

# ***Tewksbury Public Schools***

## **Elementary Schools Preschool through Grade 4**

### ***Student Handbook***

### **Parent/Guardian Information Guide**

**2024-2025**



<b>Loella F Dewing School</b>	<b>Alexis Bosworth, Principal</b>
<b>Heath Brook School</b>	<b>Terry Gerrish, Principal</b>
<b>Center Elementary School</b>	<b>Jay Harding, Principal Robert Rogers, Assistant Principal</b>

## **Civil Rights Notification**

No person shall be excluded or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. If you have a concern that a school resource we use contains a bias, you are invited to fill out this [Curriculum Resource Bias Reporting Form](#). This form can also be found on the TPS website.

Any questions should be directed to the Assistant Superintendent of Schools, 139 Pleasant Street., Tewksbury MA, 01876, 978-640-7800

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## INTRODUCTION

There are three public elementary schools in the Tewksbury School System: Loella F. Dewing, Heath Brook, and Center Elementary.. Each school has a very dedicated staff of teachers, aides and support staff who work with students every day.

The Mission of these schools is to provide all students with the best education by addressing their academic, social, emotional and physical needs while working within the Tewksbury School System curriculum and policies. The principle of respect is the basis of all school behavior; respect for self, respect for others and respect for the environment. All discipline that may take place, based on the

concept of respect, is progressive in nature and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability.

This handbook is a guide for parents and guardians. School-specific data can be found in the table below. The rest of the handbook contains general information for all Tewksbury elementary schools. Please take the time to review the contents of this handbook and keep it with your permanent files; sign and return the last sheet. If you have any questions about the contents, contact your school's principal (contact information found on accompanying chart).

SCHOOL	GRADES	CONTACT INFORMATION
Dewing	PreK - 1	Alexis Bosworth, Principal 1469 Andover Street, Tewksbury, MA 01876 978-640-7858 <a href="http://www.tewksbury.k12.ma.us/dewing">http://www.tewksbury.k12.ma.us/dewing</a>
Heath Brook	PreK - 1	Terry Gerrish, Principal 165 Shawsheen Rd. Tewksbury, MA 01876 978-640-7865 <a href="http://www.tewksbury.k12.ma.us/heath-brook/">http://www.tewksbury.k12.ma.us/heath-brook/</a>
Center	2 - 4	Jay Harding, Principal Robert Rogers,, Assistant Principal 139 Pleasant Street, Tewksbury, MA 01876 978-640-7870 <a href="http://www.tewksbury.k12.ma.us/center">http://www.tewksbury.k12.ma.us/center</a>

## **GENERAL INFORMATION/POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **ACADEMIC RECORD INFORMATION**

A parent/guardian of a student has the right to inspect academic, scholastic, or any other records concerning such student that are kept or are required to be kept, regardless of the age of such student.

A school may release the following directory information: a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans without the consent of the eligible student or parent/guardian; provided that the school gives public notice of the types of information it may release and allows eligible students and parents a reasonable amount of time after such notice to request that this information not be released without the prior consent of the eligible student or parent.

If students move to another attendance area within the school system or seek to enroll in a school outside of the system, students' records will be sent to the new school upon official request from that school.

### **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY - TECHNOLOGY AND MEDIA RELEASE**

Pictures and videos are often taken to commemorate school events, usually by school staff, but occasionally by area print and broadcast media. These photographs occasionally may be uploaded and shared via the Tewksbury Public Schools website, school Facebook or Twitter pages. Parents/Guardians are asked to indicate publishing preferences in the appropriate section of the Handbook Signature Page. The following paragraphs share TPS acceptable use of technology.

Parent/Guardian Acceptable Use Signature. Parent/guardian collaboration and consent working together is a crucial focus of Tewksbury Public Schools. Through our technology integration, we want to work with parents so they understand the different initiatives that are taking place at school, whether they are using technology or not. We encourage you to have your children guide you through their work so you will see their work as it develops. As parents, students and teachers working together, we become a strong learning community, therefore, creating more opportunities for our students to become successful.

Technology is provided for educational purposes in keeping with the academic goals of Tewksbury Public Schools, and that student use for any other purpose is inappropriate. It is impossible for the school to restrict access to all controversial materials, and the school cannot be responsible for materials acquired on the school network. Children's computer activities at home should be supervised as they can affect the academic environment at school. Parents/guardians are asked to support their student in adhering to this Acceptable Use Procedure. Breaches of this agreement may result in consequences that could include suspension of computer privileges and/or disciplinary action.

The school network and email accounts are owned by Tewksbury Public Schools and that Tewksbury Public Schools has the right to access any of the information used through the mediums provided through the school at any time. Please review the [Technology Acceptable Use Procedures](#) pertaining to our Acceptable Use Policy, and review as appropriate with your child.

Parents/guardians are asked to give permission for their child to use technology resources in Tewksbury Public Schools. Parent/Guardian Student Images for Educational Purposes Tewksbury Public Schools attempts to provide students with the best educational practices and resources. Tewksbury schools will also attempt to recognize student achievement and success by publishing student names and/or pictures in

the newspaper, school based web pages or blogs, school newsletters, and video/cable access television. Photographs and video recordings may also be taken during school activities for use on Tewksbury Public Schools web pages, blogs, newsletters, yearbooks, and newspaper articles. Tewksbury Public Schools owns the photographs and video recordings and all rights to them.

## **ADDRESS CHANGE**

Families who have moved to or within the town of Tewksbury must contact the Office of Student and Family Support. All address changes are verified with a fully executed Purchase and Sales / Lease along with a statement from a utility company indicating service has been turned on, or a current utility bill. All documentation submitted must be current, including name(s) and the new address.

## **ALCOHOL and OTHER DRUG POLICY**

The use of and or possession of drugs, alcohol or tobacco on premises under the control of the Tewksbury School District is strictly prohibited.

A student will be suspended from school and may be subject to further discipline if found to be in possession of alcohol or other drugs (or under the influence of, or distributing) while on school premises, on school buses, or at school sponsored events such as after school activities and athletic games. The school will report violators to the police.

## **ARRIVALS AND DISMISSALS**

School drop off/pick up procedures are conducted with the safety of students in mind. Schools will communicate appropriate pick up/drop off procedures; which may be adjusted if needed.

See communications from Dewing, Heath Brook and Center Schools relative to specific school hours and arrival/dismissal routines for each school.

Students in all schools arriving after the school start time are considered tardy. They must be escorted by a parent or guardian and signed in at the main office. At that time, they will be issued a tardy pass to present to the classroom teacher upon entrance

Students who are dismissed earlier than the end of the school day will require a parent/guardian to sign out their child at the office. In order to dismiss early, the student must bring a note from home or provide information on Pickup Patrol stating the requested dismissal time and the authorized adult who will meet and sign out the child. Identification must be shown at the time of dismissal. **Children cannot be picked up without proper sign-out.**

No dismissals will take place through the office during the last 20 minutes of the school day. Staff is preparing school-wide mobilization for dismissal.

Children who are picked up at regular time daily will be dismissed through the school's designated area, provided a Dismissal Notification has been turned into the office.

## **ATTENDANCE and ABSENCES**

### **Absenteeism and the Massachusetts General Laws**

The parents or guardians of each pupil shall, annually, at the commencement of each school year, be sent a notice instructing them to call a designated telephone number at a designated time to inform the school

of the absence of a pupil and the reason therefore. Said notice shall also require such parent or guardian to furnish the school with a home, work or other emergency telephone number where they can be contacted during the school day. If a pupil is absent and the school has not been notified by the designated time, the school shall call the telephone number or numbers furnished to inquire about said absence.  
(Massachusetts General Law Title XII, Chapter 76, Section 1A)

## **Classification Of Absences In The Tewksbury Public Schools K-8**

### **Excused Absences**

**Exempt Absence:** When a student is absent for a court appearance (court documentation required), religious observance or funeral (parent/guardian call required), or documented medical reasons (notes and/or receipts required), then the student's absence is classified as excused or "exempt". An exempt absence does **not** count toward the total number of accumulated absences.

