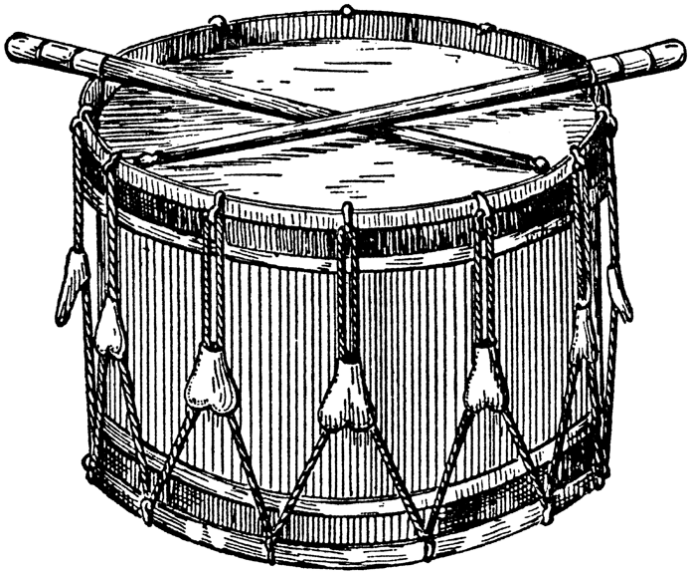

# William Diamond Middle School
## *Student Handbook 2016-2017*

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## FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

Dear Diamond Families,

Welcome to Diamond Middle School. The middle school years are an exciting time of intellectual, emotional, and social growth. Through collaboration and a shared commitment to learning, we hope to make these years both positive and productive so that each student at Diamond has the chance to develop to his or her fullest capacity.

In the spirit of strengthening this partnership, we have created a student handbook that will facilitate respectful communication, cooperation, and a shared commitment to learning. The handbook is published in digital form on the Diamond Middle School website, and we will continue to print a limited number of copies for those families without reliable Internet access. I encourage you to keep abreast of school news by subscribing to the PTA Listserv and regularly visiting the Diamond website to read my blog, view teacher websites, and peruse announcements.

We look forward to working together in the coming year for the benefit of all our students.

Graciously,

Jennifer E. Turner
Principal

*Diamond Middle School is named after William Diamond,*
*a boy whose drum mustered the Lexington Minute Men on April 19, 1775.*

## THE HOME AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

**Announcements**
Students are informed of activities, schedule changes, and important events over the public address system during homeroom each morning. In addition, end of the day announcements serve as reminders. If you sign-up for the PTA Listserv, these announcements will be sent to you daily. They are also available on the Diamond website.

**PTA**
The PTA serves as a forum where parents, teachers, administrators and other concerned adults discuss ways to promote quality education, strive to expand the arts, encourage community involvement, and work for a healthy environment and safe neighborhoods. Our goal is to be a resource for families and the community, to work with and support the administration and staff and to advocate for the well-being of every child.

In addition, the PTA sponsors educational and enrichment opportunities, such as guest speakers and performers, student clubs and teams, social gatherings and appreciation events for teachers, parents and students; the acquisition of resources and equipment; professional development; back-to-school and graduation events; and scholarship monies.

The PTA schedules activities on a monthly basis. Notices of each event will be mailed to all households on a regular basis or carried home by students. These events provide an excellent opportunity for students, parents, and teachers to get to know each other.

**Whom to Call**
The Classroom Teacher: Parents are encouraged to talk to teachers before contacting the administration with any questions or concerns that pertain to such items as student struggles, homework assignments, special events, classroom expectations, grades, tests, and so on.

Administrators & Guidance: Questions pertaining to broader issues of school or district policy, transportation, school-wide activities and events, curriculum and instruction, course selection and placement, and the like should be directed to the principal, assistant principal, and/or guidance counselors.

**Messages to Teachers**
Email is often the most efficient way of notifying a staff member that you would like to talk. In most cases, e-mails are teacher's first initial and last name followed by @sch.ci.lexington.ma.us. A complete list of emails is available on our website.

To reach a teacher by phone, you may leave a message on his/her voicemail or leave a message with the secretary, telephone (781) 861-2460. Teachers usually return calls at the beginning or end of school. You may also leave a note in the teacher's mailbox located in the office.

**Back-to-School Night**
Back-to-School Night is held early in the fall and provides one of the first opportunities during the school year for parents and teachers to meet each other. Parents will follow their student's schedule, a copy of which will be sent home with the student. In each class, teachers will give a brief course description and their expectations for the year. Since the class periods are abbreviated, this is not a time to discuss your child's progress but to introduce yourself and to get an overview of the course. Many people will want to meet each teacher, so it is requested that you keep conversations brief. There will be several other opportunities to talk at length with a teacher.

**Conferences**
Parent-teacher conferences are offered each year after the end of the first marking period. A parent-teacher conference is a time when important people in a student's life can talk about how that student is doing in school. It is a chance for parents to ask questions about the class or the student's progress, as well as an opportunity for

parents and teachers to work together as a team to find ways of helping a particular student. **Conferences are not required, nor expected for each family.**

Conference dates are listed on this year's calendar, but there is always the possibility of change. Notice of conference dates, schedules, and sign-ups come through the PTA listserv and the Diamond website. Every attempt will be made to accommodate requests, but some time periods fill quickly, and it may not be possible to schedule conferences at the particular times requested. **Due to scheduling limitations, not all families will be guaranteed a conference.** Parents who have specific concerns about a student's progress are encouraged to contact the academic team leader or teacher directly by leaving a message either via email or voicemail.

This is not, however, the only opportunity to see a teacher; parents are advised and encouraged to communicate with a teacher any time there is a problem or concern.

**Newsletter**
The primary source of information for most school events, activities, and PTA schedules is through the Principal's blog, listserv emails, and the Diamond website.

**Some Thoughts for How to Support Your Student in Middle School**
One of the biggest differences between successful and unsuccessful students is study habits. Good study habits do not come naturally to most of us. Studying needs to become a habit, and parents and guardians can help you develop this ability. Study habits take time and work to develop.

Good study habits are an important key to success in school. We hope the following hints will be helpful to our students and their parents/guardians:

1. Create a study area
   a. Provide your child with a room or a corner of a room without distractions.
   b. The study area should have the following items: desk, table, or writing surface, pencil, pens, ruler and paper, a set of colored crayons of markers, a dictionary and an atlas; good lighting.
   c. The study area should be without the following items: television, loud music, games, and a telephone; friends or noisy siblings; exception: the family pet!

2. Encourage your child to do homework at a regular time
   a. Make up a study schedule. Since an assignment notebook is provided by the school, check to see that the assignments are written down.

3. Make sure your child has the proper supplies for school. These include a three ring notebook, notebook dividers, paper, pens, and pencils; three hole pencil case. Ask what special items may be needed.

4. Preparation for the school day
   a. Encourage your child to get clothes and school materials ready the night before. This can prevent confusion and temper flare-ups in the morning.

5. Enforce reasonable hours
   a. Ensure your child will be able to perform well in school the next day by having him/her get the proper amount of sleep.
   b. It is recommended that early adolescents get at least eight hours of sleep a night.

6. Attend Back-to-School Night
   a. Back-to-School Night is the best way for you to learn what your child is studying in school and to meet your child's teachers.

7. Join the Parent Teacher Association (PTA)
   a. We invite you to join and participate in the activities of the Parent-Teacher Organization. We typically meet the first week of each month here at the Middle School and once a year in Boston.

8. Get academic help for your child
   a. Do not hesitate to seek academic help for your child. Contact your child's teacher or guidance counselor.

9. Encourage your child to plan ahead for long term projects and assignments.
   a. Many students think of homework as only the next day's work. They fail to mention studying ahead of time for quizzes and tests and they often put off starting projects early. Many students claim that all their homework can be done in a study hall, but that is usually not enough time to complete all work thoroughly and study for quizzes and tests.

