



**RAMS** Robert H. Adams  
**Middle School**

# **Family Handbook**

## **2022-2023**

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*It is the policy of the Holliston Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, color, homelessness, sexual orientation, age or disability in its educational programs, services, activities, or employment practices.*

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## I. SCHOOL INFORMATION

### MISSION STATEMENT AND CORE VALUES

The Robert Adams Middle School aims to meet the needs of the whole child through a respectful, collaborative, and supportive environment.

- As educators, parents, and students, we are passionate about and engaged in meaningful and authentic learning that is both relevant and globally-minded.
- Our school environment aims to foster initiative, curiosity, and positive energy.
- We work to grow and improve as individuals and as a community through consistent reflection and attention toward progress.

### HOURS 8:05 a.m. to 2:27 p.m.

In general, students should not come to school prior to 7:55 a.m. since safe supervision cannot be provided prior to that time. Students who do arrive before 7:55 should remain quietly in the lobby unless given a pass from their teacher to attend before school extra help. When the first tone sounds at 7:55, all students should go directly to their lockers to secure their belongings before going to the first period. The warning tone for the first period will ring at 8:02. Students should be settled in their first period by the late tone at 8:05. At dismissal, students may go to their lockers to gather their belongings before departing. No students are allowed to stay after school unless they are attending a supervised activity, extra help or detention.

### NO SCHOOL, DELAYED OPENING, AND EMERGENCY DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

1. The welfare and safety of our youngsters is our highest priority.
2. Just as the school has developed emergency procedures, each family should develop and implement a family emergency procedure to include:
  - Neighbor backup
  - Communication System
  - Safe Haven with food, water, first aid and equipment
3. The following procedures are used when (a) canceling school, (b) delaying the opening of school, and (c) sending students home early because of severe weather conditions or other emergency situations. This information will be posted on: Channels 4, 5, 7, and 25; Holliston Local Cable Access Channels - Comcast 8, 10 & 11, and Verizon 32, 33 & 34; and the Holliston Public Schools Webpage – <http://www.holliston.k12.ma.us>

A. **Canceling School** – When the conditions of the roads and access to schools are judged to be unsafe for bus travel, schools are canceled. **PLEASE DO NOT TELEPHONE THE POLICE OR FIRE DEPARTMENT ABOUT SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS** as such calls tie up the telephone lines needed for emergency calls. **School will be in session, if possible. You as a parent should feel free to keep your child home if you do not agree with the decision to hold classes.**

B. **Delayed Opening** – On days when road conditions in the early morning make driving hazardous, but school could be held by opening one or two hours later, the delayed opening procedure will be used.

Bus pick-ups will occur one or two hours later than ordinarily scheduled. School will be dismissed at the regular times.

C. **Emergency Dismissal** – sending students home early because of severe weather conditions or other emergency situations.

Please review with your child and with your friends and neighbors where your child should go if you are not at home when school is dismissed.

The welfare and safety of our students is our highest priority. With your cooperation, we can keep any inconvenience to a minimum. Thank you for your assistance.

## **SCHOOL INFORMATION FORM**

Emergency Information Form Requirement – Medical emergencies, accidents and sudden illnesses can happen to students while at school. All students and parents are required to fill out emergency information forms (front and back) at the beginning of school and return within three days. Please update the information on the forms with the school office throughout the year if it changes. It is a parent's responsibility to make sure the school has complete information on how to reach them and of any custody restrictions. If a parent's name is omitted for any reason, it is helpful to the staff to know why. All information is kept strictly confidential. (Policy JRA)

## **REGISTRATION**

All information regarding registration may be obtained through our Guidance Department. The Guidance Department's Secretary/Data Specialist can be reached at 429-0657 ext 1402 and will take the information regarding registration. (Policy JF)

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Federal and state laws provide parents and eligible students (those who are age 14 or older or in the ninth grade) with the rights of confidentiality, access, and amendment relating to student records. Copies of the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations, 603 CMR 23.00, ("Regulations"), which detail these rights, are available in the office of the principal (323 Woodland Street) and the Office of the Superintendent. The following is a general overview of the provisions in the Regulations.

**Access and Amendment:** A parent or eligible student has a right to access student records and to seek their amendment if the parent or eligible student believes them to be inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. In order to obtain access or to seek amendment to student records, please contact the building principal. Records must be made available within ten days of the initial request, except in the case of non-custodial parents, as described below.

Access by Non Custodial Parents: Massachusetts General Laws c. 71, §34H (“Section 34H”) governs access to student records by a parent who does not have physical custody of a student. Section 34H requires a non-custodial parent seeking access to submit a written request and other documentation to the Principal on an annual basis. Information may not be provided to non-custodial parents until after they have complied with the statutory requirements. Parents who have questions or concerns regarding access to records by non-custodial parents are requested to contact the building principal or Office of the Superintendent for detailed information regarding the procedures that must be followed under Section 34H.

Confidentially: Release of student records generally requires consent of the parent or eligible student. However, the Regulations provide certain exceptions. For example, staff employed or under contract to the district have access to records as needed to perform their duties. The Holliston Public Schools also releases a student’s complete student record to authorized school personnel of a school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer without further notice to, or receipt of consent from the eligible student or parent.

Release of Student Record Information: With few exceptions, information in a student's record will not be released to a third party without the written consent of the eligible student and/or a parent having physical custody of a student under 18 years of age. Two notable exceptions are:

1. Directory Information – Directory information includes 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.
2. Recruiting Information for the Armed Forces and Post Secondary Educational Institutions – Upon request from military recruiters and/or representatives of post secondary educational institutions the Holliston Public Schools will provide the name, address and telephone listing for all secondary students.

If an eligible student and/or parent does not want Directory Information or Recruiting Information released, they must notify the Principal in writing by [date at least two weeks following the receipt of this notice]. Otherwise, this information will be released without further notice.

Please be aware that a parent and/or eligible student may specify that only certain types of Directory Information or Recruiting Information may be released and that the parent and/or eligible student may rescind a release at any time during the school year by providing notice in writing to the Principal. The release or publication of information prior to receipt of written notice will constitute a violation of the confidentiality requirement.

Please refer to the Student Record Regulations for a description of other circumstances in which student records may be released without the consent of a parent or eligible student.

## **EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS**

Periodic fire and emergency response drills will be held. The signal will be a prolonged ringing of the fire alarm. Directions for a swift and orderly evacuation of the building are posted in all rooms. GOOD ORDER is to be maintained during the drill. When the fire signal rings:

1. Close windows, turn off lights, close the door and proceed in a single file out posted exits.
2. If the signal rings during a passing period, go down the stairway and out the nearest door.
3. The first students who reach the outside exits should hold the doors until the building is cleared.
4. Remain at least 100 feet away from the building, and off the road and driveways and 50 feet away from fire trucks.
5. Talking is not allowed, as there may be directions over the sound system or special instructions by faculty members.
6. Students must remain silent and lined up so that their teacher may take attendance quickly and accurately.
7. Return inside when the “all clear” signal is given.
8. Students on the second floor who are physically unable to use the stairs should wait at the top of the staircase near the music room #211 and wait for assistance from the Fire Department.

## **EMERGENCY PLANNING**

All students and parents should create an emergency plan for their student in the event that the student is dismissed early from school. This plan should include emergency phone numbers for the parents, possible location of a hidden key and instructions on where students can safely stay when parents are not home. Parents with students who routinely arrive home to empty houses are also encouraged to discuss allowable activities, telephone use and emergency numbers. Many working parents institute a callback system in which their students call them at work as soon as they arrive home.

**VACATIONING STUDENTS FROM OTHER SCHOOLS** are not permitted to visit while school is in session. (Policy KI)

## **ATTENDANCE- ABSENT AND/OR TARDY**

It is absolutely essential that students attend school on a regular basis. Chronic absenteeism greatly hinders a student’s ability to learn and to access the curriculum. “Researchers have identified chronic absenteeism as a persistent problem related to poor academic performance and potential behavioral and developmental issues. There is general agreement among researchers that being chronically absent places students at risk of negative academic consequences.” The school will work with parents to promote good attendance while also supporting students who have been absent.

