

# **Arlington Public Schools**

## **Elementary Handbook**

**Revised 12/1/2015**

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# ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Office of the Superintendent  
Arlington High School  
P. O. Box 167  
869 Massachusetts Avenue  
Arlington, MA 02476-0002

Telephone  
(781) 316-3500  
Fax  
(781) 316-3509

Dear Elementary Parents and Guardians:

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the Arlington Public Schools where we are committed to ensuring that every student is offered the opportunity to grow and learn in a positive, safe, and caring environment. Our dedicated and talented staff strives to encourage and support each and every student to reach his or her potential.

We believe that parent involvement and strong school/parent relationships are essential for student success. We encourage you to partner with us to provide the best possible educational experiences for your child. It is our hope that you will work with us in the development and achievement of our district and school goals. You are invited to join the PTO and School Councils and to work with us on activities planned by parents and teachers. We also encourage you to volunteer in the school and in our classrooms.

To facilitate communication between families and our schools, this handbook is designed to provide you with beneficial information regarding expectations, services, and programs available to you and your children. It includes descriptions of practices, policies, procedures, as well as staff information. You are encouraged to contact your school's administration and faculty whenever you have questions, comments or concerns. If we can assist you in any way, please don't hesitate to call or e-mail.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen Bodie".

Kathleen Bodie, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

*An Equal Opportunity School System with a High Commitment to Diversity*

## **Arlington Public Schools Nondiscrimination Statement**

“Arlington Public Schools does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis or sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination Act of 1974 (Age Discrimination Act), or on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or religion in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71B and 151B.”

*Title I: Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of employment.

*Title VI: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the based on race, color and national origin.

*Title IX: Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972*

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits in educational programs based on sex.

*Section 504: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on disability.

504 Coordinator, Laura Chesson [lchesson@arlington.k12.ma.us](mailto:lchesson@arlington.k12.ma.us)  
Arlington High School - 781-316-3523

*MGL, Ch. 76, Section 5: Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 5*

Prohibits discrimination in all public schools on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, national origin, religion and sexual orientation.

The Coordinators of the above statutes are as follows:

Arlington Public Schools Individual School Principals

*Title II: Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of educational programming and activities.

### Arlington Elementary Schools

Note: Individual school staff directories and school information can be found on each elementary school website listed below.

<b>Bishop Elementary School 25 Columbia Road, Arlington, MA 02474</b>	
<b>Principal:</b> Mark McAneny - <a href="mailto:mmcaneny@arlington.k12.ma.us">mmcaneny@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	781-316-3791
<b>Safe Arrival/Absentee Line</b>	781-316-3790
<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/bishop">www.arlington.k12.ma.us/bishop</a>	

<b>Brackett Elementary School 66 Eastern Avenue, Arlington, MA 02476</b>	
<b>Principal:</b> Stephanie Zerchykov <a href="mailto:szzerchykov@arlington.k12.ma.us">szzerchykov@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	781-316-3705
<b>Safe Arrival/Absentee Line</b>	781-648-2576
<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/brackett">www.arlington.k12.ma.us/brackett</a>	

<b>Dallin Elementary School 185 Florence Avenue, Arlington, MA 02476</b>	
<b>Principal:</b> Thad Dingman <a href="mailto:tdingman@arlington.k12.ma.us">tdingman@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	781-316-3730
<b>Safe Arrival/Absentee Line</b>	781-316-3725
<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/dallin">www.arlington.k12.ma.us/dallin</a>	

<b>Hardy Elementary School 52 Lake Street, Arlington, MA 02474</b>	
<b>Principal:</b> Kristin DeFrancisco <a href="mailto:kdefrancisco@arlington.k12.ma.us">kdefrancisco@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	781-316-3781
<b>Safe Arrival/Absentee Line</b>	781-316-3780
<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/hardy">www.arlington.k12.ma.us/hardy</a>	

<b>Peirce Elementary School 85 Park Avenue Ext., Arlington, MA 02474</b>	
<b>Principal:</b> Karen Hartley <a href="mailto:khartley@arlington.k12.ma.us">khartley@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	781-316-3737
<b>Safe Arrival/Absentee Line</b>	781-316-3298
<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/peirce">www.arlington.k12.ma.us/peirce</a>	

<b>Stratton Elementary School 180 Mountain Avenue, Arlington, MA 02474</b>	
<b>Principal:</b> Michael Hanna <a href="mailto:mhanna@arlington.k12.ma.us">mhanna@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	781-316-3754
<b>Safe Arrival/Absentee Line</b>	781-316-3767
<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/stratton">www.arlington.k12.ma.us/stratton</a>	

<b>Thompson Elementary School 187 Everett Street, Arlington, MA 02474</b>	
<b>Principal:</b> Karen Donato <a href="mailto:kdonato@arlington.k12.ma.us">kdonato@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	781-316-3769
<b>Safe Arrival/Absentee Line</b>	781-316-3714
<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/thompson">www.arlington.k12.ma.us/thompson</a>	

## **Arlington Public Schools Mission Statement**

The mission of the Arlington Public Schools is to educate students by promoting academic excellence, by empowering students to achieve their maximum potential, and by preparing students for responsible participation in an ever-changing world. The Arlington Public Schools are committed to helping every student achieve emotional, social, vocational, and academic success.

## Kindergarten Information

### Entrance Age

Incoming kindergarten students must be five (5) years old by August 31 of the year they will enter kindergarten.

### First Grade

Students must be six (6) years old by August 31 of the year that they will enter First Grade.

### Kindergarten Registration and Orientation

Registration and Orientation Activities for families with children entering kindergarten the following school year take place beginning in March. Specific information including dates and times for registration is posted on the Arlington Public Schools website. Information is also posted in the Arlington Advocate and on Arlington Cable.

For more information, visit the kindergarten website

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/kindergarten/](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/kindergarten/)

### Kindergarten Screening

As mandated by state and federal law, the Arlington Public Schools conducts a screening of all incoming Kindergarten children. The purpose for screening is to identify children who may have learning needs in order that any needed interventions may be introduced as soon as possible. The screening process is a non-intensive scan of a young child's overall developmental skills. Skill areas screened include: speech-language, math, fine and gross motor skills, cognition, developmental history and a review of the child's general health. The screening is not a readiness test or an evaluation. Screening activities are designed to find those children who may require extra support in school or may require further evaluation. Our goal is for you and your child to have a successful year in kindergarten.

### Frequently Asked Questions About Kindergarten

**Q:** What are the hours for full day?

**A:** The school day begins at 8:10 and ends at 2:30 (M,W,Th,F). Tuesday – early dismissal at 1:00.

**Q:** How do I find out about after school programs for my kindergarten child?

**A:** Look for information about after school programs on each elementary school's web site.

**Q:** Is lunch available? How much does it cost?

**A:** Hot lunch is available at all schools. The cost of lunch is \$3.00. Children eat lunch in the cafeteria.

**Q:** Is bus transportation provided for kindergarten?

**A:** Because the elementary schools in Arlington are neighborhood schools, transportation is not provided for most students.

## Elementary Schools General Information

### Open Enrollment and Buffer Zone.

Students are assigned to schools based on a student's home address. Some students may live on a street that falls within a "Buffer Zone". This is an area that is shared by two schools. Assignment to a school is made with the goal to balance class sizes at both schools. Parents can apply to open enroll their child at a school that is not their home school based on their address. More information on Open Enrollment and Buffer Zones can be found on the district website under School Committee Policy JC.

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/jc.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/jc.pdf)

### District Calendar

The school calendar is posted on the Arlington Schools website. School specific calendars are posted on the individual school websites.

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/calendar/](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/calendar/)

### School Hours

The school day begins at 8:10 a.m. and ends with dismissal at 2:30 p.m., Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. *Tuesday is an early release day with dismissal at 1:00 pm.*

### Attendance/Safe Arrival/Absences/ Early Dismissals by Parents Procedures

To report a change in attendance (late arrival, early dismissal, or absence), please contact your child's school. Each school will have its own safe arrival policy and phone number to call.

### Attendance Policy

Mass. Gen. L. Ch. 76, sec. 2 requires all children between the ages of 6 and 16 attend school regularly. The school year consists of 180 days. The following policy applies to student attendance:

#### Definitions:

**Excused absence:** A valid cause for absence from school, such as a legitimate illness, death in the family, observation of a religious holiday.

**Non-excused absence:** An invalid cause for absence from school, such as family vacations.

1. When students are absent, parents must call the school before 7:45 A.M. and leave the following information: Child's name, your name, child's teacher and the reason for the absence. Since there is answering machine, please contact the school as soon as you know your child is going to be absent, even the night before. Remember to speak clearly and slowly when leaving your message.
2. Parents will be contacted as soon as practical, and in any event, within three (3) days of the student's absence if the Parent(s) or Guardian has not contacted the school regarding an absence. Parents and guardians must furnish the school with a home, work or other emergency telephone number where they can be contacted during the school day for this purpose.