## PROGRAM, POLICIES, AND REGULATIONS

**Teaming and Configuration of Classes**
The instructional team approach has been used at Diamond for more than a decade. In grades 6, 7, and 8 students are assigned to an instructional team. Teaming allows a group of students and staff members to develop group identity, nurture personal relationships, and provide each student with a sense of stability and consistency in the larger school environment. Teaming assignments are made each summer for the following year. A student information form will be sent home in the spring, so that parents can contribute information to the placement process.

At Diamond, only math classes in grades 7 and 8 and foreign languages in grade 8 are ability grouped (based on teacher recommendation). All other classes are heterogeneously grouped, which means that class assignment is random (aside from the number of boys and girls placed in any one class). The goal is classes balanced in terms of gender and learning needs.

**Homework**
(Excerpt from the Lexington Public Schools Homework Policy)

Homework is an important extension of activities begun in school by students under the guidance of their teachers and continued at home. Working together, home and school can guide students as they develop their learning capacities by making possible experiences which foster learning.

Homework provides for practice of skills and application of principles based upon work begun in the classroom. It may enrich school experiences and promote a permanent interest in learning. A secondary goal of homework is to stimulate individual initiative, personal responsibility and self-direction.

Listed below are the responsibilities of teachers, students and parents with regard to homework.

**Teachers will:**
- assign homework that is meaningful and useful to individuals
- provide appropriate and timely response to all homework assignments
- provide a balance between long-range and short-term assignments
- give assignments over weekends that are no longer than a daily assignment
- not assign homework during vacation periods and on legal and religious holidays
- monitor long-term assignments in order to avoid last minute student efforts

- give clear, concise directions; allow time for student questions; consider availability of materials
- provide legible worksheets when used
- inform parents of their role in supervising homework
- ensure that students who are absent know how they may make up homework
- monitor the effectiveness of homework as reflected in student performance

**Students will:**

- record the directions for homework
- ask questions when necessary to clarify the assignment
- follow a schedule and keep materials in order
- hand in, on time, neat, accurate, and meaningful products
- plan time for completion of long-term assignments
- determine and complete homework assigned during absence

**Parents will:**

- provide a suitable place for study
- help students develop routine home study habits
- ensure that absence does not interfere with makeup
- assist and correct but do not do the actual work
- notify the teacher if students experienced extreme difficulty
- assist students in making wise course and course level choices
- be aware of long-term assignments and assist students in learning to budget their time accordingly
- contact the teacher if he/she observes and absence of homework

Because the time required of individuals to complete assignments varies, homework activities must therefore be planned to meet each student's individual learning profile. Though it is impossible to predict the time necessary for all students to complete assignments because of different learning rates and age levels, the following is suggested:

**At the Middle School Level:**

At the middle school certain courses, but not all, require homework at all levels. The Program of Studies, when read carefully provides a great deal of information about course requirements. If you have questions about homework, consult with the teacher.

Homework will not be given on legal and religious holidays or during vacations.

Homework will include both daily or short-term assignments and long-range assignments. These are suggested guidelines for the average amount of homework:

- Grade 6 One hour each night
- Grade 7 One and one-half hours each night
- Grade 8 Two hours each night

For hints about how parents can support their child's homework at home see the "Homework Hints" in the family section of our website.

**Extra Help**

For extra help in any subject, students should contact the appropriate teacher to arrange a time—perhaps during TIE block, during a study hall, or before or after school—to come in and get help.

**WIN**

This year, Diamond will be implementing an intervention and enrichment block called WIN (What I Need). This block will allow time for students to receive extra support in their academic classes and/or enrichment in a wide variety of subject areas. The WIN block will take place twice each week, and each

week, with the help of Diamond staff, students will have the opportunity to sign up for selected interventions or enrichments. Teachers will also have the option of pre-booking students for interventions when needed. For more information, please see the WIN link on the Diamond website.

**Books and Supplies**
Textbooks are provided by the school and must have a protective cover provided by the student. At the end of the school year, students must return the same book assigned to them in good condition. When this does not happen, a Pupil Obligation-Notification Form is completed by the teacher, signed by the student, and a copy is filed with the office where a fee is assessed. The student receives a copy of the form to bring home to parents or guardians.

**Student Records**
State and federal laws and regulations ensure parents' and eligible students' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment and destruction of student records. Copies of the Massachusetts Students Records Regulations are available from the Counseling Office.

*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. Authorized school personnel include professional, administrative and clerical staff who are employed by or under agreement with the school department and who need access to a record in order to fulfill their duties. The school department also discloses student records without parent/eligible student consent to officials of other elementary or secondary schools in which a student enrolls, or seeks, intends, or is instructed to enroll upon receipt of a request from such school officials, so long as the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer.

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*
The regulations require school authorities to destroy a student's temporary record within seven years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws 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.

**Standardized Testing and Research Studies**
Students at William Diamond Middle School participate in the MCAS at appropriate grade levels as required by the Department of Education of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Students also participate in various math assessments to gauge achievement.

**Progress Reports**
Progress reports are written communications from teacher to parent indicating the child's academic and behavioral progress in a given class. All students at Diamond will receive a progress report for each class midway through each quarter of each school year and a report card at the end of each quarter. Progress reports and report cards are accessed through the Aspen parent portal. Please email: parentportal@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us if you need help logging in to access your student's progress reports or report cards. Some teachers will also send home a hard copy progress report which is to be signed by the parent and returned to the teacher. Should your child receive a negative progress report, it is a good idea to communicate further with the teacher. Parents are advised and encouraged to communicate with a teacher any time there is a problem or concern.

**Report Cards**
Computerized report cards are posted quarterly to the Aspen parent portal during the school year. In addition to letter grades, a choice of informative comments, in areas such as effort, preparation, participation and cooperation, is available to teachers.

**Gym**
Shorts, T-shirts, and sneakers are the required dress for physical education classes. Sweatshirts and sweatpants may be needed during cool weather. Any additional information and instructions concerning gym clothing and equipment will be provided by the physical education teachers at the beginning of the year.

**School Bus and Transportation Policies**
*(Excerpt from TRANSPORTATION POLICY OF THE LEXINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS)*

1. School children in grades K-6 shall be transported without charge if they live two miles or more from the school to which they are assigned. .
2. Students who are not entitled to transportation between home and school free of charge may purchase a ticket to ride the bus for the school year in accordance with rates approved by the Lexington School Committee.
3. Distances will be measured from the sidewalk or public way in front of or nearest to the homeowner's property, to the closest entrance door of the school to the homeowner's property
4. The responsibility of escorting children across the street when sidewalks are only on one side and/or where the bus stop is on the opposite side of the street shall rest with the parents of the child involved.
5. The procedure of handling behavior problems, including bad language, on school buses shall be published in each student handbook.

**Regulations for Middle School Bus Students**
The school discipline code is in effect during all school-sponsored activities including, but not limited to, transportation. Consequently, violation of the school's discipline code on the bus or when loading or unloading may result not only in removal from the bus but also exclusion from school, up to and including expulsion.

The procedure for handling behavior problems, including bad language, on school buses shall be as follows:

1. First Offense - A letter shall be sent from the principal or designee to the student's parents advising the parents of the misbehavior.
2. Second Offense - Bus privileges may be revoked for a period of time and parents shall be so notified by the principal or designee of the school the student attends.
3. Subsequent Offenses - The school may revoke bus privileges for any subsequent offenses.

***At School***

- Walk to the bus line after the bus has arrived
- Whenever possible, stay on the sidewalk while walking to the bus

***On the Bus***

- Find a seat on the bus quickly
- No saving seats
- Do not block the aisle
- 2-3 students are permitted in a seat
- Stay seated while the bus is moving. Wait until it stops before getting up
- Keep hands and all articles in the bus
- Open windows only with the permission of the driver
- Use good language on the bus
- Be respectful to the bus driver

***At the Bus Stop***

- Students and their parents are responsible for being at the bus stop on time.
- Students and their parents are responsible for the students' safety and conduct at the bus stop.

In the interest of safety…

- Students should walk their bicycles to the bike rack once they have arrived at school.
- Students may not use skateboards, scooters, etc., on school property.