When a student is **tardy or absent** from school, parents are asked to call the school (508) 429-0657 and **press option 3** after 5:00 p.m. the evening before, or before 7:00 a.m. on the day

of the absence and leave a message on the answering machine. When a student returns to school from being **tardy** or **absent**, he/she must have a note from the parent/guardian excusing the tardiness/absence. If the student returns from a tardiness/absence without a note, they will be required to report to the Main Office for an admittance pass and will be reminded to bring the note to the office on the following day.

If a student needs to be **dismissed** prior to the end of the school day, a parent/guardian should complete the online “Dismissal Change” form. The student will be called out of class by the main office at the requested time for dismissal. Students are not allowed to leave the school building during the school day without proper dismissal by the Main Office. Students must be met by a parent or his/her designee. Students are not allowed to leave the building unescorted.

Families will receive a Brightarrow alert via email/text if the school has-not alerted the school of their child’s absence in order to ensure that the student is safe and accounted for. In addition, the school administration and guidance will monitor student attendance and letters will be sent home to students with significant absenteeism and tardiness. If absenteeism and tardiness continues, the school, in partnership with the district truancy officer, will meet with students and parents to work together to improve attendance.

## **TRUANCY**

Any student who is absent for all or part of the school day without the knowledge/consent of his/her parent/guardian or who leaves school during the school day without prior knowledge and consent of school authorities and of his/her parent/guardian shall be considered truant.

Being truant and/or being late for class or missing a class deliberately is serious and disciplinary action will be taken.

An Excused Absence/Tardy includes: 1) Illness or quarantine; 2) Bereavement/serious illness in family; 3) Weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child; 4)Major religious observations

For students who have five tardies (excused or unexcused) or five absences (excused or unexcused) per 45 school days, an internal review will be conducted by the school based Team to identify, if necessary, whether appropriate interventions and/or accommodations are needed. For students with seven tardies or absences (excused or unexcused) per 45 school days a staff member will make contact with parent/guardian and a meeting may be held. For those students who reach 10 days of tardies or absences (excused or unexcused) during a 45 day span will receive a letter regarding absences which will be mailed home and the parent/guardian will continue to work with the school regarding missed educational time.

## **VACATIONS**

The school administration strongly discourages students from taking vacations other than those that are regularly scheduled. If students are going to be out of school for reasons other than illness, the student should bring a parent/guardian note to every teacher and request homework that teachers can assign from texts, etc. It is up to the individual teacher, however, to determine what can be assigned.

Taking students out of school for reasons other than illness is a family choice that should be made with the understanding that the missed school days cannot be replicated. Teachers will work with students who have been absent as time allows, without sacrificing the needs of other students who have been in attendance.

## **II. IMPORTANT PROCEDURES**

### **MAIN OFFICE**

The Middle School Main Office houses the offices of the principal, assistant principal, student services administrator and support staff. These professionals provide supervision, evaluation, curriculum development and implementation of a positive educational environment for parents, students and staff.

For students, the Main Office is a place to:

1. get a dismissal slip
2. get a late pass (if the student is tardy)
3. get an admittance slip (if the student does not have a note for being absent or tardy)
4. pick up a bus pass
5. make an appointment with the principal or assistant principal

### **PHONE MESSAGES/FORGOTTEN ITEMS/MINIMIZING CLASSROOM INTERRUPTIONS**

In order to maximize time on learning and minimize interruptions, it is the policy of the Adams Middle School to avoid interrupting classrooms whenever possible.

With respect to phone messages and forgotten items, parents may drop off items for students at the designated area in the lobby. Items should be clearly marked with the student's name, grade and team. Students can check the designated bins in the lobby at locker time or with their teacher's permission during the day to pick up personal belongings that have been dropped off at school. Additionally, dropped off items and messages will be given to students at lunch. Although we expect that arrangements will be communicated ahead of time whenever possible, we will contact students before the end of the day, at a time when it is least intrusive, regarding issues related to changes in after school arrangements to ensure their safety upon dismissal.



## **LOST AND FOUND**

The “Lost and Found” is located in the cafeteria. Items of value, such as eyeglasses, keys, money, etc. may be found in the Main Office. Students are requested not to bring valuables to school, as the school cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items.

## **TELEPHONE USE**

Although personal phone calls are discouraged, students may use classroom phones after class with teacher permission for very important reasons.

## **RESTROOM USE**

Students need to get permission from a staff member, use a pass, and sign out using the online bathroom/water form before leaving the classroom to use the bathroom. Students are also required to sign their personal sign out sheet. Students have up to three daily sign-outs per form. Students may use the bathroom during passing time, but are expected to be in class on time.

## **LOCKERS**

Students will be assigned a locker at the beginning of the school year to store backpacks, jackets and other bulky materials during the school day. Lockers need to be kept clean and in good working order. Nothing is to be hung outside of the lockers, including stickers. Items hung inside the locker cannot be permanent. Lockers should be locked at all times, and students should not share their locker combinations to avoid theft. Students will be charged a \$6.00 fee for lost locks and will be issued a new lock supplied by the school. Students should not touch another student’s lock or locker.

The storage of contraband items (weapons, drugs, alcohol, lighters, stolen property, etc.) in school lockers is not allowed. School administrators have the right to search lockers if there is reasonable suspicion of contents that could be illegal, dangerous or disruptive to the students or school. Consistent with School Committee policy JIH, students should not have the expectation of privacy in school lockers.

## **LUNCH – COST/PREPAYMENT**

All Holliston Public Schools students are provided the opportunity to buy nutritious school lunches. The standard price for the Middle School is **\$3.50** for lunch, including milk. Milk may also be purchased separately for **\$0.60**. Individual items such as ice cream, hot pretzels etc., are available as well. Selections vary daily. All food and beverages must be consumed in the cafeteria.

The charging of school lunches is not allowed. Parents have the option of prepaying for their student’s lunch by the week or by the month. Checks must be made out to Holliston Food Services and should be given to the cashier in the cafeteria. The Main Office is not authorized to loan lunch money to students. Reduced and free lunches are available through the Federal Government. **\*\*Massachusetts lawmakers will continue to fund free school meals for all students, regardless of household income, under a one-year expansion of a free federal school lunch program.\*\* (July 2022)**

**CAFFEINATED DRINKS/ENERGY DRINKS AND WATER BOTTLES** – Drinks that contain caffeine are not sold in the cafeteria and are not allowed in school. Water bottles are allowed in school and in class at each teacher's discretion.

### **PARKING**

Visitor parking is located in the Woodland Street loop (entrance closest to the Placentino School at the Middle School sign).

The Woodland Street loop was designed for the safety of your child when parents/guardians are dropping off and/or picking up students at school. The front parking area is designed for school buses and we discourage the use of this area during arrival and departure times for students, including after school activities, for the safety of your child.

### **DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP**

Parents should drop off and pick up students at the Woodland Street or Linden Street loops. Parents should drop off students in the loop and otherwise should not park, stop or drop off on Linden Street itself in order to ensure that students are dropped off safely and buses can proceed from the bus exit without interference. The main parking lot is reserved for buses and employees during drop off and dismissal times. When using the loops, parents must pull up to the curb so that students will not walk in front of or in the back of cars. Students will be required to stay on sidewalks at all times and will not be permitted to walk in the parking lot area. Parents are urged to remind students about pedestrian safety and to exercise extreme caution when driving on school premises. The Fire Department emphasizes that there is no parking in the fire lanes at any time, and the Police Department stresses the importance of not impeding traffic on Woodland or Linden Street by parking or stopping. **Both Linden and Woodland Street have one way entrances, exits. Please be mindful of those locations when entering and exiting the RAMS parking lot.**

### **PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

Requests for a conference with a student's teacher(s) are welcomed and encouraged. Parents are asked to contact the individual teacher or teachers (via voicemail, email, or a note) so that an appointment can be arranged. Parent concerns should be directed to the teacher(s) prior to contacting an administrator.

Take-home information published by the school or other community organizations that have been approved by the Central Office will be posted on the school or district websites. Generally every two weeks, RAMS Newsletters will be sent to parents in order to alert them of new school postings.

## **GUIDANCE**

Three grade level counselors, as well as a school adjustment counselor, are available to Middle School students, teachers and parents. Each counselor is assigned a particular grade to best address the specific social-emotional needs of the students, along with building the appropriate supports for their student population. Counselors provide proactive, in-class programs, as well as individual counseling for students and parents.

