



**Dedham Public Schools
Elementary School Handbook
2019 - 2020**

Curran Early Childhood Education Center

Avery School

Greenlodge School

Oakdale School

Riverdale School

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The School Day

Absences

Excessive absences or tardiness have a direct impact on student achievement. Tardiness also disrupts the teaching/learning environment and impacts the teacher and the other students in the class. Please make every effort to have your child in school every day, take vacations during scheduled breaks, and be on time for school. Please call the school before 8:30 am for student absence.

1. All absences require a letter to your child's teacher explaining the reason for the absence (s) on the day the child returns to school.
2. Frequent absences or extended absences for five days or more require a doctor's note explaining the reason for the absences.
3. Early dismissal requires a note. A parent must come into the school to meet the child and sign him/her out.
4. Children who arrive at school at 8:45 AM must report to the office before going to class.

School Attendance

Chapter 76, section 1 of the Massachusetts General Laws states that all children between the ages of six and sixteen must attend school. A school district may excuse up to seven day sessions or fourteen half day sessions in any period of six months. In addition to this law, each school may have its own attendance policy with which parents/guardians should be familiar.

Policy:

1. Regular attendance is expected of all students and is a necessary factor in achieving success. Work missed cannot be made up in a completely satisfactory manner.
2. Absences are excusable for; illness, recovery from an accident, required court attendance, professional appointments, death in the immediate family, observation or celebration of a religious holiday, and such other good cause as may be acceptable to the Superintendent of Schools.
3. Absence for such reasons as vacations, non-school activities, or visiting is discouraged. Late night activities that cause a student to be tardy or absent the following day are also discouraged.
4. Dedham Public Schools discourages the scheduling of dentist or doctor appointments during school hours unless it is an urgent situation.
5. A student who arrives after 8:45 am will be reported as tardy. A student who leaves before 2:20 p.m. will be reported as an early dismissal.

Consequences:

1. At 7 days absent, tardy, and/or early dismissals, parents will receive a letter indicating the total days absent, tardy, and/or early dismissals recorded. The Principal will then confer with the parents to determine the circumstances surrounding the child's absences, tardy, and/or early releases to determine if further action is necessary.
2. At 10 days absent, tardy, and/or early dismissals, parents will receive a second letter indicating the total days absent, tardy, and/or early releases recorded. The parent and/or guardian must submit a written statement explaining the reason for the child's absences, tardy, and/or early releases.
3. At 15 days absent, tardy, and/or early dismissals, the Principal will meet with the parents to determine the need to submit a petition to the Court for resolution with assistance by the Court or Department of Youth and Family Services.

After School Child Care

The before and after School Program is provided by the YMCA. Hours are 7:00 to 8:30 AM. and 3:00 to 6:00 P.M. Please call 617-323-3200 for more information.

Curran Center – Child Care Program

The childcare program provides opportunities to expand upon the classroom theme units through activities and experiences designed to enrich the curriculum. New themes and topics of interest are also explored. The daily schedule in childcare provides a balance of quiet and active experiences, with time for social interaction, creative arts, outdoor play, and free choice times. Rest schedules will be established as needed. A childcare parent handbook is available to all who enroll.

Arrival and Dismissal

Curran Center – Hours of Operation

Preschool Program

Morning Session: 8:45 – 11:15 AM Afternoon Session: 12:30 – 3:00 PM

Kindergarten Program

Morning Session: 8:50 – 11:20 AM Afternoon Session: 12:30 – 3:00 PM

The academic school day begins for grades 1 – 5 for all students as they enter their class at 8:35 a.m. Students who arrive late start off the day already behind. Please make every effort to have your child at school on time. Staff supervision begins at 8:30 a.m. and students will line up to enter the building at 8:35 a.m. For this reason, parents are requested not to allow children to arrive before 8:30 a.m. **Children are dismissed at 3:00 p.m.** Any change in dismissal plans

must be communicated in writing *in advance* to the main office. **All students who are dismissed early must be signed out by a parent or guardian at the office with school personnel before dismissal.**

Bus Transportation

Pupils in Grades 1–5 who live more than two miles from the school are eligible for bus transportation. Payment of a user fee is required to receive a bus pass. Applications for a **bus pass must be completed every year.** The bus picks up and drops off students at the school. A school bus transportation pass is a privilege. It entitles pupils to bus transportation provided they conduct themselves properly while being transported to and from school. A bus pass may be revoked for behavior that is deemed dangerous or disrespectful by the bus driver.

Bus transportation is provided for all kindergarten students who wish to use this service. Bus routes are published in the Daily Transcript and the Dedham Times approximately two weeks prior to the opening of school. As buses arrive at the school, each group of children is met by a teacher and led into the building. Parents/guardians are responsible for the transportation of preschool students. Students in kindergarten through grade two must be met at the bus stop by an adult or they will be returned to their school.

Class Placement

Each spring, the principal joins with classroom teachers and specialists to place children into classrooms for the following school year. Every attempt is made to balance each class academically, socially, historically, (mixing populations of previous classes), and by gender. Requests by parents for specific teachers are not allowed. If you have specific concerns regarding your child’s placement please submit them for consideration in writing to the principal.

Emergency Information

At the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians are required to review and update the existing contact information related to each of their children. This information is extremely important and must be kept up to date. This is done by logging into the PowerSchool Grade Portal, enter the Demographic Update area, and following on-screen prompts to review the existing information for each child.

Lost and Found

Every school has a lost and found area in the building. Please label outer clothing, lunch boxes and school bags with your child’s name. The Dedham School Department is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen articles on school grounds prior to, during or after school hours.

Lunch/Snacks

Lunch is offered for full time students. The elementary schools offer a choice of two lunches and milk daily. A lunch menu order form is sent home each month. The menu and money are collected on Mondays, one month ahead. You can order weekly or monthly. Applications for free and reduced rate lunch will be sent home early in September. At the Avery School, there is a choice of 3 lunches and milk daily. Students may purchase lunch using their Nurtrikids account or cash.

