonwealth. The terms as used in 603 CMR 23.00 shall mean all such information and materials regardless of where they are located, except for the information and materials specifically exempted by 603 CMR 23.04.

The temporary record shall consist of all the information in the student record which is not contained in the transcript. This information clearly shall be of importance to the educational process. Such information may include standardized test results, class rank (when applicable), extracurricular activities, and evaluations by teachers, counselors, and other school staff.

## PARENT/STUDENT ACCESS

The eligible student or the parent, subject to the provisions of 603 CMR 23.07 (5), shall have access to the student record. Access shall be provided as soon as practicable and within ten days after the initial request, except in the case of non-custodial parents as provided in 603 CMR 23.07 (5). Upon request for access, the entire student record regardless of the physical location of its parts shall be made available.

- A.** Upon request, copies of any information contained in the student record shall be furnished to the eligible student or the parent. A reasonable fee, not to exceed the cost of reproduction, may be charged. However, a fee may not be charged if to do so would effectively prevent the parents or eligible student from exercising their right, under federal law, to inspect and review the records
- B.** Any student, regardless of age, shall have the right pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, section 34A to receive a copy of his/her transcript
- C.** The eligible student or the parent shall have the right upon request to meet with professionally qualified school personnel and to have any of the contents of the student record interpreted
- D.** The eligible student or the parent may have the student record inspected or interpreted by a third party of their choice. Such third party shall present

## AUTHORIZED SCHOOL PERSONNEL ACCESS

Subject to 603 CMR 23.00, authorized school personnel shall have access to the student records of students to whom they are providing services, when such access is required in the performance of their official duties. The consent of the eligible student or parent shall not be necessary.

## 3<sup>RD</sup> PARTY ACCESS

Except for the provisions of 603 CMR 23.07(4)(a) through 23.07(4)(h), no third party shall have access to information in or from a student record without the specific, informed written consent of the eligible student or the parent. When granting consent, the eligible student or parent shall have the right to designate which parts of the student record shall be released to the third party. A copy of such consent shall be retained by the eligible student or parent and a duplicate placed in the temporary record. Except for information described in 603 CMR 23.07(4)(a), personally identifiable information from a student record shall only be released to a third party on the condition that he/she will not permit any other third party to have access to such information without the written consent of the eligible student or parent.

- A.** A school may release the following directory information: a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans without the consent of the eligible student or parent; provided that the school gives public notice of the types of information it may release under 603 CMR 23.07 and allows eligible students and parents a reasonable time after such notice to request that this information not be released without the prior consent of the eligible student or parent. Such notice may be included in the routine information letter required under 603 CMR 23.10
- B.** Upon receipt of a court order or lawfully issued subpoena the school shall comply, provided that the school makes a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student of the order or subpoena in advance of compliance
- C.** A school may release information regarding a student upon receipt of a request from the Department of Social Services, a probation officer, a justice of any court, or the Department of Youth Services under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 119, sections 51B, 57, 69 and 69A respectively
- D.** Federal, state and local education officials, and their authorized agents shall have access to student records as necessary in connection with the audit, evaluation or enforcement of federal and state education laws, or programs; provided that except when collection of personally identifiable data is specifically authorized by law, any data collected by such officials shall be protected so that parties

other than such officials and their authorized agents cannot personally identify such students and their parents; and such personally identifiable data shall be destroyed when no longer needed for the audit, evaluation or enforcement of federal and state education laws

- E. A school may disclose information regarding a student to appropriate parties in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. This includes, but is not limited to, disclosures to the local police department and the Department of Social Services under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 71, section 37L and M.G.L. c. 119, section 51A
- F. Upon notification by law enforcement authorities that a student, or former student, has been reported missing, a mark shall be placed in the student record of such student. The school shall report any request concerning the records of such child to the appropriate law enforcement authority pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 22A, section 9
- G. Authorized school personnel of the school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer may have access to such student's record without the consent of the eligible student or parent, provided that the school the student is leaving, or has left, gives notice that it forwards student records to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Such notice may be included in the routine information letter required under 603 CMR 23.10
- H. School health personnel and local and state health department personnel shall have access to student health records, including but not limited to immunization records, when such access is required in the performance of official duties, without the consent of the eligible student or parent

## NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT ACCESS

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions:

- A. A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless:
  - 1. the parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
  - 2. the parent has been denied visitation, or
  - 3. the parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
  - 4. there is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent
- B. The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a)
- C. In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal
- D. Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07 (5)(a)
- E. The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school
- F. Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent

# **TRANSPORTATION**

## **MANDATED PAID TRANSPORTATION**

Under Massachusetts General Laws, transportation at town expense shall be furnished to all Abington students in grades K-6 who live two miles or more from the school they attend. Transportation at town expense is based solely on the student's home address and is only for transportation between the student's home bus stop and the school s/he attends. Additionally, transportation shall be provided at town expense for children whose Individualized Education Plan (IEP) requires such transportation or whose physical condition makes such transportation necessary as stated in an (IEP).

## **NON-MANDATED FEE-BASED TRANSPORTATION**

The Fee-Based Transportation System provides an option for arranging bus service for students in Grades K-6 who live less than 2 miles from their school and for all students in grades 7-12. There is a provision for a fee waiver. The "Fee Waiver Application Form" must be completed and submitted by July 1 to the Superintendent's Office. This form is available online and in the school offices and Superintendent's Office. Eligibility is subject to the income guidelines and verification. Ridership is not guaranteed, as it is dependent upon sufficient funding and available seating. Visit: [https://abingtonps.org/students\\_and\\_families/transportation.php](https://abingtonps.org/students_and_families/transportation.php)

## **TWO MILE LIMIT**

The two-mile measurement is the shortest vehicular route between the nearest walkway or driveway to the student's residence to the nearest walkway or gateway leading to the front door of the school. If the mileage is in dispute, a "Distance Appeal Form" must be completed and submitted by July 1 to the School Department. This form is available in the school offices and Superintendent's Office. The distance will be re-checked, and a decision will be made. This decision shall be final. Appeals not properly submitted by July 1 will not be honored. Please note that the shortest vehicular route may change from year to year as new streets open to traffic; therefore, the shortest vehicular route will be based on streets existing as of July 1 of each year. Mileage will NOT be calculated to or from a daycare provider.

## **APPLICATION, FEES, AND DEADLINES**

During the month of April students will receive a Transportation Packet containing rules and regulations, frequently asked questions, and all pertinent forms. The bus fee is \$255 per student with a \$510 cap per household. The fee is nonrefundable, and refunds will not be prorated in any manner or for any reason. The seat purchased is not transferable to another route. The application and payment-in-full must be submitted by July 1. This payment ensures that your child is included on the bus list as routes are developed during the summer. Applications and payments received after July 1 will be considered late and will be honored only if space is available and if there is an existing stop on the route.

Subject to the availability of seats and an existing bus stop, applications for children whose parent/guardians are experiencing an emergency situation will be accepted and processed during the school year. Applications submitted under this provision must be accompanied by a written explanation of the nature of the emergency and any supportive documentation requested by the school department. A committee comprised of the Chairman of the School Committee, Superintendent of Schools, and a Principal will review and act on such emergency requests and if approved, will set a prorated fee.

## NEW RESIDENTS

Subject to the availability of seats and an existing bus stop, applications, and fees for children of new residents will be processed at the time of registration.

## BUS TAGS

In mid-August, bus passes will be mailed directly to the households of all mandated and enrolled riders. Beginning the first day of school, each bus student is required to carry the bus pass; not doing so could result in exclusion from the bus. We suggest attaching the pass to the backpack. This will keep the pass handy and allow the student to display it without delay. Lost passes will be replaced for a \$5.00 fee.