(Aspen Code: E – with Reason from drop down menu)

### **Unexcused Absences**

**Absent Confirmed:** For an absence to be confirmed, a parent/guardian must call the child's school on the morning of the absence or the student must present a note from a parent/guardian upon his or her return to school. It is considered an unexcused absence unless it satisfies one of the reasons listed above. An "absent confirmed" still counts toward the total number of accumulated unexcused absences. (Aspen Code: AC)

**Absent (Truant):** When a student is absent from school and no phone call or note has been received from a parent/guardian verifying the absence, the student's absence is classified as unexcused or truant. This type of absence or truancy also counts toward the total number of accumulated unexcused absences.  
(Aspen Code: A)

### **Attendance Protocol in the Tewksbury Public Schools:**

1. Following the fifth (5th) unexcused absence, a letter will be sent home to parents or guardians notifying them of their child's attendance and a copy of the letter will be placed in the student's file.
2. Following unexcused absences of seven (7) full days or fourteen (14) half-days within any period of six (6) months, a supervisor of attendance may choose to file a "failure to send" complaint in the juvenile court. (Massachusetts General Law Title XII, Chapter 76, Section 2)
3. Following the twelfth (12th) unexcused absence, a second letter will be sent home to the parents/guardians notifying them of their child's attendance and a copy will be placed in the student's file. Parents/guardians may be asked to meet with school administration and/or guidance department at this time.
4. Between twelve to fifteen (12-15) absences the Attendance Officer may make phone contact or visit the home of the parent/guardians.
5. Following the eighth (8th) unexcused absence in one quarter, the Principal or designee may choose to file a Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) in the juvenile court to support the student in attending school. (Massachusetts General Law Title XVII, Chapter 119, Section 39 E&G)

### **Truancy**

A student is "truant" when he/she is absent without the permission of his/her parents or guardian, such as when a student:

- Leaves school without being signed out by the Nurse's Office or by the Main Office staff;
- Is absent from school without prior permission from his/her parents or guardian;

- Does not report to class (skip class);
- Obtains a pass to go somewhere in the building and does not report there;
- Becomes ill and goes home or stays in the restroom without permission;
- Reports to school but does not attend classes.

A student must make up all work missed during an unexcused absence. The student's parents or guardian must accompany the student to a conference before he/she can be readmitted to the school. Disciplinary action may include, but not be limited to, an afternoon session, suspension, expulsion or legal action.

### **Preschool Attendance Protocol in the Tewksbury Public Schools:**

1. Following the fifth (5th) unexcused absence, a letter may be sent home to parents or guardians notifying them of their child's attendance and a copy of the letter will be placed in the student's file.
2. Following unexcused absences of ten (10) consecutive days in a year or fifteen (15) intermittent absences during a single trimester, preschool students will be unenrolled from the preschool program.
  - If the student is on an IEP and receiving special education services, a letter notifying the parents that by not sending their child to school, they are declining the proposed special education services and are therefore not eligible for compensatory services. Parents will have five school days to respond/dispute the withdrawal.
  - If the student pays tuition to attend the program, a letter notifying parents of the date of withdrawal will be provided. Parents will have five school days to respond/dispute the withdrawal.
  - If the student pays tuition to attend the program, full tuition will be expected until the date of the withdrawal. Please be advised that, once withdrawal from the program has occurred, the slot will be made available to other students.

### **Family Trips**

The Tewksbury Public School policy expects that a student will be excused from school for vacation purposes only during scheduled school district vacation periods. Elementary learning is foundational...families are encouraged to have their child(ren) in school every day it is in session. Should a student miss school because of a vacation, makeup work will be assigned upon his/her return to school. Teachers may, at their discretion, assign work before students leave on vacation.

Preschool-There will be no tuition credit for family trips during the school year.

### **BREAKFAST**

Breakfast will be available daily. Price for breakfast will be determined before the start of the new school year.

### **CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Cell phones may be brought to school, but can be a distraction and negatively affect the educational process. Cell phones should be turned off and put away between the hours of 8:35 a.m. and 3:05 p.m., unless it is being used under the direction of the classroom teacher. Also, unless under the direction of the classroom teacher, the camera component of the cell phone may not be used at school. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken cell phones at school or on the bus.

Tewksbury elementary schools have adequate technology for all students' educational programs. Parents/guardians are encouraged to have students keep family-owned devices, especially iPads and other types of tablets, at home. To help parents with this if children bring them to school, schools may hold devices in the office and call parents to retrieve them at their convenience.

## **CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION**

Communication between home and school is imperative to the educational process. When concerns arise about your child regarding issues such as grading, discipline, homework, etc. please contact the staff member most closely involved in the matter. Parents/guardians and staff members should discuss concerns and work together towards a resolution. To view the Tewksbury Public Schools Chain of Communication, please visit [www.tewksbury.k12.ma.us](http://www.tewksbury.k12.ma.us).

## **CHEATING/ PLAGIARISM**

If a student cheats on a test or assignment the student's teacher will inform his/her parents/guardians or guardian of the incident. The student shall receive a grade of "zero" which cannot be made up. If the student is subsequently caught cheating again, the student's teacher will inform the school administration for the taking of further disciplinary action which may include, but not be limited to, suspension.

## **CLOSING OF SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Schools will be closed only in the case of severe, inclement weather. Announcements relative to closing schools for inclement weather will be carried by TV stations, Twitter@tpsdistrict, and through the district's telephone notification system "One Call Now." Delayed Openings: Superintendent will notify the public by the same procedure as "no school" announcements.

Parents/guardians and students are requested not to call the Police Station, Fire Station, Bus Contractors, School Principals, or the Superintendent of Schools for "no school" information. Information will not be available from these sources.

### **Extended Day Program: Delay School Schedule**

There will be NO MORNING Extended Day (AlphaBEST) on days when schools are operating on a delayed schedule.

### **Extended Day Program: No School Schedule**

Extended Day (AlphaBEST, Penguin Pride and 21CCLC program) will be canceled on those days when school is not in session.

## **COMPUTER USE - See also [ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY](#) - TECHNOLOGY**

Students are expected to read and sign the Tewksbury Public Schools Guidelines for Student Internet Use. This is the [Acceptable Use Policy](#) (AUP) for the utilization of the Internet in the school. Students will be prohibited from use of the Internet at the school if students and parents/guardians do not sign the AUP form, located as part of the general signature page at the end of this handbook. Students are expected to be responsible in the use of the Internet at all times and to honor other student's work saved on the school server.

## **CORI REQUEST and FINGERPRINT REQUIREMENTS**

All employees of the School Department, Bus Drivers and substitute Teachers are required to undergo a "CORI Check." This is a record check for access to any convictions or pending criminal case data. Any parent/guardian who wishes to volunteer or chaperone a field trip, dance, party, etc. must undergo a CORI check as well. Please obtain a form from our office or your child's teacher. Persons who do not have a CORI Request form on file in our office will be unable to volunteer or chaperone. Additional background screening processes may also be required for the aforementioned individuals.