A midmorning snack is common in most classrooms each day. We suggest students bring a piece of fruit or some other healthy snack. We encourage you to send in a well-balanced lunch for your child.

Publicity

At times, a student's photograph and name may appear in the local newspapers, on cable television, or on the school website. If you **do not** wish your child to receive this type of publicity, written notification must be given to the principal at the beginning of each new school year.

Recess

Students have an outdoor recess daily. Please dress children appropriately.

School Insurance

The Dedham School Committee provides access to student accident insurance through a reputable company at group insurance rates. The student insurance program is voluntary with application forms available in early September.

School Pictures

Individual student and class pictures are taken yearly. Prior notice of dates of the photography will be sent home. Parents must prepay for the photos.

Behavior

It is expected that all students will be thoughtful of others, respect school property and property of others and be conscientious. Students are expected to respect their peers and teachers, parents, police, traffic officers, bus drivers and other school personnel. Our intention is to work with students in this conflict resolution process as an important part of their learning experience and to communicate with parents about the process.

Dress Code

Children need to wear clothes that are clean, comfortable and appropriate for the weather. The school reserves the right to question the appropriateness of a student's dress when such dress interferes with the learning environment, the student's health, and /or safety.

Student dress should enhance, not interfere with the teaching-learning environment. Any article of clothing that endangers the health and safety of students or interferes with the teacher-learning process is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Clothing that displays inappropriate, obscene, or profane emblems, slogans or images.
- Any other attire that may disrupt the proper order of the school or distract from the educational environment (School Committee Policy 5128)

Academic Program

Academic Assessment

Academic assessment occurs regularly throughout the year in all classes to monitor student progress and to inform instruction. At any time parents are welcome to make an appointment to discuss their child's performance and progress with his/her teacher or the principal. Teachers schedule individual parent/teacher conferences in the fall. For students not meeting grade level expectations, teachers will schedule a second conference in the spring. Standards Based Progress Reports are issued three times a year in grades 1 – 5. They are issued two times a year in Kindergarten.

Elementary Curriculum

The elementary education program focuses on the academic, social, and physical growth of a child through the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the Dedham Curriculum. A wide range of materials is used to meet the individual needs of the students, including manipulative, the visual arts, games, storytelling, field trips, computer technology, and music. These are integrated into the language arts, mathematics, science, and social science curricula to make learning meaningful and important concepts understandable.

Preschool Program – The preschool curriculum is designed to meet the needs of three and four year olds as they develop socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively. A variety of developmental activities provide opportunities for the child to create, explore, communicate, and learn at his or her own pace.

Kindergarten Program- The kindergarten curriculum continues the focus on the social, emotional, physical, and academic growth of the child through a developmental approach to learning. The major goals of the kindergarten year are to foster curiosity, the desire to learn, self-confidence in ability to learn, the learning of skills, the application of skills learned, the willingness to take risks, and the acquisition of general knowledge. The kindergarten curriculum integrates reading/language arts, mathematics, science, history and social science, music, art, physical education, and library activities in a thematic structure.

Field Trips

In order to supplement the curriculum and provide enrichment programs in the arts, students in every grade have the opportunity to participate in field trips. The PTO works closely with DPS to support field trips for each school. The decision to go on a field trip is jointly made by the classroom teachers and the principal. Field trips are a privilege. Students who have, by their actions, shown a negative behavior pattern may be excluded from this privilege after consultation with the teacher, principal, and the student and his/her parents/guardian. The student is, however, expected to attend school. The teacher will provide regular class assignments for the child on that day.

Homework Guidelines

The School Committee, Administrators, and Faculty believe that homework assignments are important to a quality education and to develop independent work habits. A hierarchy developed by Lee and Pruitt provides an excellent model for classifying assignments. They set forth four major categories of homework for:

- **Practice:** to support the mastery of specific skills and to reinforce material presented in class.
- **Preparation:** to prepare students for upcoming classroom lessons.
- **Extension:** to transfer new skills and knowledge to new situations.
- **Creativity:** to integrate many skills and ideas into a new product or performance that involves planning and analysis over several days or weeks

Homework is an extension of the school day. Homework assignments are expected to be developmentally appropriate and meaningful. Students should read every night for 15-30 minutes depending on the age and reading level. The homework assignment each day is as follows:

- **Grades 1 & 2:** Approximately 15-20 minutes with a balance between language arts and math according to students' individual needs.
- **Grade 3:** Approximately 30 minutes with a balance between language arts, math, science and social science.
- **Grade 4:** Approximately 30-45 minutes with a balance between language arts, math, science and social science.
- **Grade 5:** Approximately 1 hour with a balance between language arts, math, science and social science.

Children need a special time and place to do their homework. Help your child establish a regular time to do homework each day. Provide him/her with a quiet place where homework can be completed without interruptions.

Please be reminded that children in the upper grades are often given long-term assignments. Check regularly to make sure they have organized their time well so those assignments are not left until the last minute to complete.

Library

The Elementary grades 1–5 Library Media Specialist directs information technology and the library program. Each class visits the library at least once per week for instruction on library and research skills, for exposure to literature and new books, to select independent reading, and for introduction to computer skills. Parent volunteers handle cataloging, assisting children with book selections, and reading aloud.

Transition

FIRST GRADE - Each spring, the Curran Early Childhood Center kindergarten teachers prepare information about children entering first grade for the four elementary schools.

(First grade teachers meet with the Curran Center kindergarten staff to become familiar with the classes.) The kindergarten teachers accompany students on a visit to their elementary school to provide a smooth transition. Each spring students will have an opportunity to meet their new principal, tour their new school, and visit the first grade classrooms.

MIDDLE SCHOOL- Each spring the Dedham Middle School conducts several meetings with fifth grade students and parents to provide a smooth transition. Students have an opportunity to meet the principal, tour the building and visit the classrooms.

