

2017 - 2018 Handbook



187 Brookline Street, Needham, MA 02492

Mitchell School Office: 781-455-0466

Fax Number: 781-455-0871

Safe Arrival Line: 781-444-2283

Mitchell School Nurse: 781-455-0870

www.mitchell.needham.k12.ma.us

Needham Public Schools School Calendar

2017-2018

August/September				
M	T	W	Th	F
28	29	30	31	1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

February				
M	T	W	Th	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28		

October				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

March				
M	T	W	Th	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

November				
M	T	W	Th	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

April				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

December				
M	T	W	Th	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

May				
M	T	W	Th	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

January				
M	T	W	Th	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

June				
M	T	W	Th	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

	Holiday/Recess
	PreK-8 Early Release (ER)
	PreK-12 Early Release (ER)
	PreK-8 Delayed Opening- 2 hrs

NOTE: Classes at the high school (grades 9-12) begin at 8:35 on Fridays

AUGUST 2017	
8/28	General Staff meeting/Prof. Dev
8/29	Professional Development Day
8/30	All Schools Open
8/31	First Day of Kindergarten
8/31	Preschool Orientation
SEPTEMBER 2017	
9/1	First Day of Preschool & KASE
9/4	Labor Day - No School
9/21	Rosh Hashanah
9/26	PreK-8 Early Release
OCTOBER 2017	
10/9	Columbus Day
10/26	PreK-12 Early Release
NOVEMBER 2017	
11/10	Veterans' Day Observed No School
11/22	No School- Prof Development
11/23-24	Thanksgiving Recess
DECEMBER 2017	
12/6	PreK-8 Delayed Opening
12/25-1/1	Winter break
JANUARY 2018	
1/2	Classes Resume
1/15	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
1/16	PreK-8 Delayed Opening
1/31	PreK-12 Early Release
FEBRUARY 2018	
2/13	PreK-8 Early Release
2/19-23	February Recess
2/26	Classes Resume
MARCH 2018	
3/7	PreK-12 Early Release
3/29	PreK-8 Early Release
3/30	Good Friday
APRIL 2018	
4/10	PreK-8 Delayed Opening
4/16-4/20	April Recess
4/23	Classes Resume
MAY 2018	
5/24	PreK-12 Early Release
5/28	Memorial Day
JUNE 2018	
6/4	Graduation
6/5	PreK-8 Early Release
6/13	Last day if no snow days-ER
6/20	Last day 5 snow days-ER



MITCHELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

187 Brookline Street
Needham, MA 02492

Tel: (781) 455-0466 * Fax: (781) 455-0871

July 2017

Dear Friends and Families of Mitchell,

Welcome to the 2017-2018 school year at the William Mitchell Elementary School. I hope you are as excited as I am to begin a new year and to welcome our incoming kindergarteners (the class of 2030!) to the joy of the Mitchell experience.

Enclosed in this handbook you will find helpful information on process and procedure; standards and expectations; and the culture and beliefs of our school. Our faculty and staff have put a great deal of time and thought into how we structure the learning environment at Mitchell and how we help each child grow. To that end, we as a community strive to live out our core value of respect:

Recognize your own worth and the worth of others

Encourage each other in work and play

Stay safe

Practice honesty

Empathize with others

Care, share, and be fair

Try your best

The degree to which we are successful depends in no small part on a strong home-school partnership – in other words, you. This handbook is one of many ways we work to build relationships, achieve open communication, and clarify expectations. Please take a moment to read it through and contact the school if you have any questions.

I am truly looking forward to partnering with you on what will no doubt be a fantastic year of learning and growth!

Sincerely,

Gregory Bayse
Principal

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Please call the ELL program office at 781-455-0800 x2504
if you need this document translated.

Пожалуйста, свяжитесь с офисом программы ELL по телефону
781-455-0800, если вам нужен перевод этого документа

이 서류에 대한 번역이 필요하시면 ELL 프로그램 사무실(781-455-
0800)로 전화주시기 바랍니다.

Por favor telefone para o escritório do programa ELL no número 781-
455-0800 se precisar deste documento traduzido.

Si usted desea que este documento sea traducido, por favor llame a
la oficina del Programa de aprender el idioma inglés al número 781-
455-0800.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Mitchell Elementary School
187 Brookline Street, Needham, MA 02492

PHONE/FAX LINES:

Mitchell School Office	781-455-0466
Fax Number	781-455-0871
Safe Arrival Line	781-444-2283
Mitchell School Nurse	781-455-0870

WEBSITES:

Mitchell School	http://mitchell.needham.k12.ma.us/main/
Needham Public Schools	http://www.needham.k12.ma.us/

CONTACTING US VIA EMAIL

Any employee (faculty, staff, administrator) of the Needham Public School System can be contacted via email using the following format:

FirstName LastName@needham.k12.ma.us

SAFE ARRIVAL LINE

In order to insure that all children are accounted for, the Mitchell office has a safe arrival line. A 24-hour voicemail is in operation to take absentee and late arrival calls. Please call **781-444-2283** any time before 8:15 a.m. on the day of absence or late arrival (for P.M. Kindergarten students, please call the safe arrival line before 12:00 p.m.). At the prompt, please state your name, date, student's name, grade & teacher, and if student will be absent or late.

SCHOOL HOURS:

Grades 1-5	8:20 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.
A.M. Kindergarten	8:20 a.m. - 11:03 a.m.
P.M. Kindergarten	12:02 p.m.- 2:45 p.m.
Early Release Day	8:20 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. (no lunch; no P.M. KG)
Delayed Opening	10:20 a.m. - 2:45 p.m. (no A.M. Kindergarten)

Students may enter the building at 8:05 a.m. and report directly to their classrooms. Please do not drop off your child before 8:05 a.m. as there is no supervision at that time. To arrange before or after school childcare, contact N.E.D.P. (Needham Extended Day Program) at 781-444-6337.

PARENTS AND VISITORS

Parents and visitors are always welcome in our schools. For the safety of our children and to minimize disruption visitors must report to the front office when they enter the building. **Please do not go directly to your child's classroom.** The office staff will gladly assist you, call your child to the office, or deliver items to the classroom. This procedure insures that the learning process will not be disrupted. Visitors who are volunteering or helping with a school activity are asked to sign-in at the main office.

TARDY/ LATE ARRIVAL

Children are considered late if they arrive to school after 8:20 a.m. (or after 12:02 p.m. for P.M. Kindergarten). Late arrivals should report to the office to sign-in.

DISMISSALS

Parents/Guardians who pick up their child before the 2:45 p.m. dismissal time (or before 12:15 p.m. on Early Release days) must check in with the office staff to dismiss the student and if applicable, notify the office that the child will not be taking the after school bus/van that day. **DO NOT** go directly to the classroom to dismiss your child.

NO SCHOOL /DELAYED OPENING

On days when weather conditions are severe, schools will be closed. **NO SCHOOL** announcements start at 6:30 a.m. on local radio and TV stations. On days when extra time will allow for better road and sidewalk conditions, the school will announce a two-hour delayed opening. On this alternative plan, the elementary schools will start at 10:20 a.m. On **NO SCHOOL** days and delayed openings, you will receive an automated phone call from school administration (please provide a contact number per instructions provided in the new school year packet that is sent home with each student). Please note, A.M. Kindergarten will be cancelled on days with a two-hour delayed opening, but P.M. Kindergarten will be held.

MITCHELL LISTSERV

Mitchell parents/guardians are encouraged to sign up to be on the school's e-mail distribution list. To be included on the Mitchell Listserv, parents/ guardians can sign up electronically on the Mitchell School website, under **School Resources, Email Notification Service** (<http://mitchell.needham.k12.ma.us/main/>).

MITCHELL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

A newsletter from the Principal will be sent on a regular basis via e-mail to each address on the Mitchell Listserv. This newsletter includes important information concerning events for the children as well as information for parents/guardians. The newsletter is also posted on the Mitchell School website every Friday under **News/Announcements**.

PROGRESS REPORTS

There are *two* reporting terms of approximately 90 school days each. Progress Reports are sent home with the children in January/ February and again on the last day of school. There will be a parent/teacher conference for each student in the fall and in the spring.

SCHOOL DRESS GUIDELINES

Responsibility for student dress rests with parents/guardians. Students are expected to dress for school in a manner that is appropriate and helpful to the general learning environment. Please **NO:** clothes that expose undergarments; clothes with inappropriate language or pictures; hats inside the building. Please dress for the weather as children will be sent outside for recess. When there is snow on the ground, students will not be allowed to leave the plowed hardtop area without boots and appropriate snow attire.

PETS

Pets are not allowed on school grounds between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. This includes dogs on a leash.

SCHOOL LUNCH SCHEDULE:

KASE 11:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
Grade 2 11:30 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.
Grade 3 11:50 a.m. to 12:10 p.m.
Grade 1 12:10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Grade 4 12:30 p.m. to 12:50 p.m.
Grade 5 12:50 p.m. to 1:10 p.m.