**Bicycles**
For safety purposes, students who ride their bicycles to school should obey the rules of the road, stay to the right in single file (no doubling up), and use the proper hand signals. Students are reminded that Massachusetts state law requires the use of bike helmets by persons under 17. While students are in school, bicycles should be locked in the

racks provided for that purpose. Although the bike racks are quite visible, vandalism does occur and the school cannot be held responsible. Bike racks are located within proximity to the entrance of the school building.

**School Store**
The school store is sponsored by the PTA and is staffed by parent volunteers. The store carries pens, pencils, paper, notebooks, and many other supplies. It is open everyday during lunch for students, October through May.

**Messages to Students**
When parents need to get an important message to their child during the school day, the message should be left with the school secretary at (781) 861-2460. In order to minimize class interruptions, messages should be limited to important ones such as family illness or a parent being absent from home after school. Parents should prearrange with their children that forgotten lunches, gym clothes, instruments or books will be left at the front office for them to pick up during the day. If no pre-arrangements are made, students should always check at the office to see if parents have brought the forgotten article to school. In an effort not to interrupt classroom learning, calls will not be made to individual classes during the school day – only at the AM and PM announcements.

**Lost and Found**
Lost and found storage is located in the front office area. Certain valuable items, such as eyeglasses, are kept inside the office on the counter. Clothes and other items will be placed in the "Lost and Found" container near the nurse's office. Families should label their children's clothes, handbags, wallets, and cameras. Efforts will be made to locate the owner if the found item can be identified. Twice a year, unclaimed clothes are donated to charity.

## MEDIA & TECHNOLOGY

**Library/Media Center**
The Library/Media Center at Diamond offers a diverse collection of print and non-print resources providing curriculum support for teachers and students. In addition to periodicals, the print collection includes fiction, non-fiction, biography, and reference books. The non-print collection includes audio books, subscription databases, and video resources. The library has computers with Internet access which are used only for school related research and word processing. The library catalog is automated and can be accessed via the Internet from the networked computers as well as from home. Students are systematically taught research skills by the librarian in conjunction with classroom assignments or projects. Books are loaned for a three week period and may be renewed. Students must pay for lost or damaged materials.

**Computer Facilities**
In addition to the computer facilities in the library, Diamond Middle School has a computer lab with Internet access. These computer facilities may only be used by students when there is adult supervision. Students wishing to use the word processing lab during a study hall or lunch must obtain a pass from one of their classroom teachers. If, at the time students go to the lab, there is no adult supervision, students must return to study hall or lunch and use the lab at another time. In addition to computer labs, Diamond has several mobile carts which provide a class set of laptops or I-pads for in-class use. Students are required to treat computer equipment with care and respect. Inappropriate behavior or mischief of any kind is subject to standard disciplinary procedures. Repeat occurrences may result in restricted use of school equipment or in students being held responsible for repairs to, or replacement of, damaged items. All students are required to sign and comply with the Lexington Public Schools Guidelines for Student Internet Use as adopted by the School Committee on July 7, 2015. This policy is set forth in full in the Appendix included as part of the complete version of the Student Handbook.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

Massachusetts law requires compulsory attendance for all students. Chapter 76, section 1 of the Massachusetts General Laws requires all children between the ages of six and sixteen to attend school. The school must uphold state laws relative to student attendance.

We strongly discourage family vacations when school is in session. In addition to compromising the attendance law, family vacations interrupt the educational process of each course in ways that make-up work cannot reverse. Teachers are not required to provide work in advance. It is the students' responsibility to ask each teacher for make-up assignments.

**Student Absence Notification Program**

At the commencement of each school year, parents/guardians will be sent a notice instructing them to call a designated telephone number (781-861-2460 x1) or send an email to diamondabsence@sch.ci.lexington.ma.us at a designated time (before 8:30 a.m.) to inform the school of the student's absence and the reason for such absence. The notice will also require such parent or guardian to furnish the school with a home, work or other emergency telephone number where they can be contacted during the school day. If the school does not receive a message from the parent/guardian by the designated time (8:30 a.m.), then the school shall call the telephone number or numbers furnished to inquire about the student's absence. Parents will be contacted within three (3) days of the student's absence if the Parent(s) or Guardian has not contacted the school regarding the absence. Students arriving late to school must report to the main office with their parent or with a signed parent note. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact school staff and work collaboratively with them to correct the reasons that the student is missing school.

**Middle School Attendance Policy for Absent and Tardy Students**

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 if a student has accrued any of the following:

- Five (5) or more unexcused absences in the school year
- Five (5) or more days tardy (unexcused)
- Two (2) or more classes/periods (unexcused)

Please note that when a student has been absent for five (5) or more consecutive days, parents must obtain a doctor's note and submit it to school. *If a student is absent for eight or more days in a quarter, school officials may file a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) petition with the Juvenile Court which could result in a hearing before a Juvenile Court Judge. Prior to the filing of a CRA, Families and Students will be required to work with school administrators to improve the student's attendance. Chronic absenteeism may also lead to academic failure for the year and retention of the student.*

**An Excused Absence/Tardy includes:**

- Documented illness or injury
- Bereavement/family funeral
- Major religious observations
- Extraordinary family circumstances (excused at the discretion of the principal)

An **Unexcused Absence/Tardy** is any absence or tardy that is not covered by the aforementioned definition of "Excused Absence/Tardy." Examples of an unexcused absence may include, but may not be limited to: Repetitive or chronic absence or tardiness due to illness or injury not documented by a doctor or other medical professional.

- Cutting class (suspendable offense)
- Truancy
- Family vacations
- Undocumented absences
- Non-emergency family situations

**Before School Protocol**

- The school building opens to students at 7:50 a.m. Prior to 7:50 a.m. students are expected to congregate in the courtyard outside the front entrance. Students may enter the building at 7:30 to attend breakfast or use the library. Students not using the cafeteria or library appropriately will be sent outside. Faculty members who wish to meet with students in the morning must provide them with a pass to either enter the building early or leave the cafeteria prior to 7:50.

- On days when weather conditions are poor, students may enter the building earlier and will be supervised in designated areas until 7:50, when they will be allowed to proceed to their homerooms. Students who arrive to school after 8:00 must sign in at the main office where they will be marked tardy and will wait until 8:05 to proceed to their locker.

**During School Protocol**

- If a student whose name does not appear on the daily attendance has been absent from class, teachers must report the absence to the main office. Teachers must notify the attendance secretary if a student who is present is marked absent on the daily attendance. When in the hallways during class, all students need to have a pass and should have signed out in the classroom. If another student is using the classroom pass, students need to wait until it is available unless special circumstances allow the student to leave the classroom, e.g. IEP or 504 accommodations. No student may leave school grounds without permission. Leaving without permission will automatically result in disciplinary action.

**After School Protocol**

- Students are expected to leave the building by 2:50 p.m. unless supervised by an adult.
- Students who stay and are unsupervised will be asked to leave. Unsupervised students will be reported to an administrator and their parents will be called. Students who are absent from school may not attend or participate in any extracurricular functions such as intramurals, dances, concerts, or plays, the same day of their absence.

**Early dismissal**

Students who need to be dismissed from school during the day must present a note from a parent to the main office between 7:50 and 8:00 a.m. explicitly stating the time and reason for the dismissal. The student will then be issued a pass to leave class at the requested time. Whenever possible, doctor and dentist appointments should be arranged outside of school hours. Students must be picked up when leaving school early; they may not be dismissed to leave on their own. Students should not be dismissed early on MCAS testing days unless there is an emergency.

**"No School" Procedures**

"No School" and "delayed opening" will be communicated through the Lexington Public Schools "Blackboard Connect." This notification program will call each student's home notifying them of no school or a delayed opening. "No School and "delayed opening" information is also available on websites of various news outlets and given out over radio stations WBZ, WHDH, WRKO, and WEEI after 6:00 a.m. and also TV channels 4, 5, and 7. Stay tuned to one station after 6:00 a.m. In the interest of public safety, we ask that you please do not call the police, fire, or public works departments because those lines need to be kept open for emergencies.