Communication

Newsletter/Website

A newsletter and district calendar will keep you informed about school events. PTO may submit announcements to the newsletter for community activities. These communications may also be found on the school's web site, www.dedham.k12.ma.us/.

No School and Delayed Opening Announcements

In case of inclement weather, school closings and delayed openings will be announced on Boston area radio and television stations, as well as through the Connect Ed system. Please don't call the school, police or fire departments for information. The Dedham Public Schools will announce delays or closings on the following stations: WBZ, WBMX, WHDH, WBUR, WROR and TV channels 4, 5, 7 and 56.

Most radio stations have **no school announcements** beginning at 6:00 am. In case school is not called off during bad weather, parents should exercise their own discretion about sending their children to school after considering the distance involved and the best interests of their children's health and safety. If the child is kept home, refer to the absence policy. If there is a delayed opening, listen carefully as to whether the Dedham Public Schools are operating on a one-hour delay (9:45 opening) or a two hour delay (10:45 opening).

ECEC Closings

When the Dedham Public Schools delay opening for 1 or 2 hours:

There will **not** be morning kindergarten or preschool.

There **will be** afternoon kindergarten or preschool.

Full day kindergarten will begin after the 1 or 2 hour delay.

Child care will open 1 or 2 hours later, as do the schools.

When the Dedham Public Schools cancel school:

There **will be no** morning kindergarten or preschool.

There **will be no** afternoon kindergarten or preschool.

Child care will be closed.

School Security

Each school throughout the system has a built-in security system. The system is equipped with a television monitor that allows the Principal/Secretary to control entry into the school building. All doors remain locked during the school day. All parents, volunteers and visitors must enter through the front door, sign in at the office, and wear a visitor badge while in the building. Entry through other doors is not permitted.

School Visits and Volunteers

Throughout the school-day many parents, volunteers, and service providers visit our elementary schools. To ensure the safety of our students and staff as well as the integrity of our learning environment, a comprehensive visitors protocol is in place. Please review this protocol and the procedures we employ to ensure they are successfully implemented.

Expectations for Visitors and Volunteers

Any adult(s) who are not directly employed by the school or district must check in and out through the front office and wear appropriate identification throughout their stay in the building.

Procedure for Visitors and Volunteers

1. Each adult visiting the building must use the main entryway and proceed to the front office.
2. Once in the front office, each visitor must sign in with front office staff. Office staff will issue a visitor's identification badge or sticker.
3. Each visitor must wear this identification badge or sticker for the entirety of his/her stay.
4. Each visitor must return directly to the front office when ready to depart, hand in his or her identification badge and sticker, and sign out.

Volunteering and Criminal Offender Record Information

Massachusetts General Law c. 6 §167 requires any adult working with children in schools to undergo a Criminal Offender Record Information check. Parents and community members who wish to volunteer in Dedham's schools must have an up to date Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) check on file with the District's central office. CORI forms can be obtained through the main office at each school building or on the Dedham Public Schools [website](#). Completed CORI forms, along with a copy of the applicant's photo ID, should be brought to the main office of your home school. ***Please be aware that CORI checks can take up to two full weeks to process and complete. If you are considering volunteering in the Dedham Schools please complete a CORI form well in advance of the date(s) you intend to volunteer.***

Parent-Teacher Organization

Each elementary school has an active Parent Teachers' Organization (PTO) that sponsors a variety of school activities and programs that enrich students' educational experience, support the implementation of the School Improvement Plan, and build a strong community spirit. The PTO raises funds for student field trips and arts programs. The PTO also maintains the school playground and makes other improvements to the school.

Room Parents

Each classroom has Room Parents. Room Parents assist teachers with various needs and classroom events over the year, communicate with parents should the needs arise, support fundraising efforts of the PTO, and communicate with the PTO board about school functions.

School Council

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 dictates that a school council will oversee the goals of all schools. Consistent with this, the Dedham School Committee voted that each public school shall have a school council subject to the Open Meeting Law and shall meet in the evening no less than four times a year and no more than seven times a year. The council shall be established early in the school year so that its first meeting can be held no later than forty calendar days after the start of the school year.

Membership shall include the principal as co-chair of the council, parents, teachers and other interested parties. Membership may include persons from municipal government, business and labor organizations. Council members may serve no more than two consecutive terms and are elected to either one or two year terms.

The Council writes a School Improvement Plan that contains the goals and expectations for each school. These goals include plans to improve student performance, school climate, home school communication, and facilities. In addition, the School Council reviews programs for staff development, the school budget, and other important relevant school concerns. Anyone interested in serving on the School Council should contact the principal or a member of the PTO Board.

Student Services

English Language Learners

The ELL program is designed to integrate limited English proficient students into all facets of the mainstream curriculum. In one-to-one, small group, and whole class sessions, the fundamentals of the English language are presented in an arena of inclusion where the important tenets of multicultural education are fostered. There is much reciprocal learning between the international students and the native English speakers making our community a place where cross-cultural communication is encouraged and diversity celebrated.

Evaluations

To be eligible for specialized instruction through IDEA, a student must first be found to have a disability, which prevents him/her from making effective progress in school. The school district is not required to refer students for an evaluation solely because they are at risk of being retained or have failed the MCAS.

Occupational/Physical Therapy

Occupational and physical therapists provide special education and consultation services for students, teachers and their families in the following areas:

- **Fine motor skills** - dexterity, tool usage (pencil, scissors) and visual motor skills
- **Gross motor skills** - postural stability, balance, muscle strengthening and motor planning
- **Sensory motor integration** - including accommodations to facilitate attention

Academic Intervention and Monitoring

Each elementary school employs a full time Instructional Coach and at least one Educational Interventionist. These professionals work closely with classroom teachers, administration and other professionals to assess the general academic progress of students, identify students who may benefit from additional academic support, and provide targeted academic support to students if needed.