Counselors are available to students to provide support and encouragement for academic, personal, and social problems. Students may wish to talk to a counselor about themselves, other students, home life, grades, health, peer pressure or a host of other concerns. Students are encouraged to contact their grade level counselor at any time – all visits are confidential. Parents are similarly encouraged to contact the counselors to discuss concerns or schedule an appointment.

## **LIBRARY/MEDIA CENTER**

The Library/Media Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:05 a.m. until 2:28 p.m. Books, magazines, reference materials, etc., are available for student and teacher use. Students are allowed to borrow up to two items at a time. Items are expected to be returned on time and in good condition. (Policy IJNDB)

## **VISITORS**

For the safety of the school community, all visitors should report to the Main Office to obtain a temporary visitor's pass/I.D. badge. All I.D. badges should be affixed to clothing and readily visible. Visitors to the school who have an appointment must report to the Main Office so that the teacher or administrator may be contacted. Parents are always welcome to visit the school, but need to follow the protocol for visitors.

**CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information)** requirement for volunteers pertains to any parent volunteering this school year and must fill out a CORI form. (Policy ADDA)

## **III. BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS**

Our mission at the Robert Adams Middle School is to provide a positive, safe, and collaborative environment where all students have the right to learn and grow. As members of this community, students will be held accountable and responsible for their actions. Philosophically, our school believes in the value of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports along with the value of restorative justice. With that said, there will be cases where more concrete consequences will need to be applied. In order to accomplish our mission, all students have the following expectations. This is not and cannot be all-inclusive, but is designed to provide guidance to students and their parents of the behavioral expectations.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

This Code of Conduct applies to in-school and out-of-school activities including the bus, field trips, after school activities, or any special events.

All members of the Robert Adams Middle School community, including the School Committee, the administration, faculty, staff, students, parents, and volunteers, are committed to the proposition that every person at Robert Adams Middle School has the right to learn and work in a positive, mutually respectful environment. Each of us has the responsibility to demonstrate a positive attitude, and to respect the school as a place of learning and to respect each other. In order to achieve this goal, all members of the school community will:

- Treat others as we would have others treat us;
- Accept our differences;
- Practice common courtesy, friendliness and the use of appropriate language;
- Be cooperative, attentive and supportive in class and in school activities;
- Accept the ideas of others in and outside class with an open mind and polite attention;
- Solve problems with thoughtful dialogue;
- Support one another in our efforts to do our best as we pursue our individual goals;
- Value the environment within and without the school and maintain school facilities free from litter and vandalism;
- Take responsibility for our own actions and be ready to accept the rewards and/or consequences of those actions.

Because we all share the responsibility for setting and maintaining standards of respectful behavior, all members of the school community will be responsible for setting a positive example while on school grounds, on school buses, or at school-sponsored events. We know that school safety and a respectful school culture are promoted by dealing with small problems when they are small, before they escalate into more dangerous behaviors. Therefore, we are committed to establishing a high standard of behavioral expectations. Certain behaviors will not be tolerated. Those behaviors and their consequences are listed in detail elsewhere in this Handbook. They include, but are not limited to:

- Harassment and threatening behavior of any kind that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment;
- Conduct that interferes with school discipline;
- Malicious destruction of property;
- Possession of alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, or weapons, including facsimiles of guns or other weapons; and
- Possession or use of tobacco and tobacco products.

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Students will:

- Come prepared with materials requested by individual teachers
- Be on time to school and class
- Be respectful of themselves, other students, staff, and the building. This includes but is not limited to:
  - using appropriate language

- using classroom materials appropriately
- helping other students
- asking for help
- keeping your hands and feet to yourself
- picking up after yourself and others
- refraining from teasing and bullying and other hurtful behaviors
- Behave in a way that promotes a positive learning environment. This includes but is not limited to:
  - listening and participating actively and collaboratively
  - refraining from disruptive behavior

## **DISCRIMINATION**

Discrimination, or lack of opportunity to equal access to the programs and offerings of the Holliston Public Schools, to any person because of race, age, color, creed, religion, national origin, ethnic background, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or unless required by law by membership or activity in an employee organization or political party is forbidden. Staff members will act in a way that ensures that this philosophy is maintained and will work for a goal of equality in all situations. Discrimination in any form violates state and federal laws, and, therefore, the policies of the Holliston School Committee.

### Complaint Procedures:

Any student who feels they were or are the subject of discrimination must report the discrimination to the building Principal or to the Superintendent of Schools or their designee.

### Discrimination Investigation:

Any individual who believes they have been harassed or who has witnessed or learned about the harassment of another person in the school environment, should inform the principal as soon as possible. If the individual does not wish to discuss the issue with the principal, or if the individual believes that the issue requires further attention, the individual should inform the Superintendent of Schools or Title IX/622 Coordinator, Dr. Susan Kustka, at 370 Hollis Street, Holliston, MA 01746, 508-429-0654 or the Director of Student Services, Mrs. Jessica Beattie, who can be reached at 370 Hollis Street, Holliston, MA 01746, 508-429-0662.

An investigation of the incident will take place, in compliance with School Committee Policy ACAA and Title IX/Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Robert Adams Middle School Administration will contact Dr. Susan Kustka, Superintendent of Schools and the Title IX coordinator of Holliston Public Schools. Dr. Kustka, as the Title IX Coordinator for the Holliston Public Schools, will have the responsibility to coordinate efforts to comply with obligations under Title IX and the Title IX regulations. Dr. Kustka will coordinate the investigation of complaints received pursuant to Title IX and the implementing regulations. The Robert Adams Middle School administration will conduct the investigation and consult with Dr. Kustka throughout the process. Following the completion of the investigation, Holliston High School administration will file a formal written report with Dr. Kustka. This report must include a description of the incident(s), a narrative of the findings, and the final outcome. Robert Adams

Middle School administration will also share findings with the complainant(s), while maintaining confidentiality to the extent consistent with the district's obligations under Federal and State law.

### **APPROPRIATE DRESS AND APPEARANCE**

In an effort to foster a positive school atmosphere, students are expected to dress in a way that is appropriate for school and shows respect for themselves and others. RAMS guidelines for appropriate dress and appearance are constantly evolving. With that said, these guidelines are not all inclusive, and administrators reserve the right to make decisions in case of dress that is deemed detrimental to a positive school climate and atmosphere. Students may not wear any article of clothing that could be considered offensive, disrespectful, discriminatory, unsafe or in any way disruptive to the learning environment.

- Hats are not to be worn inside the school building, exceptions will be made for a documented or known instructional, RAMS Spirit Day, safety, religious and/or medical reason.
- Outdoor coats/hoods may not be worn during the day.
- Clothing that displays language or pictures that are considered vulgar or promote violence, tobacco, drug or alcohol use are not permitted.
- Shorts that are exceptionally short and/or form fitting are not permitted. Shorts that typically meet the criteria exceed a 3" inseam.
- Clothing must provide appropriate coverage. Undergarments and midriffs must be covered at all times. Proper attire is required for participation in all physical education classes.

If a staff member believes that a student's attire may be inappropriate based on the above, the student will be discreetly referred to one of the counselors or administrators. If the clothing is deemed inappropriate for school, the parents/guardians will be contacted. We encourage you to consult your parents, guidance counselor and/or administrator if you are concerned about an item of clothing that you are considering wearing to school.

### **DISRUPTIVE AND DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR**

- Students must comply with the directions of teachers, administrators, or other school employees in charge of the students.
- Students must be on time for school and class.
  - Students who are tardy for class will be given appropriate consequences: including warnings from their teacher, a call home, teacher detention and office detentions if tardiness continues.
- Students may not leave school during the school day unless dismissed through the Main Office or the School Nurse.
- Students will follow classroom rules around gum chewing.

- Electronic Devices: Students will leave all electronic devices including cellular phones, music-playing devices, etc., turned off in their lockers during school hours. They are not to be used again until dismissal. Calculators are allowed.
- Hallways/Classrooms
  - Students must have passes when they are in the hallways while classes are in session.
  - Students may not run in the hallways.
  - Students may not obstruct traffic in the hallway due to socializing.
  - Students may not make noise that disrupts classes in session while passing in the hallways.
  - Students may not leave personal items unattended in the hallway.
  - At the teacher's discretion, students may have bottled water in class.
- Lockers
  - Students may not touch or defame another student's locker.
  - Students may not touch other student's locks.
  - Students locks must locked at all times.