In September 2013, Governor Patrick signed into law Chapter 77 of the Acts of 2013, “An Act Relative to Background Checks.” This new law expands the Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) checks currently used in our schools. Specifically, it requires a fingerprint-based state and national criminal record check for all school employees. The State Applicant Fingerprint Identification System (SAFIS) MorphoTrust USA IndentoGo TM has been created for this purpose. For more information, please see the TPS website.

### **CUSTODY/GUARDIANSHIP**

If a student resides with any person other than a natural parent/guardian, a certified copy of the court documents that establish legal guardianship will be required at the time of enrollment.

If custody of a minor child changes after enrollment, documents should be provided to the school as soon as possible after the change. Students cannot be withdrawn without this information.

The school system will give to non-custodial parents/guardian, upon request, all information required under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act unless there is a valid court order directing the school system not to divulge such information. If such an order exists, a certified copy must be delivered to the principal’s office.

Court orders that specifically authorize or direct the release of custody will be followed. The school system will not interject itself in a custody or visitation dispute between two parents/guardians. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide the school with current court documents.

### **DAMAGED / LOST BOOKS**

Students will be responsible for the cost of replacing lost or damaged books and/or school materials.

### **DRESS CODE**

Student appearance should not be distracting to the learning environment. Students should dress in neat, clean and safe clothes. Shirts or other articles of clothing that make reference to violence, alcohol, drugs or sex should not be worn to school. The wearing of hats, sandals/flip-flops, bandanas, and bare midriff outfits is also discouraged. Coats or jackets should not be worn in classrooms. Backpacks must be stored in the student’s locker or cubby.

### **EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

It is critical that the school be able to contact parents/guardians at any time the child is at school. Therefore, it is essential that the school have on file a current address as well as home, business, and cell telephone numbers. Emergency contacts with telephone numbers are needed in case a parent cannot be reached. If parents/guardians move or change jobs, they should contact the school immediately to update this important information.

### **EXTRA HELP**

A student may seek extra help from his/her teachers when the student finds his/her assignments difficult or when the student has been absent from school. Teachers will schedule before or after school extra help sessions and will notify students of these times. Transportation to before or after school extra help is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

## **ANNUAL NOTIFICATION OF FERPA RIGHTS**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the school receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students who wish to inspect their child's or their education records should submit to the school principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the records they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

Parents or eligible students who wish to ask the [School] to amend their child's or their education record should write the school principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. The criteria for determining who constitutes a school official and what constitutes a legitimate educational interest must be set forth in the school's or school district's annual notification for FERPA rights. A school official typically includes a person employed by the school or school district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel) or a person serving on the school board. A school official also may include a volunteer, contractor, or consultant who, while not employed by the school, performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist; a parent or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent, student, or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official typically has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

[Optional] Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school or school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it

states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request or the disclosure is initiated by the parent or eligible student.]

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the [School] to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Student Privacy Policy Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

[NOTE: In addition, a school may want to include its directory information public notice, as required by § 99.37 of the regulations, with its annual notification of rights under FERPA.]

See the list below of the disclosures that elementary and secondary schools may make without consent.

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in § 99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, § 99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents or the eligible student –

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in § 99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(I) - (a)(1)(i)(B)(3) are met. (§ 99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of § 99.34. (§ 99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U. S. Comptroller General, the U. S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency (SEA) in the parent or eligible student's State. Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of § 99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf, if applicable requirements are met. (§§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)
- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary for such purposes as to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§ 99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's

ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to § 99.38. (§ 99.31(a)(5))

- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction, if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§ 99.31(a)(7))
- To parents of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (§ 99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena if applicable requirements are met. (§ 99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to § 99.36. (§ 99.31(a)(10))
- Information the school has designated as “directory information” if applicable requirements under § 99.37 are met. (§ 99.31(a)(11))
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribal organization who is authorized to access a student’s case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(L))
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

## **FIELD TRIPS**

A permission slip by the parent/guardian is required for each student participating on a field trip. During the trip the student will stay with his/her teacher or chaperone. Participation on a field trip is at the discretion of the school administration. A student may be excluded from a field trip if his/her behavior has been consistently inappropriate. Any parent/guardian volunteer accompanying a field trip must complete a CORI request form.

## **FINGERPRINTING - See CORI REQUEST and FINGERPRINT REQUIREMENTS**

## **FOOD SERVICES**

Our Food & Nutrition Services are happy to provide free healthy school breakfast and lunch meals that meet state and federal guidelines at all schools for all students. We are still encouraging our households to fill out a Free/Reduced Meal application because the benefits do not stop at just free school meals. Free and reduced lunch applications are available on the school [website](#) or you may obtain a hard copy through your school office. Other school fees may be free and reduced for those who qualify. While complete breakfast and lunch meals are free, double meals and a la carte menu items are not included and will incur a charge and no charging is permitted. Payment options are through [paypams.com](#) account which is available 24/7, cash or check made out to Tewksbury Food & Nutrition Services. Note: monies paid into the paypams account will carry over year to year. Refund requests must be submitted to Food & Nutrition Services in writing. (Updated December 2023)

## **FUNDRAISERS**

The School Building Principal must approve any fundraising activity.

Children are not to engage in door-to-door solicitations for any school fundraising activities. All Parent Advisory Councils (PACs) should include this message in all fundraising literature. The children's safety is the foremost concern.

## HEALTH SERVICES

**1. ACCIDENT/ILLNESS Forms:** Please correct and return as soon as possible. Any recent health problem that is not reflected in your child's health record should be brought to the school nurse's attention immediately. The importance of correct forms cannot be overemphasized. Please update the school with any changes during the school year.

**2. Screenings:** State law mandates the following screenings:

- Height, weight and BMI measurements in grades 1, 4, 7 and 9.
- Vision screening is conducted during the year in grades PK-5, 7 and 9. Parents/guardians will be informed if the child requires follow up. These screenings are not to be used as diagnostic studies.
- Hearing screening is conducted during the year in grades K-3, 7 and 9. Parents/guardians will be informed if the child requires follow up. These screenings are not to be used as diagnostic studies.
- Postural Screening is conducted on all students in grades 5 - 9. This is mandated by the state of Massachusetts. You will be notified prior to the screening and if your child requires follow up.
- Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral for Treatment (SBIRT): All students grades 7 & 9. Confidential verbal screening for substances using a validated screening tool. • **A Parent /guardian may refuse any screening for their child in writing to the school nurse.**

**3. Physicals and Immunizations:** School immunization requirements exist to protect students and members of their community from serious vaccine-preventable diseases by ensuring high vaccination rates. [Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements 2024–2025](#) In addition to the required immunization, **state law** also mandates a **complete physical**. The school nurse must receive these documents as follows:

- One year prior or within 30 days after entry into TPS
- If no current physical is available, an appointment must be booked within 30 days of entering TPS, and a date provided to the school nurse. Paperwork required after appt.
- Entering grades, PK, K, 4, 7, and 10
- Annually prior to participation in school sponsored athletics

**4. Medication: State law** Please call the school nurse in your child's school for medication order and parental permission forms. **NO Medication, prescription or over the counter** can be administered without these forms. All medication must be in a pharmacy labeled container or an unopened original manufacturer's container. Please contact the school nurse for any medication administration including prescribed, over the counter medications, inhalers, EpiPens etc. Forms are currently available from the school nurse. Self-administration is not permitted for over the counter medications. **Inhalers require Health Care Provider's orders and written parent permission for self administration prior to review by the school nurse.**

### MEDICATIONS

- By law, all medication, prescription or over the counter, must have a written physician's order and

written parental permission to be administered in the school setting. Acetaminophen (Tylenol), Ibuprofen (Motrin), and Antacids (such as Mylanta, Maalox, or Tums) may be administered at the school nurse's discretion with established protocols developed by the consulting school physician when a signed parental permission form is on file in the health office.