School Adjustment Counselor

The School Adjustment Counselor serves as a link between home, school, and the community. The counselor promotes and supports students' academic and social development by providing services that include:

- Individual, family, & group counseling
- Crisis prevention & intervention
- Family and developmental histories
- In class programs
- Collaboration with service professionals, community agencies, & organizations
- Advocacy for students, parents, & the school

The counselor helps parents and families identify and meet their children's social and emotional needs as well as use school and community resources more effectively. Finally, the Adjustment Counselor helps educators develop and implement plans to enhance student's success in school.

Special Education

The Dedham Public Schools offer a variety of specialized education and support services to children as mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA 1997. Diagnostic evaluation, special education instruction, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling and consultation are among the many services available to children, their parents, and teachers. Inclusion of special education students through team teaching and

specialized instruction provides students with the opportunity to access the curriculum, to participate successfully in the regular education setting, and to meet their academic potential. Special needs support is provided to students in many ways. Students may receive any one or combination of the following: individual tutoring, small group instruction, classroom instructional support, modified assignments, study groups, alternative materials, MCAS accommodations, teacher's consultation, and homework support.

Speech/Language Therapy

Speech and language therapy is a special education service that addresses identified student communication disorders. Specifically, the instruction gives students strategies for speaking, listening, and following directions as well as an ability to understand language, vocabulary and inferences that promote learning in the regular education classroom. The speech and language therapist consults with parents about communication skills.

Health Services

Student Illness

To minimize the spread of infectious disease and to provide for a safe environment, students should be kept home from school for:

- Fever greater than 100 within the last 24 hours (fever should be under 100 for 24 hours **without the use of fever reducing medications** before returning to school)
- Vomiting/diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- A communicable disease
- An upper respiratory illness with significant coughing and/or nasal discharge
- Pain that requires the use of narcotic medications

Communication

A full time nurse is on duty during the entire school day. The school nurse will notify a parent/guardian when she determines the need for student dismissal due to illness/injury. These dismissals are **not** considered 'excused absences'. Parents/guardians should arrange for their child to be picked up within the half hour for the benefit of their child and other students coming into the health office.

The school nurse can be reached by telephone or email if you have any questions about guidelines for school attendance or if you are in need of any health related information. The school nurse should be notified by the parent/guardian of any:

- Serious injury, illness or hospitalization
- Planned surgery
- Communicable diseases

- New diagnosis or change in your child’s health status
- Fracture, sprain, stitches, cast, or crutches
- New medication and/or dosing change.
- Need to be excused from Physical Education.

Health-related information must be completed and updated annually by parents/guardians either online through SNAP Health Parent Portal or in paper version on the pink “Student Health and Emergency Information” sheet. All communication with the school nurse will be held confidential.

Universal Precautions

Universal precautions are the recommendations developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to control the spread of infectious diseases. Universal precautions treat all human blood and bodily fluids as infectious.

Strict adherence to universal precautions is practiced by all DPS nurses in all clinical situations.

Medication Policy

The Dedham Public Schools Medication Policy complies with the state guidelines which are available for review at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health website. The following are some important highlights of our policy:

- We encourage that medication be administered before and after school hours, if possible
- All medications, prescription or over-the-counter, require a physician’s order and a completed parental permission form. Medication will not be administered until documentation is complete and received by the school nurse. A new medication order from the physician is required for all dose changes. All required forms are available on the Health Services website.
- All medication orders expire at the end of each school year.
- All medication must be delivered to the school nurse in a correctly labeled pharmacy or manufacturer’s medication container by a parent/guardian or responsible adult. **Students are not permitted to bring medication into school. Medication will not be accepted in containers such as plastic bags.** Medication must be picked up at the end of each school year. Medication not picked up by the close of the school year will be destroyed.
- For short-term medications (requiring administration for ten school days or fewer) the pharmacy-labeled container may be used in lieu of a licensed prescriber's order; if the nurse has a question, she may request a licensed prescriber's order.

After consultation with the school nurse and development of a plan, students who fall into the following categories may self-administer medication:

- Students with asthma or other respiratory diseases may possess and self-administer prescription inhalers

- Students with life-threatening allergies may possess and administer prescription epinephrine via an auto-injector.
- Students with cystic fibrosis may possess and administer prescription enzyme supplements
- Students with diabetes may possess and administer a glucose monitoring test and insulin delivery system.

Health Requirements

The Dedham Public Schools in accordance with the regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health requires the following information before a student enters school:

- Required immunizations: an immunization record must be submitted to and reviewed by the school nurse prior to school entry
 - ◆ Exemptions: If there is a medical reason why immunizations are not done, a certificate must be obtained from your physician and forwarded to the school nurse. For a religious exemption, parent/guardian must fill out a Religious Exemption from Immunization form which can be found on our website or write a note to the school nurse. Parents/guardians should be aware that students who are not immunized due to an exemption or those who are under-immunized will be excluded from school in the event of a disease outbreak.
- Physical examination: A physical exam is required for all new students. The examination should have been carried out within one year of the start of school. An updated physical exam is also required in grades 4, 7 and 10. However, parents/guardians are encouraged to send a copy of the student's physical to the nurse annually.

Health Screenings

The Dedham Public School nurses follow the Mass Department of Public Health guidelines for vision, hearing, scoliosis and growth screenings. When a student fails any of these screenings, the parent/guardian will be notified and asked to follow up with a medical evaluation.

Life Threatening Food Allergy Policy

The Dedham Public Schools recognizes the increasing prevalence of food allergies and the life threatening nature of these allergies for many students. Our policy for Life-Threatening Allergies is available on our website. The implementation of this policy aims to minimize the risk of exposure, to assist students with assuming more individual responsibility for their health and safety as they grow older, and to ensure full participation in their educational programs and school sponsored activities. The management of students with food allergies requires the awareness, support and response of the entire school community.

If a student has a life-threatening allergy, he/she must have access to emergency medication (EpiPen) at all times. Parents/guardians must be responsible for the school nurse obtaining the necessary medical information about a child's emergency allergy action plan.