## **HURTFUL BEHAVIOR**

Examples of hurtful behavior toward others include but are not exclusive to:

- Pushing
- Hitting
- Kicking
- Jumping on someone
- Rough play
- Making disrespectful comments
- Making inappropriate comments
- Making hurtful comments/putdowns

## **BULLYING**

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed an *Act Relative to Bullying in Schools*. This law prohibits bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to address bullying incidents. The law was updated in July 2013 to expand the list of possible aggressors/perpetrators to include school staff members. Chapter 86, Section I(3) provides that each bullying plan shall recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived 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, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics. Parts of the law (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O) that are important for students and parents or guardians to know are described below.

### **Definitions**

*Perpetrator* is a student or a member of a school staff including but not limited to an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an

extracurricular activity, or a paraprofessional who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

*Bullying* is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including but not limited to an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, or a paraprofessional 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 themselves or of damage to their 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 education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying includes cyberbullying.

*Cyberbullying* is 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, photoelectronic 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 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.
- II. 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 accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v) inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

*Hostile environment* is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

*Victim* is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation is directed.

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

### **Prohibition**

Bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds,
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place on or off school grounds



- at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school
- through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by a school district or school (for example, on a computer or over the Internet)
- at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic device, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school

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

### **Reporting**

Anyone, including a parent or guardian, student, or school staff member, can report bullying or retaliation. Reports can be made in writing or orally to the assistant principal, principal or another staff member, or incident reports may be made anonymously.

Contact Information:

- Office: 508-429-0657
- Mr. Jordan: [jordand@holliston.k12.ma.us](mailto:jordand@holliston.k12.ma.us)
- Mr. Conant: [conantj@holliston.k12.ma.us](mailto:conantj@holliston.k12.ma.us)
- [Anonymous Incident Report Form Link](#)

School staff members must report immediately to the principal or their designee if they witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation. Staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessionals.

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

**For detailed information regarding Bullying Prevention and Intervention, please refer to the Holliston Public Schools *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan* and the Holliston School Committee's Bullying Prevention Policy (JICFB):**

[HSC Bullying Prevention Policy](#)

## **HAZING**

The School Committee forbids hazing of any kind. Should an alleged instance of hazing occur, the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 269 Sections 17, 18, 19 shall be adhered to. The Superintendent and Committee Chair shall be notified of the circumstances of the complaint and action taken.

Any student found to have engaged in the act of hazing shall be subject to the following disciplinary actions:

- First offense – suspension from school for up to five (5) days
- Second offense – suspension from school for up to ten (10) days
- Subsequent offense – suspension from school for an indeterminate period necessary to bring a recommendation of exclusion/expulsion to the School Committee.

## **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT**

Unfortunately, academic misconduct typically begins at the middle school level. Research has noted that up to 9 in 10 middle school students admit to some form of academic misconduct, further nearly two-thirds of all middle school students report cheating on summative assessments. With the ease of access to information via student Chromebooks, this is an especially important area of focus for RAMS.

- Cheating
  - All students are expected to present their own work for evaluation.
  - Teachers will address situations of cheating with the student(s) involved and communicate with parents, and assign appropriate consequences. This might include a zero on the assignment for all involved with the cheating incident as well as other consequences, such as detention and even in-school suspension depending on the seriousness of the offense and/or if there are repeated occurrences of cheating.
- Plagiarism
  - Plagiarism is a serious offense against academic integrity. Teachers will define and discuss plagiarism each year. Students who plagiarize will receive a zero on the original assignment and will be expected to redo and resubmit the assignment. The newly completed assignment will be graded and averaged with the zero. Additionally, students will be required to attend an after school teacher detention to work on the assignment and an office detention as a disciplinary consequence. If a student continues to plagiarize, he/she would have the above consequences and potentially an in-school suspension.
- Digital Tampering
  - Students are expected to demonstrate high standards of digital citizenship, respecting themselves and others through their actions. There is a policy of zero tolerance for stealing or tampering with the work of other people, including that of other students.

## **BUS BEHAVIOR**

School buses are an extension of the school and students are under the jurisdiction of the school while riding the bus. Students should behave appropriately while riding the bus. This appropriate behavior includes remaining seated, not eating or drinking, or engaging in any other distracting, disruptive or hurtful behaviors. Gum chewing is not allowed on school buses. Swearing and hurtful behavior are not allowed. Students must keep hands and heads inside the bus at all times, and refrain from loud talking and horseplay that may divert the driver's attention, making safe driving difficult. Students are not permitted to leave their seats while the bus is in motion. Students are strictly forbidden from tampering with the emergency door. State law prohibits smoking on school buses. Bus rules apply to the regular daily buses to and from school, late buses, field trips and athletic buses, and all bus trips by each of the Holliston Public Schools.

After each incident for inappropriate behavior on the bus, parents will be notified. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken including but not limited to assigned seating on the bus, detentions or suspensions or the possible revocation of bus privileges for a period of time.

## **CAFETERIA**

The cafeteria is a place to eat, relax and socialize with friends. Students are expected to behave according to the following guidelines:

- Respect other classmates by keeping your voice to a reasonable level.
- Remain seated during lunch until dismissed by a lunch attendant.
- Clean up your lunch area out of respect to your fellow classmates.
- Celebrations such as birthdays are not allowed during lunch.
- Please do not share food with others out of concern for students' possible allergic reactions.
- While exiting the cafeteria, please speak softly, keep to the right side of the corridors and stairs and hold the swinging doors for the person behind you. Classes are going on throughout the school; please be considerate of others.

## **SCHOOL DISCIPLINE**

Our school believes in the value of restorative justice. Students who are sent to the office will almost always be required to complete our Incident Referral Form (IRF). This document helps students reflect on the act and determine how they were wrong. Ultimately, students will take ownership of the act and determine how to "make things right". Discipline at the Robert Adams Middle School is based on the following principles:

1. All students have the right to learn in a safe and respectful environment.
2. Any person who acts in a way that infringes upon this right will be disciplined.
3. Rules apply to all students. Students who fail to comply with school rules will be subject to punishment deemed appropriate by the administration. Parents will be notified of all serious disciplinary actions. Some options that can be used include:
  - a. Teacher detention (after school and, or lunch)
  - b. Office detention(s) including Friday afternoon detentions and extended detentions
  - c. In-school and out of school suspension
  - d. Community service and, or retribution for damages

**Detention** – After school detention has priority over all other appointments including clubs, sports and part-time employment. If a student is unable to serve because of family matters, religious education, etc., a note from parent/guardian is required prior to the assigned detention. Students may not refuse to remain after school. In most cases, students will be notified 24 hours in advance of an assigned detention unless students or parents/guardians agree to have the child serve the detention without this notice. Teacher assigned detentions are held for at least one-half hour after school. Regular office-assigned detentions are held for one hour. Students who miss any assigned detentions without prior approval are referred to the office for further disciplinary action.

**Suspension** – Actions which break school rules and/or endanger or infringe upon the rights of others may result in suspension. Students will be given the opportunity to meet with the principal or designee to discuss the charges and parents will be given written notification as to the length and reasons for the suspension. The length and type of suspension is determined by the administration. This could include: in-school suspension or home suspension for one to ten days; or a combination of in-school and home suspension. Additional responses could include: community service requirements; notification of appropriate agencies, including a referral for counseling; contact with the police and the filing of a criminal complaint, if appropriate; and, or an interview with the Superintendent before re-admittance to school. Parents/guardians will be asked to meet with the principal or assistant principal at the time of the suspension and possibly at the time of readmission. Parents/guardians will have the opportunity to discuss the situation and consequence with the principal or assistant principal before the suspension begins. Students will be provided with the opportunity to make academic progress during the suspension and make up work after the suspension within a reasonable time frame. An education service plan will be created for students who are suspended for more than 10 consecutive days.

**In-School Suspension** – Students with significant or repeated discipline issues may be assigned in-school suspension; however, in-school suspension is generally not used as a consequence for issues related to violence, bullying, harassment and other very serious issues related to school safety. Teachers will assign work for the student to complete during in-school suspension. Any discipline issues during in-school suspension will result in an additional out of school suspension. In-school suspensions may not always be possible due to supervision limitations.