## BUS STOPS AND ROUTING

Students in Grades K-12 are not entitled to street-by-street or door-to-door pick-up and/or delivery. The School Department will establish common neighborhood bus stops. Timing and routing do not allow for additional bus stops, even if the bus passes your residence. Bus stops will be published in the local newspaper approximately two weeks prior to the opening of school. As it is unknown how many buses will be funded, the length of bus routes may be affected. All efforts will be made to schedule bus routes, so no child is riding for more than one hour per trip.

## SAFETY

Safety is a responsibility that is shared between the home and the school district. While the law requires the School Department to furnish a defined level of transportation, it does not relieve parents/guardians of students from the responsibility of supervision until such time as the child boards the bus in the morning. Once the child boards the bus – and only at that time – does s/he become the responsibility of the school district. Such responsibility shall end when the child is delivered to the regular bus stop at the close of the school day.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to escort the child to and from the bus stop where there are no sidewalks, where sidewalks are only on one side, where the bus stop is on the opposite side of the street, and where there are either traffic or commuter rail concerns. Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted at least twice a year to acquaint student riders with procedures in emergency situations.

## BUS CONDUCT

In view of the fact that a bus is an extension of the classroom the School Committee shall require students to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with established standards for classroom behavior as stated in the Student Handbook. Bus drivers have the authority and the responsibility to maintain good order while operating the bus. Additionally, bus drivers are instructed to inform the building administrator about any student misconduct that creates an annoyance or distraction while driving. The building administrator will inform the parents/guardians of the misconduct and request their cooperation in monitoring the child's behavior. Any student who becomes a disciplinary problem on the school bus may have riding privileges suspended on a temporary or permanent basis. In such cases, the parents/guardians of the child involved become responsible for getting the child to and from school safely. There will be no refunds resulting from disciplinary action. The following regulations will apply to all students who utilize bus transportation:

- Bus riders should not move toward the bus until the bus has come to a complete stop
- Take your seat promptly upon entering the bus and remain in it until you arrive at your destination

- Do not throw anything on the bus or out the window
- There will be no standing or saving of seats on the bus
- Do not use profane, loud, or boisterous talk or make other noises that might distract the driver
- Students shall be courteous, at all times, to the driver, fellow students, and passers-by
- Treat bus equipment well. Damage to equipment will be paid by the offender to the School Department
- Smoking or lighting of matches is prohibited
- Leave the bus promptly upon arrival at your destination
- In crossing a street, do so only after the driver signals that it is safe to cross. Pass ten feet in front of the bus and look for traffic in both directions before proceeding
- In case of an emergency, students are to remain on the bus, unless requested to leave by the bus driver and only under her/his direction
- There is no eating or drinking on the bus
- Electronic devices are not allowed on the bus unless specific permission has been granted by the building administrator and/or designee. Cell phones must be powered off

The building administrator may deprive students of riding the bus if there are violations of these rules or if students engage in any other action which jeopardizes the health and safety of those riding the bus. In all cases, a report must be made by the principal to the parents/guardians of the child involved and to the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, where an appeal can be made.

All eligible Grades K-6 bus students are expected to ride the bus to which they are assigned both to and from school and to be picked up and dropped off at their assigned bus stops. Students will be asked to walk to a common bus stop. In that situation, the child should be accompanied to the stop by a parent/guardian. The safety responsibility for escorting to and from the bus stop shall rest with the parents/guardians of the student involved.

Parents/Guardians of students are responsible for supervision until such time as the child boards the bus in the morning and after the child exits the bus at the end of the school day. Once the child boards the bus – and only at that time – does s/he become the responsibility of the school district. Such responsibility shall end when the child is transported to the regular bus stop at the close of the school day. It is also expected that all students will be at the stop 5 minutes before the bus arrives. Bus drivers have been instructed NOT TO STOP if no child is waiting. For safety reasons, it is most important that a parent/guardian be at the bus stop to receive the homecoming child.

As always, safety is of primary importance. At the bus stops and on the school bus, students are expected to be well-behaved and cooperative, at all times. A student who repeatedly misbehaves, or who by her/his actions poses a threat to the safety of others on the bus, may be removed from the bus. If such behavior continues, the student will be subject to progressive discipline.

### STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

School buses will be used for the transportation of students participating in co-curricular or extracurricular activities. However, when buses are not available, private vehicles may be permitted to transport students to or from school activities that fall within the academic day or extend the school day provided all of the following conditions are met:

- The driver will be required to complete a Department of Motor Vehicles Driving Record review
- The owner of the vehicle being used in transporting students must file evidence with the Superintendent of personal liability insurance coverage on the vehicle in the amounts of \$100,000 - \$300,000 or more
- The parents of students to be transported in this manner will be fully informed as to this means of transportation and will sign a statement to this effect
- The activity has the approval of the Superintendent of Schools

# ***INTEGRATED PRESCHOOL ADDENDUM***

## **PHILOSOPHY OF THE ABINGTON INTEGRATED PRESCHOOL**

The philosophy of the integrated preschool grows from the belief that all children learn best when they have opportunities to develop skills through hands-on play and interaction with peers. Meaningful engagement with adults, other children, and the environment supports the development of foundational social-emotional, physical, language and cognitive skills.

Our curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all students utilizing an intentional and playful approach. Classroom environments are developed to foster independence, and lessons are designed and implemented with attention to the individual needs of all preschool-aged children. With emphasis given to meeting each child at their developmental level, children play an active role in their learning.

The integrated preschool curriculum fosters development of self and relationships with others. Children are encouraged to engage in open ended activity exploration based upon individual interests. Activities are theme-based and are designed to challenge all levels of learners. The program follows a structured routine, allowing children to anticipate and plan for their day. However, schedules remain flexible to allow for special events or extended learning on a preferred topic. Opportunities for gross motor play and skill development are integrated into the school day through structured activities and daily time on the playground.

The curriculum is based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences and the NEAYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) definition of a developmental program. Areas of development that are addressed include:

- Social/Emotion Development
- Cognitive Development
- Language Development
- Gross/Fine Motor Development

## **ADMISSION PROCEDURE FOR PRESCHOOL**

In accordance with Massachusetts General Law 603 CMR 28.06 (7), the Abington Public Schools Integrated Preschool Program is designed to meet the needs of Abington's special needs preschool population as well as provide a unique experience for preschool children from the community to serve as typically developing peers. Children with special needs are referred for admissions through the Special Education Department of Abington Public Schools. Applications for admission for community peers (hereafter referred to as "peers") will be taken in the spring prior to intended attendance. Approximately 24 slots are available for peers each year for both the morning and afternoon sessions. Should the number of peer applicants exceed the number of slots, a lottery system will be implemented.

To be eligible for admission, children must meet the following criteria:

- Peers must be three or four years of age and not eligible for entry to the Abington Kindergarten program.
- Peers must demonstrate skills within six months of age expectancy in the following areas: speech/language, cognition, gross/fine motor skills, and socialization/behavior skills.

Typically, peers will be screened during the spring prior to enrollment for preschool readiness. Class groupings are established to provide the optimal learning environment for each child and reflect a balance with respect to developmental skills. Additionally, the effect individual children will have on one another is considered. The ultimate responsibility for classroom assignments for community peers is with the director.

## PRESCHOOL APPLICATIONS

Applications are accepted between December and February for the following September. Applications can be accessed through the Abington Public Schools website or be picked up at the Abington Early Education office. A complete application and registration fee are required to reserve a space in the program. Applicants will be screened in the spring to determine readiness for the program for the following September.

## ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN'S PROGRESS

Children's progress and achievement is assessed and reported through daily observations, work samples, and bi-yearly progress reports. Conferences for parents/guardians of peers are held at the end of January. Team Meetings for children with special needs are held throughout the year in accordance with the child's IEP cycle. If a classroom teacher is concerned about an area of a child's development, systematic classroom supports will be implemented to facilitate progress. If the child continues to struggle, this may result in a referral for an evaluation in the area of suspected disability. Please note that parents will be informed throughout the process and any evaluation requires advance permission from a parent/guardian in accordance with special education regulations.