There may also be occasions when school has not been officially cancelled or delayed when parents feel that their children, for health or safety reasons, should not attempt to attend school. The judgment of parents will be accepted without question by school administrators.

It is advisable that you and your child discuss a procedure to follow if there is an emergency early dismissal. This will eliminate much worry and confusion.

## LUNCH & THE CAFETERIA PROCEDURES

Lunch is scheduled during three separate sessions between 10:45 a.m. and 12:45 p.m. (the specific times differ depending on the day's schedule). The cafeteria serves a choice of meals, either a complete hot meal or a sandwich meal, both including milk or juice. Extra milk and desserts are available at additional cost. The menu is printed each week in the Lexington Minuteman and is also listed on the LPS Website. Students may bring lunch from home and may buy milk and "extras" if they wish.

Students may purchase lunch on a daily basis with their assigned I.D. number. They may also purchase lunch with cash. Free and reduced lunches are also available for qualifying families. Lunch bags forgotten at home may be brought to the front office in the morning. Please label them with the student's name and grade. Students may be assigned to eat in other areas for disciplinary reasons.

**Leaving the cafeteria during lunch:**

- Students may leave the cafeteria to use the restroom or visit the school store but they must first sign out with the staff member posted at the door.
- Students may also leave the cafeteria to visit a teacher, but only with a note from that teacher.

**Cafeteria Clean up Routine:** At the end of each lunch block, we use the following routine to ensure that the cafeteria is clean and ready for the next group of students:

- **Lights Flick**: students clean up their area (including floor) using provided brooms and paper towels as needed.
- **Lights Off:** students become silent
- **Dismissal**: students remain silent as they leave the cafeteria

**Cafeteria Rights and Responsibilities**

While in the Cafeteria, students have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a manner that respects the following rights of other students and staff:

The right to a **safe, non-threatening environment**

- Stay in your seat.
- One person per seat.
- Talk at a conversational volume.
- No extra folding chairs except at the overflow tables.
- No disruptive physical activities (e.g., chasing one another).
- No distribution of birthday cupcakes (and similar).

The right to **courtesy** and **respect** at all times

- Use acceptable language.
- Do not exclude others.

The right to the protection of **private property, personal space, and personal choices**

- You may bring reading materials.
- No backpacks or school binders.

The right to have a **clean space** in which to eat and learn

- Clean up after yourself.
- Food stays in the cafeteria.
- Purchased bottles of water may leave.

**Consequences for violating cafeteria behavior expectations:**

1. Polite reminder
2. Clean-up duty at the end of lunch
3. Notification to parents
4. Assigned seating
5. Lunch detention
6. Conference with parents/guardians

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

A wide variety of athletic and extracurricular activities complement the academic program. In addition to those activities mentioned here, activities may be offered depending on interest and need. Extracurricular activities are announced in the morning and afternoon, as well as advertised on posters around the school. Note that a student must be present in school on the day of the event to participant in the event. This policy includes athletic events, extracurricular clubs, and school sponsored dances. The administration may restrict or deny participation to any student involved in serious or repeated infractions of the school's disciplinary code.

**Athletics**
The Lexington Public Schools has membership in the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) and subscribes to all policies and procedures of this association. Competition in the Middlesex Junior High School League will take place in field hockey, boys' and girls' soccer, boys' and girls' basketball, baseball and softball, boys' and girls' track and field, and cross country. Daily attendance at practices and games is required at this level. General information about the intramural and interscholastic athletic program is mailed to students throughout the year. Further details will be available at the beginning of each season. Parents who are in need of financial assistance or who have further questions in this regard should contact the administration.

**Math Team**
Diamond Middle School participates in the Intermediate Mathematics League of Eastern Massachusetts, commonly known as "math team". The Diamond Math Team is for students primarily in grades 7 and 8. However, grade 6 is an excellent training ground for future prospects. Some 6th graders even do well enough to earn a position on the team. There are five competitions during the school year, beginning in October. A schedule of practices, tryouts and competitions, or "meets", is made available to students in late September. Students join for a variety of reasons: to improve their skills and problem-solving capabilities; socialization with other students who enjoy solving puzzles; and individual and team competitions.

**D-Minors**
The D-Minors is the extracurricular chorus that meets before school two days a week. This choir is designed for 7th and 8th grade chorus students who are looking for additional opportunities to sing challenging music. An audition will be required prior to joining the group. As this is a select group, the commitment to participate is a serious one and attendance at all rehearsals is very important. In order to audition for the D-Minors, a student must also sing in the 7th and 8th grade chorus.

**Science Olympiad**
A Science Olympiad competition is an academic meet with twenty-three team events. Individual students on the team compete in about three events with different partners. Success at the competition depends on each of the team members applying knowledge in several different branches of science and engineering such as anatomy, chemistry, genetics, geology, mechanical engineering, meteorology, physics, space science, technology, and robotics. Many of the events involve building and testing a device in advance of the competition.

**After-school Clubs**
Diamond's Clubs are PTA-sponsored activities that take place after school, once a week, for approximately 12 weeks. Fall clubs usually start in late September-early October. Spring clubs start the week after February vacation. Refer to the Diamond website for a full list of clubs and detailed information about each one.

Recent club offerings included:

- Chess
- Nature/Garden
- Improv
- Yoga
- Cooking
- The Diamond Mine-literary magazine
- Here Be Dragons-art
- Anime

- 8th Grade Playmaking

**Yearbook**
The yearbook committee works September through the end of the school year. The finished product is delivered the last week of school to those who have ordered and paid for it in advance. Any student in grade 6, 7, or 8 who is interested in helping organize and produce the yearbook is invited to join the committee. The meetings are held after school. Parent volunteers are also encouraged to participate. The school arranges for a photographer to take individual pictures for the yearbook early in the fall. Prints may be ordered if paid for in advance.

**Music**
Many exciting activities are open to Diamond students each year through the Music Department. Some of them are individual auditions for the Massachusetts Music Educators Association Northeast District Festival chorus, band, and orchestra, and the annual production of a musical show. Two major concerts are given each year by the combined performing organizations – the band, orchestra, and choruses. In addition, the bands and orchestra participate in a town-wide event during the year, and the choruses are also involved in an annual choral festival at Diamond. For more information about these groups, see the Program of Studies and our website.

**School Musical Production**
Participation in the annual musical production is open to 6th, 7th, and 8th graders by audition. Students interested in participating will be asked to attend an opening meeting and complete an audition application. There will be auditions for appropriate stage parts, and acceptance will be based upon a student's audition performance. The initial meeting will take place in November, auditions will be in mid December and rehearsals will begin in January. Accepted students are required to make a firm commitment to all rehearsals. Rehearsals are held after the school day, from 3-5:15 p.m., on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons. Performers are involved in rehearsals from January through mid-March. Production crews are involved in rehearsals for approximately 2-3 weeks. Any parental assistance is most welcome.

**School Dances & Socials**
School dances are organized by grade and open only to Diamond 7th and 8th grade students; they take place throughout the year and typically run from 6:00-8:00 p.m. Dances are chaperoned by the Diamond staff and administrators. It is important that students be picked up promptly at 8:00 p.m.

Sixth grade socials are held in the afternoon from 3:00-5:00 p.m. and are open only to Diamond 6th graders. They are chaperoned by Diamond staff and administrators. Students must be picked up promptly at 5 p.m.

## COUNSELING AND RELATED SERVICES

**Counseling**
Each student is assigned the same counselor for all three years of his or her Diamond experience. The counselors at Diamond offer a variety of services aimed at supporting students' educational and personal adjustment and their effective planning for the future. Counselors attend team meetings each week and are available to help teachers, students, and parents as they work together throughout the year.

**Human Sexuality Education**
The Lexington Public Schools provides a comprehensive health education curriculum designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills to make responsible, well-informed personal health decisions. The health education curriculum in grades 5, 7, and 9 covers a wide variety of topics, including human sexuality issues.