**Grounds for suspension include but are not limited to:**

1. Physically aggressive behavior (fighting, provoking a fight; hitting or kicking).
2. Possession and/or use of alcohol, tobacco products or drugs.
3. Involvement in acts which affect student safety such as: possession of matches or lighters, weapons, dangerous objects, fireworks, over the counter medications and arson.
4. Behavior that negatively impacts the learning environment such as: disruptions in the classroom, inappropriate acts, profanity or obscene language, other hurtful acts.
5. Theft and destruction of property and, or misuse of technology
6. Causing a false alarm of fire (in addition to \$100.00 fine from the Holliston Fire Dept).
7. Use of threats or acts of intimidation/harassment/bullying.

**Expulsion** – Under the Education Reform Act, a student attending public school can be expelled for possession of drugs, weapons, including pocket knives, or assault on a staff member.

## **VIOLATIONS AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

**The outline of the progressive discipline code within this booklet is not all-inclusive; it is a guideline for applying student disciplinary action.** Specifically, if a student commits an act that constitutes a crime under Massachusetts law, that student is subject to discipline that may include expulsion in an appropriate case. Criminal activity outside the school environment can also be a cause for disciplinary action by the school against a student, if the behavior (criminal activity) could reasonably pose a threat to the orderly functioning of the educational process or a danger to the health, safety, and welfare of other students, employees, or school property. In a situation involving unique or severe offenses which pose a threat to the orderly functioning of the educational process or which pose a danger to the health, safety, and welfare of other students, employees, or school property, the building principal shall refer the matter directly to the Superintendent or his/her designee for immediate consideration of the possibility of making a recommendation for alternative educational placement and/or expulsion from school, and that the matter be referred to the School Committee with that recommendation.

**The following disciplinary chart of incidents and consequences serves as a guideline for applying disciplinary action to specific incidents/ offenses. It is not all- inclusive.** If there are specific disciplinary actions for a violation, such discipline shall be imposed, unless there is a compelling reason to do otherwise. In addition to the recommended disciplinary actions, alternative disciplinary actions may be imposed by the principal/assistant principal if he/she concludes that additional consequences are warranted and beneficial. In such cases, where more than one violation of the Code occurs, the student may be dealt with at the highest level and may be given the most severe action allowed for any of the offenses committed.

The recommended consequences become more severe based upon the severity of the incident and the number of incidents. More serious incidents begin with a higher level of consequence. (For example: Fighting/Provoking a Fight begins with a level D consequence of a 1-3 day out of school suspension). Students who have repeat offenses earn more serious consequences. (For example, a student who commits three “Reckless Play” incidents may receive a column 3 consequence. In this case, a level C consequence of a 1-3 day in school suspension or multiple or extended office detentions may be given). Students who commit multiple related offenses also may be given a higher level consequence. (For example, a student that has one “Forgery” incident and one “Lying” incident may be given a column 2 consequence because of the related nature of the incidents. In this case, the more severe level C consequence of a 1-3 in school suspension or multiple and, or extended office detentions may be given). Lastly, consequence levels A-C have two options that can be used initially at the discretion of the teacher/administrator based upon the specific incident. (For example, a minor initial disruption of class may begin with a warning [A-1] while a more egregious disruption might warrant a teacher detention [A-2]). **As noted above, due to the complex and specific nature of actual incidents, this chart will serve as a guideline to staff and administration and be used with their professional discretion.**

### INCIDENT REFERRALS

INCIDENT	1	2	3	4	5	6
Disruption of Class	A	B	B/C	C/D	E	F
Noncompliance	A	B	B/C	C/D	E	F
Disrespectful/ Rude Behavior	A	B	B/C	C/D	E	E
Obscene Language, Materials or Gesture	B	C	C/D	D	E	E
Obscene Language or Gestures Toward Staff	C/D	D	E	E	E	
Hurtful Behavior (name-calling, rumor spreading, etc.)	B/C	C	D	E	E	
Intimidation/Threats against persons*	D	D	D	E	F	
Reckless Play	A	B	C	D	E	F
Putting hands on another student (including pushing)	A/B	B/C	C/D	D	E	F
Lying	A	B	C	D	E	
Forgery	B	C	D	D		
Cheating/Plagiarism	B	C	C			
Late to class or homeroom	A	B	B	B	C	
Failure to serve teacher detention	B	C	C	C		
Failure to serve office detention	C	C	D	D		
Class Cutting/Truancy*	B	C	C	C		
Being unsupervised before or after school	B	B/C	C	C		
Occupying an unauthorized area	A	B	C	D	E	E
Misuse of another student's property	A	B	C	D	E	
Misuse/Destruction of school property*	B	C	C	D	E	E
Tobacco use or possession (inc. lighters, matches)	C	D	D	E	E	
Inappropriate public displays of affection	A	A	B	C	D	D
Offensive or inappropriate touching*	D	E	F			
Dress Code Violation	A	B	B	C		

Inappropriate lunchroom or bus behavior	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>C</b>	
Use of cellphone during school day	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>		
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE REFERRALS *</b>						
Fighting/Provoking a Fight*	<b>D</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>		
Assault and Battery	<b>F</b>					
Weapons/Dangerous Objects or Materials/Fireworks	<b>F</b>					
Drugs/Alcohol	<b>F</b>					
Harassment	<b>C/D</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>		
Sexual Harassment	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>				
Bullying	<b>C/D</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>		
False Alarm	<b>F</b>					
Behavior Endangering Public Safety (including arson)	<b>E/F</b>	<b>F</b>				
Release of Potentially Dangerous Chemicals/Gasses	<b>F</b>					
Trespassing	<b>C/D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>			
Gambling	<b>C/D</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>		
Extortion	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>			
Stealing/Possessing/Transferring Stolen Goods	<b>F</b>					

\* Possible police contact and/or arrest \* Possible referral for intervention by SST \* Restitution, if appropriate

## CONSEQUENCES OF INCIDENT REFERRALS

### Consequence A-1 – Teacher Level

Parent notification by staff of incident
Warning and conference with student

### Consequence A-2 – Teacher Level

Parent notification by staff of incident
Incident documented on PowerSchool
Teacher detention

**Consequence B-1 – Office Level**

Parent notification by staff of incident
Incident reported to office
Office warning and conference with student

**Consequence B-2**

Parent notification by staff of incident
Incident reported to office
Office detention

**Consequence C-1**

Parent notification by staff of incident
Incident reported to office
Multiple and, or extended office detentions

**Consequence C-2**

Parent notification by staff of incident
Incident reported to office
1-3 days ISS
Parent notified of date(s)

**Consequence D**

Parent notification by staff of incident
Incident reported to office
1-3 days OSS
Parent conference mandatory before reentering school
Possible Behavior contract

**Consequence E**

Parent notification by staff of incident
Incident reported to office
3-5 days OSS
Parent conference mandatory before reentering school
Possible Behavior contract

**Consequence F**

Incident report sent to office
Parent notification by administration
10 days OSS
Possible expulsion or long-term suspension

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH HOLLISTON POLICE DEPARTMENT**

The Holliston Public Schools and the Holliston Police Department have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding in order to prevent and eliminate substance abuse and acts of violence in our community. As provided in that Memorandum of Understanding, school personnel agree that certain activities by Holliston students will be reported to the Police Department and that both the School and Police Departments will act cooperatively in addressing issues involving violence, hate crimes, possession and use of alcohol or controlled substances, and possession and use of firearms or other weapons. School personnel retain the prerogative to



impose school-based discipline in connection with any and all acts that occur on school grounds, including school buses, and at school-sponsored or related functions, including but not limited to field trips, athletic events, or dances. A complete copy of this Memorandum of Understanding is available in the office of each building Principal and in the office of the Superintendent.

## **DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

All students are expected to follow the Holliston's Code of Conduct, unless otherwise determined by the student's Individualized Education Plan Team and written in the student's IEP or 504 Plan. Federal and state laws provide certain procedural rights and protections relating to discipline of students who have been identified under such laws as having special needs based upon a disability. A brief overview of these rights is provided below.