MITCHELL SCHOOL CURRICULUM, PROGRAMS, AND SERVICES

ART

Art education is an integral part of the elementary school experience. Each year the students at Mitchell experience an exciting learning process involving painting, printmaking, clay, drawing, sculpture and mixed media. Students also study art history and learn to use critical thinking skills to analyze artwork. Art classes for grades one through five meet once a week. Fifth grade art is a one-hour session per week focusing on advanced skill level and technique. In addition, students in 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades receive between 8 and 9 integrated STEAM Art classes that are aligned with the other STEAM areas. In late spring, the Mitchell Elementary School has an Art Show representing artwork from every student.

ENGINEERING

As part of the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) program, students in grades 1, 2 and 3 participate in 10 weeks of engineering. This class meets 40 minutes a week, during which students are engaged in project based engineering activities. As in all STEAM classes, students experience the engineering design process (ask, imagine, plan, create, improve and share) to solve a problem.

Activities in the engineering class are extensions/reinforcements of the science and engineering standards for each grade (Air & Weather, Sound and Earth Science). First graders design sails and windmills, second graders explore the properties of sound to design musical instruments and third graders engineer model buildings that are earthquake resistant.

HEALTH

A health educator teaches one formal health education unit to students in grade five. This is a five-to-six lesson unit on Growth and Development. Prior to beginning this unit, fifth grade parents are invited to a parent information night (usually in April) to view the curriculum and to learn more about the unit.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students in Kindergarten and 1st grade meet with a P.E. teacher once a week. Students in grades 2 through 5 meet with a P.E. teacher twice per week. At the elementary level, our goal is to teach students basic skills and concepts that will become the foundation for a lifetime commitment to health and well-being. Towards this end, we have adopted a skill themes approach to physical education. The goal of a skill themes model is to design lessons that help children to practice and develop fundamental skills and movement competencies that enable them to participate in a wide variety of physical activities with success and enjoyment. As basic skills are learned they are applied to a wide variety of games, dance, gymnastics, fitness, and adventure activities. As students become skillful, they begin to develop positive attitudes about themselves and about physical activity. It is our hope that this will lead them to choose to be physically active throughout their lives. In addition to psychomotor skills, fitness and wellness concepts are interwoven throughout the program. Teachers also introduce and practice specific social and emotional skills that contribute to children's success in school.

MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY

The Mitchell School Media Center, with a collection of almost 20,000 print and non-print items, is staffed by a Library Teacher, a Library Support Assistant, a Technology Specialist and a support group of volunteer parents. All Mitchell students in kindergarten through grade 5 visit the Media Center during regularly scheduled class times. A sequential program of study includes lessons that provide opportunities for developing reading, viewing, and listening skills as well as information literacy and research skills needed for the 21st century.

The Technology Integration Specialist and Library Teacher instruct students and staff in the use and application of computers and other technologies. The Technology Specialist works with classroom teachers to integrate technology projects into the curriculum, and also addresses keyboarding skills and Digital Citizenship, which includes Internet safety and responsible use of technology.

In addition, the technology department teaches an integrated STEAM program to grades 1, 2, and 3. In this program students explore computer and programming skills and are introduced to computer programming via sites such as Google's Blockly, MIT's Scratch and Scratch Jr., Code.org, as well as robotic devices. Students will also develop the basic computer and navigation skills needed to support their programming activities. Through computer programming and a constructivist approach to learning, students will have an opportunity to develop their critical and logical thinking skills and understand connections to the technologies that are part of their everyday lives. This exploration will expose students to new and important literacies.

PROGRAMS SPONSORED BY THE MEDIA CENTER

An **Annual Book Fair** is held in the fall. All profits from the book fair are used to buy materials for the Media Center.

A **Birthday Book Program** allows families to donate a book in honor of a child's birthday. The birthday child (with a parent's help, if desired) may choose from a shelf of pre-selected birthday books in the Media Center. (See the Library Teacher if you would like to donate a book that is not on the birthday shelf.) The child's name will be written on a special birthday bookplate, and he or she will be able to be the first person to check out the book.

The **Media Center and Technology Websites** help organize Internet resources for teachers and students and may be the first places to go when researching topics for schoolwork. There are links to search engines, reference sources, literature sites and

other educational resources. Also, each grade level has its own page of links. Student work may also be found on these pages. These are accessed from the main Mitchell School website (Media Center, Research page).

A **Summer Reading Program** allows students the opportunity to borrow books over the summer vacation. Each year, the Elementary Library Teachers develop a reading list of suggested titles to support parents and children in choosing books for the summer. This list can be found on the Mitchell School website (Media Center page).

MUSIC

Students at all grades meet with a Music Specialist for 40 minutes once a week. In grades 1 through 3, there will be an additional nine-week STEAM section integrated with the curriculum. In grades 4 and 5, students also meet for chorus once a week. Students in grades 4 and 5 may elect to participate in an instrumental ensemble of woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments. Students in grades 3 through 5 may elect to join a string group that meets before school. Concerts by the performing groups are presented in December and May/June.

SPANISH

Mitchell School offers Spanish instruction for all students from first to fifth grade. Spanish instruction is completely in the target language, which along with a variety of language development activities enables students to naturally acquire the language. Our curriculum integrates exposure to the Hispanic culture, academic subjects and vocabulary relevant to each grade level making meaningful connections and resulting in students' cognitive growth.

FOOD PANTRY

Once a month, classroom students sort and deliver food for the Needham Food Pantry at the Needham Community Council. The Mitchell School community donates this food. Classrooms take turns delivering and stocking the food.

COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE SERVICES

Counseling services in the Needham Public Schools are an integral part of both the regular and special education curriculums. Counselors work with students to promote their social and emotional development, attending to the feelings, sensitivities, thoughts, and viewpoints of the children. The emphasis is on primary intervention. Services are multifaceted, emphasizing the following activities:

- Classroom programs to teach understanding and managing emotions, perspective taking, and problem solving skills
- Individual counseling for children's personal concerns
- Group counseling for self-growth or age-related concerns such as peer relations or home-related issues that may be affecting school adjustment
- Consultation with parents
- Consultation with teachers
- Participation in the special education process
- Liaison between outside professionals and school staff.

Counselors may work with children directly or indirectly- individually, in large or small groups, formally or informally, intensively or casually. Children are brought to the counselor's attention in a variety of ways. Most commonly, parents or teachers make the initial contact. Children themselves may also self-refer by speaking directly to the counselor. Team meetings are another way in which children may be referred. When teachers or a child request a meeting, children are seen as soon as possible to address the issue. If anything of a serious nature is brought to the counselor's attention, parents will be contacted.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The English Language Learners program is designed for students whose home language is not English and who are not able to do grade level work commensurate with their ability. Proficiency in areas such as communication, grammar and vocabulary are emphasized. ELL teachers work closely with the classroom teachers, and content support is a major focus of the curriculum. The ELL program also works to help students build connections between home and school culture.

READING SUPPORT SERVICES

Reading Support Services are provided to children by Literacy Coaches at the Mitchell School. Children are referred for diagnostic testing based upon classroom performance, parental permission, and teacher recommendation. A Literacy Coach generally meets with the children by grade level in small groups, and focuses on assessed areas of needs, or works in a coaching role in classrooms with the teacher.

SCIENCE CENTER

The Needham Science Center located at the Newman School provides science expertise and enrichment activities in the areas of engineering, natural history, life, physical, earth and space sciences to children in grades K-5. This widely acclaimed center is a resource to the teachers through in-service training, hands-on materials, science kits and equipment loans, curriculum support and special programs. For more information, please see the department website at www.needham.k12.ma.us/science_center/.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Special Education services provide specialized instruction to students who have been identified through testing, as having a disability that prevents them from making effective progress in their classroom. Parents/guardians play a key role in this process by offering their insight and information that helps the TEAM to understand their children. If determined to be eligible for special education services, a TEAM meeting, including parents and teachers, develops an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for the student. This Program is designed to support the student's access to the general education curriculum. Special Education evaluation and services can only be provided with a parent's permission. If you would like more information or believe your child may have a disability, please contact your child's teacher or school principal, or the department website at www.needham.k12.ma.us/special_education/.

TEACHER ASSISTANCE TEAMS (TAT)

All of our schools have Teacher Assistance Teams. These are faculty groups (consisting of teachers, special education staff, administrators, and counselors) who come together on a regular basis to support their colleagues in evaluating the diverse needs of their students. This forum provides an opportunity to share expertise and make decisions about how best to meet the needs of individual learners. Specific topics of discussion and collaborative problem solving may focus on:

- how instructional strategies may be varied
- accommodations that may help a student better learn
- behavioral interventions that may be adapted to improve behavior

- what other regular education supports may be needed to enhance learning.

The outcome of every TAT meeting is to have teachers leave with strategies that they can use in their classrooms.

METCO

The Needham Public Schools are participants in the Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO). Under authority of Massachusetts State Law, this program is aimed at reducing racial isolation in the public schools. Each year, depending upon available space, Boston students are placed at the Mitchell School. The telephone number for the Needham METCO Office is 781-455-0800, Ext. 2554.