- All other medication that may need to be taken during the school day, whether routine or as needed, must have a written physician's order as well as a completed parental permission form that can be downloaded from the school website or obtained at the health office. All medication needs to be brought to the health office by a parent/guardian. Every effort should be made to schedule medications outside the school day, such as daily meds and those given two or three times a day.
- Medication must be in a pharmacy labeled container or unopened original manufacturer's container. Ask your pharmacist for a second prescription-labeled bottle if medication needs to be taken between home and school. Medication will not be given from any other type of container. Please notify the school nurse of any changes in medications or dosages.
- Medication must be taken in the nurse's office under the supervision of the school nurse. Sharing medication with other students is not permitted.
- By law, students are allowed to carry emergency medications, including respiratory inhalers, insulin, epi-pens and pancreatic enzymes with prior knowledge of the nurse. Please be sure to have the necessary physician and parent signed forms on file in the health office.
- Please call the school nurse's office or email with any questions you may have or to make an appointment.
- Failure to adhere to the above policies and procedures may result in suspension.

**5. Illness, Injuries and Surgeries: Please call the school when your child is absent.** In the event of a physician documented contagious illness, it is important for the school nurse to know. This is for the protection of your child as well as the other students and staff that may be susceptible to infection.

*A Doctor's note is required when the student returns to school when there are any restrictions in activity, including the nature of the restriction and the time/ length of the restriction especially in cases of hospitalization and surgery. Students must provide documentation from a Health Care Provider before returning to school, with splints, braces, crutches, slings, and stitches etc. Any medical condition requiring specific nursing assessment and resulting in treatment will require a physician's order indicating such directives.*

**6. Concussion and Head Injuries:** Head injuries/concussions must be reported to the school nurse, when reporting back to school. Documentation from the health care provider must be provided to the school nurse indicating that the student may return to school along with any restrictions in activity or academics that may be required. Please contact the school nurse prior to returning to school. Please visit [www.tewksbury.k12.ma.us](http://www.tewksbury.k12.ma.us) District Info Policy Manual to access TPS Policies regarding Concussion. Refer to File: JJIF ATHLETIC CONCUSSION POLICY and File: JJIF-R ATHLETIC CONCUSSION REGULATIONS.

## 7. When to keep your student home:

1. Fever over 100°F/37.8°C. Students may return to school when **fever free for 24 hours without** the use of fever reducing medications such as Tylenol or ibuprofen.
2. An unexplained vomiting episode, or 3 or more loose, watery stools or loss of control of stools. May return after **24 hours after last episode**, and has returned to normal diet.
3. Conjunctivitis: Any drainage from the eye can signal infection. Please have it checked and provide written clearance from a health care provider. Keep the student home until **24 hours after the first dose of medication**.
4. Antibiotics: these are prescribed for infections. Please avoid spreading infection by keeping the student home **until 24 hours** after the first dose of medication.

Please call your school nurse if the student requires medication, or has any change in their medical condition. If you are not sure, check with your nurse.

**Please call the school nurse at your child's school for any questions and for more information regarding these procedures.**

## HOMEWORK

Teachers may assign homework in all grades and in all areas of the Curriculum in the Tewksbury Public Schools. The objectives of homework are:

- To help students develop independent and collaborative work-study habits.
- To reinforce learning that has taken place in school or introduce new learning that will occur.
- To increase potential for home/school communication.
- To increase opportunities for enrichment activities.
- To provide differentiated learning opportunities.
- To correlate school learning with outside interests of the students' choice.

Role of the School/Teacher: If homework is assigned, the teacher will:

- Tailor homework assignments to cater to the diverse learning styles, interests, and needs of students. This may involve offering choice in assignments or adjusting the difficulty level to challenge students appropriately.
- Ensure that students understand each homework assignment.
- Review students' homework completion and provide relevant feedback in a timely manner.
- Ensure two-way communication between both students and parents/guardians when a student has difficulty completing or cannot complete homework assignments.
- Make every effort to honor students and families' time off from school and not assign homework on weekends, holidays, observed religious holidays, or school breaks/vacations on the school calendar.
- Allow a student, following an excused absence, a reasonable amount of time to submit the homework missed due to the absences.

Role of the Student: The student will:

- Ask the teacher to clarify any assignment that is unclear or ask for assistance when needed.
- Complete all their assignments within the time-frame given, to the best of their ability.
- Let their parent/guardian(s) know what the homework is and ask them for their assistance whenever needed

Role of the Parent/guardian(s) The parent/guardian(s) will:

- Provide the student a consistent time and a suitable place for study.
- Review homework with the student to monitor its completion and the student's understanding of the work completed.
- Communicate with teacher(s) whenever the student appears to have difficulty with homework or when clarification is needed.

#### Time Guidelines

While assigning homework is not mandatory, the guidelines below serve as a recommended MAXIMUM amount. It is expected that interdisciplinary/grade-level teacher teams will collaborate to ensure guidelines are not exceeded.

- K-4: not to exceed 20 minutes/day (May include, but not limited to, reading to/with a parent/guardian, journaling, and/or telling about their school day with a parent or guardian)
- Grade 5-8: not to exceed a total of 45 min/day (as determined by the core team)
- Grades 9-12: not to exceed 60 min/day, 15 min/day in each of the four major subjects on the days the major subject classes meet.

#### **LIBRARY**

We are so pleased to have the opportunity for our students to check out books from the library. This is a great opportunity for us to share our love of reading and for them to enjoy many different books. This is also a tremendous opportunity for our students to practice independence, choice making and responsibility. All of our books are either purchased through public funds or donated from generous parents. It is important that books are returned in the condition they were sent. If by chance, your child misplaces the book or damages it beyond repair, we will ask that the book be replaced by the parent paid for at book value.

#### **LOST AND FOUND**

When a student finds something that isn't his/hers, bring it to the office. A student may look through "found" items in the main office area to find something that was lost and turned in.

#### **NON-DISCRIMINATION NOTICE**

All publications for students, parents/guardians and employees, including written materials and other media used to publicize the school, specifically affirm that the school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. Students with differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer), mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics, will be provided support and anti-bullying skills, knowledge and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment of the student with differentiating characteristic(s) and the peer group. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against in any of the District's educational activities can file a written grievance with Assistant Superintendent, Lori McDermott, 139 Pleasant St. Tewksbury, MA 01876. 978-640-7800

#### **OPEN HOUSES**

There are three evenings for parents/guardians to formally come to the school to discuss curriculum and their child's progress. The first Open House in September allows the administration and staff to explain the upcoming year. Curriculum for that particular grade level will be explained in the child's classroom. The second and third evenings are Conference Nights where parents are encouraged to set up appointments with their child's teacher to discuss student progress and any other concerns.

In addition to regularly scheduled conferences, parents/guardians are encouraged to make an appointment to talk with teachers if students are finding it difficult to meet their responsibilities or have problems that they feel should be discussed.

### **PARTIES AND BIRTHDAYS**

Because of the prevalence of food allergies, there may be no food brought into classrooms to share other than that provided by the school department food services. After checking with a student's teacher, parents/guardians may wish to have their child bring in small tokens, such as stickers, erasers or pencils to share with classmates, though nothing is expected. All children should bring in their own food item(s)-not to be shared.

### **PETS**

No pets of any kind are allowed at school without permission from the school. Teachers may give special permission for pets to be brought to school as part of a special display or activity if approved by the principal. Under no circumstance is a potentially dangerous pet to be brought to school. Pets or animals are not allowed on the school bus.