In general, if your child has violated Holliston's disciplinary code, the school may suspend or remove your child from his or her current educational placement for no more than 10 consecutive school days in any school year. If your child possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; carries a weapon to school or a school function; or inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event, the school may place your child in an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days. If your child has been placed in an interim alternative education setting as a result of a disciplinary action, your child may remain in the interim setting for a period not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, your child will return to the previously agreed-upon educational placement unless you or Holliston have initiated a hearing on the disciplinary action that the district took and a hearing officer orders another placement, or you and Holliston agree to another placement.

Any time Holliston wishes to remove your child from his or her current educational placement for more than 10 consecutive school days in any school year, or if a student is removed for disciplinary reasons for more than a total of 10 days in any school year when a pattern of removal is occurring, this is a "change of placement." A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal special education law. These include the following:

(a) Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, the school must convene a Team meeting to develop a plan for conducting a functional behavioral assessment that will be used as a basis for developing specific strategies to address your child's problematic behavior. If a behavioral intervention plan has been previously developed, the Team will review it to make sure it is being implemented appropriately, and will modify it if necessary.

(b) Prior to any disciplinary removal that constitutes a change in placement; the school must inform you that the law requires that the school district consider whether or not the behavior that forms the basis for your child's disciplinary removal is related to their disability. This is called a ["manifestation determination."](#) Remember that you, as the parent, always have the right to participate as a member of the group of people making this determination.

**Consideration of whether the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability:**

The law provides that Holliston and the parent, along with relevant Team members, must consider all evaluation information, observational information, the student's IEP and placement; and must determine whether your child's behavior that prompted disciplinary removal was a manifestation of his or her disability. The behavior is considered a manifestation of your child's disability if the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to your child's disability, or was a direct result of the school district's failure to implement his or her IEP.

If the manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary behavior was related to your child's disability then your child may not be removed from the current educational placement (except in the case of weapon or drug possession or use, or serious bodily injury to another) until the IEP Team develops a new IEP and decides upon a new placement and you consent to that new IEP and placement, or a Hearing Officer orders a removal from the current educational placement to another placement.

If the manifestation determination is that the behavior was not related to your child's disability, then the school may suspend or otherwise discipline your child according to the school's code of student conduct, except that for any period of removal exceeding 10 days the school district must provide your child with educational services that allow your child to continue to make educational progress. Holliston must determine the educational services necessary and the manner and location for providing those services.

**In the case of a disagreement with the Team's determination:**

If you disagree with the Team's decision on the "manifestation determination" or with the decision relating to placement of your child in an interim alternative education setting or any other disciplinary action, you have the right to appeal the Team's decision by requesting an expedited due process hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA).

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

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

If the school district has no knowledge that a student is an eligible student under the IDEA before taking disciplinary measures against the student, the student may be disciplined just as

any other student may be. If, however, a request is made for an evaluation to determine eligibility while the student is subject to disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner. Pending the results of the evaluation, the student must remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion without services. If the student is determined eligible for an IEP as a result of the evaluation, the school district must provide the student with special education and related services in accordance with the IDEA.

## **DISCIPLINE LAW**

### **Dangerous Weapons, Controlled Substances & Assaults on Educational Staff**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Students should note that the definition of “assault” includes not only harmful or offensive contact, but also threatening such contact. Additionally, students should be aware that the federal Gun Free Schools Act mandates that any student who brings a firearm to school be expelled for a minimum of one year, with exceptions granted only by the Superintendent. Under this Act, a firearm includes not only a gun but also an explosive device.

### **Felony Complaints or Convictions**

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

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student’s continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student’s parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student’s request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such a decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student’s continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the

student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such a decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

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

### **Procedural Due Process**

A student will not be excluded from school without being afforded appropriate due process as set forth below. If, however, a student's continued presence in school poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the administrator's judgment there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption, a student who is charged with a disciplinary offense may be removed temporarily from school before receiving due process pursuant to an Emergency Removal (see below for more information).

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

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

3. The administrator will send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parents to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth above, if such a meeting has not already occurred. The administrator will deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to the address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the administrator and the parent.

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

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

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

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

- a) the disciplinary offense;
- b) the basis for the charge;
- c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; 22
- d) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the administrator concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
- e) the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- f) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

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

**2. Efforts to Involve Parents:** The administrator will make reasonable efforts to notify the parent of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the administrator must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The administrator is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the

administrator has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

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

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

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

**1. Notice:** The notice will include all of the components for a short-term suspension in Section C above, plus the following: In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the administrator may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;

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

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

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

- a) Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
- b) Set out the key facts and conclusions reached;
- c) Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
- d) Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive educational services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school (if more than 10 cumulative days);
- e) Inform the student of the right to appeal the administrator's decision to the superintendent or designee. Notice of the right of appeal will be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and will include the following information stated in plain language:
  - a) The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that
  - b) the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the administrator's determination on appeal.

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

#### **IV. Expulsion**

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

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



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

Students are also subject to long term suspension/expulsion by the Principal when charged/convicted of a felony based upon the standards and procedures set forth in M.G.L. c.71, §37H1/2.

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

### **Procedures Applicable to Conduct Covered by M.G.L. C. 71, §37H AND 37H ½**

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

1. The informal hearing will be in the form of a conference between the student and the principal or designee. At this conference, the student (1) shall be informed of the reason for the conference, (2) shall be given the opportunity to present his or her side of the story, and (3) shall be given a decision on the suspension. If the administrator deems delay of the hearing necessary to avoid danger or substantial disruption, this process may occur immediately after, rather than before, the suspension.

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

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

- a) The reason for the suspension
- b) A statement of the effective date and duration of the suspension

c) A statement regarding whether or not the Principal will schedule a formal hearing to consider further discipline, up to and including expulsion from school in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, §37H

When considering a suspension/expulsion of a student charged with/convicted of felony, the Principal will use the standards and procedures set forth in M.G.L. c.71, §37H1/2. In addition, prior to initiating such procedures, the Principal may meet informally with the student and/or his parents to review the charge and the applicable standards if the Principal deems appropriate.

### **Exception for Emergency Removal**

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

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

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

- Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and other applicable matters;
- Provide written notice to the student and parent as provided in Section C or D above, as applicable;
- Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the administrator, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the administrator, student, and parent.
- Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day. An administrator may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

### **Appeal to the Superintendent**

If a decision by an administrator, following the parent meeting, results in suspension of a student for more than 10 cumulative school days for the school year, the student may appeal the decision to the superintendent. In order to do so the student or parent must file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days with a seven (7) day postponement option. The superintendent must hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days. If the

appeal is not filed within this time frame, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The following apply:

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

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

## **IV. ACADEMICS**

### **STUDENT SUPPLIES**

Students are expected to bring with them supplies that are needed to accomplish tasks in each class.

### **CHROMEBOOKS/TEXTBOOKS/AGENDAS**

The Holliston Public Schools has initiated a program to provide each student who is actively enrolled at Robert Adams Middle School a Google Chromebook laptop computer, a carrying sleeve, and Chromebook charger. The aim of this program is to promote communication, collaboration, and critical thinking among our students and teachers. Please see the following links for additional details.

- [Chromebook Loan Agreement 22-23](#)
- [Chromebook Care and Use Guide 22-23](#)

It is the student's responsibility to return books to the appropriate subject teacher at the end of the school year or upon transfer out of the school. Students are financially responsible for

textbooks that are lost, destroyed, damaged or missing. Replacement costs for missing or damaged books are determined by the current cost of the new textbook(s).

## WELLNESS

All students must report to wellness prepared for class. If a student is injured and unable to participate, the student will be excused from one class, with authorization from the parent. If a student will miss more than one class, a doctor's note is required.

## HOMEWORK

Homework expectations will be communicated by teachers and teams early in the year. Middle School students should plan to receive homework in most subjects, most nights. Students are responsible for turning in their assignments on time.