MITCHELL SCHOOL COUNCIL

As required by the 1993 Education Reform Law, all schools must have a School Council, which is composed of parents, teachers, a community representative, and the principal. The purpose of the School Council is to identify educational needs of the students, review the annual school budget, and formulate a school improvement plan. Faculty and parent representatives are elected in the fall. The principal chooses the community representative from interested residents who live in the Mitchell School district.

BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL CHILD CARE

Needham Extended Day Program (NEDP) operates before-school and after-school child-care programs for children in grades K-5 at Needham school sites. For more information, please contact NEDP at 781-444-NEDP (6337). In addition, a number of Needham area day care providers offer child-care services before and after school hours. Contact local day care providers directly for information.

KASE (Kindergarten After School Enrichment Program)

The KASE program is offered to kindergarten students in the mornings and afternoons. Children can be enrolled for 2-5 days a week. Morning (A.M.) KASE is from 8:20 a.m. -12:02 p.m. Afternoon (P.M.) KASE is from 11:03 a.m. - 2:45 p.m. Each session incorporates a lunch period in the Mitchell cafeteria. If there is a delayed school opening (weather conditions or professional development), A.M. KASE begins when school opens at 10:20 a.m. and P.M. KASE begins at 11:03 a.m. (normal P.M. start time). For information, contact Connie Leonard at 781-559-3384.

SCHOOL STORE

The Mitchell School store is operated by the Student Council and is located at the front entrance of the school. The store stocks a variety of school supplies as well as many fun items. Store hours are 8:05 - 8:20 a.m. on Fridays.

MITCHELL SCHOOL RECESS & TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

These rules and procedures were developed to help insure that each and every student has a safe and productive school experience.

RECESS ENTRANCE AND EXIT SAFETY

- Enter and exit the building in a safe and orderly manner.

RECESS BOUNDARIES

- Both front and back parking lots are absolutely OFF limits during recess. If a ball goes into either parking lot, students must ask a recess aide/teacher for assistance.
- Students are not allowed to bring sticks and branches from the wooded area onto Mitchell School property.
- Students are not allowed beyond the trees lining the Mitchell School property. Students should not leave the school grounds during the school day for any reason.
- The large rocks are OFF limits for climbing or standing during school hours.

SLIDE AND PLAYGROUND STRUCTURE SAFETY

- Walk! No running on the playground structure.
- Use two hands on playground bars/equipment. No knees-only hanging from the bars.
- One person at a time going down the slide.
- Wait until the slide is clear of others to slide down.
- Slide in a seated position only, going down with feet first.
- After going down the slide, move off quickly and step aside for the next person.
- No climbing up the slides or climbing on top of the tube-slide.

SWING SAFETY

- Swings are to be used in a seated position only.
- No jumping off the swings.

FIELD/PLAYGROUND SAFETY

- No gum or snacks are allowed outside during recess.
- Tag is allowed on the field only.
- No dangerous games are permitted, including tackle football, rugby, baseball (hard ball), or any other game which involves considerable physical contact.
- Wall-ball outside the gym wall is allowed using a tennis ball only. No soccer balls, basketballs or foursquare balls may be used for wall-ball.
- Throwing snowballs or other unauthorized objects during recess creates a danger of injury to the eyes, head and/or body, and therefore is prohibited.
- Climbing on the piled up snow mounds is prohibited.
- Posted signs indicate the playground is for student use only during school hours.

PARKING LOT DROP OFF & PICK UP

BROOKLINE STREET - FRONT CIRCULAR DRIVEWAY

- The front driveway is available for:
 - Student drop-off from 8:05 - 8:15 a.m.
 - Student pick-up from 2:45 - 2:55 p.m.
- Use the front driveway for live parking only (otherwise use the parking lot).
- For safety reasons, PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE THE CAR. If you need to leave the car, use the parking lot to park the car and please shut off the engine.
- Please do not double-park. The left lane is for passing only.
- Unless you have a handicap license plate, do not park in handicap spaces.
- Drivers are expected to pull up and around the front driveway as far as possible.
- Children must safely enter and leave the vehicle from the sidewalk side of the car line.
- At pick up time, drivers stay in their cars and wait for students to come to the car.
- As the car in front of you finishes and pulls out of the car line, please pull forward, unless you have children entering or leaving the car.

BROOKLINE STREET - PARKING LOT

- **Do not use the parking lot for live drop off or pick up.** In the parking lot, you must get out of your car and escort your children safely from and to your car.
- Please park only in marked parking spaces.
- DO NOT BLOCK OTHER PARKED VEHICLES.
- Do not allow your child to walk or run across the parking lot alone!

TOWER AVENUE – BACK CIRCULAR DRIVE & PARKING LOT

- Tower Avenue circular driveway is for A.M. drop off only.
- Drivers are expected to pull up and around the circular driveway as far as possible.
- Students should only exit cars on the sidewalk side of the car.
- At dismissal, Tower Avenue is reserved for buses & vans only. (For student pick up, cars must use the Brookline Street driveway / parking lot. Please see above.)

STREET PARKING RULES

DELL AVENUE (across from Brookline Street parking lot)

Parking allowed on the UP side only. The street is too narrow to allow parking on both sides.

TOWER AVENUE (entrance behind school)

PLEASE NO PARKING on Tower Ave. between Lindbergh Ave. and the Mitchell School circular driveway. The street is too narrow for parked cars with car, bus and truck traffic.

GOING TO AND FROM SCHOOL

ROLLER BLADES, SKATE BOARDS AND SCOOTERS

Students are not permitted to roller blade, skateboard, or use scooters on school property during school hours.

BICYCLES

Children in Kindergarten & Grades 1-2 are NOT permitted to ride bicycles to school.

Students in Grade 3 may ride bicycles to school after successfully completing the school-sponsored Bike Rodeo. Students are expected to walk bicycles to/from the crossing guard and while on school property. ***Bicycle helmets are required by law (age 12 and under).**

BUSES

School bus routes will appear in the Needham newspapers and bus passes will be mailed the last week of August. Needham Public Schools (NPS) buses all elementary students who live more than 2.0 miles from their assigned school. Busing is available for a fee to all other students. Applications are available on line at <http://rwd1.needham.k12.ma.us/transportation> or from NPS Transportation Department at 1330 Highland Ave., Needham (781-455-0400, ext. 234).

MITCHELL SCHOOL PTC

Welcome to the Mitchell School.

The Parent Teacher Council (PTC) is an organization dedicated to enriching the education of our children and fostering a sense of community at the Mitchell School. They work in cooperation with the school's administration and teachers to provide services, funding, volunteer support and programs that enhance the school experience.

Meetings are held monthly, and all are encouraged to attend. Every parent is a member of the PTC and they look forward to having you join them. Please visit the PTC website at www.mitchellptc.org for more information.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

The education of children is a responsibility shared by the school and parents. Teachers and parents work together to develop characteristics important in the educational growth of children. Regular attendance is essential to the learning process and helps to establish good student work habits. Participation in classroom activities is an important factor in educational success. Student absences, tardiness and early dismissals affect this learning process. Therefore students are expected to be in attendance every day of the school year from arrival to dismissal. Students should be home when they are ill; otherwise, all efforts should be made to have them in school. To the greatest extent possible, all appointments should be made before or after school and recreational trips scheduled during school vacations.

Under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 76, Section 1 states that all children between the ages of six and sixteen must attend school. A school district may excuse up to seven days or fourteen half-days 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. Parents/guardians are required under the law to ensure regular school attendance of their children and are subject to a fine for failure to comply with the law. If a child is absent for five (5) or more consecutive days, a doctor's note (certificate) is required when the child returns to school. Failure to provide a medical note will result in the absence being considered as unexcused.

***ABSENCES-REPORTING**

In the event a child will be absent for the day, parents or guardians are expected to call the school office before the beginning of school. Parents and guardians must furnish the school with a home, work or other emergency telephone number where they can be contacted during the school day. Parents will be contacted as soon as practical and within three (3) days of the student's absence if the Parent(s) or Guardian has not contacted the school regarding an absence.

***ABSENCES-EXCESSIVE**

Parent(s) or Guardians will be notified when a student has at least five days in which the student has missed two or more classes/periods (unexcused) or who has five or more unexcused absences in the school year. The building principal (or his/her designee) will make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent or guardian of a student who has 5 or more unexcused absences to develop an action plan to improve the student's attendance. In all circumstances Parents/Guardians are encouraged to contact school staff and work collaboratively with them to correct the reasons that the student is missing school. Excessive, unexcused absences may also result in the school taking legal action to remedy this situation.

ABSENCES-PLANNED

School vacations are planned well in advance, at appropriate intervals during the school year and parents should make family plans accordingly. It should be realized that teachers cannot realistically provide work in advance of planned absences that will adequately make up for missed instruction; therefore, teachers shall not be required to provide work for any student prior to a planned absence. Parents who allow their child to be out of school for vacations are assuming responsibility for their child's educational program. When a student returns to school, he/she shall complete work not available during their absence. The time limit for COMPLETION IS THE LENGTH OF THE ABSENCE.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS CODE OF CONDUCT

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND EXPECTATIONS

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The goal of the Social and Emotional Learning program in the Needham Public Schools is to help students develop self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, responsible decision-making, and relationship skills. The promotion of a social and emotional learning framework in our schools is designed to foster a school culture that promotes respect, inclusion and strong classroom and school culture. The implementation of this framework endeavors to provide an appropriate learning environment for our students.