3. Each child must bring a note from a parent/guardian to reenter school after any absence or it will be considered a non-excused absence/ truant.
4. Upon returning to school the absent note should be given to your child's classroom teacher. All absent notes will be forwarded to the Safe Arrival Office where they will be kept on file.
5. The school will contact the home upon the third non-excused absence in the school year to remind parents of the legal requirements for students to be in school.
6. Upon the fifth non-excused absence in the school year, a meeting will be scheduled with the building Principal (or his/her designee), the Parent(s)/Guardian, and the student to develop an action plan to improve the student's attendance. In all circumstances Parents/Guardians are encouraged to contact school staff and work collaboratively with them to correct the reasons that the student is missing school.
7. Excessive school absence may also result in the school taking legal action to address the situation.

### **Calendar of Early Dismissals**

There is an early dismissal (1:00 PM) every Tuesday for staff professional development, curriculum planning and meetings. In addition, there will be a few days with early dismissal at 11:15 for parent conferences. [www.arlington.k12.ma.us/calendar/](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/calendar/)

### **Inclement Weather**

Closings and delays are reported on the Arlington Public Schools district website and the following TV channels and radio stations. In addition, parents will be notified by phone through the district's Connect 5 system.

#### TV Channels

WBZ -4  
 WCBV – 5  
 NECN – 6  
 WHDH -7  
 FOX – 25  
 WLVI - 56

#### Radio Stations

WRKO (680)  
 WBZ (1030)

### **DELAYED OPENING**

#### **ONE HOUR -**

#### **School Time:**

Menotomy Preschool half day morning session - NO SCHOOL

Elementary (Grades K-5) - 9:10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Tuesday dismissal at 1:00.

Middle School – 9:00 a.m. to 2:26 p.m.

High School – 9:00 a.m. to 2:26 p.m.

***All classes begin one hour later; dismissal time remains the same (lunch is served).***

## **TWO HOURS -**

### **School Time:**

Menotomy Preschool half day morning session - NO SCHOOL

Elementary (Grades K-5) - 10:10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Tuesday dismissal at 1:00.

Middle School – 10:00 a.m. to 2:26 p.m.

High School – 10:00 a.m. to 2:26 p.m.

***All classes begin two hours later; dismissal time remains the same (lunch is served).***

***NOTE:*** *On a no-school day, supervisory staff will not be available. On a delayed-opening day, supervisory staff will be available one or two hours later, depending on the delay.*

***PARENTAL DISCRETION IS ALWAYS ADVISED AS TO ATTENDANCE IN INCLEMENT WEATHER.***

### **Religious Observances**

Student absences due to the observance of religious holidays are considered excused absences for the purpose of attendance. Ample and flexible accommodations will be made to assist students in making up class work with sufficient time to do so with the expectation that they will not be studying nor doing homework on religious observance days. On days of major religious observance where school is in session and it is expected that significant numbers of students will be absent, there will be no tests, quizzes or other such examinations scheduled. Religious observances will be taken into consideration when scheduling school activities such as school photographs, after school, and evening programs, etc.

### **Family Vacations**

Families are strongly discouraged from scheduling vacations during school time, especially during the MCAS examination period. Family vacations are marked as unexcused absences. Please contact your child's school if she/he will be absent for a family vacation while school is in session. Students will be required to make-up any work or assessments missed during their absence.

### **Field Trips**

The principal reviews and approves all field trips. There are no special school funds for field trips. The cost of the trip, such as admission fees, bus transportation and insurance, are calculated and then divided among the participants. The schools do not make a profit from these trips. You are asked to pay a fee so that the school can cover its costs.

You are not required to send your child on a field trip; participation is voluntary. However, a permission slip must be signed for any child to participate on a field trip. The School Committee strongly recommends that students participate in these trips because they enhance the educational experiences of students. If your child does not attend a field trip, he or she is required to spend the day at school doing regular assignments. Teachers at school will supervise your child.

Field trips generally do not extend beyond the normal school day and your child more than likely will be able to go to his/her usual after school activities. In rare instances when we know the schedule is affected, you will be given specific advance notice.

Prescription medication and special needs during the trip should be addressed specifically with your child's teacher and, if necessary, school principal. Please notify the school nurse prior to a field trip so arrangements can be made for your child's medicine during field trip hours.

For more information about field trips and related forms, visit:

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent\\_forms/Field\\_Trip\\_Questions\\_and\\_Answers.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent_forms/Field_Trip_Questions_and_Answers.pdf)

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent\\_forms/Field\\_Trip\\_Permission\\_Form.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent_forms/Field_Trip_Permission_Form.pdf)

### **Lunch Program/Free and Reduced Lunch**

Children from households that meet Federal income guidelines are eligible for free or reduced price meals. Families may apply to participate in the program at any time during the school year. Only one application per family is required. Please include information on all the children in the household. To apply for free or reduced meals, complete and sign Free & Reduced application and return it to the school principal. For application forms visit:

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent\\_forms/Free\\_and\\_Reduced\\_Priced\\_Lunch\\_Application.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent_forms/Free_and_Reduced_Priced_Lunch_Application.pdf)

### **Student Insurance Program**

The Arlington Public Schools offer low-cost accident insurance to the parent/guardians of all duly enrolled public school students. Parents /guardians are encouraged to purchase this insurance as financial protection against accidents although this is essentially a voluntary program. Families will receive information regarding this insurance in the fall of each school year.

**Visitors** - All visitors must report to the school office upon arrival. You must check in with the school secretary. We do this to provide a safe and secure environment for all students and staff.

### **C.O.R.I. Requirements**

It is the policy of the Arlington Public Schools to obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information (C.O.R.I.) for prospective employee(s) or volunteer(s) of the School Department including any individual who regularly provides school related transportation to children or who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. CORI checks are made prior to hiring employee(s) or accepting any person as a volunteer. Refer to *School Committee Policy ADDA* concerning C.O.R.I. Requirements

## **Safe Schools**

Arlington Public Schools strives to provide an enriching educational environment for our students. A safe and secure school is essential to the learning environment. We have implemented a program that includes safety and security audits, development of emergency plans and procedures, and training for staff to respond to incidents. This program has been developed with the assistance of our community partners -- Arlington Police, Arlington Fire, and the Arlington Board of Health. We are grateful for their contributions.

Preparedness begins at home, so our district website provides information for parents, guardians, and students. We encourage every family to develop a family preparedness plan. It is also essential that parents become familiar with Arlington Public Schools' emergency plan and ensure that the emergency information on file with your child's school is up-to-date. Parents and guardians are encouraged to check the district website to find resources that may help address problems or challenges that your child may be experiencing.

Safe Schools information can be found at:

[http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/emergency\\_preparedness/](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/emergency_preparedness/)

## **Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Policy And Procedures**

School personnel are mandated to report suspected child abuse pursuant to M.G.L. c. 199 section 51A. The Principal/designee will:

- Communicate child abuse/neglect procedures to the school staff annually.
- Ensure that all professionals understand that they must notify the Department of Children and Families (DCF) immediately if they suspect that a child has been or is at risk of being abused or neglected. In the alternative, the staff member may report the matter to the Principal or designee, who will then take responsibility for filing the report.

## **Student Rights And Responsibilities**

### **Right to an Equal Education**

Federal and State Laws prohibit discrimination in education. All students are guaranteed “an adequate publicly supported education to every child resident.” This right cannot be denied “on the basis of national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, race, religion, and physical or mental handicap.” The Arlington Public Schools have established policies that ensure compliance to these laws.

### **Rights of Students with Special Needs**

Federal and state laws, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and M.G.L. c. 71B, require schools to provide students with disabilities access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education. In some circumstances, this also means that a child will be entitled to receive special education and related services. All students between the ages of three and twenty-one, who have not yet obtained a high school diploma or equivalent, are entitled to special education services if he or she is determined to be eligible to receive such services on the basis of a disability. Specific questions and concerns regarding special education, including referral for special education, eligibility and services, can be directed to a student’s principal or the Special Education Services Office at Central Administration.

### **Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap**

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992 requires that no qualified individual with a disability shall, because the district’s facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs and activities of the district or be subject to discrimination. Nor shall the district exclude or otherwise deny services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability of a person with whom the individual is known to have a relationship or association.

A “qualified individual with a disability” is an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the district.

### **Rights of Homeless Children**

Students who have been displaced from their home and do not have a permanent place of residence are guaranteed the same rights to an education as every other student under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act. Students have the right to:

- Go to a public school, including preschool
- Obtain free lunch
- Receive transportation, if requested
- Participate in school programs (athletics, clubs, and other student activities)
- Receive the same support and services provided to all students, as needed

### **Freedom of Religion**

Arlington Public Schools take responsibility to protect the religious freedom of all students. Students have the right to practice their own religious beliefs as long as they do not violate the constitutional rights of others. Students also have the right to study, discuss, and analyze religious ideas of institutions and cultures related to content within a specific curriculum.

### **Patriotic Observances**

Students have the right to refrain from participation in the salute to the American flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the singing of the National Anthem. Students who choose to refrain from these activities should respect the rights and interests of others who do wish to participate and in a manner that does not disrupt the ceremonies. Schools may not force the students who refrain from participation to leave the room or be punished in any manner.