Under Massachusetts law and School Committee policy, parents or guardians have the right to exempt their children from any portion of a curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues by submitting written notification to the school principal. The written notification should specify the course/class from which the child is to be exempted. A child who is exempted will not be penalized because of the exemption. We may provide an alternative assignment for exempted students. A copy of the health education

curricula and related materials is available in the school library. Please contact the Coordinator of Health Education with any specific questions.

**METCO Program**
The Lexington Public Schools participates in the METCO program, a program sponsored by the Metropolitan Council on Educational Opportunity. Boston students participating in the METCO program are an integral part of Diamond Middle School. A METCO staff person at Diamond works on a direct basis with METCO students and their parents and assists the Diamond staff in a support capacity. Tutoring is also available to METCO students through the program.

**Health Policies**
The school nurse serves as a resource person in health-related programs by interpreting medical reports, assessing health status, screening students for visual, auditory, and postural difficulties, providing health counseling for pupils and staff, evaluating sudden illnesses or injuries, and providing emergency services.

If a student shows signs of illness in the morning, it is important that s/he be kept at home for his/her comforts and safety and for the protection of others. Students who become ill or who are injured during the school day should report to the Health Office. Parents should ensure that they provide up-to-date information about emergency telephone numbers and contacts.

If a student is under a physician's care and needs specific consideration, a note from the physician addressing the student's situation and needs must be sent to the nurse. If medication (over-the-counter or prescription) needs to be taken during the school day, both a parent's and a physician's note are required. The medication must be sent in the original container and can only be dispensed by the nurse on duty. (See "Medication Policy," below.)

The school has two elevators that are available to injured students. Instruction in the use of the elevators will be given by the school nurse.

**Physical Examinations**
Current physical examinations are required of all 6th grade students, all new students, and all students who choose to participate in sports. Medical documentation of all immunizations is necessary. In order to enter grade 7, all students must have received a Tdap booster and their 2nd varicella vaccination, with a record of this on file at the school.

Sports participation requires the submission of both a physical and a parental permission form. A current physical needs to be on file in the nurse's office. A current physical is defined as "good for 365 days plus a 30 day grace period." No exceptions. The parental permission form ("Middle School Sports/Health Form") must be completed on both sides and returned to the school nurse after June 15th and prior to any tryout.

**Accidents**
Every injury in school or on school grounds, no matter how slight, should be reported immediately to the teacher in charge, the nurse, or the front office.

**Medication Policy:**

1. **Dispensing of Medication**. All medication (over-the-counter, prescription, emergency, long-term or short-term) required to be administered at school will be dispensed only by the school nurse. Medication will be kept in a place designated by the school nurse.
2. **Physician and Parental Permission**. A signed order from the attending physician stating the diagnosis, medication, dosage, time of administration, and length of time to be given must be obtained by the parent and forwarded to the school nurse, along with the required medication in its original container. Written parental permission is also required to administer the medication. Any deviation from the original order will require a new physician's order. All medication orders must be renewed at the beginning of the school year

3. **Emergency**. In case of emergency, our school physician has written an order for the administration of Epipen or Benadryl for those students who have not been previously identified as needing emergency medication at school.
4. **Overnight Field Trips**. In order for medication to be administered during an overnight field trip, a signed statement from the parent/guardian and the physician stating the diagnosis, medication, dosage, and time of administration is required. This applies to prescription and nonprescription medication. All medication must be given to the attending chaperone prior to the field trip.

## STUDENT RIGHTS, NORMS, AND BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Students and staff have the responsibility to contribute to an environment that is safe, comfortable, and conducive to productive and satisfying learning. In particular, we all have the responsibility to conduct ourselves in a manner that respects the rights of other students, staff, and visitors to our school, specifically:

- the right to courtesy and respect at all times (including the right to a protection of property;
- the right to a safe, non-threatening learning environment; and
- the right to work hard and learn in an environment free from distraction.

We will each do our part to enhance Diamond's learning environment and culture by following these **Community Norms:**

| The Diamond Way | We each have the responsibility to … |
|---|---|
| We **communicate** honestly and directly | ● be courteous and respectful to others<br>● recognize that others may have an equally passionate opposing view<br>● seek clarity about behavior expectations<br>● actively help to clarify misunderstandings and share new understanding with others<br>● not pass on rumors |
| We **respect** each other's time, contributions, and perspectives in an atmosphere that assumes positive intent | ● contribute to creating an environment that is free from distractions and conducive to learning<br>● appreciate that we don't all see things the same way<br>● respect each person's identity (race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, etc.)<br>● use appropriate "work place" language<br>● wear appropriate "work place" clothing<br>● engage in safe and healthy behaviors<br>● respect school and private property |
| We **collaborate**, and support each other and the wider school community | ● share resources and ideas<br>● offer one another encouragement<br>● seek help for friends in need<br>● take the extra step to ensure that all voices are heard<br>● raise problems honestly and fairly and participate in finding practical and mutually acceptable solutions |
| We embrace opportunities to **learn and support** one another's growth | ● view challenges and mistakes as learning opportunities<br>● work hard to get better and smarter<br>● allow time for processing and reflection<br>● try new ideas and push ourselves to take academic risks<br>● participate actively in our learning<br>● seek, consider, and incorporate feedback<br>● ask for help and seek support from each other<br>● come to class fully prepared with all expected materials and completed assignments |

Our school, like the larger community, needs rules to protect rights and encourage responsibility. The following rules and the consequences for breaking these rules are meant to provide clear guidelines for our conduct. Because every possible act of misbehavior cannot be anticipated, there cannot be a rule to cover every possible situation. Students are expected to use their common sense and act appropriately at all times, in accordance with the responsibilities described above. All rules and regulations pertaining to the general school day will be enforced during field trips and at all evening activities.

**Rules and Behavior Expectations:**

**The right to courtesy and respect at all times (including the right to a protection of property)**

1. Students must treat adults and one another with respect and courtesy.
2. Lockers are a convenience provided to accommodate a student's belongings. They are school property, should not be defaced or damaged, and are subject to search by school officials at any time (see below for more information).
3. You may not go into any one's personal property or into lockers assigned to others.
4. You may not damage the school's or anyone else's property.
5. You may not go into anyone else's computer files or tamper with school computers or use the internet inappropriately. Please refer to Appendix 1 for more information regarding computer use.
6. Cheating of any form is strictly prohibited, and any student involved is subject to disciplinary action. This includes, but is not limited to cheating on homework, class work, papers, reports, projects, tests, etc. Plagiarism is presenting someone else's words, opinions, or work as your own without appropriate acknowledgement.

**The right to a safe, non-threatening learning environment**

1. Fighting and harassment such as bullying, name-calling, teasing, ridiculing, displaying offensive graffiti, intimidating, or discriminating is not acceptable. In addition, initiating or passing on communications or posts which contribute to the creation of an unsafe or threatening environment for one or more fellow students is not acceptable. Tell individuals behaving in a disrespectful manner towards you or someone else that you want them to stop. Report the behavior if it does not stop.
2. Possessing, using, distributing, or being under the influence of tobacco products, alcohol, or controlled substances on school premises, or having a dangerous weapon on school premises is unacceptable, unsafe, and forbidden (see section below regarding Substance Abuse)
3. You are expected to move through the hallways and other areas of the school in a calm and orderly manner. Backpacks are permitted only to carry personal belongings to and from school.