The elementary school faculties establish a system of rules that govern their teaching and common spaces. Teachers engage students in establishing classroom rules and procedures that provide a structure to support all students as they learn and grow. Students are expected to demonstrate behavior appropriate to specific settings within the school, on the bus and on the playground. Teachers are asked to communicate clearly the rules of these settings to their students. School rules should be simple and few and emphasize a spirit of cooperation, high expectations and caring for one another. The rules will be stated in the affirmative wherever possible.

Children benefit from the consistency of having adult models both at school and at home in order to develop acceptable social behavior. The partnership between school and home is a critical support to our students in their social and emotional development. One of our guiding principles is the fostering of this partnership so that teachers and parents can share information, strategies, ideas, insights and, when needed, can problem-solve to assist our students in developing and maintaining appropriate behavior in the school setting.

STRATEGIES TO HELP CHILDREN MODIFY BEHAVIOR

All students are expected to demonstrate respect for other individuals, their rights and their property in school and during all school-sponsored activities, including those times when they are riding school buses. Students are expected to behave in accordance with school rules and regulations. When appropriate, school personnel will modify environments to help prevent the likelihood of misbehavior.

Behavior expectations will be in keeping with each child's developmental readiness. Through classroom structures and direct skill instruction, children will be instructed in how to:

1. Make sound decisions and seek adult help (assistance when needed)
2. Behave responsibly
3. Cooperate with teachers and peer groups

The process for communicating with parents regarding problems with behavior will be initiated early on. Teachers are expected to contact parents for a conference, following the emergence of a behavior difficulty. Our schools believe that a strong home/school partnership is helpful in addressing the student's progress. Likewise, parents should contact their child's teacher with any concerns about social or behavioral problems. It is expected that most behavior problems will be solved at the parent-teacher level. However, if necessary, the Principal may communicate directly with parents regarding a challenging behavior. The following are examples of steps that may be taken in order to help students modify their behavior:

1. Parent-teacher conference - At the first sign of an emerging behavioral pattern or difficulty
2. Teacher creates a behavior plan and/or contracts with the student for improvement
3. Involvement of the principal, school counselor and/or resource teacher as collaborative consultant to the teacher
4. Teacher applies to the Teacher Support Team for review of the student's progress and the development of a behavior intervention

BUS CONDUCT

The school bus is an extension of the school itself and rules regarding behavior are the same as in the school. School bus safety is a primary concern of the Needham Public Schools, and we reserve the right to take whatever action is necessary to maintain a high level of safety. The school reserves the right to exclude students from school and/or the bus for misconduct of a serious nature that occurs on the bus or at the bus stop that may impact the school environment. The right of a student to school bus transportation is a qualified right dependent on good behavior. In a case where a student seriously or continuously misbehaves, parents/guardians will be notified by the principal or designee of the school to which the student is assigned. The bus pass may be revoked if, in the opinion of the principal, such action is necessary for the general safety and well being of other students. In cases where a student's conduct jeopardizes the safety and well being of other students that student may immediately be excluded from the bus.

INVESTIGATION (Interviews & Searches)

Under Needham School Committee policy, school administrators have the authority, as deemed necessary, to interview students regarding matters that are relevant to the school environment. In addition, school administrators may search students and their personal belongings on school property when the administrator has a reasonable basis for believing that the search will produce evidence that the student has violated a school rule or a state or federal law.

Lockers, desks, and similar areas assigned to students remain the property of the school and are therefore subject to inspection by the school administration at any time.

POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES FOR SERIOUS BEHAVIOR

The following behaviors may serve as grounds for suspension or other disciplinary action, including loss of student privileges.

1. Use of obscene, abusive or profane language or gestures
2. Harassment of another student especially on the basis of race, sex, national origin, religion, handicap, gender identity, or sexual orientation
3. Bullying, cyber-bullying or other intimidation of another student, regardless of the basis of such conduct
4. Behavior which endangers persons or property or disrupts the educational process or school activity
5. Fighting or any assault or act of violence committed against another student or school personnel

Students may be expelled under limited circumstances defined by statute (so called "Statutory Offenses") referenced in section titled: **STATUTORY OFFENSES: DUE PROCESS AND PROVISIONS OF LAW**

PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION

Please refer to section titled: **PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION & EXPULSION** of this handbook for detailed information regarding Needham Public Schools Procedures for Suspension

NEEDHAM SCHOOL NUTRITION SERVICES INFORMATION ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The school cafeteria is open every school day (except early release days), serving many choices of nutritious hot and cold lunches. The Needham Nutrition Services department is dedicated to being a leader in quality nutritious school meals and has won two Healthier US School Challenge awards. The department is directed by a Registered Dietitian, and supported by a second Registered Dietitian as Nutrition Outreach Coordinator. The Cafeteria Staff at each school are dedicated, talented, and kind people who are there because they love to care for children by preparing and serving excellent food in their "nutrition classroom", and encouraging the students to make good food choices to enhance their well-being.

Much thought and planning is put into providing a variety of entrée and other lunch menu components, which are delicious, kid-friendly, and nutritious. The menu of the day changes, but every day there are six other lunch options available (Chicken Caesar Salad, Turkey Sandwich, Wow(Soy)butter & Jelly Sandwich, Tuna Sandwich, Bagel & Yogurt or Cheese, Soft Pretzel & Yogurt or cheese). Plentiful supplies of many choices of delicious fresh fruits, cut veggie sticks and salads are always available as part of the school lunch.

A printed copy of the Needham Elementary Lunch Menu is sent home with each child at the end of each month, for the following month. The menu and nutritional information, as well as allergy and ingredient information, are available on the Nutrition Service Department page of the Needham School District website. www.needham.k12.ma.us.

Kindergarten students do not participate in the lunch program due to their short school day.

KASE students DO have the option to participate in the lunch program since they are at school for the whole day.

Lunch prices

The price of Elementary lunch for the 2017-2018 school year is \$2.60.
Eliot has a breakfast program.

Price is \$1.25

Reduced price is \$.25
Reduced price is \$.25

Elementary Items for sale:

LUNCH Includes 5 components, per USDA: Meat (or Meat Alternate), Grain, Fruit, Vegetable & milk.
The student must take at least 3 components and must take a fruit or vegetable for it to be priced as a meal.

A la carte: Extra Milk, 8 oz	50 Cents
Bottled water, 8 oz	50 Cents
Flavored Yogurt- 4 oz	50 Cents

Free or Reduced Priced Lunches:

Families may apply for free or reduced lunches by completing a current school year meal application. A new application must be filled out at the beginning of each school year, or at any time the financial situation in the home changes. Meal applications are sent home at the beginning of every school year and are available in the school office or the Nutrition Service office at the Administration Building. An on-line application is also available at lunchapp.com as well as on the Nutrition Services webpage.

What do you get with a "LUNCH"? & What is NOT included

Students who qualify for free or reduced price meals are able to get one complete breakfast and lunch for free or reduced price per day.

Included in a LUNCH (free, reduced, or full price) is:

- One Entree (any choice)
 - o "Entrée" is the protein item and grain item (usually together, ie: Hamburger on bun)
- Fruits & Vegetables. We don't limit (within reason) and we encourage students to take LOTS
- Milk, 8 oz. 1%, Fat-free, Fat-free Chocolate or Strawberry, Lactaid (for documented lactose intolerant students)
- Dessert - if it is written on the menu for the day (usually 1-2 x/week)

Other A la carte items are available at Elementary schools FOR \$ALE, which are NOT included in the LUNCH price. These items that are not included are as follows:

- o 8 oz water \$.50
- o 4 oz yogurt \$.50

Students who qualify for free or reduced lunch can purchase a la carte items with cash, or money can be deposited into their lunch account for purchases of those items.

Students are not allowed to "go negative" in their lunch account for snacks. (only for LUNCH). Please talk with your child if you want to limit what they buy.

How the automated cafeteria payment system works:

1. Every student has their own personal lunch account and PIN number (automatically assigned when enrolled- whether or not they ever use it).
2. Parents/Guardians deposit money into the student's account by check via the school cafeteria, on-line (credit card or electronic check), or cash (see How to prepay information below).
3. Sales are automatically deducted from the student's account. Details of account use are tracked in the system and parents can access this information (see #10 below).
4. Pre-payment into the account is strongly encouraged- as it is much faster, however paying with cash is an option.
5. Students who qualify for free or reduced price lunches are processed at the cash register like all other students, avoiding any potentially uncomfortable situation for the student. A la carte water, extra milk, and yogurt are not free nor available at reduced price. Only the meal. (Yogurt is included as the "Meat Alternate" part of the Bagel or Pretzel lunch, but not with other entrée choices.)
6. All students access their accounts at the cash register by entering their 4-digit PIN number on the PIN pad located at the register. Each child's unique PIN number stays the same from year to year, and should be memorized, but not shared. However, if they do not remember it, the cashier can access their account through the computer register by their name.
7. When the lunch account gets low:
 - Older students will be notified at the cash register.
 - An automated 'Low Balance Email' is sent on Monday evenings to the parent/guardian of students whose lunch account is at \$25.00 or below.
 - A second 'Low Balance Email' is sent on Thursday evenings if balance is \$15 or below.