### **PLACEMENTS**

The principal in consultation with the staff makes classroom assignments. Parents/guardians are welcome to provide information in writing regarding their child that they feel would be helpful in making an appropriate student placement for the following school year i.e. learning styles or unusual personal circumstances. Requests for specific teachers will not be accepted.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Students will be given the opportunity to recite the Pledge of Allegiance each school day. If a child wishes not to participate in reciting the Pledge they should tell a teacher about this or have their parents/guardians send a note to the teacher. If students do not wish to participate, they may either stand or remain seated.

### **POLICIES**

The Elementary School Handbooks may be amended by any policy or procedure subsequently enacted by the Tewksbury School Committee.

### **PRESCHOOL**

The Town of Tewksbury offers three separate programs for pre-kindergarten children ages three through five.

#### **Integrated Preschool Program**

The preschool program offers a child-centered curriculum. The program is designed to create a structured learning environment which fosters creativity, independence and community building. The social-emotional learning needs of each student are addressed. The program focuses on preparing students for Kindergarten. The curriculum is aligned with Massachusetts Curriculum Standards. Students learn through play and exploration of their environment. Daily activities include language arts, math, readiness, and structured activities for social development.

The Integrated Preschool supports a population of diverse learners and is developed to support students who are receiving special education services in an inclusive learning environment. The preschool is developed to meet the individualized learning needs of all students. Staff are DESE licensed early childhood special educators and related service providers.

The Integrated Preschool Program is offered 5 days per week for half-days only.

Contact Information:

Mrs. Alexis Bosworth, Dewing Principal 978-640-7858 or <a href="mailto:abosworth@tewksbury.k12.ma.us">abosworth@tewksbury.k12.ma.us</a>	Michelle Jennings, Administrative Asst. 978-640-7858 or <a href="mailto:mjennings@tewksbury.k12.ma.us">mjennings@tewksbury.k12.ma.us</a>
Mrs. Terry Gerrish, Heath Brook Principal 978-640-7865 or <a href="mailto:tgerrish@tewksbury.k12.ma.us">tgerrish@tewksbury.k12.ma.us</a>	Jennifer Cunningham-Allard, Administrative Asst. 978-640-7865 or <a href="mailto:jcunningham@tewksbury.k12.ma.us">jcunningham@tewksbury.k12.ma.us</a>

**Early Childhood Education Preschool Class at TMHS**

TMHS Preschool is a part-time public preschool which offers a fun, safe and secure learning environment. The goal of the program is to address the total development of the child through a mixture of free play and planned activities designed and created by following the Preschool Massachusetts State Frameworks.

The program is staffed with high school students who are enrolled in the high school child care classes and who are learning to teach. The high school students gain incredible hands-on experience while the preschool children benefit from the favorable low student/teacher/child ratio. High School Students are supervised by a Licensed Teacher.

Contact Information:

Mrs. Alexis Bosworth, Dewing Principal 978-640-7858 or <a href="mailto:abosworth@tewksbury.k12.ma.us">abosworth@tewksbury.k12.ma.us</a>	Michelle Jennings, Administrative Asst. 978-640-7858 or <a href="mailto:mjennings@tewksbury.k12.ma.us">mjennings@tewksbury.k12.ma.us</a>
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**Extended Preschool day offered through Community Services**

Students who participate in the Integrated Preschool Program have an option to extend their time at school until the end of the school day. These preschool program classes offers a child-centered curriculum, and are designed to create a structured learning environment which fosters creativity, independence and community building. The social-emotional learning needs of each student are addressed. The program focuses on preparing students for Kindergarten, and is also aligned with Massachusetts Curriculum Standards. Students learn through play and exploration of their environment. Daily activities include language arts, math, readiness, and structured activities for social development. This longer, full-day option allows for lunch, recess and a rest period.

Classes are taught by a DESE licensed preschool teacher and an aide, who cooperatively support the children in their learning.

The Community Services Preschool Extension Program is offered 5 days per week for students enrolled in the TIPS classes only.

#### Contact Information

<p>Dr. Cynthia Basteri Interim Director of Community Services, 978-640-7800 x219 <a href="mailto:basteric@tewksbury.k12.ma.us">basteric@tewksbury.k12.ma.us</a></p>	<p>Ms. Elise Edson Office of Student and Family Support Services) 978-640-7800 x218 <a href="mailto:eedson@tewksbury.k12.ma.us">eedson@tewksbury.k12.ma.us</a></p>
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### REGISTRATION, NEW STUDENT ENTRANCE

In order to be eligible for kindergarten, a child must be five years of age as of the first official day of school for students of the coming school year. A birth certificate or proof of age must be submitted at the time of registration.

Registrations are processed through the [Office of Student and Family Support](#). Proof of residency is also required. This proof may be a utility bill. A driver's license is not acceptable proof. The requirements for the first grade are the same except that child must be six years of age as of the first official day of school for students. No child will be admitted to school without a certificate of immunization. It is strongly recommended that parents/guardians bring records indicating the dates of immunizations at the time of registration. All immunizations are required and must be completed by the first day of school.

Families wishing to enroll a student within the Tewksbury Public Schools need to schedule an [appointment](#). A checklist of required documentation along with registration paperwork is available for [download](#) on our central registration site. It is important to note that a representative for the Office of Student and Family Support will provide you with a link to a virtual meeting for the date and time you have scheduled. Please contact the Office of Student and Family Support with any questions or concerns 978-640-7800 x 218.

### SAFETY

As per the requirements of 40 CFR 763 section 84(f) of the AHERA regulation, asbestos inspections and management plans are available for review at the office of the building principal during normal working hours.

### SCHOOL SAFETY DRILLS

#### Fire Alarm directions

Students should be aware that fire exit directions are posted in each classroom. Teachers will instruct the students of the fire exit directions on the first day of school. Students should:

- Follow those directions quickly and quietly when the alarm sounds;
- Leave the school building immediately with teachers;

- Follow the prescribed route and ask teachers if there are any questions concerning the fire exit directions;
- Use alternate routes other than posted instructions in case the fire is blocking established routes, e.g. rear doors adjoining one class with another, outside exits, different staircases, etc.;
- Listen to any additional instructions given on the public address system and follow these;
- Not enter the building until directed to do so by a teacher;
- While outdoors, remain at least 50 feet from the school building with teachers;
- Treat every fire alarm as a real alarm.

**NOTE: Pulling a false alarm is an unlawful act and will be treated as a police matter.**

### **Evacuation**

An evacuation of the building could be used by the administration to evacuate the building for any reason other than a fire. Evacuation for a fire will always be done via the fire alarm system. An alternate evacuation will begin with an announcement made over the intercom system.

Students should be aware of the alternate evacuation route for the room that they are in. The evacuation route for each room will be posted next to the fire exit sign in each room. If there are any questions about the evacuation procedure, students should ask their teacher. When evacuating the building for any reason, it is important that it be done in a calm and orderly manner. Classes must stay together with their teachers so that an accounting of all students can be done.

### **Lockout**

LOCKOUT is a procedure to be used when dealing with a threat or potential threat to the school building or occupants from outside of the building.

The Administration or designee will initiate LOCKOUT over the intercom. Students will be instructed to go into their assigned room. All students will rejoin their class or activity.

### **Lockdown**

LOCKDOWN is a procedure to be employed when dealing with a threat or potential threat to the school building or occupants from within the building.

The Administration or designee will initiate LOCKDOWN over the school intercom. Students will be instructed to go to the nearest room and evacuate the hallways.

Students and staff will utilize this approach as part of the A.L.I.C.E response (see below).