Key points of the DPS Life-Threatening Allergy policy include:

- An individualized health care plan will be developed for each student with a medically diagnosed life-threatening allergy.
- Our school programs are not declared as allergen-free and foods with known allergies are not banned from our schools.
- Communication, planning, and education with staff, parents/guardians, and students will aim to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to students.
- DPS staff are not responsible for implementing the Food Allergy Policy during school sponsored events beyond the school day that are open to the public (e.g. plays, concerts, athletic contests, ceremonies).
- DPS staff are not responsible for implementing the Food Allergy Policy for programs or events on DPS property that are sponsored by various parent, community and private groups.

Children with Special Health Care Needs

When a student has asthma, allergies, diabetes, seizures, attention deficit disorder, or any other medical or mental health condition requiring special health services in the school and/or requires the assistance of medical technology, it is vitally important that the parent/guardian meet with the school nurse to develop an Individualized Health Care Plan as soon as possible.

Students with Medical Equipment Needs

A medical order is mandatory if a student requires the use of crutches, wheelchair or any other medically necessary equipment. If a student comes to school without a note for this equipment, the student will be sent home for reasons of liability and the potential for further injury. It is imperative that the nurse be aware when students with crutches, etc. are in the building so that, in the event of an emergency, an evacuation plan can be developed.

Concussions

Concussion or Traumatic Brain Injury can occur whenever there is a blow or jolt to the head. DPS seeks to prevent concussions and provide a safe return to activity, both academic and athletic, after a head injury. Although every concussed student is different, the care and management of students who have sustained a concussion requires education, supervision, and close collaboration between students, parents/guardians, school nurses and, when applicable, the athletic trainer, athletic director, administrator, guidance counselors, and medical professionals.

In accordance, when a student sustains a head injury, DHS' protocol for Re-entry to Academics and Return to Physical Activity is as follows:

- Student is removed from physical activity until medically evaluated
- Head Injury report filled out by Athletic Trainer, Coach, or school nurse as appropriate
- Parent/guardian notified and student is dismissed from school or athletic activity and referred for medical evaluation
- Medical provider evaluates student and documents diagnosis or traumatic brain injury or concussion
- Parent provides school nurse with documentation of head injury from medical provider and plan of care including accommodations for academic and physical activity
- School nurse will initiate the Return To Academics protocol
- School nurse will notify, as applicable, the athletic trainer when student has completed the Return to Academics protocol and is ready to begin the Gradual Return to Play protocol

Dedham Public School Policies

Alcohol & Drugs

Any student found with alcohol in their possession or suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs (other than drugs prescribed by a physician) will be sent directly to the school nurse or office, as proper in each case. The student's parents will be contacted and corrective action will be required before readmission to the regular school program. Readmission will follow five (5) days suspension, provided that the parents have attended a school conference and the student, parents and school representative have developed a corrective plan for behavior modification

Bullying and Cyber-Bullying

Bullying and Cyber-Bullying are prohibited at school and at any school related activity or program, including on school buses ([School Committee Policy JICFB](#)). Bullying and cyber-bullying are also prohibited when they occur off school grounds or at non-school sponsored activities if the bullying or cyber-bullying creates a hostile school environment for a student. (i.e. if it creates a situation in which the bullying causes the school environment to be sufficiently intimidating to the student to alter the student's education).

Bullying

Bullying is defined as repeated acts from one student to another student that cause physical or emotional harm to the victim, damages the victim's property or puts the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or his property.

Examples of bullying include but are not limited to the following:

- tripping, hitting, pushing, spitting, pinching, or blocking an entrance/exit
- intentionally excluding a student from an activity
- spreading hurtful or untrue stories
- name calling, threats, or attempts to scare someone

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is defined as the use of technology and/or electronic devices to commit acts of bullying. Cyber-bullying can include sending emails, text messaging, posting messages on websites or blogging that meet the definition of bullying as stated above.

Any student who reports actual or suspected acts of bullying to the school Principal or other staff member, or who provides information during an investigation into reported bullying, cannot be retaliated against.

Procedure for Reporting Bullying:

Any student who witnesses or is made aware of a suspected act of bullying or cyber-bullying must report the incident to the building Principal or his designee. If the student makes the report to his or her teacher or other staff member at school, that person will convey the information to the Principal and/or the Principal designee. The student can make the report verbally or in writing. The student can also choose to make the report anonymously although the Administration is not permitted to discipline a student based only on an anonymous report. It is prohibited for a student to make a knowingly false report of bullying or cyber-bullying.

The Principal and/or their designee will conduct an investigation into the report of bullying or cyber-bullying upon receipt of the information and in accordance with the Dedham Public Schools' Bullying Prevention Policy.

Discipline

Any student who is found to have bullied, cyber-bullied or committed an act of retaliation against a student who reported bullying, will be subject to discipline. Depending on the nature and severity of the offense, the discipline imposed can range from a verbal warning to expulsion, in accordance with applicable policy, procedures and regulatory requirements.

Student Network Acceptable Use Policy

Mission Statement

The primary purpose of the Dedham Public Schools instructional network (DPS Network) is to support and enhance teaching and learning by providing a network, computers and an Internet connection to allow electronic communications storage and access to information resources.

General Policies and Guidelines

It is the policy of the Dedham Public Schools that students shall utilize the network in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner in accordance with the mission of the Dedham School Department for school-related purposes ([School Committee Policy IJNDB](#)). The DPS Network is provided to support the educational mission of the district. All other uses are prohibited. The DPS Network is not a forum for personal opinion on any subject. Students are reminded that any use of the DPS Network must comply with this policy and all other applicable policies, procedures and rules of the Dedham Public Schools. Users must acknowledge their understanding of the general policy and guidelines as a condition of receiving an account to use the network. Failure to adhere to this policy and its guidelines below may result in suspending or revoking access to the network as well as other consequences as described below.