- If we have no email address in our lunch account system, a brightly colored “low balance notice” will be placed in the elementary child’s backpack once / week if the child’s account goes below \$25.00.

8. Negative Lunch Accounts

- When an account goes below zero, only a complete lunch can be purchased- no a la carte items.
- Negative account balances will be allowed to go to a maximum credit limit of 10 lunches at elementary schools. If the student’s account balance reaches that maximum negative credit limit, they will no longer be able to “charge” a regular lunch.
- The automated “Low Balance Email” that is sent on Monday and Thursday evenings (see above) serve as a further request to deposit money into the lunch account.
- If we have no email address in our lunch account system, a negative balance letter is printed out and mailed to the home, requesting deposit into the lunch account.

9. Maximum credit limit /Alternate meals

- When the account reaches the maximum credit limit (value of 10 lunches), and there has been no response to the requests for deposit, the student may receive an “alternate” meal consisting of a cheese sandwich, a serving of canned fruit, and a low fat white milk. There is no charge to the account for this alternate meal. The cheese sandwich lunch is meant to provide basic nourishment so the child won’t be hungry, but to get attention to replenish the lunch account.
- Nutrition Services personnel usually attempt to make phone calls about the negative accounts, if they believe there may be a problem with account communications previously made, and before they get to the cheese sandwich stage.

10. Tracking lunch accounts

- Parents can look at student lunch account activity. Instructions for doing this are on NPS Nutrition Service website: “MyLunchAccount instructions”. You will need the students Powerschool student ID number for this (get from school secretary).

Please make sure the school secretary has your correct email address in Powerschool , as our lunch software system uploads the information from Powerschool.

How to Prepay:

1. Deposit funds via on-line via PayForIt.net. (<https://www.payforit.net/Login.aspx> The link is on the NPS website home page, as well as on the Nutrition Services page under Lunch Payment System. You will need to know the student’s PayForIt ID number specifically assigned for this on-line payment service, through DBS. You can get that number and instructions for setting up account in Powerschool or from your school secretary.

2. Bring/send a check (payable to “Needham School Nutrition Services”) to your school, in an envelope marked “Cafeteria”. Deposits are made at the school cafeteria register. Please record on the memo line of the check: Student’s full name, and 4 digit PIN number.

Website: needham.k12.ma.us Departments: Nutrition Services

There is lots of information on the Nutrition Services website, as well as pictures of the cafeterias and meals. Check it out!

Feel free to call the Nutrition Services Office with any questions or comments: 781-455-0400:

x219 for Mirella Santucci, Nutrition Services Bookkeeper/Secretary

x216 for Ruth Griffin, Nutrition Services Director

x237 for Jen Tuttelman, Nutrition Outreach Coordinator

HEALTH SERVICE POLICIES

The Needham Public Schools, in accordance with the regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, requires the following health information before a student enters school.

Health History

The Health History Form, which provides important health and developmental history about your child, must be completed by the parent/guardian and submitted to the school nurse prior to school entry for all students.

Required Immunizations

Massachusetts Department of Public Health Regulation 105 CMR 220 requires students to be immunized before admission to school. An immunization certificate/record that includes the month, day, and year the immunizations were administered needs to be submitted to, and reviewed by, the school nurse before the student begins school. State regulations also require each child to meet grade entry immunization requirements.

Exemption

Only documentation of medical and religious exemptions from immunization requirements is acceptable by the law in Massachusetts. If there are medical reasons why your child has not been immunized, a certificate must be obtained from your physician annually and forwarded to the school nurse. For religious exemption, please write a note to the school nurse.

Physical Examination

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health Regulation 105 CMR 200 requires a physical examination for all new students that was completed within 12 months prior to the entrance to school, or within 30 days after school entry, and at intervals of three or four years after school entrance. Per these regulations, documentation of a current physical examination is required for students entering into preschool, kindergarten, grades 4, 7, and 10. If a student is participating in competitive athletics, an annual physical exam is required.

A student transferring from another school system shall be examined as an entering student. Health records transferred from the student's previous school may be used to determine compliance with this requirement.

Lead Poisoning Screening and Vision Screening (Kindergarten entry requirement)

Each child must present documentation of lead poisoning screening, tested at ages 2- 5 years, upon entry to kindergarten. Vision screening must be completed by the student's primary care provider upon entry to kindergarten (within the previous 12 months), or within 30 days of the start of the school year; certification that kindergarteners have passed acuity and stereopsis screenings is required.

Tuberculosis (TB) Testing

Documentation of either:

- Screening for student's low risk of tuberculosis exposure
- Testing for tuberculosis of students at high risk of exposure to tuberculosis.

The Confidential Nurse Emergency Card must be completed **annually** by the parent/guardian and returned to the school nurse with updated information and authorization including: emergency contact information, student medical history, consent for student to receive emergency medical treatment, communication of pertinent medical information, and administration of select over the counter medication by the school nurse, per the NPS Medical Protocols.

Medication Policy

The Needham Public Schools Medication Policy complies with state and federal laws and Massachusetts Department of Public Health Regulation 105 CMR 210. The following statements highlight the main points of the policy:

- The Health Services policy encourages that medication be administered before and after school hours, if possible.
- All medication, prescription or over-the-counter, requires an order from a health care provider who is a licensed prescriber as well as a completed parental permission form. **Medication will not be administered until all required documents are completed and received by the School Nurse.** These required forms are available in the health offices or may be downloaded from the Needham Public Schools Department of Health Services website.
- After consultation with the school nurse and the development of a medication administration plan, students who fall into the following exceptions may self-administer medication:
 - students with asthma or other respiratory diseases may possess and administer prescription inhalers
 - students with life-threatening allergies may possess and administer 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

- Medications must be delivered to the School Nurse in a correctly labeled pharmacy or manufacturer's medication container by the parent, guardian or responsible adult. (Medications are not accepted in containers such as plastic bags.) **Students are not permitted to bring medication to school.**
- All medication orders expire at the end of each school year. New medication orders are required at the start of the school year.
- All medications must be picked up by a parent/guardian before the close of the school year. Any medications that are not picked up by the close of school will be destroyed.

Children with Special Health Care Needs

If your child 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 is assisted with medical technology, it is vital that the parent meet with the school nurse and develop an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) prior to school entry.

Concussions

Concussion or Traumatic Head Injury can occur whenever there is a blow or jolt to the head that causes complicated chemical changes in the brain that take several days to resolve. Many concussions occur during organized (especially contact) sports, but are also common as a result of skiing, snowboarding, skateboarding, gymnastics or ballet falls, etc. Many concussions can go undetected initially because there has been NO loss of consciousness and the person is able to resume activity following the initial blow to the head or whiplash. Concussions may be life-altering or life-threatening if not treated correctly or aggressively. The Needham Public Schools (NPS) seeks to prevent concussions and provide a safe return to activity for all students after injury, particularly after a head injury. Although every concussed student is different, the care and management of all students who have sustained concussions requires education, supervision, and close collaboration between students, parents/guardians, school nurses, coaches, athletic trainers, athletic director, administrators, guidance counselors, school physician, teachers, neuropsychologists, and the students' primary care providers and medical specialists. In accordance with the Needham Public School (NPS) Policy on Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities 2012, protocols and procedures that are implemented are compliant with Massachusetts General Law c. 111, §222, An Act Relative to Safety Regulations for School Athletic programs, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations 105 CMR 201.000, Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities, and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations 105 CMR 200.000, Physical Examination of School Children.

The NPS Protocol Post Student Head Injury and Concussions- Re-entry to Academics and Return to Physical Activity and Athletics:

- Student sustains head injury during school, extracurricular athletics or activities, or other setting
- Student is removed from "play" from sports, physical education, or other physical activity until medically evaluated
- Student is assessed by school nurse during school day and certified athletic trainer during NHS sports, as available
- Coach, certified athletic trainer, or school nurse completes head injury report
- Parent/Guardian is notified and student is dismissed from school or athletic activity and referred for medical evaluation
- Medical provider evaluates student and documents diagnosis of traumatic brain injury or concussion
- Parent provides school nurse with documentation of head injury from medical provider and plan of care including orders for brain and physical rest
- School nurse notifies guidance department and teachers/coaching staff of injury and initiates a re-entry meeting with teachers, guidance, special education liaison, parent/guardian, and student (as applicable)
- A graduated academic re-entry plan and accommodations are implemented per protocol unless severity of head injury or prolonged recovery necessitate development of a 504 plan or amendment to IEP
- Nurse will review symptoms with student each day to assess recovery, update return to academics check list, and advise guidance and teachers of student's readiness to progress with return to academics plan
- Teachers, students, parents will maintain an open dialogue regarding work expectations and progress
- Medical provider provides updated documentation about student's medical recovery and clearance for progression to full academic program including physical activity and physical education
- School Nurse notifies guidance and teachers of progression to full academic program without accommodations due to head injury
- School Nurse notifies certified athletic trainer to initiate graduated return to athletics per protocol
- Certified athletic trainer consults with medical provider for authorization to clear student to return to full athletics.