**The right to work hard and learn in an environment free from distraction**

1. Students need to refrain from distracting behaviors, especially those that are inappropriate to a school setting such as foul language, running, loudness, "just fooling around," and excessive displays of personal affection (e.g., kissing).
2. The use of handheld electronic devices in the school, or other items that do not serve an educational purpose, is forbidden because the disruptive potential of such devices. Students should not have in school electronic devices such as cell phones, iTouch, iPod, electronic games, or other distractions. If such items are found in a student's possession, they will be taken to the office and may be retrieved by the student at a later time. If it is necessary to bring valuables to school for any reason, students should lock them safely in their own locker. Electronic reading devices are acceptable in the cafeteria and library (and in classrooms with teacher permission).
3. **Appropriate Dress:** Students' dress should be appropriate for school and work activities. Inappropriate clothing include: torn or dirty clothes, muscle shirts, showing underwear, shirts that expose bare midriffs, blouses that are very low cut, thin-strapped tops, and excessively tight fitting or short shorts or skirts. Shorts and skirts should reach approximately mid-thigh; wearing leggings under shorts and skirts is also a good idea. Keeping a school appropriate outfit in your locker is recommended. If your clothing does not meet the appropriate dress guidelines you may be asked to wear something over what you have worn to school for the remainder of the day. Outer clothing such as jackets may not be worn during the school day. Baseball caps are allowed, but must be worn with the bill facing forward.

**Non-Discrimination**
The Lexington Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability in its programs and activities. The Human Resources Director will handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policy.

**Lockers and Students' Private Property**
Lockers are a convenience provided to accommodate a student's belongings. They are school property, should not be defaced or damaged, and are subject to search by school officials at any time. The security of a locker depends on the combination being kept private; it should not be shared with anyone. It is a student's responsibility to see that the locker is kept locked at all times. The school is not responsible for the loss or theft of items from lockers. A student having trouble with the operation of lock or locker should report the problem to the office.

**Search and Seizure**
School officials may search a student when they have **reasonable grounds** for suspecting that the search will reveal evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. Searches may include, but are not limited to, clothing, bags, lockers, personal computers, cell phones, school-issued network accounts, or school-issued email accounts.

- Members of the administrative team or their designees (e.g., school nurse) will be responsible for conducting all searches.
- Evidence and items found during the search may be held by the school until turned over to the police or returned to the student or a parent/guardian.
- A warrant is not required for searches of students suspected of violating a school rule or criminal statute.
- Following any search, parents/guardians will be notified.
- Students who refuse a search will be suspended pending a meeting with their parent/guardian.

**Substance Use Policy**
The use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco products of any kind by students poses a serious threat not only to their own well-being, but also to the well-being of the school system. Drugs and alcohol have no place in an educational environment where the goals are learning and growth, and they will not be tolerated during school hours or on school property or at any school-sponsored activity or event.

Students are strictly prohibited from actions involving drugs and alcohol during school hours or on school property or at any school-sponsored activity or event. Such prohibited activities include but are not limited to:

1. Purchasing or attempting to purchase
2. Using
3. Possession
4. Selling or distributing or intending or attempting to sell or distribute
5. Possession of drug paraphernalia

For the purposes of this policy, drugs include not only controlled substances as defined in Mass. Gen. Laws, Ch. 94C (including but not limited to marijuana, cocaine and heroin), but also restricted drugs such as prescription or over-the-counter drugs; steroids; and other products which may be misused (aerosols, solvents, etc.) Students who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion as set forth in this handbook. The school will cooperate fully with the police to deal with violations of the law on school property.

**Behavior Consequences**
Federal and state law provide certain procedural rights and protections relating to discipline of students who have been identified under such laws as having special needs based upon a disability. Students should be aware that the school department will report any suspected criminal activity to the School Resource Officer (a member of the police department) and will cooperate with the police in their investigations. For more detailed policies and state legal requirements relating to student conduct, disciplines, and procedures, see Appendix 2.

Administration works to match the consequence with each situation.

Consequences can range from:

- Parent notification
- Administrative detention (morning, lunch, or after-school)
- Community service
- Loss of computer privilege
- Hearing with the student, parent and an administrator
- Short term or long term in-school or out-of-school suspension from School
- Expulsion (i.e. permanent exclusion) from School

**Administrative Detention**

- Administrative detention will be assigned by the principal or assistant principal who will inform the
- student of this obligation.
- Detention will be held in the main office, from 2:55 to 3:45 pm.
- If a student fails to meet this obligation, parents will be notified.
- Detention will be a silent experience.
- An administrative detention will supersede athletic events, practices, or other school-related activities.

**Suspensions and Suspendable Offenses**

Suspensions may be short term or long term. Short-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. Long-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year.

Suspensions may occur in-school or out-of-school. In-school suspension is the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Long-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. A principal may, in his/her discretion, allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school.

During the course of any suspension, a student is ineligible to participate in any school-related activities, including athletic activities during the course of the suspension. The student and his/her parents are expected to meet with a school administrator prior to the student's return to class. During the course of an out-of-school suspension, a student is not on school premises.

Although consequences can vary from situation to situation, the following categories of behavior are likely to result in suspension:

- Insubordination
- Violence
- Harassment
- Weapons
- Threatening behavior (including spoken or written threats)
- Drug alcohol use
- Refusing a reasonable search
- Willful property destruction

**Due Process Rights and Procedures**

- Due Process is explained in detail in Appendix 2.

## STATUTES AND POLICIES

Information regarding applicable statutes and the full text of certain policies adopted by the Lexington Public Schools, including policies regarding discrimination, student conduct and discipline, sexual harassment, hazing, drugs and alcohol, tobacco, parental notification relative to sex education, student Internet use, life threatening food policy, wellness policy, and school records, are set forth in the Appendix included as part of the complete version of the Student Handbook. Parents and students should carefully review these policies.

## Appendix 1: Lexington Public Schools Guidelines For Student Internet Use

Lexington Public Schools "**Standards For Acceptable Use of Technology**": http://goo.gl/BM0iuc
Lexington Public Schools "**iPad User Guide for Middle Schoolers** ": https://goo.gl/XkgA6H

The Lexington Public Schools offer Internet access at each school. The sole purpose of this Internet access is to support education and research by providing students and teachers with access to unique resources and an opportunity for collaborative work. All uses of Lexington's Internet access (like all other uses of Lexington's computer facilities) must be in support of and consistent with these educational objectives. All students who use Lexington's Internet access are expected to read these Guidelines and/or to take part in a discussion of the Guidelines with a teacher. Adherence to the Guidelines is a condition for a student's privilege of Internet access.

**The Internet**
The Internet is a vast, global network, linking computers at universities, schools, laboratories, and other sites. Through the Internet, one can communicate with people all over the world through discussion forums and electronic mail. In addition, many educationally valuable files may be downloaded from the Internet. Because of its enormous size and resources, the Internet's educational potential is boundless. Because of its broad reach, however, the Internet also contains the potential for abuse. These Guidelines are intended to help ensure that students use this valuable resource in a safe and appropriate manner.

**Students' Individual Responsibility**
All student use of the Internet is to be conducted under faculty supervision. Nevertheless, faculty members are not expected to monitor student use at every moment. Every student is expected to take individual responsibility for his or her appropriate use of the Internet.

**Internet Access Is a Privilege**
For both levels of access, Internet access through the Lexington Public Schools is a privilege, not a right. A student's access may be canceled by school officials if this privilege is abused. Inappropriate conduct on the Lexington Public Schools' Internet access will also be subject to disciplinary action, in conformity with the Lexington Public Schools' Policy on Student Conduct and Discipline and the disciplinary policies of individual schools.

**Administrators' Access to Student Files**
All student e-mail files and other Internet files and records may be accessed and examined by administrators for educational and administrative purposes, including the need to ensure that these Internet Guidelines are being adhered to. Administrators will also cooperate in providing access to student e-mail and Internet files and records to law enforcement authorities. Students should not assume that uses of the Lexington Public Schools Internet access will be private.

**Personal Safety**
The Internet is accessible to the public. Unfortunately, this includes people who want to make contact with students for inappropriate purposes or under false pretenses. The Lexington Public Schools cannot screen the Internet for such inappropriate uses. Therefore, students must be cautious and prudent about supplying personal information and arranging personal meetings. In particular, students should never arrange a personal meeting with a person who

was met on-line without their parents' or guardians' knowledge and approval. Students should promptly inform their teacher or school administrator of any on-line communication that the student feels is threatening, harassing, or otherwise inappropriate.