Guideline 1: Acceptable uses of the network are activities that support classroom teaching and learning, career development and limited high quality academic self-discovery activities.

Guideline 2: There shall be no anonymity in use of the network. All users must log in to the network with their given account name and password. No other user may use the network under that account.

Guideline 3: There are unacceptable uses of the network. Inappropriate uses can be classified into two categories: illegal and prohibited. Please note that some prohibited uses, in certain situations, can be illegal. Examples of illegal and prohibited activities follow. These lists are not to be viewed as comprehensive but as explanatory.

- Illegal activities will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency. Illegal uses include: obscenity, libel, threats, hate postings, sexual harassment, and copyright violations.
- Prohibited activities are based on the intended use of the DPS network. Examples of these include: promotion of personal views, pornography, profanity, plagiarism, commercial or political use, and anonymous messages. Additionally users are not to broadcast messages, download files or applications, send mass emails, encrypt files, raise unwelcome attention, show disrespect or violate commonly agreed upon etiquette when using the network.

Guideline 4: Staff members are responsible for teaching proper techniques and standards for participation, for guiding access to appropriate sections of the network, and for assuring that users understand that if they misuse the network, that consequences will be applied.

Guideline 5: It is the responsibility of students, parents, teachers and administrators to clearly communicate in order to support all guidelines.

Users of System

The student is responsible for what s/he says and does on the network. The following people are entitled to use the network in support of the Dedham School Department's mission:

- All Dedham School Department employees;
- All Dedham students under the supervision of a sponsoring educator and parent;
- Others working in K-12 education that request guest accounts from the Instructional Network Administrator, these requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will be granted as needs and resources permit.

Limitation of Liability

The Dedham School Department (DSD) makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the system will be error-free. The DSD will not be responsible for any damage you may suffer, including but not limited to loss of data or interruptions of service. The DSD is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. The DSD will not be responsible for obligations (financial, legal or other) arising through the authorized or unauthorized use of the system. Users of the system understand that some efforts are made to block inappropriate material but that it is impossible to block all offensive material; therefore, the DSD is not responsible for any information that is transferred through the Internet.

Additional Disclosures

Email is insecure and may be read by authorized enforcement personnel (see Email Policy for future details). Please note there is only a limited expectation of privacy within the network, just as there is for any storage facility in the schools. Similarly, there is only a limited freedom of expression on the network: the school department has the discretionary right to “edit” publications within its jurisdiction everything posted or transmitted via the DPS is a “publication.” In support of our educational mission, students’ work, image, voice and identification may be transmitted through the instructional network, including but not limited to, postings on the Dedham School Department’s Intranet and Internet site. Restrictions on such use should be submitted in writing to the building principal.

Consequences

Network use in the Dedham Schools is an appropriate application of our instructional program. Supervision and monitoring of student use will be a staff priority; however, there may be episodes of inappropriate student use. In this event, consequences will be applied.

Consequences for Inappropriate Use: In the event of inappropriate use of the network, a building administrator will apply consequences. Consequences may consist of any or all of the following, as determined by the administrator following severity of the infraction.

- Parents will be contacted and informed of the violation.
- The student will lose her/his network access rights immediately. A conference with the building administrator, the student and parents will be held. Access privileges may be revoked permanently.
- A disciplinary report will be written, with a copy for the parents and a file copy.

- The student may be suspended or expelled from school.
- All illegal activity will be reported to local law enforcement.

If you have any concerns or questions about network use, please contact your child's principal.

Approved by School Committee April 16, 2008n.

Computers

School computers are to be used only for academic purposes. While the school fully supports computer and Internet use at home, parents are strongly urged to limit and monitor computer use as well as television viewing and telephone usage. Parents should supervise email and "chat rooms" by their children as well.

Search and Seizure

Under the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, students are protected from unreasonable searches and seizure conducted by school officials and teachers. An unreasonable search may invalidate any disciplinary action that was taken and potentially could lead to a claim for monetary damages.

Reasonable searches are conducted when:

- There are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student has violated or is violating the law or the rules of the school.
- The search is conducted in a manner that is appropriate to its objectives and not excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction.
- If a search of a student is necessary for the safety of the student, student body and/or school personnel, the search must be conducted by the building administrator in the presence of another school administrator, nurse, etc., of the opposite sex (if the student being searched is of the opposite sex of the school administrator). If the building administrator determines that the police must be involved and the administrator requests that the police do the search, then a search warrant must be issued. Under no circumstance should a school administrator search a student without requesting permission from the student. If a student chooses not to be searched, he/she should be notified that they will be detained until a police officer arrives with a search warrant. Parents must be notified.

Parents and students are reminded of the following:

- Desks and cubbies are school property on loan to students.
- Certain items may not be stored in desks, cubbies or other receptacles including weapons, penknives, Swiss Army knives, (etc.), stolen property, etc.

- Dedham Schools retain the right to inspect desks and cubbies periodically for compliance with these rules and to maintain health and sanitation standards.
- A student search that is conducted by a police officer will, in all likelihood, be upheld if a valid warrant is held. However, searches including locker searches by administrators are allowed without a warrant if he/she has reason to suspect that a student has violated or is violating the law or the rules of the school.

Discrimination and Harassment

Introduction

The Dedham Public Schools has a commitment to maintaining an educational environment where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or age, are not tolerated. Discrimination and harassment are contrary to the mission of the Dedham Public Schools and its commitment to equal opportunity in education.

The Dedham Public Schools does not discriminate against students, parents, employees or the general public. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to the Dedham Public Schools, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of the Dedham Public Schools on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. (M.G.L. c. 76 §5). Additionally, the Dedham Public Schools does not tolerate harassment based upon race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. (603 CMR 26.08).

For purposes of this policy, "school" includes school - sponsored events, trips, sport events, similar events connected with school or employment. Any retaliation against an individual who has complained about discrimination or harassment, or any retaliation against any individual who has cooperated with an investigation of a discrimination, harassment or retaliation complaint, is also unlawful and will not be tolerated.