### **A.L.I.C.E. Protocol**

Students and staff are trained in the A.L.I.C.E. (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) protocol in a developmentally appropriate manner and are able to choose from the above response options in determining the most effective way of ensuring their physical safety if faced with an imminent threat.

### **Bus Emergency Evacuation Drills**

In addition to bus riding safety information that is shared, at least twice each school year, students who ride buses shall participate in bus emergency evacuation drills.

## **SEARCH AND SEIZURE**

Students have a legitimate right to privacy; however, this right must be balanced against the school department's responsibility and commitment to maintain a safe school environment that is conducive to learning. School officials are not required to obtain a warrant before searching a student under their authority provided there is a basis for reasonable suspicion. If there is reasonable suspicion, the school administration has the right to search a student and or their possessions, including but not limited to backpack, locker, vehicle, electronic devices, and platforms (such as cell phones and smart watches). If inappropriate items that disrupt or interfere with the educational process are discovered, they may be confiscated and students will be subject to the disciplinary process.. Furthermore, if illegal articles are discovered, they will be confiscated. In this instance, law enforcement officials may be notified and students may be subject to legal action.

In the interest of the safety of all students, the police department K-9 units in cooperation with school officials may conduct random searches of school property which may lead to probable cause for student searches.

Resources:

- [ACLU Massachusetts Resource](#)
- [Mass.gov Juvenile Justice](#)

### ***Questioning/Interviews by Administration and/or designee:***

The school department has a responsibility and is committed to maintain a safe school environment that is conducive to learning. The school administration, including principals/assistant principals, counselors, and designated staff, are permitted to question and examine a student at school without notice by the school administration to the student's parents/guardians. These interviews may be conducted for various reasons, including but not limited to:

- Investigating disciplinary incidents or behavioral concerns.
- Assessing academic progress or educational needs.
- Providing counseling or support services.
- Addressing issues related to student safety or well-being.

Information discovered during questioning/interviews that indicates illegal activity may be reported to the Tewksbury Police Department.

Information discovered during questioning/interviews that indicate abuse or neglect will be reported to the Department of Children and Families, As required by Massachusetts Mandated Reporter Law (51a)

Information discovered during questioning/interviews that indicate a student may engage in self-harm or hurting others could result in a mental health/Safety assessment, which could be performed by TPS or TPD and other partner clinicians.

## **STATE AND FEDERAL LAWS**

All students are expected to abide by all State and Federal Laws, and any violation of these laws will be cause for disciplinary action, including police involvement.

The Tewksbury Public School District provides Equal Opportunity without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, sex, marital status, disability or sexual orientation.

The School District complies with all applicable State and Federal Laws, including but not limited to: Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the American Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Massachusetts General Laws, c.151C and c.71B and c.76.

The School District has a duly appointed individual responsible for the overall monitoring, auditing, and ensuring compliance. For any compliance issues please contact:

Brenda Theriault-Regan Interim Superintendent of the Tewksbury Public Schools.

Address: 139 Pleasant Street Tewksbury, MA 01876 978-640-7800

## **STUDENT PICTURES**

Many times photographers or television crews or others may take still pictures or video of our students here at school during the course of the day. Our school is technology rich and has many activities ongoing so this can be a common occurrence. Due to the ever-increasing use of technology, student pictures and work may be posted on the Tewksbury Public Schools Website. (Please note: Last names are prohibited on the Internet.) If you would prefer **NOT** to have your child's picture published, simply put your request in writing when submitting the signature page for this document.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

In accordance with state and federal regulations, the school has established policies and procedures to ensure the confidentiality of student records. Any parent/guardian with questions concerning student record information maintained for his or her child should contact the principal.

## **TOYS/CARDS/ETC.**

Toys, cards and other entertainment type items can be a distraction and negatively affect the educational process. These items may not be brought to school except with the expressed permission of the teacher.

## **VALUABLES**

Students should not bring large amounts of money or expensive items to school. Items may be temporarily stored in the main office. The school is not responsible for the loss or theft of a student's property. Students should not bring valuable items to school. Such items and their loss cause disruptions in the learning process. In addition, students must never leave their property unattended.

## **VEHICLES RUNNING ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

The Tewksbury School Committee is committed to provide a safe learning environment. The committee is cognizant of the fact that vehicles left idling and unattended on school property can pose a threat to the safety of the school community.

Therefore, the School Committee adopts this policy (approved May 2009) in accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 90, Section 12. The School Administration will inform the motorist of the first infraction and will be obligated to report the license number to the Tewksbury Police Department for subsequent infractions.

## **VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS**

Visitors are welcome to our school. To minimize interruption, to assure safety for our students, and preserve the educational environment of all students, ALL parents/guardians and visitors must stop at the main office to sign in, pick up a visitor's badge and receive permission to proceed to classrooms or other parts of the school building or property. Parents/guardians may not visit the classroom without a scheduled appointment. The teacher and/or Room Parent(s) will handle all parties. In the interest of protecting students with severe allergies, students may not bring in food for parties.

Families and community members can be active participants in the educational process, not only by supporting our schools financially, but also by volunteering their time at the school. Please remember that a CORI check must be completed for all volunteers. All volunteers are to enter through the main entrance and sign in at the office. Please always wear a visitor's badge in the building.

## **WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL**

When a student is withdrawn from school during the school year, a parent/guardian must complete withdrawal procedures through the school office. At the time of withdrawal, students must return all textbooks, library books, and other school-owned items. Those items not returned must be paid for in accordance with school system rules.

## **ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS**

### **CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT**

This Code of Conduct is intended to inform students and parents/guardians as to the expectations of the staff and administration of the school to ensure that each student receives the benefit of an educational experience that fosters skill and knowledge development, social and emotional growth and self-worth. In return, each student is expected to function as a responsible individual who cooperates with and respects the rights of others. At a minimum, each student is expected to come to school on time and on a regular basis, and to behave in a way that allows students to enjoy all of the educational programs that our school may provide.

The information contained in this Code of Conduct is also intended to make each student and parent/guardian aware of what is to be expected when student disciplinary problems arise. Please become familiar with this CODE.

Each student is responsible for the following:

- **Doing Quality Work:** Do your best each day to complete assigned lessons including homework and assignments missed because of absence;
- **Knowing School Rules:** Learn our school's Code of Conduct and respect the adults who have a duty to enforce it;
- **Regular Attendance:** Arrive on time; remain on school grounds the whole school day; don't leave without permission; bring a note from your parents or guardian explaining any absence to the satisfaction of your Homeroom Teacher;

- **Respect for Others:** Treat others, as you would like them to treat you, and show the same respect for the property of others as well;
- **High Personal Standards:** Dress appropriately; meet standards of health and cleanliness; be honest, courteous and moral; only use acceptable language; refrain from actions that seem insubordinate or unruly.

## **BEHAVIORS/CONDUCT**

### **Bullying- “We don’t do that here!”**

Bullying behavior is not tolerated in the Tewksbury Public Schools as defined by Massachusetts General Law (M.G.L. c. 71).

#### **Key Definitions:**

#### **Bullying is defined as:**

The repeated use by one or more students or staff members of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim’s property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a school.

#### **Cyberbullying is defined as:**

Bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photoelectric or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be assessed by more than one persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Bullying in the school building, on school grounds, on the bus or school sanctioned transportation, or at school-sponsored functions will not be tolerated and will be grounds for the disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion.