Students are responsible for requesting and completing make-up work when absent by contacting teachers and/or checking teachers' websites. Students will have one day for every day of absence to complete all makeup work. For extended absences, students and teachers should agree upon a plan where assignments can be completed in a reasonable timeframe. **If students and their parents/guardians know in advance that time will be missed in school, they are responsible for requesting work from teachers at least 3 days in advance of the absence.**

Therefore, teachers will not assign homework or projects over a school break or over the following religious holidays. Consequently, no homework and projects should be due the day after the break or holiday, and no tests/quizzes should be given on those days. These include:

School Breaks	Religious Holidays
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Thanksgiving Break</li><li>• Winter Vacation</li><li>• February Vacation</li><li>• April Vacation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rosh Hashanah</li><li>• Yom Kippur</li><li>• Passover</li><li>• Easter</li><li>• Diwali</li></ul>
<i>Teachers are understanding if students are unable to complete homework or participate in other activities that interfere with religious observances not recognized on our school calendar. They will be flexible with the timing and manner in which make-up homework is completed. Students will take responsibility for developing a reasonable plan with their teachers to complete missing homework.</i>	

## REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS

Middle School students will receive report cards in December, March, and June. The term-end dates are: **December (typically first week) March (typically second/third week) June (end of school)**

All parents will have access to their student's grades throughout the year by accessing the progress report on their PowerSchool Account. It is highly encouraged to sign up for this function. Parents will receive notification at the midpoint of each term to check their student's progress report in PowerSchool. Progress Reports are designed to update student progress for both the student and their parents. Questions regarding the progress reports are to be addressed by the parent with the teacher(s).

**Incomplete Grades** – Students who receive an incomplete grade on their report card should work with their teacher to make up the work. A two-week timeframe is allowed for work to be made up. Work not made up within this timeframe will result in a grade of zero. An incomplete on a supplementary report indicates work not completed and should be addressed by the student by conferencing with the teacher.

**Medical Excuse Grades** – Students receiving this grade have been medically excused from their work. Proper documentation is required.

### **MASSACHUSETTS COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (MCAS)**

Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) was implemented in response to the Education Reform Law of 1993, which required that MCAS be designed to:

- Report on the performance of individual students, schools, and districts
- Serve as one basis of accountability for students, schools, and districts (for example, beginning with the Class of 2003, grade 10 students must pass the MCAS tests as one condition of eligibility for earning a high school diploma).

The Federal No Child Left Behind Law requires annual testing in grades 3-8 and high school.

The Education Reform Law of 1993 requires the participation of all public school students in the grades being tested. This law ensures that all students are provided with an opportunity to learn the material covered by the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks' academic learning standards.

Home-school students are not enrolled in the public school system and are, therefore, NOT required NOR entitled by law to participate in MCAS.

### **STUDENT AWARDS/HONORS**

**Student Recognition Assemblies** – Celebrations will be held by grade and students who have demonstrated outstanding work, effort, behavior, or citizenship will be celebrated at these assemblies.

**Honor Roll** – To be eligible for placement on the Honor Roll a student in grades 6 – 8 must maintain grades of A, B, S or O in all of their classes for that term.

Principal's List – To be eligible for placement on the Principal's List a student in grades 6 – 8 must maintain straight A's, which includes O (outstanding), for the entire year in all subjects.

### **8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE STUDENTS ONLY**

President's Education Award (Gold Certificate) – Outstanding Academic Excellence. This award is given to students who have maintained a 90% average on the traditional grading scale for the entire school year. Students also receive a letter from the President and First Lady as well as a pin.

President's Education Award (Silver Certificate) – Outstanding Achievement. This is an improvement award given to selected grade 8 students who have been recommended by their team teacher. These students have shown outstanding academic and/or behavioral improvements over the school year. Students will also receive a letter from the President and First lady as well as a pin.

Mary Troy Mathematics Award – Students are nominated for this award by their 8<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher and have met the following criteria: perseverance and consistent effort shown throughout the year, significant improvement in their grade, and a demonstrated willingness to help other students.

Scholastic Award – This award is given to a student who has achieved the highest academic standing in grade 8. Their name will be placed on a plaque which will be displayed in the school lobby.

David McCobb Award – This award is given to a student who has been nominated by the faculty. The nominations are based on the following criteria: student possesses a serious attitude about school and the importance of learning, but is not necessarily an honor student; commits time and effort to the school and the community; presents as a positive role model for students by being cooperative, courteous and respectful to all.

## **V. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

**Attendance** – A student must be in school during the day to attend an after-school activity. An administrator must approve extenuating circumstances. Students are expected to remain in the activity for the allotted time.

**Social Events** – Former students who have left the Holliston School System, but who still live in town, may be allowed to attend school-sponsored dances with prior approval from the Middle School Principal. However, the student must meet the following requirements: A letter written by the parent/guardian should be given to the Middle School Principal a week prior to the date of the dance. Students are also required to present a letter from their current school stating that they are in good standing.

**Home Educated Students** – Home-educated students participating in events sponsored by the middle school will be subject to all the procedures, rules, and regulations set forth in the Student/Parent Handbook. (Policy IHBG)

**Field Trips/Excursions** – Policy IJOA.

**School-Sponsored Social Activities** – Policy JJB

**Participation in Extracurricular Activities** – Policy JJIA

## **ATHLETICS**

An interscholastic athletic program will be offered to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, and 6th graders as space is available, for a fee. Fall sports will consist of the following: Field Hockey, Cross Country, and Volleyball. Wrestling will be offered in the winter. Track will be offered in the spring. Please refer to the MIAA regulations pertaining to eligibility.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

A yearbook is produced by the Yearbook Club that includes all three grades and is published at the end of the school year. Information regarding yearbooks is sent home by the Yearbook Club. The school newspaper, *The RamPage* and the literary magazine, *The Middle Ground*, will be composed and published by students periodically throughout the year. School news is shared on our web site and via RAMS News Announcements emails on a regular (bi-weekly) basis throughout the school year.

## **CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

The Robert Adams Middle School is dedicated to providing fun, relaxing, and stimulating after-school activities for all of its students. Clubs change and evolve as our students' interests shift. Often, many of our favorite clubs were first initiated through student voice and student advocacy. Further information about these activities is available in the Main Office, as well as through the school website and morning announcements. The following is a partial listing of potential activities:

Anime	Beautiful Minds	Johns Hopkins (Gr. 7)	ReAct Players(Drama)
Art Club	Dance Lessons- Gr 6 only (sponsored by MS-PTSA)	Quidditch Club	Running Club
Band & Jazz Band	Debate Club	Literary Magazine	Ski Program (run through the PTSA)
Chorus	Green Team	Math Club	Spirit Club
Circle of Friends	Homework Club	Ultimate Frisbee	Student Leadership
Robotics	Intramurals	Newspaper Club	Yearbook Club

**Music Program** – While the Music Program offers academic instruction during school hours, Chorus and Band also meet once a week after school for group rehearsals. Participation in evening events requires attendance at after-school rehearsals.

## VI. PROGRAMS AND OFFERINGS

### TRANSPORTATION (Policy EEA)

**Buses** – All students riding our school buses must have a bus pass. Bus passes must be obtained through the application process at the Central Office at 508-429-0654. Students are assigned a bus at the beginning of the school year and are expected to be at their bus stops at the scheduled time.

For safety purposes, students should cross in front of the bus when getting on or off so that they will be in safe view of the driver. While riding the bus, students are expected to behave appropriately. (Please see the Bus Behavior section for more details.) Inappropriate behavior on the bus may result in revoking a student's privilege to ride the bus for a period of time or permanently.

The school provides late buses at 3:30 PM (with abbreviated routes) for students who participate in extra help sessions or after-school sponsored activities. Routes and stops are posted at the Main Office. There are no late buses on Fridays. Students cannot leave school property and return to take the late bus.

Since many of our buses are at capacity or near capacity with regularly assigned students, requests for **bus passes** allowing students to ride a different bus cannot always be honored. For this reason, the student must bring a note from a parent/guardian which contains the requested destination, bus number for that day, and a phone number where the parent can be reached. This note should be brought to the Main Office for approval from the Bus Coordinator.

### **Bikes/Scooters/Skateboards/Roller Blades (etc.)**

For the safety of all students, scooters, skateboards and rollerblades are not allowed on the buses under any circumstances. *Students are reminded of the Massachusetts law regarding bike safety rules requiring the use of helmets. Bike racks should be used and helmets should be secured during the day with locks.*

### SCHOOL COUNCIL

The Middle School Council is an advisory board for the Principal that meets publicly once a month. A copy of the minutes from each meeting is available in the Main Office. The Council's work includes setting and monitoring school goals and development of a school improvement plan. Members of the Council are elected annually in the fall. Length of terms vary. All Holliston Public Schools are required to have individual School Councils and annual school improvement plans. (Policy BDFA-H)

### PARENT/VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS

Several volunteer parent/teacher groups are available to support the Adams Middle School including:



**The Holliston MS PTO (Middle School - Parent Teacher Organization)** is a volunteer organization which supports middle school-aged students with activities and school fundraisers. MS PTO meetings are held periodically. For more information please refer to the MS PTO website.