The Dedham Public Schools takes allegations of discrimination and harassment seriously and will respond promptly to complaints. Where it is determined that conduct that violates the law and this policy has occurred, the Dedham Public Schools will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose corrective action as necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate, which may include school-related discipline.

Definition of Discrimination and Harassment

"Harassment" is defined as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on: race, color, national origin, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or age. Harassment is prohibited by the Dedham Public Schools, and violates the law.

Discrimination and /or harassment include, but is not limited to:

- Display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading to a person or group based upon the criteria listed above.
- Verbal abuse or insults about, directed at, or made in the presence of an individual or group described above because of one of the criteria listed above.
- Any action or speech that contributes to, promotes or results in a hostile or discriminatory environment to an individual or group described above.
- Any action or speech that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent that it either (i) interferes with or limits the ability of an individual or group (as described above) to participate in or benefit from a school program or activity of the Dedham Public Schools; or creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment.

Many forms of harassment have been recognized as violations of the civil rights laws (including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the ADA, Title VI, Title IX and state statutes like M.G.L. 151C) by federal courts, state courts, the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination.

"Sexual harassment" is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

-Submission to or rejection of such advances, requests, or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of employment, academic standing, school-related opportunities, or as a basis for employment decisions.

-Such advances, requests, or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive work or educational environment.

While it is not possible to list all circumstances that may be considered sexual harassment, the following are examples of conduct that violate the law and policy and which, if severe and pervasive, constitute sexual harassment. In each case, such a determination will depend upon the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, whether they involve physical touching or not.
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments.
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or verbal references to sexual conduct, comments about an individual's body, comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess.
- Discussions of one's own sexual activities or inquiries into others' sexual experiences.
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons.

The definitions of discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment are broad. In addition to the above examples, other unwelcome conduct, whether intended or not, that has the effect of

creating a school environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating may constitute discrimination, harassment and/or sexual harassment.

Grievance Procedure: Reporting Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment

If any Dedham Public Schools student, parent/guardian, or employee or third party believes, in good faith, that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment or any other form of harassment or discrimination described above, the individual has a right to file a complaint with the Dedham Public Schools. This may be done informally or formally, as described below.

Teachers or other staff members who observe incidents of harassment or discrimination involving students shall report such incidents immediately to the student's Principal. Administrators aware of harassment or discrimination involving any employee shall report such incidents to the appropriate coordinator, listed below, or to the Superintendent.

Please note that while these procedures relate to the Dedham Public Schools' policy of promoting an educational setting free from discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, as detailed further in this policy, these procedures are not designed nor intended to limit the Dedham Public Schools' authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which the Dedham Public Schools deems unacceptable.

Internal Grievance Procedure

Informal Resolution of Discrimination and Harassment Complaints:

Before initiating the formal procedure, the student/parent/guardian/employee/third party may wish, if possible, to resolve the complaint on an informal basis through discussion.

A student or parent can discuss the issue with his/her teacher or building Principal. An employee or third party can discuss the issue with his/her immediate supervisor or the building Principal.

The person receiving the complaint shall attempt, within his/her authority, to work with the individual to resolve the issue fairly and expeditiously within ten (10) working days of receiving the complaint. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution from the informal process, or if he/she does not choose informal resolution, then he/she can begin the formal complaint procedure described below.

Contact information for building principals and for the Superintendent is located below.

Formal Resolution of Discrimination and Harassment Concerns:

A student, parent /guardian, employee or third party who is not satisfied with the informal resolution process or who chooses not to participate in the informal resolution process may initiate the formal complaint procedure by putting the complaint in writing to the District Civil

Rights Coordinator assigned for the specific type of discrimination/harassment that is alleged. An employee, at the request of the student, may put the complaint in writing for the student.

Who you should contact:

District Civil Rights Coordinator for Title IV (race, color, national origin); Title IX (sex); Section 504 (disability); Title II of the ADA (disability); Religion, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation and Age is:

*Ian Kelly Ed.D. Assistant Superintendent
100 Whiting Avenue
Dedham, MA 02026
781-310-1000*

Students, parents/guardians, employees or third parties who wish to initiate the formal complaint process may also put their complaint in writing to the building Principal. Any Principal receiving such a complaint shall immediately forward the complaint to the appropriate District Coordinator listed above, who will then begin the formal procedure described below.

Any teacher or other employee who receives a formal complaint of discrimination or harassment shall immediately forward the complaint to the building Principal. The Principal will then forward the complaint to the appropriate District Coordinator listed above, who will begin the formal procedure described below.

What the complaint should include:

The student/parent//guardian/employee/or third party's complaint should include: the name of the individual making the complaint, the name of the individual aggrieved, the name of the individual accused of committing the harassing or discriminatory practice, the location of the school/department where the alleged discriminatory practice occurred, the basis for the complaint, and the corrective action the student is seeking. If the written complaint does not contain this information, the District Civil Rights Coordinator will ask the complainant for this information.

When to file a complaint:

Efforts should be made to file such complaint within twenty (20) calendar days after the alleged discriminatory practice occurred in order for an expeditious investigation to be conducted, unless extenuating circumstances exist. However, the Dedham Public Schools will investigate any complaint no matter when it is filed.

What will happen after a complaint is filed:

Promptly after receiving the complaint, the District Civil Rights Coordinator will conduct the necessary investigation. In the course of his/her investigation, the District Civil Rights Coordinator shall contact those individuals that have been referred to as having pertinent information related to the complaint. This process shall include, at a minimum, contacting the complainant and the person against whom the complaint was filed and/or the appropriate authority involved. During this process, complainants will have the opportunity to present witnesses and other relevant evidence to the District Civil Rights Coordinator conducting the investigation.