### **Bus Conduct**

School bus drivers are instructed to ensure that all school bus passengers:

- Remain seated and do not change seats while the bus is in motion;
- Don't throw anything out of the bus or inside the bus;
- Don't put arms, head or hands outside the window;
- Don't make excessive noise or distract driver;
- Don't transport animals or large packages;

- Hold books and other property on his/her lap;
- Don't eat or drink on the bus;
- Don't use any tobacco products on bus;
- Obey all directions of driver quickly and courteously;
- Open emergency exits only when instructed by driver;
- Keep step wells and aisles free of musical instruments;
- Pay for any damage that is caused to the bus;
- The use of electronic and digital devices must conform to Tewksbury Public School policies.

Whenever an infraction of one or more of the above occurs, the student will be suspended at the discretion of the school administration for two (2) or three (3) consecutive days for three (3) minor offenses or three (3) consecutive days for one (1) major offense. The determination of the administration as to the type of offense shall be final.

Examples of major offenses include:

- a. lighting matches/smoking/tobacco use;
- b. throwing objects in or out of bus;
- c. hanging out windows;
- d. using obscene language;
- e. having or using drugs or alcohol;
- f. tampering with bus equipment;
- g. destroying property, i.e. tearing seats, breaking windows, etc.
- h. aggressive acts towards others
- i. possession of an object which may be perceived as a weapon

Please note that video cameras have been installed on all school buses.

The student's parents or guardian will be notified before a student is suspended. Every reasonable effort will be made to notify the student's parents or guardian on the day the offense occurs. Whenever continued major violations occur, the student may, at the discretion of the school administration, forfeit his/her bus privilege for an indefinite period. Specific attention is directed to student behavior on a school bus. The consequences would include, but not limited to:

- A designated seating assignment,
- Parents/guardians being called to meeting to discuss the behavior
- Suspension from riding the school bus as circumstances and conditions may warrant.

*NOTE: When a student's bus privileges are suspended, the student's parents or guardian are responsible for transporting the student to and from school.*

### **Cafeteria Conduct**

To encourage good nutrition, a well-balanced lunch is offered at a reasonable price each school day. All school rules apply. To make it a pleasant setting for all our students to enjoy lunch we ask:

- Eat with appropriate table manners
- Remain at table until given permission to leave
- Leave the table and table area clean (no litter left behind)
- Keep food in the cafeteria
- Speak in a quiet tone of voice.

- Walk at all times
- Because some students have severe food allergies, there should be no sharing of food.

## Drugs

The School Building Principal has authority to discipline a student from school (or the school district) if a student is found to have any of the following in his/her possession while he/she is on school property, on a school vehicle or at a school event such as an athletic game:

1. a dangerous weapon (such as a gun or knife); or
2. illegal drugs (such as marijuana, cocaine, and heroin).

## Harassment, Civil Rights, and Respect

"Harassment" is conduct that is personally offensive, degrading or threatening to others. It is strictly prohibited at the school. The school's policy against harassment refers to but is not limited to insulting or harmful comments or actions based on a person's race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, physical characteristics or disability. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to name calling, put downs, threats, sexually suggestive remarks, unsolicited physical contact, unwelcome and insulting comments and gestures, and the display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading to any individual, or any race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. All members of the school community, including staff, are expected to adhere to this policy and are strongly encouraged not to tolerate, even by silence, any violation of it by others. Consequences for violating this policy can include mandatory counseling, exclusion from school social events, and suspension from school ranging from one to ten days with notification to the police. Repeated or extreme forms of harassment may result in further disciplinary action.

Please see [Policy ACAB](#), updated by School Committee on October 13, 2021.

## Harassment - Sexual

All students should show respect toward each other in the school setting. Bothering another person with unwanted verbal or physical advances of a sexual nature is unacceptable. Displays of affection are also not considered appropriate in the school setting or at school events. These behaviors may lead to disciplinary action. For compliance issues, parent/guardians should contact:

Nancy Milligan, Assistant Superintendent of Schools - Tewksbury Public Schools 139 Pleasant Street - Tewksbury, MA 01876 978-640-7800	
Alexis Bosworth, Dewing Principal 1469 Andover St. Tewksbury, MA 01876 978-640-7858	Jay Harding, Center Elementary School Principal 139 Pleasant St. Tewksbury, MA 01876 978-640-7870
Terry Gerrish, Heath Brook Principal 165 Shawsheen St. Tewksbury, MA 01876 978-640-7865	

## Playground Regulations

Outdoor recess rules:

- Play in designated areas only
- Use playground equipment properly and safely
- Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself
- Use proper language
- Report hurtful actions to an adult immediately!

Indoor recess rules:

- Children may participate in various games and activities appropriate for indoor play.
- Balls and playground type equipment are not allowed.

### **Student Behavior**

Students are responsible for exercising good behavior to ensure the safety and well-being of themselves and others. When misbehavior has occurred, teachers and administrators will work toward the improvement of the student's behavior. Student behavior will be dealt with in an appropriate and progressive manner. In the school setting this would include, but not be limited to:

- Discussion of incident with member of staff
- Losing recess,
- A telephone call being made by the staff member to parents/guardians,
- Discuss incident with the principal or assistant principal,
- A telephone call being made by the principal/assistant principal to parents/guardians,
- Receiving a letter from the principal regarding behavior,
- Parent/Guardian meeting with the principal/assistant principal to discuss the behavior,
- Suspension from school.

In case of suspension from school, due process will be afforded to all students in accordance with the Tewksbury School District's policies pertaining to the conduct of students, as promulgated and amended from time to time.

### **Title IX and Chapter 622 Policy**

It is the policy of the Tewksbury Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of sex, religion, color, or national origin in the educational program, activities, or employment policies as required by Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments and Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971. Complete policy available in the Main Office.

A student or employee in the Tewksbury public schools who feels that he/she has a grievance under Title IX or Chapter 622 shall file it in writing to the following:

- Level 1 - Principal
- Level 2 - Assistant Superintendent
- Level 3 - Superintendent of Schools
- Level 4 - School Committee

Students are prohibited from knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during a grievance process, including but not limited to harassment and bullying reports and investigations.

### **Weapons**

Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related event, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal. Toys such as cap pistols, water guns, and rubber knives are prohibited. Toy guns of any kind are not permitted. They will be confiscated and discipline imposed.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

### **Consequences - Detention**

Students may be detained after school with a teacher or administrator for the following infractions:

1. Verbal or physical harassment
2. Failure or refusal to follow a direct order (insubordination)
3. Inappropriate response or reaction (insolence)
4. Use of profanity or inappropriate language
5. Leaving school or a class without permission
6. Behavior that endangers the health, safety or learning of others
7. Bringing items to school which are prohibited unless specifically authorized by the administration.

Repeated offenses for any of the above infractions will be referred to the School Building Principal who may, acting at his/her discretion, take such additional disciplinary action for such offenses, as he/she may deem appropriate under the circumstances.

### **Consequences - Due Process**

By law, the Tewksbury Public Schools must give the student and his/her parents or guardian a fair hearing before the student is separated from the school for misconduct. School administration usually conducts this hearing and may share with parents/guardians:

- Written notice of the charge of misconduct;
- Access to information school is using when determining whether or not consequences are appropriate.
- A reasonably prompt, written hearing decision.

### **Consequences - Suspension**

Please refer to 603 CMR 53.00

In some cases, the conduct of a student may necessitate his/her suspension from continued participation in the activities of the school for a period up to 3 school days. Generally, a student may be suspended from school for doing the following:

1. Verbal or physical harassment
2. Failure or refusal to follow a direct order (insubordination)
3. Inappropriate response or reaction (insolence)
4. Use of profanity or inappropriate language
5. Truancy from school; cutting a class or are late to class or school
6. Leaving school or a class without permission
7. Behavior that endangers the health, safety or learning of others
8. Failure to report when a teacher requires a student to stay after school
9. Bringing items to school which are prohibited.
10. Use of alcohol or other controlled substances
11. Willful violation of any local, state or federal law
12. Smoking in school, on school property or on a school bus
13. Vandalizing school property

School authorities determine the length of a student's suspension. In certain cases a student may be offered an opportunity to perform community service in lieu of a school suspension. The student's parents

or guardian will be notified in writing of the actions taken. Further, before a student may be readmitted to school following a period of suspension, the student and the student's parents or guardian must first meet with a representative of the school administration before the student will be readmitted.