**System Security and Resource Limits**
Students are expected to follow procedures and guidelines that are issued in order to ensure the security of the Lexington Public Schools' computer system and to respect its resource limits. These include any downloading guidelines and virus protection procedures that may be issued.

**Network Etiquette**
Students are expected to learn and to abide by generally accepted rules of Internet network etiquette, as well as rules of school decorum. These include common courtesy, politeness, and the avoidance of vulgar language.

**Unacceptable Uses**
The following uses of the Lexington Public Schools' Internet access are unacceptable:

1. Posting private or personal information about another person.
2. Attempting to log in through another person's e-mail account or to access another person's files.
3. Accessing or transmitting obscene or pornographic material.
4. Posting chain letters or engaging in "spamming." ("Spamming" means sending annoying or unnecessary messages to large numbers of people.)
5. Engaging in sexual harassment. The Lexington Public Schools Sexual Harassment Policy, which is included in the individual schools' handbooks, is applicable to Internet conduct.
6. Participating in any communications that facilitate the illegal sale or use of drugs or alcohol; that facilitate criminal gang activity; that threaten, intimidate, or harass any other person; or that violate any other laws.
7. Plagiarism. "Plagiarism" means the taking of material created by others and presenting it as if it were one's own.
8. Infringing copyrights. Copyright infringement occurs when a person inappropriately reproduces or transmits material that is protected by copyright. For example, most software is protected by copyright and may not be copied without the permission of the copyright owner.
9. Participating in commercial activities that are not directly related to the educational purposes of the Lexington Public Schools.

**Disclaimer of Liability**
The Lexington Public Schools disclaim all liability for the content of material that a student may access on the Internet, for any damages suffered in the course of or as a result of the student's Internet use, and for any other consequences of a student's Internet use.

**Changes in the Guidelines**
The Lexington Public Schools reserve the right to change these Guidelines at any time.

## Appendix 2: Dangerous Weapons, Controlled Substances & Assaults On Educational Staff

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, section 37H requires that all student handbooks contain the following provisions:

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 than 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 shall not be 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.

**Students should note that the definition of "assault" includes not only harmful or offensive contact, but also threatening such contact.**

**Additionally, students should be aware that the federal Gun Free Schools Act mandates that any student who brings a firearm to school be expelled for a minimum of one year, with exceptions granted only by the Superintendent. Under this Act, a firearm includes not only a gun but also an explosive device.**

## Felony Complaints or Convictions

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, section 37H 1/2 provides that:

*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 or guardian within three 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 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 that five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian 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 an 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. Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational service to such student.

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.

## Procedural Due Process

A student will not be excluded from school without being afforded appropriate due process as set forth below. If, however, a student's continued presence in school 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, a student who is charged with a disciplinary offense may be removed temporarily from school before receiving due process pursuant to an Emergency Removal (see below for more information).

**I. In-School Suspension.** 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:

A. 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.

B. 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.

C. 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 principal for the purpose set forth above, if such meeting has not already occurred. The administrator will deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the administrator and the parent.

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 at page 27.

The Principal may remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to such due process procedures.

**II. Short Term, Out-of-School Suspension.** Except in the case of an Emergency Removal (see below), prior to imposing a short term out-of-school suspension (10 days or less in a school year) for conduct not covered by M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and 37H ½, an administrator will provide the student and his/her parent oral and written notice and an opportunity to participate in an informal hearing.

**A. 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:

1. the disciplinary offense;
2. the basis for the charge;
3. the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
4. 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;
5. the date, time, and location of the hearing;
6. 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, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the school and parent.

**B. 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.

**C. 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, which 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.

D. **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.

**III**. **Long Term Suspension**

Except in the case of an Emergency Removal provided on page 29, 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:

**A. Notice**: The notice will include all of the components for a short-term suspension in Section C above, plus the following: 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;

1. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
2. 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;
3. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
4. 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
5. the right to appeal administrator's decision to impose long-term suspension to the superintendent.

**B. 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.

**C. 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 took place, 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 cumulative 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.

## IV. Expulsion

Students are subject to expulsion (i.e. permanent exclusion) by the Principal for the conduct listed below. (See also, M.G.L. ch. 71, §§37H at page 29)

- Possession of a dangerous weapon*
- Possession of a controlled substance (such as marijuana, cocaine, or prescription drugs not authorized by the school nurse)
- 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, §37H1/2.

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 be so informed at the time of the suspension/expulsion.

**Procedures Applicable To Conduct Covered By M.G.L. C. 71, §37h And 37h ½**

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

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, §37H1/2. 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.

**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 C or D 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.

**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 D 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 D 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.

## Appendix 3: Right Of Access And Laws Regarding Sexual Harassment

*Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 76, section 5 (commonly known as "Chapter 622") and the Chapter 622 Regulations (603 CMR 26.00) contain provisions designed to "insure the right of access to the public schools of the Commonwealth and the equal enjoyment of the opportunities, advantages, privileges and courses of study at such schools without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation." Sexual harassment in public schools is sex discrimination, and therefore is prohibited by federal and state laws. Title IX of the federal Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681) states, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." In addition, Mass. General Laws Chapter 151C, section 2(g) states that "it shall be an unfair educational practice for an educational institution to sexually harass students in any program or course of study. The Lexington Public Schools is committed to maintaining an environment free of harassment based on gender or sexual orientation on school property and at school-sponsored events. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, vendors at school or school sponsored events is unlawful and is strictly prohibited. The Lexington Public Schools requires all employees, students and other individuals in the school environment to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect to all employees, students, and other members of the school community. Harassment in any form or for any reason based on gender or sexual orientation is strictly prohibited. This includes harassment of a subordinate by a supervisor, among staff, between staff and students, or among students. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may reasonably be viewed as sexual harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions may be reasonably viewed by others.*

**Definition**
Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and/or other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Acceptance of or submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by the individual is used as a basis for employment or educational decisions affecting this individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance, including participation in extra-curricular activities, by creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment.

Harassment includes such things as remarks, gestures or physical contact, writing placed on school property or the display or circulation of written materials or pictures derogatory to an individual's gender or sexual orientation. What constitutes sexual harassment is based upon reasonable perceptions of the complainant rather than the intent of the alleged harasser.

**Reporting sexual harassment**

**Students**:
Students who believe that they are victims of harassment should report such occurrences to a teacher, counselor or administrator who in turn will notify a complaint manager or students may report directly to complaint managers. Notice of each school's complaint managers, whose role is defined below, will be posted in a prominent location in each school.

**Employees:**
All Lexington School System employees must respond to students' complaints of harassment by notifying the building principal or appointed complaint managers. They must always take every report of sexual harassment seriously. Employees who believe that they are the victims of harassment should report such occurrences to their immediate supervisor or Equal Opportunity Coordinator.

The following person has been designated as the Equal Opportunity Coordinator:

Director of Human Resources
Lexington Public Schools
146 Maple Street
Lexington, MA 02420
1(781)861-2580

**Investigation/Action:**
The Lexington Public Schools will investigate all complaints of harassment. Such investigation may include discussions with all involved parties, identification and questioning of witnesses, and other appropriate actions. Reports of sexual harassment and related information will be kept confidential to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law and the collective bargaining agreement.
Each building Principal will appoint two or more complaint managers, at least one from each gender. (Principals may also serve as complaint managers themselves.) The complaint managers shall be responsible for investigating complaints of harassment, communicating with the Principal, recommending discipline as a consequence of harassment, and filing reports with the Equal Opportunity Coordinator. Complaint managers will attend training sessions and workshops as directed. Notice of each school's complaint managers will be posted in a prominent location in each school.