Symptoms to look for following a blow to the head:

- Headache or “pressure in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Loss of consciousness (even briefly) or groggy
- Sensitive to noise and/or light
- Blurred or double visions
- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment
- Confusion: can not recall events prior to hit or fall
- Answers questions slowly
- Forgets sports plays
- Unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy
- Concentration or memory problems changes
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Can not recall events after hit or fall

Some of these symptoms will appear immediately after the blow. Some may quickly disappear while other symptoms can increase or develop hours or even days after the injury.

What to do if your son/daughter has had a concussion:

1. **Seek medical consultation.** If there has been loss of consciousness (even briefly) person should be taken immediately to the hospital or MD office for evaluation. For concussions not involving loss of consciousness, report symptoms to primary care provider (PCP) right away for advice about how to proceed.

2. **Brain and Physical Rest** is the main treatment for a concussion. Doing as little as possible will allow symptoms to begin clearing and a graduated return to school and sports will be planned.

3. **Proper evaluation.** Make sure to get written clearance from PCP or specialist who understands current concussion management protocols before resuming activities. Progression is very individualized and is determined on a case-by- case basis. Factors affecting progression include: duration and type of symptoms, previous history of concussion, and type of sport/ activity participation.

4. **Inform your child’s school nurse** if he/she has experienced a concussion and to discuss the procedures and plans for your child’s return to academics, physical activity, and athletics.

Life-Threatening Food Allergy

The Needham Public Schools (NPS) recognizes the increasing prevalence of student food allergies and the life-threatening nature of allergies for many students. The implementation of the Policy for Life-Threatening Food Allergy aims to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to students, 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 your child has a life-threatening allergy, please make sure he/she has access to emergency medication (Epinephrine) at all times and be sure that the school nurse has the necessary medical information about your child’s emergency allergy action plan.

Key points of the policy for Life-threatening Food Allergy include the following:

NPS recognizes the increasing prevalence of student food allergies and the life- threatening nature of allergies for many students.

- An individualized health care plan including accommodations for prevention, management and emergency response is developed for each student with a medically diagnosed life-threatening food allergy.
- The school programs are not declared as “allergen free” and foods with known allergens (peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, shell fish, fin fish, soy, wheat) are not banned
- Communication, planning, and education with faculty/staff, parents/guardians, and students will aim to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to students.
- Non- curriculum related classroom-based celebrations and parties are food free
- Use of food as a reward or incentive during the school day is prohibited unless approved as part of an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- Inclusion of food for curriculum instruction and related activities or special school events, requires strict adherence to the management protocol

- Sales of competitive foods and beverages (including bake sales/fundraisers) will not be permitted district wide during the school day and beyond school hours at the preschool-elementary level. Beyond the school day sales of competitive foods are permitted in grades six- twelve.
- NPS Staff employed by the NPS, to supervise and/or coach students participating as members of school-sponsored athletic teams, clubs, and other extracurricular activities beyond the school day, are responsible for implementing the applicable portions of the Food Allergy Policy and related protocols and procedures for the management of students with LTA
- NPS staff are not responsible for implementing the Food Allergy Policy and related protocols and procedures during (1) school sponsored events beyond the school day that are open to the public (e.g. school athletic contests, plays, or ceremonies) or (2) programs or events on NPS property that are sponsored by various parent, community, and private groups.

RESPONSIBLE USE OF DIGITAL RESOURCES

Students and his/her parent/guardian are required to sign and submit an acknowledgement that they together have reviewed the Responsible Use of Digital Resources Policy and agree that the student will comply with its terms.

Student email

Needham Public Schools may provide students with an email account. Email can be a powerful communication tool for students to increase communication and collaboration. Email is intended to be used for school and educational purposes only. Teachers may send email to middle and high school students to communicate reminders, course content, pose questions related to class work, or for other reasons. Students may send email to their teachers with questions or comments regarding class. Students may send email to other students to collaborate on group projects and assist with school classes.

Student Roles and Responsibilities

Our network systems provide access to educational resources. The destruction, vandalism, hacking, or damaging of data, networks, hardware, software, and backend systems, or disruption of this or other resources used by NPS are prohibited.

- Resources must be used in a manner consistent with the mission of NPS
- Network and account security is the responsibility of all members of the NPS community. Any security risks should be reported to a teacher or network administrator
- Students will not use the internet or any technology resource to perform any act that can be construed as illegal or unethical
- Students will immediately report any suspicious or unusual activity to the supervising teacher or other appropriate staff member
- Computers not owned and managed by NPS must use the public guest NPS network
- Devices, including student owned devices, that disrupt the educational process or operation of the NPS are prohibited and will be removed. Such devices may be held and searched.
- Students will not deliberately damage any of the District's systems or cause the loss of other users' work
- Students will not override or encourage others to override any firewalls, desktop management or security measures established on the network.

Respect and protect the intellectual property of others

- Users must respect others' privacy and intellectual property. Any traffic from this network that traverses another network is also subject to that networks' acceptable use policy (AUP)
- Students are responsible for citing sources and giving credit to authors during the research process. All communication and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property
- Users have a right to be informed about personal information that is being, or has been, collected about them, and to review this information.

Safety and privacy of self and others

All users are expected to adhere to principles of safety and privacy.

- Students will not share passwords
- Students will login to their own accounts, not accounts belonging to someone else
- Students will not view, use, or copy passwords, data, or access networks to which they are not authorized
- Students will not capture, record, or distribute audio, video, or pictures of any school activity without permission from the staff and students involved.

- Students will not distribute private information (e.g. address, phone number, etc.) about themselves or other without permission, and only as necessary and specifically related to the educational process.
- Students will not pretend to be someone else online.
- Students will not agree to meet with someone they have met online without the approval or participation of a parent or guardian or teacher

Respect and practice the principles of community

Students are expected to be courteous and to use appropriate language and will communicate only in ways that are kind and respectful.

- Students will report threatening or discomfoting materials to a teacher or trusted adult
- Students will not access, transmit, copy, or create material that violates the school’s code of conduct (such as messages that violate the prohibitions against bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment).
- Students will not access, transmit, copy, or create material that is illegal (such as obscenity, pornography, stolen materials, or illegal copies of copyrighted works).
- Students will not use NPS resources to further other acts that are criminal or violate the school’s code of conduct.
- Students will not send spam, chain letters, or other mass unsolicited mailings
- Students will not buy, sell, advertise, or otherwise conduct business unless approved as a school project. Violation of any portion of the Student Responsible Use of Digital Resources policy may result in not only revocation of the privilege of using IT, but also in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension from school. In addition, legal action may be taken for conduct that is unlawful.

Notification of Student Access to Digital Tools

There will be a number of digital resources that teachers may use as educational tools with students. This is our notice to you that your child may have access to digital tools such as apps and web sites. These tools will be vetted regarding educational value, age appropriate content, and student data privacy. If such tools require student accounts, then students will be guided through the process to use a school-appropriate user name and password. Examples of such tools are the following:

Khan Academy

Khan Academy is a free online resource that allows students to learn anytime, anywhere, with material that is uniquely appropriate for them. Students can explore new topics and practice their skills by using interactive practice and tutorials. Teachers will use this app when they feel appropriate; not all teachers will use this app. When used in class teachers will assist with log-in.

Website: www.khanacademy.org

Terms of Service: www.khanacademy.org/about/tos

Privacy Policy: www.khanacademy.org/about/privacy-policy

Quizlet

Quizlet is a free website providing learning tools for students, including flashcards, study, and game modes. Quizlets can be made by teachers and shared or made by students as a study tool. Teachers will use this app when as appropriate, though not all teachers will use it. When used in class teachers will assist with log-in.

Website: <https://quizlet.com/>

Terms of Service: <https://quizlet.com/tos>

Privacy Policy: <https://quizlet.com/privacy>

Newsela

Newsela is a resource that provides teachers, parents, and students with over 1,000 current event articles scaled at five different reading comprehension levels. Newsela uses leveled articles and real-time assessments to build comprehension. Articles are aligned to curriculum standards and often include lesson plan components such as writing prompts and quizzes.

Website: <https://newsela.com/>

Terms of Service: <https://newsela.com/pages/terms-of-use/>

Privacy Policy: <https://newsela.com/pages/privacy-policy/>

Please see School Committee Policy IJNDB-2 for full statement on the district’s policy regarding Student Responsible Use of Digital Resources

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION & EXPULSION

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

Except in the case of Statutory Offenses described later in this handbook, students may not be suspended more than 90 days in a school year and school staff will avoid suspensions of more than 10 days until alternatives such as positive behavioral interventions and supports have been tried as appropriate.