**The Holliston Music Parent Group** is a volunteer parent group that regularly supports the Middle School music program through fundraising activities and school-sponsored concerts. Further information is available through the Music Department.

The CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) requirement for volunteers pertains to any parent volunteering in the school and must fill out a CORI form. (Policy ADDA).

## **OFFICE OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND CHILD CARE (OCECC)**

### **EXTENDED DAY**

The Holliston Public Schools' Extended Day Program is a self-supporting, nonprofit organization offering recreation and enrichment to those children needing care when school is not in session. The Holliston Public Schools and a Parent Advisory Board govern the program. Holliston Extended Day maintains a non-discriminatory policy with respect to staff and enrollment. It is open to all Holliston school children in grades preschool through seven.

## **VII. HEALTH SERVICES**

### **NURSE'S OFFICE**

The school nurse is at school each day to help keep students healthy. Parents are encouraged to communicate any health, illness or injury related concerns to the school nurse by calling or coming in during school hours. Please inform the nurse of any medical information or medication required by a student during the school day. Students are encouraged to see the school nurse when they are ill or injured or with any other related concerns. It is very important for the nurse, as well as the Main Office, to receive a copy of the Emergency Information Form in the event a parent/guardian needs to be contacted.

The following information is provided by the Holliston School Health Department. The school nurse provides advisory and emergency care only. The school health office is not a diagnostic clinic. Once first aid has been administered, it is the responsibility of the family and the family physician to carry out treatment and aftercare. Only those injuries or illnesses occurring in the school, on the school bus or on the school grounds are the responsibility of the school staff.

An Emergency Information Form, signed by the parent or guardian must be on file in the school health office and in the Main Office for each student. The form is supplied to each student at the beginning of the school year. The information is essential in time of illness or injury and must be updated as necessary. Information on both parents (if addresses differ) should be included. If there are any custody issues or concerns, the school needs appropriate documentation.

If a student becomes ill or injured in school and must be sent home, parents/guardians must make provisions for transportation. If parents/guardians are unavailable, the student may be dismissed to one of the persons named on his/her emergency dismissal card.

In case of extreme emergency, where it is impossible to reach the parents, the Principal acts as parent in absentia and will take whatever steps deemed appropriate.

Families are encouraged to notify the **school nurse**, preferably in writing, of any health condition pertinent to the child's well being: for example – asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, reaction to bee stings, bone and joint problems, difficulties with speech, vision or hearing and religious stipulations regarding medical care. Parents/guardians are encouraged to make an appointment for a conference with the school nurse to develop an Individual Health Care Plan.

**Immunizations** – The school immunization law is fully implemented in Holliston. No student will be admitted unless immunization requirements are met. All pre-kindergarten students entering school must present a physician's or Board of Health certificate showing complete immunization against DPT (4)(diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus), Polio (3), MMR (1)(measles, mumps, rubella), HIB, Hepatitis B (3) and evidence of lead poisoning screening.

All kindergarten students entering school must present a physician's or Board of Health certificate showing complete immunization against DPT (5), Polio (4), MMR (2), Hepatitis B (3), evidence of lead poisoning screening, and as of 8/99 Varicella (Chickenpox) vaccine or evidence of Chickenpox disease.

No student shall be admitted to grade 7 or (in the case of an ungraded classroom) beyond the age of 12 without a second dose of a live Measles containing vaccine, a TD booster, Hepatitis B (3) and one (1) Varicella or evidence of Chickenpox disease. These requirements shall not apply where the child meets the standards of medical or religious exemptions. Contact School Nurse at 508-429-0659 for information regarding required immunizations.

**Required Physical Examinations** – Postural screening (grades 5-9), vision and hearing testing (all grades) are mandated by law and are conducted each year by the school nurse. If any problems are identified, the student will be referred to his/her primary care provider for follow-up. Any parent not wishing the child to participate in the above screenings must present a physician's statement that the child has been tested and must send the results to the school nurse.

Physical examinations are also required by law for grades K, 4, 7 and 10. These may be conducted by the family physician or, if the student is without a primary care provider, he/she will be referred to the school physician. If the student has no health insurance, he/she will be

referred to state programs such as Masshealth or The Children's Medical Security Program. These examinations must be conducted within the school year or within 6 months before the start of the school year (March), with the result on file by June 1.

Head lice or pediculosis is a concern among school children. It is advised that parents check their own children frequently. At least once a week is recommended. All cases must be reported to the school nurse in an effort to control an outbreak.

Students with a communicable disease (noted below) shall be excluded from school for the following minimum times:

- Scarlet Fever – 24 hours on medication
- Chicken Pox – 7 days or until all lesions are crusted over  
(Parent must notify Board of Health)
- Strep Throat – 24 hours on medication

Students with skin disorders (impetigo, ringworm, etc.) shall be excluded from school and readmitted at the discretion of the school nurse.

The Board of Health is located in the Town Hall. The telephone number is (508) 429-0605. Contact School Nurse at 508-429-0659 for information regarding required physical examinations for school and also for intramurals.

**Administration of Medication** (Policies JLCD, JLCC) – The school nurse, in accordance with the following procedures, must administer all medication that must be taken during the school day:

1. A parent/guardian must bring in medications to the School Nurse.
2. Medications not picked up by a parent/guardian at the end of the school year will be destroyed.
3. No more than thirty (30) day supply of medication should be brought to the school nurse.
4. A student may carry his/her inhaler as long as there is a doctor's order on file and the parent/guardian has signed a permission slip allowing the student to do so.
5. For all medication, a doctor's order and a signed parent/guardian consent form must be on record in the student's health file and administered in accordance with School Committee policy.
6. Both forms must be renewed annually at the beginning of each academic year. The doctor's form must be renewed as needed.
7. For short-term prescription medication, the pharmacy labeled medication may be used in lieu of a licensed prescriber's order.
8. Non-prescription or over-the-counter medication requires a written doctor's order.
9. No medications are to be sent in anything other than the original, labeled container.

Contact School Nurse at 508-429-0659 for information regarding administration of medications.

**Student Health/Accident Insurance** – Every fall, low cost health insurance is offered to families with school-aged children in the Holliston Public Schools. It is important that students return the insurance sign-up form to the school only if they are participating in the insurance plan. Insurance can be purchased for school day coverage only or for 24-hour coverage. Further information is available in the Main Office.

**Use of Tobacco** – Tobacco use on school grounds is prohibited by law. (Policy ADC)

## **VIII. STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Student Support Services are available for our entire school population. The Student Services Administrator/Team Chair is available to identify, assess, and, when appropriate, implement support for students who may require specific services to optimize learning opportunities.

Our School provides a rich curriculum, instructional practices, and varied programs of services geared to individual needs including opportunities for strong family involvement and awareness of the educational services in the school.

**Special Education Services** – Special Education services are offered to Holliston students in accordance with 603 CMR 28.00 (formerly Chapter 766) of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Special Education is intended to provide services to students who have disabilities, and who, because of those disabilities, need help to make progress in the general education program of the school and thus to receive the full educational benefit of the district's programs.

Our Student Services Administrator works with the classroom teacher, specialists and parents to ensure that, when appropriate, referrals are made to assess a student's eligibility for special education services. Any questions you may have regarding Special Education services and programs should be referred to the following:

Adams Middle School:	Tessa Piantedosi Student Services Administrator 508-429-0657 ext. 1405
District Wide Office:	Jessica Beattie Student Services Director 508-429-0662

**Section 504- 504 Plans** are provided to Holliston students who meet the criteria set forth by the Section 504 Rehabilitation Act. Any questions you may have regarding 504 services should be referred to the following:

Adams Middle School:	Tessa Piantedosi Student Services Administrator
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508-429-0657 ext.1405

Coordinator for Compliance

Dr. Susan Kustka  
Superintendent of Schools  
508-429-0654