## PROGRAM EVALUATION

Parental/Guardian input is integral to the success of the program. Comments and suggestions, including both positive feedback and areas for further development, are welcome at any time.

## PARENT PARTICIPATION

The quality of the program is directly enhanced by the involvement of parents/guardians, grandparents, and other family members. Participation in the daily events of the school is encouraged and is permitted following the completion of a CORI. There are occasions when young children do not respond well to having their parents/guardians/family members in their learning space. In those cases, contributing to events, preparation of classroom materials, and supplying recycled materials for center activities are some additional ways adults may become involved. Parent/guardian participation in the PTO is also strongly encouraged. Contact the Abington Early Education PTO for more information about meetings and involvement with the parent community.

## COMMUNICATION

Our teachers value ongoing communication with parents/guardians. Classroom newsletters, email, communication books, phone calls and conferences are vehicles for keeping in touch with school personnel. However, because it can be challenging to speak with any one individual during arrival, dismissal or class time, parents/guardians are encouraged to make an appointment to discuss anything that requires more than a brief check-in

## BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE

Many times, behavior challenges during the preschool years are related to children developing the necessary skills to cope with frustrating or unfamiliar situations. Ongoing monitoring of the program by all staff members ensures that demands and expectations are developmentally appropriate. Opportunities for development of pro-social skills are integrated into the classroom routine throughout the school day and teachers utilize concepts

from the *Second Step Social Emotional Skills for Early Learning Program*. Staff are trained in non-physical de-escalation techniques. Physical punishment, psychological coercion, threats, derogatory remarks, and withholding food and/or toileting opportunities are strictly prohibited. Inappropriate and maladaptive behaviors are addressed through developmentally appropriate strategies including redirection and modelling. Parents/guardians will be notified if a child demonstrates ongoing difficulty displaying adaptive behaviors within the school setting. In these circumstances, the parents/guardians, classroom teacher and the program director will meet to determine how to best support student growth.

The discipline philosophy of the program is based upon the belief that children learn responsibility and resilience when they are consistently provided appropriate models and guidance. We believe that children develop self-control when adults treat them with dignity and use classroom management techniques such as:

1. Setting clear, consistent, and fair limits for classroom behavior
2. Learning to value mistakes as learning opportunities
3. Redirecting children to more acceptable behavior or activities
4. Praising children when they demonstrate more acceptable behavior
5. Listening when the children talk about their feelings and frustrations
6. Guiding children to resolve conflicts and model
7. Modeling skills that will help children solve their own problems
8. Reminding children of the classroom rules and their rationale

## ABSENCES

Regular attendance is strongly encouraged. However, to ensure the health and safety of all students, please reference the Abington Public Schools Elementary Handbook illness policy in deciding whether or not to send your child to school when s/he is not feeling well. If a child becomes ill during the school day, parents/guardians or emergency contacts will be called for pickup. Please call (781)982-2195 to report if your child will be absent from school and send a note providing the reason for absence upon his/her return.

## BIRTHDAYS

Birthday celebrations are an opportunity to build children's self-esteem and self-awareness. As such, we encourage celebrations in the classroom. However, in keeping with district-wide wellness policy, party favors must be limited to non-edibles. If desired, please notify your child's teacher in advance to make arrangements for a celebratory activity on your child's special day.

## CLOTHING

Each student should bring a complete change of clothes (top, pants, socks, and underwear) to be kept in school. Please put clothes in a plastic bag and label with your child's name. Wet or soiled clothes will be sent home, and a replacement set should be sent with your child the following day. During the wet season, please be sure students bring a comfortable pair of shoes to wear after removing their outside boots. Because students do go outside whenever possible, please be certain that the children are always dressed appropriately for the weather (e.g., coats, boots, hats, mittens). Smocks will be available in the classrooms during multi-media activities (e.g., paint, glitter, glue). However, please note that accidents do happen, and clothes may accidentally become soiled.