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

DUE PROCESS: PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION FOR CONDUCT OTHER THAN STATUTORY OFFENSES (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4)

A. In-School Suspension For Less Than 10 Cumulative Days During A School Year

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

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

B. Procedures For Short-Term, Out-Of-School Suspensions (10 Cumulative Days Or Less In A School Year)

Except in the case of an Emergency Removal (see section D) prior to imposing a short-term out-of-school suspension (**10 days or less in a school year**) **an administrator will** provide the student and his/her parent oral and **written notice and an opportunity to participate in an informal hearing.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

If the student is in preschool or grade K-3, the administrator will send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and Director of Student Support Services and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension before the short-term suspension takes effect.

C. Procedures For Long -Term Suspension

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

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

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

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

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing 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 last more than 90 school days in a school year nor extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

D. Exception For Emergency Removal

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

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

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

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

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

E. Appeal To The Superintendent

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

The following apply:

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

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

Conduct Which May Lead To Expulsion (Statutory Offenses)

Students are subject to suspension/expulsion by the Principal for the conduct listed below, subject to the procedures set forth in M.G.L. ch. 71, § 37H.

- 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 (see below).

Gun Free Policy

In accordance with the Gun Free Schools Act of 1994, any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school or to a school related event will be excluded from Needham Public Schools for a period of not less than one year except as determine by the Superintendent on a case by case basis. The definition of a firearm includes but is not limited to guns (including a starter gun, bombs, grenades, rockets, missiles, mines and similar devices). 20 U.S.C. S8921

STATUTORY OFFENSES: DUE PROCESS AND PROVISIONS OF LAW:

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.

STATUTE: CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, DANGEROUS WEAPONS & ASSAULTS ON EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL (MASS. GEN. LAWS, CHAPTER 71 SECTION 37H)

- a. 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 limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter 94 C, including but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal.
- b. 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.
- c. 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/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Principal to have violated either paragraph a or b.

d. 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 10 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.

e. 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.

STATUTE: FELONY COMPLAINTS & FELONY CONVICTIONS (MASS GEN. LAWS, CHAPTER 71 SECTION 37H1/2)

Notwithstanding the provisions of section 84 and sections 16 and 17 on chapter 76;

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 of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said Principal if said Principal 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/her 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/her request for an appeal no later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parents/guardians within 3 calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his/her behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within 5 calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

2. Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the Principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such Principal 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/her 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/her request for an appeal no later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parents/guardians within 3 calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his/her behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within 5 calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

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 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.

DISCIPLINE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

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

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

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

Results of the Manifestation Determination. If the Team determines that the behavior is not a manifestation of the disability,

then the school may suspend or expel the student consistent with the policies applied to students without disabilities, except that the district must still provide an appropriate educational program to the student, as determined by the Team, which program may be in a different setting. If the Team determines that the behavior is a manifestation of a disability, the Team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop a behavioral intervention plan or where a behavioral intervention plan was previously developed, must review the plan and, if necessary, modify it to address the behavior. Except in circumstances involving drugs, weapons, or serious bodily injury as described below, the student will be returned to the placement from which the student was removed unless the placement is changed by agreement or through the Team process.

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

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

Additional information regarding the procedural protections for special education students eligible for services under laws providing for services for students with disabilities can be obtained from the Director of Student Support Services, who can be reached at 781-455-0400 x 213.

Discipline of Students Whose Eligibility for Special Education is Suspected

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

If the school district has no knowledge that a student is an eligible student under the IDEA before taking disciplinary measures against the student, the student may be disciplined just as any other student may be. If, however, a request is made for an evaluation to determine eligibility while the student is subject to disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner. Pending the results of the evaluation, the student must remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion without services. If the student is determined eligible for an IEP as a result of the evaluation, the school district must provide the student with special education and related services in accordance with the IDEA.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES UNDER SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT

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

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

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Needham Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, genderidentity, religion, disability, age, active military/veteran status, ancestry, genetic information or national or ethnicorigin in the administration of its educational policies, employment policies, and other administered programs andactivities. In addition, students who are homeless or of limited English-speaking ability are protected fromdiscrimination in accessing the course of study and other opportunities available through the schools.

Any person having inquiries or complaints concerning the Needham Public Schools' compliance with Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADA or MGL Ch 76, sec. 5 is directed to contact:

For Students and Parents/Guardians: TOM DENTON, Director of Guidance, 781-455-0800 x 2130

For Employees: TOM CAMPBELL, Director of Human Resources, 781-455-0400 x208

These individuals have been designated by the Needham Public Schools to coordinate the school district's efforts to comply with these laws, or contact the Office for Civil Rights, 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02109-3921, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Office of Program Quality Assurance Services, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906, or the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination at One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108 (telephone 617-994-6000) (TTY 617-994-6196).

Ref: Title VI: 42 U.S.C. 2000d; 34 CFR 100.3(a),(b); EEOA: 20 U.S.C. 1703(f); Title IX: 20 U.S.C. 1681; 34 CFR 106.31, 106.34, 106.35; Section 504: 29 U.S.C. 794; 34 CFR 104.4; Title II: 42 U.S.C. 12132; 28 CFR 35.130; IDEA 2004: 20 U.S.C. 1400; 34 CFR 300.110; NCLB: Title III, Part A, Sec. 3121(c)(1)(C); Title X, Part C, Secs. 721, 722(g)(4); Mass. Const. amend. art. 114; M.G.L. c. 71A, s. 7; c. 76, s. 5; 603 CMR 26.03 as amended by Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011

POLICY PROHIBITING HARASSMENT

Needham Public Schools are committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, ancestry, or national or ethnic origin. In addition, students who are homeless or of limited English-speaking ability are protected from discrimination in accessing the course of study and other opportunities available through the Needham Public Schools. Consistent with our Policy Addressing Bullying, Needham Public Schools specifically prohibits all conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile environment for others. However, such conduct based upon the protected classifications described above requires particular attention.

A. Definitions

Harassment includes communications such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct which offends or shows disrespect to others based upon the protected classifications described above, when such communication or conduct is sufficiently serious to deny or limit the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from their educational programs or school sponsored-events. By law, the particular communication or conduct is viewed from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals.

Sexual Harassment. Sexual harassment includes not only the types of conduct listed above that is based upon gender, but can also include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

B. Harassment and Retaliation Prohibited

Harassment in the school environment is unlawful and is absolutely prohibited. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. In addition, retaliation against any individual who has filed a complaint of harassment or who cooperates in an investigation of possible harassment is unlawful and is prohibited. Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or school committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

C. Reporting & Investigating Incidents Of Harassment

Needham Public Schools will promptly investigate every complaint of harassment. If you believe that you may have been harassed, or if you witness or learn about the harassment of another individual, you should inform the principal or the Title IX Coordinator for the district immediately.

For Parents or Students:

TOM DENTON
 Director of Guidance Pre-K-12
 Needham Public Schools
 609 Webster Street
 Needham, MA 02494
 Tel: (781) 455-0800 x 2130
 tom_denton@needham.k12.ma.us

For Faculty & Staff:

TOM CAMPBELL
 Director of Personnel Resources
 Needham Public Schools
 1330 Highland Avenue
 Needham, MA 02492
 Tel: (781) 455-0400 x 208
 tom_campbell@needham.k12.ma.us

These individuals have responsibility for accepting, investigating and resolving complaints of discrimination (including harassment) in a timely manner. They are also responsible for ensuring that all staff and students are trained and/or notified annually about these requirements and procedures.

If you do not wish to discuss your claim with either of these investigators, notify the Superintendent of Schools at 781-455-0400 x 203.

The Title IX Coordinator will promptly investigate any complaint of harassment. Such investigation may include identification and questioning of witnesses and other appropriate actions. Confidentiality of grievant and or respondents and witnesses will be maintained, to the extent consistent with the Needham High School's obligations relating to investigation of complaints and the due process rights of individuals affected.

If the investigator determines that harassment has occurred, he/she will take action to end the harassment, and take appropriate steps to make sure that it is not repeated. Such steps may range from counseling to discipline, which could include suspension or expulsion.

D. State and Federal Agencies

The Needham Public Schools urges all individuals in the school community to bring any concerns or complaints of harassment to the attention of school personnel so that they can address the issue as appropriate. Inquiries concerning the applicability of the aforementioned federal laws and regulations to Needham Public Schools also may be referred to the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR), 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02109-3921 (telephone 617-289-0111) (TTY: 1-800-877-8339)

A grievant may file a complaint with OCR, generally,

1. within 180 calendar days of the alleged discrimination or harassment, or
2. within 60 calendar days of receiving notice of Needham Public School's final disposition on a complaint filed through Needham Public Schools, or
3. within 60 calendar days of receiving a final decision by the Massachusetts Department of Education, Bureau of Special Education Appeals, or
4. instead of filing a complaint with Needham Public Schools.