### **Freedom of Expression**

Under the First Amendment, all students have the right to express their own points of view and are protected from those who would inhibit that expression. At the same time, they are responsible for keeping such expression from disrupting the educational process, and should allow other points of view to be expressed. Free speech may not only include verbal expressions, but may also include symbolic speech such as the wearing of buttons, armbands and decals.

### **Right To Privacy**

The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), sometimes called the "Buckley Amendment", requires schools to protect the privacy of student records, and gives parents and students rights including inspection and review of student records. The Massachusetts Student Record Regulations are consistent with the FERPA statute and regulations.

### **Confidentiality of Student Records**

Except where the regulations specifically authorize access by third parties, no individuals or organizations other than the parent, eligible student and authorized school personnel are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent or eligible student.

School systems are required to provide for the security and confidentiality of student school records. Under these laws, the school principal or his/her designee is responsible for the privacy and physical security of all student records maintained in the school and any computerized systems employed are electronically secure.

All information and data contained in or added to the student record shall be limited to information relevant to the educational needs of the student. Information and data added to the temporary record shall include the name, signature, and position of the person who is the source of the information, and the date of entry into the record. Standardized group test results that are added to the temporary record need only include the name of the test and/or publisher and date of testing.

Screening and Assessment Records are accessible by the screening team, the child's teacher, any specialists involved in the assessment process (testing or implementation of services), and the school principal. Screening and assessment results are used to identify areas where a student may need additional testing, intervention, or other support services that will assist in the learning process.

### **Amending the Student Record**

The eligible student or the parent has the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant written material to the student record. The eligible student or the parent shall have the right to request in writing deletion or amendment of any information contained in the student record, except for information which was inserted into that record by an Evaluation Team. Such information inserted by an Evaluation Team shall not be subject to such a request until after the acceptance of the Evaluation Team Educational Plan, or, if the Evaluation Team Educational Plan is rejected, after the completion of the special education appeal process. Any deletion or amendment shall be made in accordance with the procedure described below:

- (a) If such student or parent is of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in the student record, either student or parent shall present the objection in writing and/or have the right to have a conference with the principal or his/her designee to make the objections known.
- (b) The principal or his/her designee shall within one week after the conference or receipt of the objection, if no conference was requested, render to such student or parent a decision in writing, stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the student or parent, the principal or his/her designee shall promptly take such steps as may be necessary to put the decision into effect.

### **Inspection of Record**

A parent or an eligible student has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be made available within ten days after the request, unless the parent or student consents to a delay. The parent and eligible student have the right to receive a copy of any part of the record, although the school may charge a reasonable fee for the cost of duplicating the materials. The parent and eligible student may request to have parts of the record interpreted by a qualified professional from the school, or may invite anyone else of their choice to inspect or interpret the record with them.

## **Destruction of Records**

Regulations require school authorities to destroy a student's temporary record within seven years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraw from the school system. School authorities are also allowed to destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information in the record from time to time while the student is enrolled in the school system. In each case, the school must first notify the parent and eligible student and give them the opportunity to receive a copy of any of the information before it is destroyed.

## **Non-Custodial Parents Rights**

As required by General Laws Ch. 71, Section 34H, a parent who does not have physical custody of his/her child ("non-custodial parent") may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Department of Education Regulations. The Arlington Public School district encourages all parents to be involved in and informed about the education of their children and asks that non-custodial parents follow this process to access their child's records:

- Submit a written request for the records to the school principal.
- Include the full name of the student, the name of the custodial parent, and the name of the parent making the request.
- When making an initial request, and to facilitate the process, a non-custodial parent may also include a certified copy of a court order indicating that the requesting parent is entitled to:
  - Unsupervised visitation with the child
  - Eligible to receive student record information pursuant to Section 34H.

School officials are required to contact the custodial parent when they receive such a request in order to provide that parent an opportunity to provide information that may impact the noncustodial parent's eligibility for access.

## **Freedom from Harassment**

The Arlington Public Schools is committed to providing a safe educational environment that promotes equal access to educational and occupational opportunities for all adults and children regardless of race, gender, gender identity, color, national origin, sexual orientation, qualifying disability or religion. Consistent with its pledge of equity for all students and staff, discrimination or harassment based on any of the above mentioned characteristics will not be tolerated. It is the goal of the Arlington Public Schools to prevent harassment through on-going and appropriate means of staff and student awareness, staff training, and policy dissemination. However, should an incident of harassment occur, the school system shall provide for swift action to eliminate such harassment or discrimination among or between students and staff.

Harassment includes unwelcome verbal or physical conduct that may or does offend, denigrate or belittle any individual because of, or due to, any of the characteristics described above. Such conduct includes pictures, jokes, comments, innuendoes or any other behavior, which creates an environment, which is offensive, intimidating, or hostile to anyone. By law, what constitutes harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider as acceptable behavior, another person may

reasonably view as harassment. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communications is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

Freedom from sexual harassment is protected by state and federal law Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act defines Sexual Harassment as “Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment.”

Any individual, who believes he/she has been harassed or who has witnessed or learned about the harassment of another person in the school environment, should inform the Principal as soon as possible. If the individual does not wish to discuss the issue with him/her, or if s/he does not address the problem in an effective manner, the individual should inform the Assistant Superintendent of Schools who can be reached at 869 Massachusetts Ave, Arlington, MA 02476, 781-316-3523

Additional information regarding the Arlington Public Schools' procedures for addressing allegations of harassment, can be found at:

<http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/aca.pdf>

### *Bullying*

The Arlington Public Schools is committed to preventing bullying and its effects. Bullying is prohibited on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

All incidents of bullying should be reported to the appropriate elementary principal.

A summary of relevant portions of the District's Policy Prohibiting and Addressing Bullying is attached as Appendix A. Further information regarding the District's related Plan may be found on the district website at:

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/administration/bullyingprevention/pdfs/apsbullyingpreventionplan.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/administration/bullyingprevention/pdfs/apsbullyingpreventionplan.pdf)

### **Student Conduct and Discipline**

Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

While this section provides examples of conduct that is prohibited, not every type of prohibited conduct can be listed. Students are expected to recognize that any conduct that is inconsistent with maintaining an appropriate environment either at school or at a school-sponsored event could lead to discipline, including exclusion from school. Even misconduct that does not take place in school or at a school sponsored event can result in discipline if it is of a serious nature and has a direct relationship to the school or causes substantial disruption to the school environment.

### Suspension

School staff may use suspension from school not only as a deterrent to inappropriate behavior, but also to address the needs of students adversely affected by the inappropriate behavior of others. However, school staff seek to use alternatives to suspension whenever effective and appropriate to the circumstances. Except in the case of the “Statutory Offenses” as described in M.G.L. Ch. 71, §37H and 37H1/2 and set forth below, students may not be suspended more than 90 days in a school year, and school staff will avoid suspensions of more than 10 days until alternatives such as positive behavioral interventions and supports have been tried as appropriate. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Any student who is suspended from school will be given the opportunity to make up school work as needed to make academic progress. If the student is excluded from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days the student will have an opportunity to receive education services in order to make academic progress through the school-wide education service plan.

If a student in preschool or in grades K through 3 is to be suspended out-of-school, the principal will provide written notice to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension before the suspension takes effect.

The following are examples of behaviors that may lead to suspension:

- a. Physical and/or verbal assault on an adult or student (includes fighting).
- b. Verbal threats (verbal, written, electronic or otherwise) made to any student or staff member.
- c. Bullying.
- d. Remarks, gestures or physical contact, the display or circulation of written materials or pictures derogatory to either gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation or to racial, ethnic, religious, age, ancestry or disability groups.
- e. Pulling a false fire alarm, starting a fire, or making a bomb threat.
- f. Possession of controlled substances (drugs), alcohol, cigarettes (including vapor devices).
- g. Possessing dangerous items (e.g., knives, guns, look-alike guns, weapons, explosives, matches, harmful chemical substances).
- h. Using or copying the academic work of another and presenting it as his/her own without proper attribution.

- i. Repeatedly and intentionally defying the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, or administrators.
- j. Malicious destruction of property or stealing, including school property.

School principals retain the authority to discipline students for any other misconduct not specifically listed above.

### Expulsion

Section 37H of Ch. 71 of the Gen. Laws gives principals authority to expel any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored events in possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance, or any student who assaults school personnel on school premises or at school-sponsored events. Expulsion is discretionary within the province of the principal. Students are also subject to long term suspension/expulsion by the Principal when charged/convicted of a felony based upon the standards and procedures set forth in M.G.L. c.71, §37H1/2. Offenses covered by these statutes are sometimes referred to as "Statutory Offenses."

### Disciplinary Procedures

The procedures that must be followed prior to suspending or expelling a student from school are outlined in Appendix B of this Handbook.

### **Discipline of Special Education Students**

"The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act" (20 U.S.C., §1400 et seq.) and related regulations (34 C.F.R. §300 et seq.) ("IDEA") provide eligible students ("students") with certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline, as set forth below.