If the Lexington Public Schools determines that harassment has occurred, it will take appropriate action to end the harassment. Steps which may be taken include, among others, warnings, suspensions, exclusion from school related activities, and expulsion from school or dismissal from employment. Disciplinary action will be subject to applicable procedural requirements. Any staff member or student who is dissatisfied with the results or progress of the School's investigation may discuss his/her dissatisfaction directly with the building Principal, the Equal Opportunity Coordinator, or the Superintendent of Schools, or his/her designee.
Under certain circumstances, harassment of a student may constitute child abuse under Massachusetts law, Mass. Gen. Laws, Ch. 119, Sec. 51A. The Lexington Public Schools will comply with Massachusetts law in reporting suspected cases of child abuse. The Lexington Public Schools will report suspected criminal activity to the local police. The Lexington Public School System urges all of its students and employees to bring any concerns or complaints to its attention. The state agency responsible for enforcing the laws prohibiting harassment is the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, which is located at One Ashburton Place, Boston, Massachusetts. The agency responsible for enforcing federal laws prohibiting harassment is the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission which is located at One Congress Street, Boston, Massachusetts.

**Retaliation**
It is unlawful to retaliate against a person for filing a complaint of sexual harassment or for cooperating in an investigation of a complaint for sexual harassment. Acts of retaliation may result in immediate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion or dismissal, even if the underlying sexual harassment is not proven. Retaliation is an independent, prohibited act.

**Legal References**
Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
Mass. Gen. Laws: c.151B (prohibiting employment discrimination based on gender); c.214 s.1C (right to be free from sexual harassment); c.76 s.5 (prohibiting educational discrimination in public schools); c.119, s.51B (reporting of suspected child abuse). Other relevant statutes and case law.

## Appendix 4: Bullying Prevention And Intervention

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed an *Act Relative to Bullying in Schools*. This new law prohibits bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to addressing bullying incidents. Parts of the law (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O) that are important for students and parents or guardians to know are described below.

**Definitions**
*Aggressor* is a student or a member of the school staff who engages in bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation toward a student
*Bullying* is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying includes cyber bullying.

*Cyber bullying* is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings.

*Hostile environment* is a situation 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 the student's education.

*Target* is a student against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation is directed.

*Retaliation* is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

School Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

**Prohibition Against Bullying**
Bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds,
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds,
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place 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,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owed, leased or used by a school district or school (for example, on a computer or over the Internet),
- at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic device, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

**Reporting Bullying**
Anyone, including a parent or guardian, student, or school staff member, can report bullying or retaliation. Reports can be made in writing or orally to the principal or another staff member, or reports may be made anonymously. School staff members must report immediately to the principal or his/her designee if they witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation. Staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors,

school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessionals.

When the school principal or his/her designee receives a report, he or she shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the school principal or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he or she shall (i) notify the parents or guardians of the target, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; (ii) notify the parents or guardians of a aggressor; (iii) take appropriate disciplinary action; and (iv) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

**Professional Development for School and District Staff**
Schools and districts must provide ongoing professional development to increase the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying.
The content of such professional development is to include, but not be limited to: (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying; (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been show to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyber bullying; and (vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber bullying.

Additional information about the school's or district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is available on the LPS website: lps.lexingtonma.org

## Appendix 5: Life Threatening Allergies

**Background**
The prevalence of reported food allergies has continued to increase significantly over the last several years. It is reported that the incidence of peanut allergy over the last five years has doubled in children.(1) In 2003, it was reported that there were approximately 2 million school-age children with food allergies. (2) Those with a diagnosed food allergy are at significant risk of anaphylaxis, a life-threatening allergic reaction. In a study by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health there were 374 reported cases of anaphylactic reactions requiring the use of an EpiPen in the schools of the Commonwealth between September 2001 and May 2005.
In October 2002, the Massachusetts Department of Education joined the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology (AAAAI) in recommending that all schools have in place a system to identify children with life threatening allergies (LTA) and be prepared in the school workplace to deal with life-threatening allergic reactions. Education of all staff in life-threatening allergy awareness is the cornerstone of this initiative.

**Purpose and Scope**
In order to minimize the incidence of life-threatening allergic reactions, the Lexington Public Schools (LPS) will maintain a system-wide response plan to address life-threatening reactions and maintain an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) for any student whose parent/guardian, primary care physician or board certified allergist has informed the principal of a school in writing that the student has a life-threatening allergy.

**Implementation Of The Life-Threatening Allergy Policy**
The Lexington Public Schools (LPS) will:

1. Provide life-threatening allergy awareness education and EpiPen training for all LPS employees based on Department of Public Health (DPH) and Department of Education (DOE) recommendations, including but not limited to:
   a. The significance of LTAs and a discussion on the most common food, stinging insect, latex, and medication allergies,
   b. How to create a safe environment for students with LTAs,

c. The signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis,
d. What an EpiPen is and how to use it, and
e. How to activate the Emergency Response System (ERS), i.e., nurse and 911 Emergency Medical Services (EMS), to deal with an actual, suspected, or potential anaphylactic reaction.

2. At the elementary school level during the school day, all schools will require that any parties and celebrations be food free. The use of food for curriculum instruction or special luncheons during the school day will be restricted to approval by the principal. The use of food as a reward in any classroom will be eliminated.

3. The principal or designee in each school will implement a "No Food or Utensil Sharing" practice, with particular focus at the elementary school level.

4. Each elementary school, as reasonably appropriate, will provide a peanut free/tree-nut free table in the cafeteria. Reasonable efforts will be made for such table to become "free" of other allergens as deemed needed for an individual student through documentation from the student's primary care physician or board certified allergist. At the middle and high schools appropriate accommodations will be made as needed.

5. The risk involved in allowing students of elementary and middle school age to make unsupervised food choices at bake sales is recognized; therefore, no bake sales will be permitted at elementary or middle schools during the school day. Bake sales conducted outside the school day are limited to those at which only adults are allowed to purchase products. At the high school level, the sale of food products as a fundraiser will be at the discretion of the principal.

6. At the elementary school level, when a student's medical need to be in an LTA-free environment is clearly documented by a board certified allergist, and clear directions from the allergist are provided, LPS will make reasonable efforts to create LTA-free classrooms for the student. LPS reserves the right to consult with a board certified allergist of its choice to review the recommendation to determine if it will authorize its implementation.

7. Each school's Crisis Management Plan will include how to respond to an anaphylactic reaction (life-threatening allergic reaction). This plan will be reviewed annually by each building principal and will be part of all LTA-awareness training.

8. Each school will develop and maintain an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) for any student identified with a life-threatening allergy in collaboration with the student's parent/guardian and primary care physician or board certified allergist.

9. The LPS will maintain records of any life-threatening allergic reaction, the use of an EpiPen, and the call for medical assistance by calling 911. LPS will report all such LTA reactions to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), according to department regulations and protocol.

10. Because of the confidentiality of medical records, a student's parent/guardian has the responsibility for notifying school bus drivers directly of any life threatening allergies of which the bus driver should be aware.

11. For any event outside of the regular school day which is neither sponsored by LPS nor part of the LPS curriculum, the sponsor of such event is responsible for assuring that appropriate provisions concerning LTA's of participants are in place.

**Employee/Contractor Training And Education**

1. Life-threatening allergy (LTA) awareness training will be required of all teachers, aides, tutors, secretaries, and student teachers in the school system.

2. The custodial staff either will be included in staff LTA-awareness training or will be offered 11 informational sessions on life-threatening allergies by the building principal.

3. All substitute teachers contracted by the LPS will receive LTA-awareness training, following the LPS curriculum. No substitute will be employed in the system who has not received this training. The Director of Human Resources will be responsible for ensuring that contracted services provide LTA-awareness training to substitute teachers.

4. Food-service personnel contracted by LPS will be given building-based LTA-awareness training annually.

5. The LPS Business Office will offer to our contracted bus drivers the opportunity for LTA19 awareness training annually, and will encourage their participation.

6. Principals or their designees will be responsible to schedule LTA-awareness training in their 21 schools and to ensure that all appropriate employees are trained.

## Appendix 6: Hazing

Section 17 of Chapter 269 of the General Laws states that...

*Whoever is a principle organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.*

*The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person, to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.*

*Not withstanding are other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this section.*

*Whoever knows that another person is a victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.*

*Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.*

*Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested*

*acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.*

*Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.*

*Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution that fails to make such a report.*