Inquiries relative to state law may be referred to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-5023 (telephone 781-338-3000) (TTY 1-800-439-2370) or the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination at One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108 (telephone 617- 994-6000) (TTY 617-994-6196).

DISTRICT MEETINGS, PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES

The Public Schools, recognizing that some areas in its school department buildings are inaccessible to individuals with disabilities, adopts the following policy:

- All meetings, conferences, programs, and activities in school department buildings are available, without discrimination, to individuals with disabilities as defined by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and/or Title II of the American with Disabilities Act.
- Whenever an individual with a disability(ies) wishes to attend or participate in a meeting, conference, program, or activity which is inaccessible, that meeting, conference, program or activity will be relocated to an accessible area. Forty-eight hour notice of the need for relocation should be made by the person with a disability(ies) to the Superintendent's Office:

Needham Public Schools
 1330 Highland Avenue
 Needham, MA 02492
 (781) 455-0400 x 203

The Superintendent is responsible for implementing this policy by relocating meetings, conferences, programs, or activities.

Whenever an individual with impaired vision seeks to obtain information under this procedure, the information will be communicated as follows:

- A Braille copy of the posting; a tape recording of the notice; and the use of a reader, where necessary, will be provide upon request.

Whenever an individual who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing seeks to obtain information under this procedure, the district will seek to provide access to that person as follows:

- A communication option will be offered that reflects the individual's preference: interpretation by a sign language interpreter or oral interpreter; live transcription services; or another method, which could include written notes. This assistance will be arranged through the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Please contact the Director of Student Support Services for more information: (781) 455-0400 x 213.

This policy will be posted in prominent and, where possible, accessible places in all School Department buildings, Town Hall, and the Public Library.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Special Education services provide specialized instruction to students who have been identified through testing, as having an educational disability that prevents them from making effective progress in their classroom. Parents/guardians play a key role in this process by offering their insight and information that helps the TEAM to understand their children. If determined to be eligible for special education services, a TEAM meeting, including parents and teachers, develops an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for the student. This Program is designed to support the student's access to the general education curriculum. Special Education evaluation and services can only be provided with a parent's permission. If you would like more information or believe your child may have a disability, please contact your child's teacher or your school's principal.

HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The **McKinney-Vento Act** is designed to remove barriers to enrollment and retention in school of homeless children and youth. A homeless child is defined broadly as "any child or youth without a fixed, regular, and adequate residence." These students include those who are "doubled up" with friends or relatives (sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship), runaways, unaccompanied youths, as well as others.

Homeless students have the right to continue to attend the same school they attended when permanently housed (or the school in which they were last enrolled) (i.e. school of origin) and to receive round-trip transportation between their temporary housing and their school of origin. In the alternative, the student may choose to attend school where they are temporarily residing. School placement determinations must be made based on the best interest of the homeless student. School districts must presume that keeping the student in the school of origin until the end of the school year in which the student obtains permanent housing is in the student's best interest except when doing so is contrary to the request of the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth. Homeless students must be enrolled immediately in school even if they do not have the documents usually required for enrollment such as school records or proof of immunizations. The District's Homeless Education Coordinator will contact the previously attended school district to request copies of any required records that are missing.

Any questions about the programming available to homeless students and their families should be directed to the Director of Student Support Services (Responsible for Homeless Education Coordination) who can be reached at (781)-455-0400 x213.

BULLYING POLICY

Bullying Definitions and Responses:

Bullying (and cyber-bullying) will not be tolerated in our schools, on buses or anywhere on school grounds. **Bullying** is conduct that is repeated by one or more students or by a member of the school staff and targets another student, causing one or more of the following:

- physical or emotional harm to the targeted student or damage to his/her property;
- placement of the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- a hostile environment at school for the targeted student;
- infringement on the rights of the targeted student at school; or
- Material and substantial disruption to the educational process or the orderly operation of the school.

Cyber-bullying is bullying through use of cell phones, computers or other technology and may include conduct such as sending mean or threatening email messages, instant messages, or text messages; creating websites that make fun of, humiliate, or intimidate others; and posting or sending embarrassing pictures of others.

Preventing and reducing bullying will be addressed in the following ways:

- by establishing a school-wide culture where bullying is not acceptable and where students recognize that helping students who are bullied is the right thing to do
- by training staff in identification of bullying, prevention and intervention techniques for bullying
- by providing time in classrooms/morning meetings for teachers to focus on bullying prevention so that they can provide tools for students
- by establishing and enforcing school rules and policies related to bullying

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

her skills, knowledge and strategies to respond to bullying or harassment.

How to Report Bullying: Students who believe they are targets of bullying or retaliation, or who know about bullying conduct should report the conduct to an assistant principal, a teacher, guidance counselor or other school staff member. All school personnel are mandated to report any incidents of bullying that they witness to an appropriate administrator. In addition, parents/guardians are encouraged to report any incidents that may involve bullying. All members of the school community are responsible for keeping students safe. We expect that the community will set a positive example and not tolerate students who might create unsafe situations for other students.

Please see School Committee Policy JCFB Bullying for full statement on the district’s policy regarding bullying and cyber-bullying.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS & TIME OUT PROCEDURE

Physical Restraint

School staff may physically restrain students only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm and as a last resort when other alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate. In all cases, staff will be mindful of the importance of preventing or minimizing any harm to the student that could result from physical restraint.

Physical restraint means direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student’s freedom of movement. It does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort. While use of physical restraint is generally restricted to personnel who have received appropriate training, this training requirement does not preclude personnel from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. During a restraint, at least one adult who does not participate in the restraint will be present whenever possible.

A staff member who administers a restraint must verbally inform the principal or designee of the restraint as soon as possible and submit a written report no later than the next school working day. The principal or his/her designee will make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student’s parent of the restraint within 24 hours and will provide written notice within three school working days by email address provided by the parent (or by regular mail to the parent postmarked within three school working days of the restraint.)

Time-out

Time-out is a behavioral support strategy in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member, and a staff member must be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. Time-out must cease as soon as the student has calmed.

Complaints and investigations regarding restraint practices are covered by School Policy JKAA.

Additional information, including a copy of applicable state regulations, can be obtained from Mary Lammi, Director of Student Support Services, who can be reached at 781-455-0400 x213

STUDENT RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations (“Regulations”) together provide parents and eligible students (those who have reached the age of 14 or who have entered ninth grade) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. A general overview of those rights is provided below. Parents and students may obtain a complete copy of their rights under the Massachusetts Student Record Regulations by contacting the school’s principal.

- a. The right to access the student’s education records. Parents or eligible students should submit their request for access to the building principal. Access is generally provided within ten days of a request. However, Massachusetts General Laws c. 71, §34H (“Section 37H”) law provides specific procedures that must be followed prior to release of records to a parent who does not have physical custody of a child. These procedures include submitting a written request and other documentation to the principal on an annual basis. Information about these procedures can be obtained from the building principal.
- b. (b) The right to request amendment of the student’s education records. Parents or eligible students should direct their request to the principal, clearly identifying the part of the record they wish to have amended, and why.
- c. © The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA and the Massachusetts regulations authorize disclosure without consent. One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests in the records. Such school officials include professional, administrative and clerical staff who are employed by or under agreement with the Needham Public Schools and who need access to a record in order to fulfill their duties. The Needham Public Schools 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.
- d. As required by law, the Needham Public Schools routinely releases (1) the name, address and telephone listing of secondary school students to military recruiters and to institutions of higher learning upon request, (2) the name and address of students to third party mail service that has been approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education upon the request of a Charter School and (3) directory information, without consent. Directory information consists of the following: the student’s name, parents’ names, address, parent’s email address, telephone listing, date of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of athletic teams, class, participation in recognized activities and sports, honors and awards, and post- high school plans. In the event a parent or eligible student

objects to the release of any of the above information, the parent or eligible student may state that objection in writing to the Director of Student Support Services no later than October 1 of each school year. Absent receipt of a written objection for the parent or eligible student by that date, this information will be released without further notice or consent.

e. (d) The right to file a complaint concerning alleged failures by the District to comply with the regulations and laws governing student records. Complaints may be filed at the Massachusetts Department of Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148. In addition, complaints relative to federal statutes and regulations governing student records may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington DC.

f. (e) Destruction of Records: Regulations require that certain parts of the student record, such as the temporary record, be destroyed a certain period of time after the student leaves 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. Before any such information is destroyed, the parent must be notified and have an opportunity to receive a copy of any of the information.

g. (f) Temporary Records consist of all the information not kept on the transcript. This information includes the student's standardized test scores and evaluations by teachers, counselors, and other staff members. Said record shall include, but not be limited to, any incidents involving suspension or violation of criminal laws or any incident reports in which the student was charged with any suspendable act. In accordance with Department of Education regulations, a student's temporary record will be destroyed up to 7 years after leaving school provided prior notice is given to the student.

Core Values We Teach Mitchell Students

Recognize your own worth, and the worth of others.

Encourage each other in work and play.

Stay safe.

Practice honesty.

Empathize with others.

Care, share, and be fair.

Try your best.