#### Short term removals

Students who violate school rules are subject to removal from their current placement for up to ten (10) consecutive school days to the extent that such a removal would be applied to students without disabilities, without a prior determination of whether the conduct is a manifestation of the student's disability. Students may be removed for additional periods of up to ten (10) consecutive school days in the same school year for separate incidents of misconduct without a manifestation determination, so long as the removal does not constitute a "change of placement" as described below. However, during such additional removals the district must provide the student with services to the extent necessary for progress in the general curriculum and the student's Individualized Education Program ("IEP") goals, as determined by the principal in consultation with at least one teacher. In addition, if appropriate, the district must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop or revise an existing behavioral plan for the student.

### Change of Placement

A suspension of longer than 10 consecutive days or a series of shorter term suspensions that constitute a pattern are considered to represent a “change in placement.” Prior to a suspension that constitutes a change in placement, the student’s Team, including the student’s parents, must convene to determine whether the behavior is a manifestation of the student’s disability. In making this determination, the Team must review all relevant information in the student’s file, including the IEP, teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents, to determine if the conduct was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student’s disability, or was the direct result of any failure by the school to implement the IEP.

### Results of the Manifestation Determination

If the Team determines that the behavior is not a manifestation of the disability, then the school may suspend or expel the student consistent with the policies applied to students without disabilities, except that the district must still provide an appropriate educational program to the student, as determined by the Team, which program may be in a different setting. If the Team determines that the behavior is a manifestation of a disability, the Team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop a behavioral intervention plan or where a behavioral intervention plan was previously developed, must review the plan and, if necessary, modify it to address the behavior. Except in circumstances involving drugs, weapons, or serious bodily injury as described below, the student will be returned to the placement from which the student was removed unless the placement is changed by agreement or through the Team process.

### Exception for Drugs, Weapons and Serious Injury

Regardless of the Team’s decisions regarding the manifestation determination, school personnel may order a change in the placement of a student to an interim alternative educational setting, such setting to be determined by the Team, for not more than forty-five (45) school days if the student (1) carries a weapon to school or to a school function; (2) knowingly possesses, uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or (3) has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person at school, on school premises, or at a school function. Additionally, a Massachusetts Bureau of Special Education Hearing Officer, under certain circumstances, may order a change in the placement of a student with a disability to an interim alternative education setting for up to forty-five (45) days if the hearing officer determines that maintaining the current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others.

When a parent(s)/guardian(s) disagrees with the Team’s decision on the “manifestation determination” or with a decision regarding placement, the parent(s)/guardian(s) has a right to request an expedited due process hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals.

Additional information regarding the procedural protections for special education students eligible for services under laws providing for services for students with disabilities can be obtained from the Director of Special Education.

### **Discipline of Students Whose Eligibility for Special Education is Suspected**

The IDEA protections summarized above also apply to a child who has not yet been found eligible for services under the statute if the district is “deemed to have knowledge” that the child was eligible for such services before the conduct that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. The IDEA provides that a school district is “deemed to have knowledge” if: (1) the child’s parent had expressed concern in writing to district supervisory or administrative personnel or the child’s teacher that the child needs special education and related services; (2) the child’s parent had requested an evaluation of the child to determine eligibility for special education services; or (3) the teacher of the child or other school district personnel had expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior by the child directly to the district’s director of special education or to other supervisory personnel. However, a school district is not “deemed to have knowledge” if the district evaluated the student and determined that the child was not eligible for special education services or the child’s parent refused an evaluation of the child or IDEA services.

If the school district has no knowledge that a student is an eligible student under the IDEA before taking disciplinary measures against the student, the student may be disciplined just as any other student may be. If, however, a request is made for an evaluation to determine eligibility while the student is subject to disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner. Pending the results of the evaluation, the student must remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion with services provided only to the extent required for general education students. If the student is determined eligible for an IEP as a result of the evaluation, the school district must provide the student with special education and related services in accordance with the IDEA.

### **Discipline of Students with Disabilities Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”) provides students with disabilities certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline. Prior to imposing a “significant change in placement” for disciplinary reasons, the district must determine whether the conduct is a manifestation of the student’s disability. A significant change of placement results not only from an exclusion for more than 10 consecutive school days, but also from a pattern of shorter suspensions accumulating to more than 10 school days during a school year. Whether a pattern exists must be decided on a case-by case basis, considering such factors as the length of each suspension, the nature of the alleged conduct, the proximity of the suspensions to one another, and the total amount of time the student is excluded from school.

Prior to any significant change in placement for disciplinary reasons, a group of individuals knowledgeable of the student, the evaluation data, and the school program must determine whether the conduct at issue is related to the student’s disability. If the conduct is directly related to the disability, the district will not impose the discipline and will develop an individual behavior management plan if the behavior significantly interferes with the student’s ability to benefit from his education. If the conduct is not directly related to the student’s disability, the district may discipline the student as it does general education students.

## **Freedom from Corporal Punishment**

Maintaining discipline on school property shall never include the right to inflict corporal punishment on any student.

## **Dress Code**

The School Committee considers dress to be a personal and family matter; students will be expected to exercise good judgment as to appropriate dress. Students should come to school dressed in a fashion that does not inhibit either the teaching or learning processes or promote an unsafe environment. It is expected that students will demonstrate good taste in this manner and will take pride in their personal appearances.

Immediate responsibility for determining what is or is not appropriate dress will rest with the principal.

## **Acceptable Use of Technology**

Every student and their parents/guardians are required to sign an acceptable use policy regarding the use of school computers including access to the Internet.

For more information, refer to the APS Acceptable Use Policy.

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/ijndb.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/ijndb.pdf)

## **Health And Wellness Information**

### **Health Office Information**

Each school has an assigned qualified nurse who is trained and certified in the specialized practice of School Nursing that advances the wellbeing, academic success, and lifelong achievement of students. To that end, school nurses facilitate positive student responses to normal development; promote health and safety, intervene with actual and potential health problems; provide case management services, and actively collaborate with others to build student and family capacity for adaptation, self-management, self-advocacy and learning.

Arlington school nurses provide:

When a child becomes ill at school, a parent or guardian will be notified and are expected to come for the child immediately.

- Illness and care
- Injury prevention and treatment of injuries that occur in school
- Medication administration and monitoring
- Individualized health care planning and case management for students with special healthcare needs
- Health counseling and health promotion
- Management of student health records
- Health screenings (vision, postural, hearing, height, weight)
- Communication with students, parents, the school community and health care providers
- Communicable disease prevention and control
- Access to health care services and insurance
- Emergency preparedness and response

**Student Attendance During Illness**

There are times when a student should remain at home for his/her own welfare and the protection of other students. Your child should remain at home if he/she has:

- Uncontrollable and/or productive cough
- Fever over 100.4 degrees within past 24 hours
- Vomiting or diarrhea within past 24 hours
- Sore throat and swollen glands
- Undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions
- Earache, severe headache or drainage from eyes

Students should remain home for 24 hours after an acute illness or after starting antibiotics for a diagnosed infection

## Medication Policies

### Daily Medication

In order to ensure the health and safety of children requiring medication during the school day, the following procedures must be followed:

The Health Office requires that the following forms be completed and returned to the nurse before medication is given at school:

- Signed consent by the parent/guardian to give the medication
- Medication order signed by the child's physician. The medication order should be taken to your child's licensed prescriber (doctor, nurse practitioner) for completion and returned to the school nurse. This order must be renewed as needed and at the beginning of each academic year.
- If the child requires an EpiPen and/or and Individual Health Care Plan (for ex. Asthma, Life Threatening Allergies, Diabetes, Seizure Disorder), please contact the school nurse as soon as possible to discuss and have the appropriate forms signed.

You or a responsible adult whom you designate should deliver the medicines to the school in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container. Please ask your pharmacist to provide separate bottles for school and home. No more than a thirty-day supply of medicine should be delivered to school.

### Short Term Prescription Medication

No medication should be brought to school, unless prescribed to be given at school. In order to protect all school children, the following procedure is used when a child must take a medication during school hours on a short-term basis.

1. The parents are requested to ask the physician if it is possible to prescribe the medication other than during school hours.
2. If the medication must be taken during the school hours, the parent/guardian will send **no more than a thirty-day supply**.
3. The accurate dose will be sent in a container labeled by the pharmacy with the following information: name of child, name and dosage of medication, date prescribed, and name of prescribing physician.
4. The parent/guardian will send a note to the nurse giving permission to take the medication **as prescribed**. Only the nurse is allowed to dispense the medication. The note will be attached to the child's health record.
5. If the medication is for more than ten days a form will be sent home to be completed by the MD and returned to the nurse.
6. Over the counter medications are **not** encouraged to be administered in school, except in unusual circumstances and only by the nurse with written permission.
7. Metered dose inhalers prescribed for Asthma and EpiPens prescribed to prevent anaphylaxis may be carried by a student and self-administered with written permission and after discussion with the school nurse.
8. Students are not allowed to have medications on their possession at school. There may be exceptions to this rule and such will be approved by the school nurse.

## **Guidelines For Students With Life-Threatening Allergies (LTA)**

Allergic reactions can span a wide range of severity of symptoms. The most severe and potentially life threatening reaction is anaphylaxis. The Arlington Public Schools cannot guarantee to provide an allergen-free environment for all students with life threatening allergies, or prevent any harm to students in emergencies. The goal is to minimize the risk of exposure to food allergens that pose a threat to those students, educate the community, and maintain and regularly update a system-wide protocol for responding to their needs. A system-wide effort requires the cooperation of all groups of people within the system.

The goal of the Arlington Public Schools regarding Life Threatening Allergies (LTA's) is to engage in a system-wide effort to:

- Prevent any occurrence of life threatening allergic reactions
- Prepare for any allergic reactions
- Respond appropriately to any allergy emergencies that arise

School nurses, in conjunction with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and the primary care provider/allergist will prepare an Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan for any student with a life threatening allergy. The plans will be reviewed by the school nurse, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and primary care provider and/or the student's allergist, and signed off by the child's physician to indicating that he/she deems it to be adequate. The Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan will be available in the nurse's office and homeroom in the student's homeroom at the elementary level. EpiPens will be available in the nurse's office and those prescribed for individual students will be kept in that child's homeroom and in other clearly designated locations as specified in the AAP/IHCP.

Staff will be trained to identify and respond to reactions from LTA's, including the use of EpiPens. Any staff involved with students who have LTA's will be informed and provided information from the AAP/HCP of each of these students. School staff will take steps to ensure that these classrooms and instructional areas are as allergen free as possible.

Schools will provide and maintain LTA free tables in each elementary school cafeteria as needed by the Individual Health Care Plan. These tables will be designated by a universal symbol. These tables will be cleaned and sanitized. Elementary schools encourage "NO FOOD TRADING" and "NO UTENSIL SHARING" policies to minimize accidental exposure to allergens.

It is requested that each parent of a student with an LTA inform the school nurse of your child's allergies prior to the opening of school (or as soon as possible after a diagnosis). Parent(s) must arrange to meet with the school nurse to develop an Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan (AAP/IHCP) for the student and provide medical information from the child's treating physician as needed to write the Plans. Parents should provide the school a list of foods and ingredients to be avoided, and provide a list of safe or acceptable foods that can be served to your child.

In addition parents should do the following:

- Provide the school nurse with enough up-to-date emergency medications (including EpiPens) so they can be placed in all required locations for the current school year.

- Complete and submit all required medication forms.
- Provide a Medic ALERT ID for your child.
- Notify nurse of upcoming field trip as soon as possible and provide EpiPen to be taken on field trips as stated in the field trip policy.
- Encourage students to wash hands before and after handling food.
- Teach your child to recognize the first symptoms of an allergic/anaphylactic reaction and to communicate clearly as soon as s/he feels a reaction is starting.
- Not share snacks, lunches or drinks.
- Take as much responsibility as possible for his/her own safety.

For more information on the LTA policy, refer to:

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/jlccb.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/jlccb.pdf)

### **Wellness Policy**

The Arlington Public School System supports health lifestyles, nutrition and physical activity for everyone. Health and wellness for children relies on the collective efforts of families, the school community, the health system, food industry, and the wider community. The APS recognizes its role in this important community endeavor through the implementation of a district Wellness Policy and the promotion of good nutrition and physical activity.

For more information on the district wellness policy, refer to the APS website.

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/jlce-e.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/jlce-e.pdf)

### **Communicable Diseases**

The spread of communicable diseases can be controlled by the use of good infection control practices. In the school setting, age appropriate immunization is the key in preventing the transmission of vaccine preventable diseases. Proper hand hygiene, standard precautions, appropriate cleaning and disinfecting are effective methods for preventing the spread of most infectious diseases. These practices are practiced and implemented consistently in the Arlington Public Schools.

A child showing symptoms of any communicable disease for which health officials order isolation is required to be kept out of school as long as the child's illness is considered to be contagious. If symptoms develop at school, administration will notify the parent/guardians that the child must be taken home. In case of contagious or infectious disease, the school nurse shall notify the health officials.

### **Smoking on School Premises**

Use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, school facilities, or on school grounds or school buses by any individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

A student determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the student discipline code and shall receive education on the hazards of smoking.

## **Pets**

Parents and children are reminded that pets are not allowed on school property. This is both a safety issue and a health concern. Please do not walk dogs or other animals on the school grounds. This also applies to families when dropping off and picking up their children

## **Parent Notification Relative to Sex Education**

It is the rights of parents and guardians of our students to determine whether or not their children will participate in curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. At the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students in our schools will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum we offer that primarily involve human sexual or human sexuality issues. If planned curriculum change during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation. Each such notice to parents/guardians will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy, and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

1. Exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexual issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school Principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.
2. Inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable.

Parents/guardians may arrange with the principal to review the materials at the school and may also review them at other locations that may be determined by the Superintendent of Schools.

At the elementary school level, the Health Curriculum, The Great Body Shop, includes a unit called "Growing Up" for grade five students. This unit teaches the basic facts about growing up, including the role of hormones, the endocrine system, and the biological differences between girls and boys. More information about this curriculum can be obtained from the nurse or principal at the individual schools.

## **Curriculum, Assessments and Progress Reports**

### **Curriculum Documents**

All APS curriculum documents are aligned with the Massachusetts State Frameworks. For more information on Mass Frameworks and Standards, you may go to the MASS Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) website.

[www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu)

For detailed information on Arlington curriculum documents, refer to the APS website [www.arlington.k12.ma.us/tl/curr/](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/tl/curr/)

Curriculum information that is specific to content areas and grade levels is available in each of the elementary schools. In addition, classroom teachers will be providing specific information to families during orientation and Back-to-School programs.

### **Assessments**

Assessments are an important tool in education at all levels. They provide vital feedback regarding student performance, effectiveness of curriculum, and in determining how to better support all students in the learning process. Students in Arlington are assessed using classroom-based assessments, system-wide common assessments, as well as statewide tests (MCAS).

APS Common Assessments are administered town-wide throughout the year in Reading, Writing, and Math. Results of these tests provide important information regarding student progress and curriculum delivery. For more information regarding these assessments, see your classroom teachers.

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) is designed to meet the requirements of the Education Reform Law of 1993. This law specifies that the testing program must:

1. Test all public school students in Massachusetts, including students with disabilities and limited English proficient students
2. Measure performance based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework learning standards
3. Report on the performance of individual students, schools, and districts

**State Mandated Assessment Tests** (MCAS) are administered in the spring of each year in grades 3, 4, and 5. (Beginning in spring 2016, students in grades 3-8 will be tested using the PARCC assessment; in 2017, the new MCAS 2.0 assessment)

**Grade 3** - ELA Reading, Mathematics

**Grade 4** - ELA Reading Comprehension, Writing, Mathematics

**Grade 5** – ELA Reading Comprehension, Mathematics, Science and Technology

Test results are forwarded to parents after the results are received from the State.

As required by the Education Reform Law, students must pass the Grade 10 tests in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science as one condition of eligibility for a high school diploma (in addition to fulfilling local requirements). In addition, the state assessment program is used to hold schools and districts accountable, on a yearly basis, for the progress they have made toward the objective of *No Child Left Behind*, that all students be proficient in Reading and Mathematics.

### **Progress Reports**

Standards-based progress reports are distributed for students in grades 1-5 three times a year in December, March, and June.

Standards-based progress reports for students in Kindergarten are distributed two times a year in December and May.

The grade level progress reports and rubrics may be found on the APS website at [www.arlington.k12.ma.us/tl/progressreports/](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/tl/progressreports/)

### **Parent Teacher School Conferences**

In order to communicate with parents regarding their student's progress, parent-teacher school conferences are held at each school. The dates for these conferences are published on the district calendar which can be found at [www.arlington.k12.ma.us](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us). Each student's teacher will communicate with parents regarding parent-teacher conference registration.

### **Homework**

Homework enriches and extends the learning experience of the school day and stimulates interest in learning outside of the classroom. Additionally, homework supports learning through practice and the development of study skills such as time management, independence, and growth in responsibility.

For elementary students, learning at school is supplemented by homework. Homework is assigned for grades 1 and above. A general guideline is that a child spends about 10 minutes per grade level on an evening's assignment (first grade: 10 minutes, second grade: 20 minutes, etc.). Reading at home with a parent or independently is strongly encouraged. Parents are also encouraged to review homework and the schoolwork brought home each day to promote the quality of each child's work with regard to its completeness, accuracy and presentation.

## **Additional Programs**

### **Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO)**

The Arlington Public Schools participates in one of the nation's largest and longest running desegregation programs, known as METCO. The METCO program provides the opportunity for an integrated public school education for children of color from racially imbalanced schools in Boston by placing them in suburban schools. METCO also provides a new learning experience for suburban children and provides a closer understanding and cooperation between urban and suburban parents. There are no income requirements for participating urban families.

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/metco](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/metco)

For more information, contact Margaret Credle-Thomas, APS METCO Director  
Phone: 781-316-3566      E-mail: [mthomas@arlington.k12.ma.us](mailto:mthomas@arlington.k12.ma.us)

### **Enrichment**

Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO) from each school enthusiastically plan and implement a variety of cultural and academic events to enrich the curriculum. Each school's events may differ but some past offerings have included such programs as:

- Entertainment from multigenerational ensembles, a cappella groups, instrumental groups, and marionette demonstrations
- Interactive experiences where the children participate in the productions
- Science programs incorporating magnets, plants, star gazing, and live animals
- Mock elections in which the students follow real voting procedures

For school specific information, go to your neighborhood school website.

## **Student Support Services**

### **Counseling**

Counseling services are available in each elementary school to support students with school adjustment, social and emotional development, and normative life crises. Referrals are made through the classroom teacher, Teacher Assistance Teams and/or the school principal. (See below.)

### **English Language Learners (ELL)**

The ELL Department is responsible for providing English language instruction to ELL students.

The current laws in the United States and in the State of Massachusetts require that ELL students receive special English instruction until they are proficient in English. School districts are required to identify children who can benefit from ELL services as they come into the district so they are first screened to assess their English proficiency.

For more information, visit the ELL website.

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/departments/English\\_Language\\_Learners](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/departments/English_Language_Learners)

## Reading Intervention in Regular Education K-5

**The Three Tier Model** is a research based service delivery model designed to deliver reading services to K-3 students. It utilizes the skills and training of classroom teachers, reading teachers, reading coaches, and special education staff for reading instruction. The classroom-reading program will remain the core reading program for all students.

**Tier I** reading instruction is the comprehensive literacy program which students receive in the regular classroom settings. In addition, the classroom teachers will give supplemental, targeted support to students who are struggling to master the reading skills and concepts taught at that grade level.

**Tier II** is an intervention level of service for the students who have been identified as needing reading support based on district and state criteria. These students will receive an additional 30 minutes of support five times a week provided by the classroom teacher, the reading teacher, reading coaches, or special education staff.

**Tier II.5** is a more intensive level of support provided to students who have participated in at least one year of comprehensive intervention, such as Tier II, and have failed to close the gap in their reading achievement. This generally will entail a program on five times a week for 30 minutes with a targeted group of students with similar needs. The services include an appropriate mix of phonics, fluency, and comprehension based on student need. It may also involve additional weekly sessions of intervention beyond the five times a week for 30 minutes, depending on individual needs and student progress.

**Tier III** is the most intensive level of intervention for students who are performing at least one grade level below expectations AND have already received Tier II/II.5 or another similar level of comprehensive instruction and intervention without showing sufficient progress in reading achievement. This level of intervention occurs 5 times per week for 60 minutes in addition to classroom reading instruction. Students will receive daily instruction in Wilson/OG/Fundations. Part of each session will also be devoted to fluency and reading comprehension.

For more information, contact one of the District Elementary Reading Coaches: Linda Hanson ([lhanson@arlington.k12.ma.us](mailto:lhanson@arlington.k12.ma.us)), or Tammy McBride ([tmcbride@arlington.k12.ma.us](mailto:tmcbride@arlington.k12.ma.us)) or visit the Reading website: [www.arlington.k12.ma.us/tl/curr/ela/k-5/reading](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/tl/curr/ela/k-5/reading)

### Teacher Assistance Teams (TAT)

Students experiencing learning difficulties can be helped through a wide array of instructional supports. Once a problem has been identified, teachers meet with the principal and other teacher/specialists to explore classroom or school-based accommodations to help support the student. This instructional support can include, but is not limited to, reading intervention, accommodations to curricula, behavioral contracts, counseling, after-school help, and teacher/parent/guardian conferences. State law requires schools to meet the needs of students within the regular education program using instructional supports often referred to as Response to Intervention

before considering a Special Education Evaluation.

Each of Arlington's schools has a TAT made up of teachers and specialists who serve as an important resource. The TAT often develops additional instructional support activities to help the student better access the general curriculum. Typically, TAT members review student data, documents, and interventions used within regular education. If the documentation shows that the instructional support services are producing positive results, and the student is making effective progress in the regular education setting, no further intervention is necessary. If, however, the documentation shows that the student is not responding to the interventions, a referral may be made for a Special Education Evaluation. Parents or guardians have the right to refer a student for a special education evaluation as well.

### **Special Education**

If a student is found eligible for special education services through district evaluation, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be developed by the IEP team to address the individual instructional needs of the student. Special Education in Arlington is provided as one aspect of a continuum of supportive services and programs. It is Arlington's philosophy that ALL students can learn and should be full participants in the life of the school.

For more information on the referral process, please contact the building principal, building team chairperson, or the Director of Special Education.

## Parent Involvement

### Volunteers

There are many opportunities for volunteering. Please contact your PTO or classroom teacher for more information. All volunteers must submit a CORI check. The CORI is required even for a one-time event. CORI forms are located in each elementary school office.

### Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO organizes most of the fundraising and special events at each elementary school. Parents and teachers are strongly encouraged to join the PTO and become active members. It is a great way to volunteer for one hour or even the entire school year. PTO meetings are typically held one a month for two hours. Committee chairs, the principal, and teachers report and evaluate past activities and discuss current and upcoming activities ahead. Students and teachers rely on their PTO for support in numerous ways.

Parent volunteers are appreciated. Please contact your school's PTO, classroom teacher, or principal and help make a difference in your child's education.

#### Bishop Elementary:

<http://bishopschoolpto.weebly.com/>

#### Brackett Elementary:

<http://brackettelementary.org/PTO>

#### Dallin Elementary:

[http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/dallin/pto\\_gettinginvolved.php](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/dallin/pto_gettinginvolved.php)

#### Hardy Elementary:

[www.hardyschool.com/pto](http://www.hardyschool.com/pto)

#### Peirce Elementary:

<http://peirceschool.info/volunteering/>

#### Stratton Elementary:

<http://strattonpto.org/wordpress1/>

#### Thompson Elementary:

<http://www.thompsonschoollpto.org/>

### School Councils

According to MA State Law (Chapter 71, Section 59C), every public school in the Commonwealth must have a School Council consisting of the school principal, who co-chairs the council, parents of students attending the school who are selected through an election by parents, teachers who are elected by the teachers in the school, and members of the community. The council meets regularly with the principal of the school to assist in the identification of the educational needs of the students attending the

school, to review of the annual school budget, and to formulate a school improvement plan.

For more information on the School Council in your neighborhood school, go to the individual school websites.

### **SEPAC (Arlington Special Education PAC)**

SEPAC is a parent volunteer group that acts as an advisor to and provides resources for parents and children with disabilities in the Arlington Public Schools.

For more information, visit the website [www.arlington.k12.ma.us/sepac](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/sepac) or email [arlingtonsepac@yahoo.com](mailto:arlingtonsepac@yahoo.com)

## **Community Resources**

Arlington has many resources for you and your family.

[www.arlingtonma.gov](http://www.arlingtonma.gov)

- **Arlington Boys & Girls Club**

[www.abgclub.org/](http://www.abgclub.org/)

As a nonprofit institution, the Club is committed to affordable opportunities for enriching constructive activities that many children would not otherwise have.

- **Arlington Center for the Arts**

[www.acarts.org/](http://www.acarts.org/)

The Arlington Center for the Arts (ACA) is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit arts organization that offers more than 250 programs annually in the visual, literary, and performing arts, many of which are free to the community. Programs include classes and workshops for adults and children, vacation arts programs for students aged 4-14, art exhibits, theater and music performances, lectures, arts festivals, and many more programs designed to make art accessible to all.

- **Arlington Children's Theater**

[ACT.arlington.ma.us/](http://ACT.arlington.ma.us/)

ACT, a non-profit organization run entirely by parent volunteers, hires professional theater artists to work with the children to bring high production values to the shows.

- **Arlington Community Television**

<http://acmi.tv>

Public, Educational and Governmental Access Television on RCN, Comcast, and Verizon.

- **Arlington Education Foundation**

[www.arlingtoneducationfoundationma.org/](http://www.arlingtoneducationfoundationma.org/)

AEF is a 501(c)3 corporation that raises money to support and enrich the Arlington Public Schools.

- **Arlington Family Connection**

[www.arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](http://www.arlingtonfamilyconnection.org)

Non-profit organization for families with children ages six and under in Arlington.

- **Arlington Friends of the Drama**

[www.afdtheatre.org/](http://www.afdtheatre.org/)

AFD Theatre (Arlington Friends of the Drama) has presented award-winning productions to the community for 85 years. Actors, production staff, behind the scenes supporters, and members are always welcome.

- **Arlington Historical Society**

[www.arlingtonhistorical.org/](http://www.arlingtonhistorical.org/)

The Arlington Historical Society promotes and encourages knowledge of the history of the Town of Arlington from its earliest days (1635) to modern times. It preserves, documents, and shares Arlington history through exhibits at the Smith Museum, through conserving and offering tours of the Jason Russell House, an eighteenth century home and Revolutionary War battle site, and by hosting a yearly lecture series, school group visits, and academic and family researchers.

- **Arlington Hockey and Figure Skating Club**

[www.Arlingtonice.com/](http://www.Arlingtonice.com/)

Offers programs for children 5 – 19 in figure skating and hockey.

- **Arlington Housing Authority**

[www.arlingtonhousing.org/](http://www.arlingtonhousing.org/)

The Arlington Housing Authority operates several housing assistance programs, which provide direct housing in government-owned developments or subsidized housing in privately owned dwellings for persons of low or very low income.

- **Arlington List**

[www.arlingtonlist.org/](http://www.arlingtonlist.org/)

Email list for Arlington residents. You can think of the list as a long, long back fence, where neighbors can chat, trade stories, and get some useful information about Arlington.

- **Arlington Parents List**

<https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/arlingtonparents>

The Parents list is a conversational email list for parents to discuss parenting and Arlington events for parents with other area residents.

- **Arlington Pop Warner**

[www.leaguelineup.com/welcome.asp?url=arlingtonpw](http://www.leaguelineup.com/welcome.asp?url=arlingtonpw)

- **Arlington Recreation Commission**

<http://www.arlingtonma.gov/departments/recreation>

Arlington Recreation, a self-sustaining department of the town of Arlington, offers safe, quality and affordable programs and facilities for citizens of all ages and abilities. Staff members are qualified professionals, dedicated to serving the community with excellence and pride.

- **Arlington Soccer Club**

[www.arlingtonsoccerclub.com/](http://www.arlingtonsoccerclub.com/)

- **Arlington Youth Consultation Center (AYCC)**

AYCC works towards the treatment, prevention, and resolution of problems relating to the children and youth of the Town, and advises and assists other agencies concerned with such matters. AYCC provides counseling services (individual, group, and family), crisis intervention services, referral services, and pharmacological services to children and youths and families. The services are available to all Arlington residents whose problems involve children and adolescents ages 3 to 21.

Located at 670R Massachusetts Avenue. Call 781-316-3255.

<http://www.arlingtonma.gov/departments/health-human-services/arlington-youth-counseling-center-aycc>

- **Child At Risk Hotline**  
[www.mass.gov/](http://www.mass.gov/)  
 The Department of Children and Families (DCF) is the Massachusetts state agency responsible for protecting children from child abuse and neglect. To report abuse or neglect, call the Child-at-Risk Hotline anytime of the day or night at 800-792-5200.
- **Child Care Resource Center Inc.**  
<http://www.manta.com/c/mm8wjrs/child-care-resource-center-inc>CCRC works to ensure that children thrive. Promote the care and education of all children through advocacy and programs that serve families, professionals and communities.
- **The Children's Room**  
[www.childrensroom.org/](http://www.childrensroom.org/)  
 Center for Grieving Children and Teenagers, Inc. 819 Massachusetts Ave. Arlington, Massachusetts 02476 781-4741
- **Fidelity House**  
[www.fidelityhouse.org/](http://www.fidelityhouse.org/)  
 Fidelity House is dedicated to meeting the needs of Arlington families by providing flexible, diverse and quality programs for all ages. Youth development is the primary purpose of the center. Its mission is the promotion of good citizenship, increasing self-reliance and furthering the social, physical and emotional growth of the individual.
- **Little Fox Shop**  
<http://www.littlefoxshop.com/>  
 A volunteer-run children's resale shop in support of the Fox Library. The shop carries an array of children's toys, books, games, clothes, infant equipment, and maternity wear. Quality donations are accepted and volunteer opportunities are available.
- **Fox Library**  
[www.robbinslibrary.org/about/fox-branch](http://www.robbinslibrary.org/about/fox-branch)  
 The Fox Branch of the Robbins Library has a variety of fiction and nonfiction titles for adults, young adults and children, as well as newspapers and magazines. Small collections of videos and Large Type Print books rotate from the Robbins Library to the branch on a regular basis. CD-ROM games for children are available to borrow. Infant-toddler programs, preschool story times and sing-alongs are offered
- **Robbins Library**  
[www.robbinslibrary.org/](http://www.robbinslibrary.org/)  
 The library maintains a high quality collection of current materials to meet residents' desires for leisure reading, listening and viewing, recreational and cultural enrichment.
- **Walking in Arlington**  
[www.walkinginarlington.org/](http://www.walkinginarlington.org/)  
 A group concerned about issues involving pedestrians.

## APPENDIX A

### Bullying and Retaliation are Prohibited

The Arlington Public Schools are committed to maintaining a school environment where students are free from bullying, including cyber-bullying, and the effects of such conduct. We further recognize that students may be more vulnerable to bullying based upon actual or perceived differences related to race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socio-economic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical developmental or sensory disability or by associations with other people who have one or more of these characteristics. We will provide support to students whose vulnerability is brought to the attention of a teacher, guidance counselor or administrator through observation or direct report from a student, staff member or parent/guardian. This support may be in the form of counseling, education to support both the student's ability to report bullying and his/her skills, knowledge and strategies to respond to bullying or harassment.

#### **A. Definitions**

**Bullying** is conduct that is repeated by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional and is directed at a student, causing one or more of the following:

- a. Physical or emotional harm to the targeted student or damage to his/her property;
- b. Placement of the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- c. Hostile environment at school for the targeted student;
- d. Infringement on the rights of the targeted student at school; or
- e. Material and substantial disruption to the educational process or the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying generally involves "picking on" a student over time and may include conduct such as hitting and shoving; pressuring a student into taking an action he/she does not wish to take; words that involve threats, teasing, putdowns, or name-calling; threatening looks, gestures, or actions; cruel rumors; false accusations; and social isolation.

**Cyberbullying** is bullying through use of cell phones, computers or other technology and may include conduct such as sending derogatory, harassing, or threatening email messages, instant messages, text messages, or bogs; creating websites or bogs that make fun of, humiliate, or intimidate others; and posting or sending embarrassing or inappropriate pictures or images of others. It may also include creating a website, bog, or posting by which the creator/author impersonates another person.

**Hostile Environment** is a circumstance in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education. The targeted student becomes so concerned about bullying that he/she is unable to participate in and concentrate on academic and other school activities.

**Retaliation** is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. It involves a student or staff member “getting back at” a student because of a belief that the student reported bullying or provided information about it to an adult or others who may help the targeted student.

**B. Acts of Bullying (Including Cyberbullying) and Retaliation Are Prohibited.**

The Arlington Public Schools prohibit bullying (including cyberbullying) and retaliation as defined above both at school and under the following circumstances:

- on school grounds or any property next to school grounds;
- at the bus stop or on school buses or any other school vehicle;
- at any school-sponsored, or school-related activities, functions or programs;
- through use any school computers, internet connection or other school based technology;
- at a location or during activities that are not school related, or by using a private computer or cell phone, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the targeted student, infringes on the rights of the targeted student at school, or otherwise disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

**C. How to Report Bullying**

Students who believe they are targets of bullying or retaliation, or who know about bullying conduct should report the conduct to: K-5 Building principals, 6-8 Grade level Administrator, 9-12 House Deans. Students may also report the conduct to a teacher, guidance counselor, or other school staff member, who will in turn report the incident to the Principal (or to a member of the Superintendent’s staff if appropriate). Students are urged to report all conduct that is of actual concern to them. However, knowingly making a false accusation of bullying could result in discipline.

**D. Addressing Concerns Regarding Bullying**

The Principal or other appropriate administrator will be responsible for taking steps to investigate and otherwise address reports of bullying and retaliation. Where appropriate, the Principal/designee will take steps to restore a student’s safety even before an investigation has been completed. Students who engage in bullying will be subject to discipline by the Principal or Assistant Principal, subject to any procedural requirements. In making disciplinary decisions, the Principal/Assistant Principal will consider both the need for accountability and the importance of teaching appropriate behavior. The range of disciplinary action for students that may be taken includes, but is not limited to:

- verbal warning;
- written warning;
- reprimand;
- detention;
- short-term or long-term suspension; or
- expulsion from school

In addition to taking disciplinary action, the Principal/Designee will report conduct relating to bullying and retaliation to local law enforcement if s/he believes that criminal charges may be pursued.

Nothing in this handbook is intended to prevent school staff and/or school committee if applicable, from addressing and taking disciplinary action against a student for conduct that does not meet the definition of bullying/cyberbullying or retaliation, as defined above, but that is nevertheless

inappropriate for the school environment.

**E. Closing a Complaint Regarding Bullying**

In the event school staff determines that bullying or retaliation (as defined in this policy) has taken place, the Principal or designee will, in addition to taking disciplinary action, notify the parent or guardian of the student aggressor. Staff will also inform the parent of the targeted student of the steps that will be support the student and to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation, so long as consistent with applicable legal restrictions. For example, specific information about disciplinary action taken will generally not be released to the target's parent or guardian—unless it involve a “stay away or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

**F. Further Review**

If either party is dissatisfied with the results of an investigation, he/she may direct his/her concerns in writing to the Superintendent or designee for further consideration.