Strict timelines cannot be set for conducting the investigation because each set of circumstances is different. For example, sometimes the employees or students that are involved in the complaint are not immediately available. The District Civil Rights Coordinator, however, will make sure that the complaint is handled as quickly as feasible and will strive to complete the investigation within thirty (30) working days. When more than thirty (30) working days is required for the investigation, the District Civil Rights Coordinator shall inform the complainant that the investigation is still ongoing.

After completing the formal investigation of the complaint, the District Civil Rights Coordinator shall make a decision on the complaint, and shall inform the complainant and the person against whom the complaint was made, of the results of the investigation. If the District Civil Rights Coordinator finds that there is reasonable cause for believing that a discriminatory or harassing practice has occurred, the District Civil Rights Coordinator will refer the matter to Superintendent of the Dedham Public Schools and/or his or her designee for appropriate action, up to and including discipline for either the employee or the student(s) who engaged in the harassing or discriminatory conduct.

What you can do if you are not satisfied with the outcome of the formal complaint procedure:

If the complainant is not satisfied with the District Civil Rights Coordinator's decision, he/she can appeal the District Civil Rights Coordinator's finding to the Superintendent within five school days.

The Superintendent will review the information considered by the District Civil Rights Coordinator, collect any additional information he/she believes is necessary to make an informed decision and shall issue a written decision to the complainant and the person against whom the complaint was made. Again, strict timelines cannot be set for conducting the investigation because each set of circumstances is different. However, the Superintendent will make sure that the complaint is handled as quickly as feasible and will strive to complete the investigation within ten (10) working days.

If the complainant is not satisfied with the Superintendent's decision, or if he/she does not choose either of the internal resolution processes, he/she may follow the external grievance procedure described below.

External Grievance Procedure

Any student, parent or employee who chooses not to use the district's internal grievance procedures or who is not satisfied with the district's internal grievance procedures may file a complaint of discrimination or harassment with an appropriate state or federal agency.

For complaints related to discrimination/harassment of students:

The Office for Civil Rights US Department of Education 8th Floor
5 Post Office Square, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: 617-289-0111 FAX: 617-289-0150 TDD: 877-521-2172

OR

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
One Ashburton Place, Sixth Floor, Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
Phone: 617-994-6000 TTY: 617-994-6196

For complaints related to discrimination/harassment of parents:

The Office for Civil Rights US Department of Education
8th Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: 617-289-0111 FAX: 617-289-0150 TDD: 877-521-2172

For complaints related to discrimination/harassment of employees:

The Office for Civil Rights US Department of Education 8th Floor
5 Post Office Square, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: 617-289-0111 FAX: 617-289-0150 TDD: 877-521-2172

OR

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
One Ashburton Place, Sixth Floor, Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
Phone: 617-994-6000 TTY: 617-994-6196

OR

The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
Phone: 1-800-669-4000

General Policies

1. No reprisals or retaliation shall be invoked against any person for processing, in good faith, a complaint, either on an informal basis or formal basis, or for participating in any way in these complaint procedures.
2. No reprisals or retaliation shall be invoked against any person who, in good faith, has testified, assisted or participated in any manner in any investigations, proceeding, or hearing of a complaint or for otherwise participating in any way in these complaint procedures.
3. Whenever possible, a conference should be scheduled during a time that does not conflict with regularly scheduled work and/or school programs.
4. The Dedham Public Schools will work with an individual who files a complaint of discrimination or harassment; including conducting an investigation and holding conferences, in order to fairly and expeditiously resolve the complaint.

Smoking/Vaping

According to the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993, the use of any tobacco products within school buildings or facilities, or on school grounds or buses, by any individual, is prohibited at all times.

With the support of the Board of Health, the Dedham Public Schools, Schools and the Dedham School Committee, the following measure will take effect immediately:

Any Dedham Public School student found smoking in the building or on school grounds will be subject to the following consequences:

1st Offense: \$100.00 fine or Smoking Education Class
Parent notification
Notification to sports and activity directors

2nd Offense & thereafter: \$100.00 fine
Parent notification
Notification to sports and activity directors

Failure to pay the \$100.00 fine after twenty-one (21) calendar days will result in a suspension from school.

Suspension and Expulsion

A **suspension** is when a student is excluded from school and school related activities for not more than ten school days. After each suspension, a student must have his parent/guardian come to the office to confer with the principal before he/she may return to class. The following actions may be a cause for suspension:

- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Destruction of school property or property belonging to a staff person or a student

- Fighting
- Insolence or disrespect for authority
- Any other conduct, which, in the judgment of the principal, seriously interferes with the education process.

An **expulsion** is when a student is excluded from school and school related activities for more than ten school days. Please refer to Dedham School Committee Policy Relative to Weapons on School Property, School Buses, or at School Events. Policy appears at the end of this handbook.

Suspension and Expulsion Process and Procedure

If it is considered necessary to suspend or expel a pupil, the following procedures shall be followed with the understanding that a student facing suspension or expulsion has the following Due Process rights:

- The student shall be given an opportunity to present his/her side of the story.
- The student shall be given oral or written notice of the charges against him/her.
- Two adults should be present during the entire process if at all possible.
- If the student denies the charges, the student shall be given an explanation for the evidence the authorities have.
- The parent or guardian shall be notified in writing within 24 hours of the suspension or expulsion. This notice will clearly state the reason and length for the suspension or expulsion. The parent will be notified of the procedure and the date the student should return to school.
- A brief note outlining the action taken and the process followed should be on file.
- No suspension will exceed ten school days.
- As a general rule, the notice and hearing should take place prior to a suspension from school.

As previously stated, the notice and hearing should precede the removal of the student from school. However, a student whose presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property, or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process, may be immediately removed from school. In such cases, the school will make immediate, reasonable efforts to provide oral notice to the student and parent of the emergency removal, and the need for it, followed by written notice. The principal will render a decision orally on the day of the hearing with a written decision to follow by the next school day. When a student is suspended or expelled from school, the parents or guardian shall be called in for consultation with regard to the actions of their child and possible solutions to help solve the problem.