When a student is suspended he/she may not come onto any property under the control of the Tewksbury School District or attend any school functions or school-sponsored activities within the District.

The student is responsible for making up all work that the student's teachers may assign while the student is suspended from school. If a student does not complete the assigned work and return it to the assigning teacher, the student will lose credit for it.

**Suspension Policy** - This policy is pursuant to MGL Chapter 71; Section 37H3/4. <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71/Section37H3~4>. Any student who is suspended from school for more than 10 days has the right to appeal to the Superintendent. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long term suspension.

### **Discipline of Children with Educational Plans.**

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior set forth in this handbook. Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws (also known as Chapter 766) requires that additional provisions be made for children with special needs. The following additional requirements apply with respect to discipline of students with special needs.

1. The Individual Educational Program (IEP) for a special needs student will indicate whether the student is expected to meet the regular discipline code or if the student's condition requires a modification. Any modification will be described in the student's IEP.
2. For special needs students who may be removed from their educational program for more than ten days, cumulatively, in a school year, a review of the relationship between the misconduct and the student's disability will be conducted.
3. If, after conducting such review, the student's special education Team determines that the behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability, the Team will discuss a modified program for the student. If the Team determines that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of his/her disability, the student may then be subject to the school's disciplinary code. In that event, an alternative setting for the student for the student to receive instruction will be determined.
4. A Functional Behavioral Assessment will also be conducted with respect to a special needs student whose behavior violates the school's disciplinary code.
5. If a student's conduct involves weapons or drugs, the team may place the student in an alternative educational setting.
6. When a student is on an educational plan he/she must abide by the Heath Brook, Dewing, or Center School rules and regulations unless his/her plan states otherwise. Suspensions will be reported to the Administrator of Special Education. Plans will be reviewed by a special education team when a student has accumulated 10 days of suspension from classes in a school year.

### **Discipline of Children with 504s**

Similar procedures (as those for discipline of children with education plans) apply to students with plans under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

## **Legislation related to School Safety**

The School Committee intends that the administration and school principals be given a full range of authority in accordance with the guidelines of the Educational Reform Act of 1993 in order to prevent, address, and hold accountable those responsible for school related violence and other behavior that is not conducive with attendance in a public school. Two important pieces of legislation related to safe schools are summarized as follows. Safety is the prime issue of concern. All students should be aware of the following rules pertaining to school conduct - **MGL Chapter 71; Section 37H**

- (a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter Ninety-four C, including but not limited to marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from school or school district by the principal.
- (b) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff or student on the 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 (a) or (b) above shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; providing, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After the hearing, a principal may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to violate 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 ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal.
- (e) The student has the right of counsel at the 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 the section.
- (f) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of reasons for said expulsion.

The use of tobacco products, alcohol, or illegal drugs within the school buildings, the school facilities/grounds, or school bus is strictly prohibited by any individual.

## **MGL Chapter 71; Section 37H1/2**

- 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, a principal may suspend such student for a period of time determined to be 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 suspension prior to the suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of the right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his/her behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the right 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 five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such a decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

Upon a student's being convicted of a felony or upon adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such felony or felony delinquency, the principal 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. (Due process procedures including notification, request for appeal and appeal hearing mirror those procedures outlined in the first paragraph above). Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to such student.

### **Education Services Plan**

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, § 21 and 603 CMR 53.13, the Tewksbury Public Schools offers and provides alternative education services to students who are expelled or suspended in or out of school for more than ten (10) consecutive school days.

The following services are made available to provide students who have been expelled or suspended in excess of ten (10) consecutive school days with an opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school.

- ☐ Online/distance learning
- ☐ Tutorial services

Students who are expelled or suspended in or out of school for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a school year may select one of the above identified alternative education setting options in which to participate during the period of suspension or expulsion.

To obtain more information regarding the available alternative education setting options and to confirm your selection of and enrollment in one of these alternative education setting options, please contact the school principal. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent or guardian, the school or school district will facilitate and verify the student's enrollment in the service.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

The Tewksbury Public Schools provide a variety of supplementary services for students. These services include:

- Title I
- English as a Second Language
- MTSS (Massachusetts Tiered System of Support)
- Screening of 3 and 4 year old children
- Kindergarten screening
- Home tutorial services
- Special Education

## **504 Policy**

The Tewksbury Public School District provides Equal Education Opportunity without regard to race, creed, color, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or sexual orientation.

The School District complies with all applicable State and Federal Laws, including but not limited to, Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Massachusetts General Laws, c.151C and c.71B.

The School District has a duly appointed individual responsible for the overall monitoring, auditing and ensuring compliance with this policy as it pertains to students attending the Tewksbury Public Schools. For compliance issues, parents/guardians should contact:

Nancy Milligan, 978-640-7800 extension 201, Assistant Superintendent and Section 504 Coordinator, Tewksbury Public Schools, 21 Town Hall Ave., Tewksbury, Massachusetts, 01876. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against in any of the District's educational activities can file a written grievance with the Assistant Superintendent of Schools.

## **Special Education**

The Massachusetts special education law, popularly known as Chapter 766 aligns with the Federal Education law, known as IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). Both the state and federal laws require that every child between the ages of 3 and 22 be provided with a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Tewksbury Public Schools has established a decentralized special education process. Special Education decision-making is conducted by the In-School Evaluation Team at the school. Parents/guardians are an integral part of each special education team. If a child is found to have special education needs in one or more areas, PL 94-142 requires School Systems to develop a special education program for that child which, to the maximum extent possible, allows the child to be educated with children who are not in need of special education. Questions about special education services and/or the TEAM process should be directed to the principal or Candace Tharrett, Interim Director of Student Services, at 978-640-7800.

## **Title I Programs and Supplemental Reading Services**

### *Title I*

Title I services are available to Title I eligible students in 2nd through grade 4. This federally funded program provides supplemental services to Title I eligible students specifically identified as Title I school sites. School site identification is based on Title I federal guidelines. Student eligibility is determined by student need based on standardized test results and on supplemental teacher referral information.

### *Supplemental Services*

Each elementary school is staffed with a DESE certified Reading Specialist, who plans and oversees the collection of reading data and the organization of support services for students. Eligible students participate in inclusive in-class, tutorial pullout, and/or consultation based instructional programs in Reading and the Language Arts. These instructional services supplement the Regular Education program and are coordinated with the Regular Education curriculum.

**Tutorial Services (relative to medical and related absences)**

The intent of Tewksbury Public Schools (TPS) Home and Hospital Instruction is to provide a student receiving a publicly funded education with the opportunity to make educational progress even when a physician determines that the student is medically unable to attend school. In compliance with the Massachusetts regulations 603 CMR 28.03(3)(c) and 603 CMR 28.04(4), TPS Home and Hospital Instruction collaborates with schools, parents, physicians, agencies and hospitals to ensure alignment of educational goals and curriculum for accurate service delivery to provide, at a minimum, the instruction necessary to enable the student to maintain progress in his/her courses of study and minimize the educational loss that might occur during the period when the student is confined at home or in a hospital.

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Tewksbury Elementary Schools  
**Signature Page**

[\*link to an online signature page\*](#)