In addition, regardless of the outcome, school officials will inform parents about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS) and how to access that system. Information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, emails can be sent to [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu) or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information are also available at the Superintendent's office.

***The above language is intended to be consistent with the Arlington Public School's Policy Addressing Bullying and the Arlington Public School's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. A copy of the complete plan is available at: <http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/administration/bullyingprevention/pdfs/apsbullyingpreventionplan.pdf>***

## APPENDIX B

### **DUE PROCESS and OTHER PROVISIONS RELATING TO STUDENT SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION**

#### **STATUTORY OFFENSES: CONDUCT THAT MAY LEAD TO EXPULSION UNDER M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and 37H½**

Under M.G.L. Ch. 71, §§37H, students are subject to expulsion (i.e., permanent exclusion) by the Principal for the following conduct:

- Possession of a controlled substance (such as marijuana, cocaine, or prescription drugs not authorized by the school nurse)
- Possession of a dangerous weapon\*
- Assault on teachers, administrative staff or other educational personnel

\*This includes not only knives and guns, explosive devices and realistic replicas of such weapons/devices, but also other objects used to assault another person or to otherwise create a dangerous situation, such as a baseball bat, a pair of scissors, matches or a lighter. While such objects would not always constitute “dangerous weapons”, administrators and educational professionals will review the circumstances of each case and make a reasonable determination about whether a particular object in a student’s possession constitutes a dangerous weapon in the school setting. Any illegal weapon will be turned over to the Police Department. Any student who brings a firearm to school must be expelled for a minimum of one school year, with exceptions granted only by the superintendent. (The definition of a firearm includes but is not limited to guns (including a starter gun), bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines and similar devices.)

Students are also subject to long term suspension/expulsion by the Principal when charged/convicted of a felony based upon the standards and procedures set forth in M.G.L. c.71, §37H½.

Any student who is removed from school for a disciplinary offense under G.L. c. 71, §37H or §37H½ for more than ten consecutive days will have an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress during the period of removal under a school-wide education service plan, and will so informed at the time of the suspension/expulsion.

#### **Procedures Applicable to Statutory Offenses**

When considering the exclusion of a student from school for possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance (such as marijuana, cocaine, or prescription drugs not authorized by the school nurse), or assault on teachers, an administrator may place a student on short term suspension (ten days or less) based upon an informal hearing, to be followed by a formal hearing before the Principal within that period of suspension to determine whether to take additional disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from school.

1. The informal hearing will be in the form of a conference between the student and the principal or designee. At this conference, the student (1) shall be informed of the reason for the conference, (2) shall be given the opportunity to present his or her side of the story, and (3) shall be given a decision on the suspension. If the administrator deems delay of the hearing

necessary to avoid danger or substantial disruption, this process may occur immediately after, rather than before, the suspension.

2. Prior to putting a suspension into effect, the principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to telephone and inform the student's parent or guardian of the impending suspension; this shall include attempts to contact the parents or guardian at home and at work. Parents may contact the school for additional information regarding the suspension.

3. A letter will be mailed to the parent/guardian of the suspended student stating:

- a) The reason for the suspension
- b) A statement of the effective date and duration of the suspension
- c) A statement regarding whether or not the Principal will schedule a formal hearing to consider further discipline, up to and including expulsion from school in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, §37H (See below.)

When considering a suspension/expulsion of a student charged with/convicted of felony, the Principal will use the standards and procedures set forth in M.G.L. c.71, §37H½. In addition, prior to initiating such procedures, the Principal may meet informally with the student and/or his parents to review the charge and the applicable standards if the Principal deems appropriate. (See below.)

**Controlled Substances, Dangerous Weapons and Assaults on Education Personnel**  
**(M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H)**

1. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

2. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

3. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

4. Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal is not limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

5. Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to the

school or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

### **Felony Complaints and Felony Convictions (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H½)**

1. Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent. The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the Superintendent. The student shall notify the Superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) within three (3) calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

2. Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent. The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal; or headmaster, including recommending and alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

3. Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to the school or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

## CONDUCT OTHER THAN STATUTORY OFFENSES

Conduct of concern in a school setting that is not covered by M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and 37H½ may result in disciplinary action up to and including long term suspension (up to 90 days) from school. The administration will determine the consequences for serious infractions of the Code of Discipline and avoid using long-term suspension from school (i.e., more than ten days cumulative in a school year) as a consequence until alternatives have been tried as appropriate. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.)

If a principal decides to impose an out-of-school suspension on for a student in preschool or in grades K through 3, the principal will send to the superintendent a copy of the written determination and an explanation of the reasons therefore, before the out-of- school suspension takes effect.

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

### DUE PROCESS: PROCEDURES THAT APPLY TO DISCIPLINE FOR CONDUCT OTHER THAN STATUTORY OFFENSES

#### **A. In-School Suspension for Less than 10 Cumulative Days During a School Year**

An in-school suspension is a removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises. The procedure for an in-school suspension of no more than (10) school days (consecutive or cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year) will be as follows:

1. The administrator will inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged, the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to respond. If the administrator determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the administrator will inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which may not exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.
2. On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the administrator will make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The administrator will also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting will be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the administrator is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts will constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.
3. The administrator will send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the administrator to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement and possible response to the behavior. Such meeting will be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the administrator is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall

constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

An in-school suspension of more than 10 cumulative days in a school year will be subject to the procedures for long-term suspension found under Section C below.

**B. Procedures for Short-Term, Out-of-School Suspensions (10 Cumulative Days or Less in a School Year)**

Except in the case of an Emergency Removal as provided under Section D below, prior to imposing a short-term out-of-school suspension (i.e., 10 days or less in a school year), an administrator will provide the student and his/her parent oral and written notice and an opportunity to participate in an informal hearing.

1. Notice: The written notice to the student and the parent will be in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate and will include the following:

- a) The disciplinary offense;
- b) The basis for the charge;
- c) The potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- d) The opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the administrator concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
- e) The date, time, and location of the hearing;
- f) The right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

Written notice to the parent may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the school and parent.

2. Efforts to Involve Parent: The administrator will make reasonable efforts to notify the parent of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the administrator must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The administrator is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the administrator has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

3. Format of Hearing: The administrator will discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also will have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the administrator should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate. The administrator will provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the administrator should consider in determining consequences for the student.

4. Decision: The administrator will provide written notice to the student and parent of his/her determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal. The notice of determination may be in the form of an update to the original written notice of hearing.

### c. Procedures for Long-Term Suspension

Except in the case of an Emergency Removal provided under Section D below, prior to imposing a long-term suspension (**more than 10 days of suspension, whether in-school or out-of-school, whether consecutive or cumulative for multiple offenses during a school year**), an administrator will follow the procedures for short-term suspension plus **additional** procedures as follows:

1. Notice: The notice will include all of the components for a short-term suspension in Section B above, plus the following:

- a) In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the administrator may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
- b) The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
- c) The right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
- d) The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- e) The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the administrator, and a copy of the audio recording provided to the student or parent upon request; and
- f) The right to appeal administrator's decision to impose long-term suspension to the superintendent.

2. Format of Hearing: The Hearing will afford the rights set forth in the notice above. The administrator will also provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the administrator should consider in determining consequences for the student.

3. Decision: Based on the evidence, the administrator will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to long-term suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The administrator will send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the school and the parent. If the administrator decides to suspend the student on a long-term basis, the written determination will:

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing was held, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached;
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school (if more than 10 consecutive days);
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the administrator's decision to the superintendent or designee. Notice of the right of appeal will be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and will include the following information stated in plain language:
  - a) The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within

- five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that
- b) The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the administrator's determination on appeal.

No long-term suspension will extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

#### **D. Exception for Emergency Removal**

Notwithstanding the provisions for short or long-term suspension set forth above, a student who is charged with a disciplinary offense may be removed temporarily from school if the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the administrator's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

The administrator will immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger or disruption by the student.

The temporary removal will not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the administrator will provide the following, as applicable to the length of suspension:

- Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and other applicable matters;
- Provide written notice to the student and parent as provided in Section B or C above, as applicable;
- Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the administrator, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the administrator, student, and parent.
- Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day.

An administrator may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

#### **E. Appeal to the Superintendent**

If a decision by an administrator, following the parent meeting, results in suspension of a student for more than 10 cumulative school days for the school year, the student may appeal the decision to the superintendent. In order to do so the student or parent must file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days with a seven (7) day postponement option. The superintendent must hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days. If the appeal is not filed within this time frame, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The following apply:

- The superintendent will make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The superintendent will be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent will send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.
- The superintendent will conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence will be. The superintendent will arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which will be provided to the student or parent upon request. The superintendent will inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
- The student will have all the rights afforded the student at the administrator's hearing for long-term suspension as described in Section C above.
- The superintendent will issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements for a long-term suspension as described in Section C above. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the administrator, but will not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the administrator's decision.

The decision of the superintendent constitutes the final decision of the school district.