## TOILETING

Each classroom is equipped with an appropriately sized bathroom. Children use the facilities on an individual, as-needed basis throughout the day with staff assistance available. Children who require a change of clothing will be assisted, as needed. Soiled clothing will be sealed in a bag and sent home. If/when clothing is sent home, please supply the school with another change of clothes. All children should have an extra set of labeled clothing kept at school throughout the year.

## OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is an important part of our daily schedule. Following the Child Care Weather watch guidelines, children will go outside each day unless the wind chill is below 20 degrees Fahrenheit, or the heat index is above 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

## ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Drop-off occurs at the rear entrance to the building. Parents/guardians should park their cars and bring their children directly to door 24 at the rear of the building where they will be met by staff. Parents/guardians are encouraged to limit time at the door by giving a hug/kiss and saying goodbye. It is our experience that when children learn to separate quickly and consistently along with their classmates, they are more comfortable making the transition from home to school. Morning students should arrive at 8:15 a.m., and afternoon students should arrive at 11:30 a.m. Students will be dismissed to their parents/guardians at 10:55 a.m. and 2:10 p.m. Due to the number of students being dropped-off and picked-up, it is important to be on time. If for some reason you will be late in meeting your child, please call the office and indicate your approximate time of arrival.

Transportation will not be provided for students attending the integrated preschool program, unless required by special education laws. Students with special needs requiring transportation will be met by staff members at the front entrance of the building.

If your child will be going home with someone other than her/his regular driver, please write a note to inform staff of the change. The individual will be required to provide identification at the time of pick-up. In case of an emergency, you may call the main office and leave a message. No child will be dismissed from the school to an unknown caregiver without expressed parent/guardian permission and provision of appropriate identification.

# **BEAVER BROOK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ADDENDUM**

## **BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS**

Beaver Brook Elementary School is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that will foster the development of each student to the fullest of his/her capabilities. To maintain this environment, it is important to help students develop behaviors that help them become responsible, active participants in their school and the larger world. Our goal is to help students function independently, make their own decisions, and work cooperatively with others. We expect students to behave with respect and concern for the rights, safety, and welfare of all other individuals in the school.

## **A RESPONSE TO AND PREVENTION OF HARM**

In schools, Restorative Practice/Approaches are multifaceted in nature. Restorative practices include interventions when harm has happened, as well as practices that help to prevent harm and conflict by helping to build a sense of belonging, safety, and social responsibility in the school community.

***Proactive and Responsive Circles:*** circles can be used for team building and problem solving. It enables a group to get to know each other, builds inclusion, and allows for the development of mutual respect, trust, sharing, and concern. Circles provide students with opportunities to share their feelings, ideas, and experiences in order to establish relationships and develop social norms on a non-crisis basis.

***Restorative Meetings/Conferences:*** involve those who have acknowledged causing harm meeting with those they have harmed, seeking to understand each other's perspective and coming to a mutual agreement which will repair the harm as much as possible. Often all sides bring supporters, who have usually been affected, and have something to say from a personal perspective.

***Behavioral expectations*** are posted in specific settings and students are taught those expectations regularly. Students will also be taught social, emotional, behavioral skills, and concepts within their classrooms. Classrooms will develop relationships, build community, practice social skills, and address conflict during Restorative Practice Circles that will occur daily at a minimum.

As we attempt to resolve conflict and teach students how to manage social interactions, logical consequences may be used as part of a restorative plan. Staff members will apply progressive discipline based on the unique situation **BEFORE** moving to the steps outlined earlier in the handbook (p. 17) on a case-by-case basis:

- Ignoring the behavior
- Using verbal reminder or redirection, linking to school expectations
- Giving non-verbal reminders
- Student/teacher informal conversation using Restorative Statements/Questions
- Simple reparation (“You break it, you fix it”)
- Temporarily increasing structure and/or supervision (move student, take objects away, narrow student choice, take privilege or responsibility away)
- Student fills out “Think Sheet” to reflect on solution to problem
- Parent phone call by teacher
- Take-a-break (a positive time out) in a designated space (inside classroom)
- Reteach (by role-playing, interactive modeling, and practice of expected behavior)
- Hold a small impromptu conference or Restorative Circle to talk through the situation
- Private work area during time of difficulty
- Modify situation or schedule to address issue
- Take-a-break in a buddy classroom
- Student/Teacher/Parent conference
- Informal behavior plan
- Parent/Teacher/Administrator conference
- Formal Restorative Conference - victims, offenders, families
- Written problem-solving exercise
- Before or after school detention (parent always notified first)
- Referral to school psychologist and/or school adjustment counselor
- Formal behavior plan

# **WOODSDALE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ADDENDUM**

## **BICYCLES/ROLLERBLADES/SCOOTERS**

Students in Grades 3-4 may ride their bicycles to and from school if they have obtained written permission from their parents/guardians. These notes will remain on file in the school office. Massachusetts Law requires all children under the age of thirteen to wear a safety helmet when riding their bicycles. Students are expected to wear protective equipment (elbow pads, wrist pads, kneepads, and a helmet) when rollerblading and riding scooters.

## **DRESS CODE**

To best fit the educational and school setting, students should dress in a way that allows for comfort and safety. Many of our classrooms utilize flexible seating options, students are often working in many areas around their class and need appropriate clothing to do so comfortably. Students must also wear appropriate footwear for recess and Physical Education classes.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR PROTOCOL**

Our expectations of students revolve around three facets of good character: Respect, Responsibility, and Citizenship. Students are expected to treat others well, uphold their personal responsibilities, exhibit understanding of the needs of others, and follow classroom expectations. When student behavior falls outside of these ideals, there is a need for correction. The typical process is outlined below:

- 1<sup>st</sup> layer: Staff will communicate clearly, set & reset expectations, discuss the effect of the behavior on the classroom, and set meaningful parameters and consequences within classroom context
- 2<sup>nd</sup> layer: If a problem persists without correction or improvement, staff will involve the student's family. They will outline the impact of the behavior, describe the process they've put into place to solve this problem, and recommend that the parents continue the conversation with the child at home. They will also describe plans for future consequences (recess conversations, classroom consequences, parent meeting) and for follow up contact. Typically, administration is made aware of the problem and the efforts at this layer. However, the corrective action should initially take place with the teacher in order for the process to be most effective
- 3<sup>rd</sup> layer: After parent contact and continued work with the student proves ineffective, a parent meeting will be scheduled on-site (likely with the student in attendance). The continued concerns will be outlined clearly and parameters for success will be delivered (Student X must improve X behavior within X time, given the following interventions....) Administration will be debriefed about the parent meeting and what supports are needed (admin conversation w/ student, etc.)
- 4<sup>th</sup> layer: Considering the above efforts, administrative action (ex. parent meeting with administrator, school-level consequences, etc.) will occur at this phase and continued communication and follow-up regarding this problem is necessary

## **PBIS**

The Woodsdale School uses a system of positive behavioral intervention and supports, the Woodsdale Owl Program. Each day, staff and students have an opportunity to recognize the efforts made by others to adhere to the tenets of our school culture (Respect, Responsibility, and Citizenship), good deeds, and effort. Additionally, each month, school-wide, a trait is highlighted and taught (acceptance, empathy, good sportsmanship, etc.) so that students have models for the traits we seek to recognize. Students who have earned Owl Awards are recognized during morning announcements, monthly All-School meetings, and via social media & parent phone calls.

# APS HOMEWORK ADDENDUM

**Homework Slip Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Mr. or Ms. TEACHER,

I have given my homework the necessary effort, but I've reached the point where I need to stop. I'll be turning in what I have completed and wanted you to know that I tried my best.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_

**\*Assignment:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Time Spent:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*What caused me trouble was:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature:

**Homework Slip Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Mr. or Ms. TEACHER,

I have given my homework the necessary effort, but I've reached the point where I need to stop. I'll be turning in what I have completed and wanted you to know that I tried my best.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_

**\*Assignment:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Time Spent:** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*What caused me trouble was:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: