



# Family Handbook 2024-2025

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Si necesita ayuda traduciendo este documento en un idioma aparte de inglés, contáctenos por favor 508-869-2200.

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# Berlin-Boylston Regional School District School Calendar 2023-2024

Approved 6/6/2023



July 2023						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	H	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

O = Opening Day for Staff; PD = Full Day PD for Staff;  
F = First Day for Students

  

August 2023 (2 Student/ 4 Staff)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	O	PD	F	31		

O = Opening Day for Staff; PD = Full Day PD for Staff;  
F = First Day for Students

  

September 2023 (20 Student/20 Staff)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	H	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	ER/ PD	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

H = Labor Day; ER/PD = Early Release Students/Professional Development (Staff) Afternoon

  

October 2023 (21 Student/21 Staff)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	H	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	ER/ PD	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

ER/PD = Early Release Students/Professional Development (Staff) Afternoon; H = Columbus Day

  

November 2023 (19 Student/ 19 Staff)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	ER/ C	H	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	ER/ H	H	H	25
26	27	28	29	30		

H = Veterans Day, Thanksgiving; ER/C = Early Release-All Schools/Afternoon to Evening Conference; ER/H (Early Release for Thanksgiving)

  

December 2023 (15 Student/ 14 Staff)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	PD	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	ER/ H	23
24	H	V	V	V	V	30
31						

PD = No School for Students / Professional Development (Staff); ER/H = Early Release for Christmas; V = Winter vacation

  

January 2024 (20 Student/ 21 Staff)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	H	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	PD	13
14	H	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

H = New Year's Day, MLK Day; PD = No School for Students / Professional Development (Staff)

  

February 2024 (16 Student/ 14 Staff)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	ER/ PD	14	15	16	17
18	H	V	V	V	V	24
25	26	27	28	29		

ER/PD = Early Release Students/Professional Development (Staff) Afternoon; H = President's Day; V = vacation

  

March 2024 (20 Student/ 21 Staff)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	PD /C	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

PD/C (Morning PD for Staff; Afternoon Conferences at All Schools - NO school for students)

  

April 2024 (17 Students/17 Staff)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	H	V	V	V	V	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

ER/PD = Early Release Students/Professional Development (Staff) Afternoon; H = Patriot's Day; V = spring vacation

  

May 2024 (22 Student/ 22 Staff)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	H	28	29	30	31	

H = Memorial Day

  

June 2024 (8 Student/ 8 Staff)						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	S
						1
2 HS GR	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	L/ ER	13	14	15
16	17	18	H	SD	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

GR = HS graduation; L = last day of school for students and staff (ER); H = Juneteenth

### Key:

O = Opening Day (all faculty and staff)	ER = Early Release - All Schools / PD	GR = High School Graduation
F = First Day of School	H = Holiday	L = Last Day of School (early release)
C = Early Release - Parent/Teacher Conferences	V = Vacation	PD = PD (full day, no students)
	SD = Last day for students if all 5 inclement weather days are used	

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## **PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK**

One of the primary goals of the Boylston Elementary School (BES) is for every child to have a successful and enjoyable experience at school. We believe this requires a close partnership between the staff and faculty, and you, the parents and guardians of the student. This handbook is intended to provide the information to help create a smooth partnership and provide orientation for families joining BES.

This handbook contains a lot of information. State or local authorities mandate some of the information; other pieces are necessary to increase the flow of communication and are simply helpful. Families that are new to Boylston Elementary School will find that this handbook assists in the transition to the school community. For current Boylston Elementary families, please look for updates and additions as each year there are changes we want to share and highlight.

You will inevitably have questions about Boylston Elementary School, your child's experience, or other related issues. Because this handbook has a great deal of information, we recommend that you check the handbook first to see if you can find an answer to your question.

If the handbook does not include information that you need or if you desire clarification, please call us! The main phone number is 508-869-2200. Michele Hatem, the school secretary, can be reached at extension 1002. We will happily answer your questions.

We also appreciate any suggestions for future improvements to this handbook to make it more helpful to you.

During the first week of school you will receive a sign-off page to verify that you have received notice of the handbook's existence and its location on the Boylston Elementary School website. Please return this form to the school as soon as possible.

Hard copies of this handbook can be requested by contacting the secretary.

## **BOYLSTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

Our mission is to support and challenge all students to achieve personal and academic excellence in a student-centered environment.

## STAFF DIRECTORY

Cynthia Sykes, *Principal*  
508-869-2200

Michele Hatem, *School Secretary*  
508-869-2200, Ext 0 or 1002

Lisa Lamoureux, R.N., *School Nurse*  
508-869-2209 Office Hours: 8:15 AM - 3:00 PM

Robin Milaszewski, *School Psychologist*  
508-869-2200, Ext. 1041

Sherry Trainque, *Special Education Team Leader*  
508-869-2200, Ext. 1305

### Central Office Administration

Albert Ganem, Jr., *Interim Superintendent of Schools*  
508-869-2837 Office Hours: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM  
Jannel Fitzpatrick, *Director of Pupil Personnel Services*  
508-869-2837 Office Hours: 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

### Berlin-Boylston School Committee Members:

Meagan Grill (Chair)  
Julie Lee (Vice Chair)  
Lori-Anne Hart (District Clerk)  
Lisa Mair  
Jessica Moore Deglialberti  
Michael Totman

### Boylston Elementary School Staff

Cynthia Sykes	<i>Principal</i>
Michele Hatem	<i>Secretary</i>
Dawn Cote	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>
Briana Pascoal	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>
Michelle Ruggieri	<i>Kindergarten Teacher</i>
Jessica Barry	<i>Grade 1 Teacher</i>
Amy Gaucher	<i>Grade 1 Teacher</i>
Gail Kelleher	<i>Grade 1 Teacher</i>
Sarah Lewis	<i>Grade 2 Teacher</i>
Kara Sczerbinski	<i>Grade 2 Teacher</i>
Stephanie Woodward	<i>Grade 2 Teacher</i>
Jen Logue	<i>Grade 3 Teacher</i>
Alyssa Porter	<i>Grade 3 Teacher</i>
Kristine Reed	<i>Grade 3 Teacher</i>
Nicole Avery	<i>Grade 4 Teacher</i>
Patty Inwood	<i>Grade 4 Teacher</i>
Hannah DeCoteau	<i>Grade 5 Teacher</i>
Ben Dillman	<i>Grade 5 Teacher</i>
Cathy LeDuc	<i>Grade 5 Teacher</i>

### Special Education Department

Hilary Johnston	<i>Special Educator</i>
Eileen MacQueen	<i>Special Educator</i>
Roshan Valipour	<i>Special Educator</i>
Deb Malo	<i>Special Educator</i>
Katie FanFan	<i>Speech/Language Pathologist</i>
Alison Johnson	<i>Occupational Therapist</i>
TBD	<i>Physical Therapist (Consultant)</i>
Amy Thompson	<i>School Psych/BCBA</i>
Cari Baker	<i>Adjustment Counselor</i>
TBD	<i>Literacy Coach</i>
Kassidy Edwards	<i>Literacy Tutor</i>
Joseph Flournoy	<i>Math Coach</i>
Jennifer Smith	<i>Math Tutor</i>

### Special Subject Areas

Michael Blain	<i>ELL</i>
Darlene Noonan	<i>Library/Tech Teacher</i>
Lauren Kuppens	<i>Art Teacher</i>
Megan Bell	<i>Physical Education Teacher</i>
Audrey Thompson	<i>General Music/Choral Teacher</i>
Jackie Bruss	<i>Instrumental Teacher</i>
Tasha Rondeau	<i>Health Teacher</i>

### Paraprofessionals

Deb Blais  
Stephanie Buckley  
Christine Bradford  
Shara Braga  
Emily Chehade  
Lauri Cormier  
Pete Dillman  
Emily Ernst  
Lottie Flionis  
Lauren Gamel  
Samantha Haggerty  
Anna LaRose  
Alexandra Malley  
Nisha Patel  
Renee Savoie  
Ciara Rivera  
Laura Swackhammer  
Dara Uva  
Casey Wetherall

### Cafeteria Services

Jenny Wright  
Cassidy Bauer  
Ryan Jones

### Custodial Services

Ryan Colleton  
Mike Wilson

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular school attendance is an important factor that contributes to students achieving their full academic potential. Without consistent attendance, the continuity of learning is disrupted. We believe that there is value in classroom experiences that can never be replaced by after school help. Students who are frequently absent seldom fully master necessary skills, concepts, and individual talents. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts supports the philosophy of the Boylston Elementary School as evidenced by Chapter 76, Sections 1 and 2 of the Massachusetts General Laws. Please refer to [Policy JE](#) for our complete policy.

### **School Dismissal Manager**

Boylston Elementary School uses School Dismissal Manager (SDM) to facilitate communication between home and school about attendance and dismissal. Parents are able to quickly and easily update their child's attendance, late arrivals, dismissals, and early dismissals, and this information is instantly relayed to the school. Families will receive an email in August or shortly after registering with instructions on how to set up their account.

### **Absenteeism Procedures**

For the safety and protection of the children, parents must update School Dismissal Manager before 9:00 AM to report their child absent for the day. The school will contact the home for any unreported absence. If no one can be reached at home or work, we will then try to contact those individuals listed on the emergency list. If we are unable to establish contact with any of the aforementioned, we will inform the unreported absence to the police department for investigation.

A reasonable absence is defined as an illness, a death in the family, medical procedure, a family emergency, or religious holiday. A physician's note may be required at the discretion of the principal or the school nurse.

Per the Department of Education, students who are absent from school for reasons other than illness and family emergency are "truant." The Department of Education further points out that schools are not required to plan for work for student absences other than illness or family emergency or to make up instruction or work for students who are absent for other reasons. However, upon return to school students will be required to make up work and have the number of days they were absent to make up the work.

The following sections will outline Boylston Elementary School's Arrival, Tardy, Early Dismissal and End of Day Dismissal policies.



## Arrival Procedures

Children can arrive at school starting at 8:25 AM and will go straight to their classroom. For safety purposes, the school bus driveway area is not a drop-off or pick-up site for students being transported to and from school. Parents who transport children to school should drive around the building via the access road and drop off behind the building in the designated area. Please don't leave your vehicle in the drop-off zone to walk your child(ren) into the building.

## Tardy Procedures

The bell rings, and the school day begins at 8:25 AM. When a student arrives after 8:33 AM, they must be signed in by a parent at the main office. The child will be marked tardy. Please also update School Dismissal Manager with Late Arrival so that your child is accounted for.

Repeated tardiness is disruptive to the classroom environment as well as the education of your child. Any student who is late more than four times per trimester will have a letter sent home. At the discretion of the principal, a parent or guardian will be required to meet with the principal and if needed, the superintendent, the school nurse, the school psychologist, and/or the pupil personnel services director at a mutually agreeable time to discuss appropriate corrective action that will include notification entered into the student's record.

## Early Dismissal

Dismissal time at the Boylston Elementary School for children is 3:00 PM. If it is necessary to pick up your child prior to 3:00 PM (for a doctor or dentist appointment, etc.), please update School Dismissal Manager with the relevant information. Calls to make dismissal arrangements are strongly discouraged unless an emergency has arisen during the day.

Every attempt should be made to schedule activities and appointments after 3:00 PM, so as not to interfere with the learning process. Boylston Elementary does not condone scheduling extracurricular activities that require early dismissal. **Children will not be dismissed to anyone other than a parent unless School Dismissal Manager is updated or the office receives a note authorizing such a dismissal.**

## End of Day Dismissal Procedures

Dismissal time at the Boylston Elementary School for children is 3:00 PM. Buses depart shortly after 3:00 PM. A student will only be allowed to ride the bus to which they are permanently assigned. A bus change will be granted for child care purposes only and requires prior authorization from the principal. Any child who knowingly rides a bus to which they are not assigned will be subject to disciplinary action.

Students must return home according to their normal routine unless School Dismissal Manager is updated. Families have until 1:45 PM to update their child's dismissal on SDM. If a change needs to be

made after this time, please call the office. Please **do not email** dismissal changes to either the child's teacher or the office.

If a parent deems the student responsible and in close enough proximity to arrive and depart from the school independently, they must send in a written permission note. The school must be notified prior to the student arriving independently.

NEW AREA: Parent pick-up is behind the school by the playground from door #7.

**Dismissal on early release days will begin at 11:45.** Please update SDM by 10:45.

## **Dismissal from Special Events**

Children participating in any after school activities (such as the After School Program, scouts, or mini-courses) will be brought down to the office at the conclusion of the program for dismissal. Parents will not be allowed into the main building as they wait.

If there is a school wide or grade wide special event that runs until the end of the day, and you plan on taking your student home with you, please update School Dismissal Manager. Your teacher will have a list of all who have arranged to take their children at the end of the program. If you will also be dismissing a sibling, please also update their School Dismissal Manager as well.

## **Accessing the Building After Hours**

Students and parents will not be allowed back in the building after dismissal due to safety concerns. The only exceptions are scheduled appointments or activities.

After the completion of the regular school day, cones are placed in the road leading up to the front entrance to prevent parking in the fire lane.

# **BEHAVIOR**

## **Social Curriculum/PBIS**

As a result of the 2010 Massachusetts Senate Bill No. 2313: "An Act Relative To Bullying In Schools," our school system was required to adopt a comprehensive school-wide social curriculum and to begin its implementation in the fall of 2012.

Upon a rigorous curriculum review, Boylston Elementary School and Berlin Memorial School adopted the Caring School Community (CSC) program. Working in conjunction with PBIS, this supports our

students in developing the requisite skills to be successful in life. General information about CSC can be found at [www.collaborativeclassroom.org](http://www.collaborativeclassroom.org).

PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports) is a tool to support student learning. General information about PBIS can be found at [www.pbis.org](http://www.pbis.org).

One of the basic pillars of the PBIS’s foundation is the belief that all expected behaviors must be taught and reinforced. Our four school-wide expectations are to BE SAFE, BE RESPECTFUL, BE RESPONSIBLE and BE YOU. Everything we do at BES will come from these four expectations.

PBIS focuses on explicit teaching of behavioral expectations coupled with positive reinforcement. Students are taught the appropriate behaviors for different situations and are then reinforced with "Bobcats" when adults see the appropriate behaviors displayed.

Inappropriate conduct is tracked through electronic forms that monitor specific students and grade wide trends. Data from these forms are evaluated to determine patterns & assist in planning for educational opportunities.

## BES Matrix for Positive Behavior

	<b>Be Safe</b>	<b>Be Respectful</b>	<b>Be Responsible</b>	<b>Be You</b>
<b>Classroom</b>	*Walking feet	*Listen to adults and other students *Take turns *Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself	*Keep your area neat *Place things back where they belong *Keep floors clean *Listen to the teachers *Participate	*Stay true to you
<b>Hallway</b>	*Walking feet	*Use kind words *Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself	*Listen to the teacher	*Stay true to you
<b>Playground</b>	*Safe bodies *Stay in playground area *Listen to the teachers *Follow the recess rules	*Include everyone *Be a good sport *Take turns *Use nice words	*Put recess items back where they belong *Pick up your belongings *We line up when bell rings	*Stay true to you

<b>Bathroom</b>	*Safe bodies *Indoor voices	*Respect everyone's privacy *Take turns and wait patiently *Use kind words	*Throw paper towels in the trash *Shut off water *Flush the toilet *Wash hands	*Stay true to you
<b>Bus</b>	*Stay seated *Walk to/from bus *Follow safety rules	*Listen to the driver *Use quiet voices *Use kind words	*Pick up items that you drop	*Stay true to you
<b>Assemblies</b>	*Stay seated *Keep voices off	*Keep hands to self *Use bathroom before assembly	*Show your attention to speaker	*Stay true to you
<b>Cafeteria</b>	*Stay in your seat *Eat your own food	*Use indoor voice *Listen to the teachers	*Clean up after yourself (tables and floor) *Stay in your seat	*Stay true to you

Respect Ourselves...Respect Others...Respect the Environment

## **Playground**

Students should follow these rules at all times when on the school playground:

1. Students should stay in designated play areas. Woods (beyond the stone wall, the side of the building, and behind the fence by the kickball field) and parking lot are off limits.
2. Games that involve tackling, tripping, pulling of clothes or headwear, and excessive roughness are not permitted.
3. Climbing or hanging on basketball hoops, soccer goals, picnic tables, dugouts, or trees is not allowed. Students should not stand on picnic tables or breakaway bases.
4. Throwing of any items found outside is not permitted (i.e. snowballs, sticks, rocks, woodchips, sand etc...).
5. Students should avoid ice, mud, and areas with puddles. Orange cones will signal areas that are off limits.
6. Boots and snow pants must be worn in order to play in the snow.
7. Only appropriate, safe playground toys allowed outside. Hard baseballs, wooden/metal bats, footballs, hard Frisbees, skateboards, lacrosse balls, pogo sticks, and water pistols cannot be used.
8. No gum chewing or snacks on the playground.
9. Profanity, rude language, and inappropriate gestures are not tolerated. Treat others the way you want to be treated!
10. Students must request permission to re-enter the school building from a teacher on duty during recess. (All students must re-enter the building through the doors by the science lab).
11. Soccer can be played on the field only. If only the hardtop is being used for recess, soccer cannot be played.
12. The teacher on duty has the final say on all playground issues (safety, fairness, exclusions, peer activities or sportsmanship).
13. Take turns on all equipment.
14. People using the monkey bars should all travel in the same direction and people pushing friends on the swings should all stand on the same side of the swings.

## **Assemblies and School Programs**

At all times the student's behavior should be safe, responsible, and respectful. Whether guests are present or not, each student is personally responsible for the impression made by the school group as a whole. The principal, teacher, or adult in charge may remove a student from the assembly or program if a student is not displaying expected Bobcat behavior

## **After Hours School Functions**

Children must be supervised by an adult at all times when attending after hours school functions. School staff are not responsible for children at events outside of school hours.

## **Harassment and Bullying**

It is the purpose of the school community to ensure that all students can attend school in a safe, supportive environment that is conducive to serious learning. The school community does not condone harassment or bullying. It is recognized that students may at times tease one another either through verbal or written statements, pictures, or gestures. Behavior is considered teasing when both parties understand it is a joke and is meant as fun. However, when someone is insulted to the point they become distraught, cannot study, or do not want to come to school, the behavior may be considered to be harassment or bullying. Those who harass or bully may receive disciplinary action up to an out-of-school suspension of 1-10 days. If a student feels he or she is being harassed or bullied, or if they witness another student being targeted, he or she should talk to a teacher, counselor, parents or the principal. All efforts will be made to deal with complaints of bullying or harassment at the earliest possible stage.

See Appendix (Policy against Harassment & Discrimination for Students – Policy JBA, Prohibition of Hazing – Policy JICFA, and Bullying Prevention – Policy JICFB) for more information.

## **Cheating/Plagiarism**

Plagiarizing is defined as stealing and using the ideas or writings of another as one's own. Intentional cheating during formal testing activities, intentional copying of another student's work and plagiarism does not constitute proper student responsibility. If a teacher confirms a student to be in the act of intentional cheating or plagiarizing, the teacher shall collect the student's paper and notify the principal. Appropriate disciplinary action will then take place.

## **Disciplinary Action**

Whenever a student is referred to an administrator for reasons of serious misbehavior, a form may be completed with information from student(s) and teacher involved. The problem will then be discussed with your child and the form may be sent home for review. Parents/guardians are welcome to call the administrator regarding the incident. The parent/guardian signature is requested only to show evidence of awareness of the discipline action and not necessarily agreement with the actions taken by the school personnel. A telephone call from the administrator may be used in place of the discipline form.

Three office referral forms per marking period may result in the student's loss of privilege to attend special school functions in that marking period. A request for a conference with administration, teacher, and parent/guardian(s) will be made. The student may be asked to be in attendance as well.

The principal has the right to exclude any student from special school programs or field trips based on improper behavior. The principal will notify the parents in these cases. Children are expected to be in attendance at school regardless of exclusion from activity.

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71B, Section 3, students who receive services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are entitled to the same procedural rights provided

to students who receive special education services pursuant to 603 CMR 28.00 et. Seq. (with regard to student disciplinary action).

## **Grounds for Suspension and/or Expulsion**

In certain cases, students are suspended or expelled from school. The length of suspension or whether a student is to be expelled from school is determined by the administration. A student's parent/guardian(s) will be informed about the suspension. Please see the due process procedures above, which protect the student's rights in these cases.

A student can be suspended or expelled for committing any of the following acts on school grounds:

1. Fighting or physical harm to others
2. Theft of property
3. Possession of fireworks
4. Possession and/or use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, tobacco related devices including e-cigarettes or vaping devices, drugs
5. Destruction of property, i.e. arson, vandalism
6. Causing a false alarm or fire
7. Possession of any weapon (including pocket knives or other harmful objects)
8. Acts endangering the safety of others
9. Profanity or obscene language or gestures
10. Use of threats or acts of intimidation
11. Leaving school grounds
12. Insubordination
13. Repeated school or classroom rule violations
14. Issuance of a criminal complaint charging the student with a felony

Education Services are available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English as determined by the home language survey, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

Please see Appendix MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS CH. 71 SECTIONS 37H, 37H ½, and 37H ¾ AND CH. 71B for additional information.

## **BIKERS AND WALKERS**

Students with written parental permission may walk or ride their bikes to and from school. School Dismissal Manager must also be updated to "Walker or Biker." The students must follow safety rules, and bicyclists are required to wear approved safety helmets.

The school is not responsible for the security of bicycles during the school day. Bikers and walkers are dismissed from the building once the last bus has left the school driveway. Bicyclists should plan on arriving between 8:00 AM and 8:10 AM prior to bus arrival.

In case of inclement weather or other safety concerns, the principal reserves the right to put the child on their regular school bus.

## **BUS RULES AND ROUTINES**

The Boylston Elementary School Bus Transportation Policy states, “The purpose of school transportation is to provide safe, comfortable and economical transportation for those pupils living beyond walking distance to the school.” There is a list of rules for proper bus behavior; the most important point, though, is that we are all concerned for the safety of our children on the roads. It is often difficult for a boisterous group of young children to remember that their actions may be distracting to the driver. By helping your child to respect the need for safe transportation, you will help all of us maintain the safety of everyone on the bus.

### **Bus Rules**

1. The bus driver may assign seats.
2. Be courteous.
3. Use appropriate language and voice level.
4. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
5. Be in control of your body and keep your hands to yourself.
6. Remain in your seat.
7. Keep your hands and head inside the bus.
8. Treat the property with respect.
9. For your own safety, do not distract the driver.

### **Bus Routines**

#### **Waiting for the bus**

1. Be on time.
2. Observe all safety precautions while waiting for the bus.
3. Avoid active play (for example: chase games), in order to remain safe while waiting along the road.
4. Do not cross the street, except when directed by the bus driver.
5. If one must cross a street, do so only if you are sure that no moving vehicles are approaching from either direction. Wait at the designated stop only.

#### **Getting on the bus**

1. As the bus approaches, line up at least six feet off the road



2. Do not approach the bus until it has stopped and the driver has opened the door.
3. Get on the bus quickly and be seated at once.
4. Listen carefully and obey all directions issued by the bus driver.

### **Getting off the bus**

1. Stay in the seat until the bus has stopped and the door has opened.
2. Obey any directions from the bus driver.
3. Leave the bus quickly; wait respectfully for others to clear the aisle.
4. If you must cross a street as you leave the bus, be sure to walk in front of the bus (never in back) at a distance of at least 12 feet from the bus. If you get too close to the front of the bus, the driver will not be able to see you, and a serious accident could occur.

The transportation vendor and its staff shall provide a safe, healthy, and well-managed environment that is conducive to appropriate student conduct.

In the unlikely event of an accident involving a school bus or van, there are a series of procedures and protocols that the bus company must follow. First, they will notify the police who, upon arrival, are in charge of all activity at the scene of the accident. The school is then informed and we will contact parents of the children on the bus or van providing accurate and timely information. Parents are asked to stay home and await the continuation of the bus run, or to follow specific instructions.

Parents/guardians or friends are specifically asked NOT to go to the scene to pick up their child(ren), as safety officials will not allow these pick-ups to occur.

### **Loss of Riding Privileges**

School rules are in effect for children on the bus. Children whose behaviors are disruptive, inappropriate and/or endanger the health, safety, and welfare of other riders and/or the driver will face disciplinary action including the loss of publicly-funded transportation in accordance with regulations established by the superintendent or principal and approved by the school committee policy. Children may face other disciplinary action at the discretion of the principal in addition to the loss of publicly funded transportation in accordance with those regulations. Serious misbehavior on the bus may also result in suspension or expulsion from school.

### **Questions or Concerns About the Bus**

**Parents should call the principal with any questions or concerns** regarding the bus or van transportation. It is best to discuss concerns with the principal, (and not the driver or other students), when they first occur in order to avoid the frustration of a long-standing issue.

## **CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL AND DELAYED OPENING**

It is the policy of the Berlin-Boylston School Committee to keep schools in session unless road conditions are too hazardous for the school buses to travel safely. It is the policy of the Berlin-Boylston School Committee to delay the opening of school, rather than canceling an entire day, whenever it is felt road conditions will clear so as to allow safe school bus travel.

Once students have arrived at school, it is extremely rare that we would send them home early. If there were circumstances in which we anticipated extreme weather conditions at dismissal time, we would hold students at school until the danger has passed.

### **Notification Procedures**

In the event of inclement weather, and school is delayed, canceled, or dismissed early, the superintendent will send automated phone and email messages to all families and staff in the Boylston Elementary community announcing either the close or delay of school.

Television coverage of delays or cancellations may be broadcast by the following channels, usually by 6:00 AM: WBZ, Channel 4, WCVB, Channel 5, WHDH, Channel 7 and on their websites.

## **CLASS ASSIGNMENTS**

Our goal, as a school, is to create well balanced, heterogeneously grouped, teachable classrooms of students. The placement process considers individual student's academic strengths and needs, as well as social emotional, behavioral dynamics, and related service needs. Parents are an important component in this process as they know their child best. While it is district policy to not take specific requests for classroom teachers, if parents have specific concerns regarding their student's placement, they are encouraged to put those concerns in writing to the principal before the last Friday in April.

Classroom teachers and staff members will take the knowledge of the children that they have garnered over the course of the school year, along with any parental input, and place students appropriately. By balancing the classrooms, we can assure that all students will receive the attention that they need to be successful.

## **COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL**

Home-School Communication is an important factor for school success. In the fall, an Open House is scheduled for parents to meet the teachers and learn about curriculum, goals, and classroom expectations at each grade level. In an effort to go greener, we will be utilizing our website ([bbrsd.org](http://bbrsd.org)) for the majority of school to home communication. In fact, this handbook and calendar will only be available on our school website, and the majority of school wide notices will only be accessible

electronically in our e-backpack. We will however provide hard copies upon request. Teachers will be encouraged to maintain active websites and our school website will be updated regularly.

In case of problems arising between the school and the parent, the parent is urged to discuss the problem first with the teacher. Parents are asked to respect the daily schedule and responsibilities of the classroom teacher and discuss concerns during prearranged times or appointments.

If the parent does not feel that the matter is satisfactorily addressed after talking with the teacher, he should then discuss the situation further with the principal. We feel strongly that it is in the best interest of your child for the school and the home to work together in a cooperative and amicable manner. We all believe that your child's school experience should be healthy, happy, and productive.

## **DRESS CODE**

We ask that children come to school dressed appropriately for both the weather and in keeping with sensible standards for an educational building. It is helpful if all clothing is marked on the inside tag or label with the child's name. Students are encouraged to wear sneakers to recess for maximum play opportunities. The wearing of sandals and other footwear that leave toes exposed is not recommended on the playground during recess.

We use the Child Care Weather Watch chart to determine whether to hold recess outdoors in winter. **Children should come to school each day prepared to go outside for recess with hats, mittens, snow pants, and boots.**

A child's dress is essentially the responsibility of the parent and child. Messages and/or images on clothing which are offensive to another child or adult at school are considered inappropriate. Students will be asked to cover or turn inside out the particular garment that is considered offensive. The staff of the Boylston Elementary School believes that proper attire adds to a positive climate within the school setting. To achieve this goal, a school committee dress code policy is below:

The responsibility for the dress and appearance of the students will rest with individual students and parents.

They have the right to determine how the student will dress providing that attire is not destructive to school property, complies with requirements for health and safety, and does not cause disorder or disruption. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements.

This does not mean that student, faculty, or parent groups may not recommend appropriate dress for school or special occasions. It means that students will not be prevented from attending school or a school function, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as their dress and appearance meet the requirements set forth above.

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE AND DRILLS

## Emergency Preparedness Guide

The Emergency Preparedness Guide can be found in every classroom. The guide is a combined effort of all the members of the Safety Committee. This committee includes the principal, the school nurse, the school psychologist, the head custodian, members of the police and fire departments, and members of the rescue squad.

Every staff member of Boylston Elementary School has reviewed these procedures thoroughly. We will have periodic drills on these procedures throughout the year. All of our substitute teachers have also reviewed the guide. These practices are in place to ensure the safety of all of our staff and students. Please notify a member of the Safety Committee with any concerns or questions.

## Fire Drills

A minimum of two fire drills will take place each year. All staff will clearly instruct their students in the proper exit routes for each classroom within the building. Exit routes will be posted in each instructional area.

Basic rules for behavior in case of emergency evacuation are as follows:

1. All students and adults will walk while exiting the building.
2. No personal effects will be taken while exiting the building.
3. Exiting the building should be done quietly.

## ALICE

Periodically the school will practice drills in case of an intruder. The Berlin-Boylston Regional School District has adopted ALICE to respond to this unlikely event. ALICE is based on the premise that information, authorization, and proactive training are the key to surviving the active shooter.

- **Alert:** all are authorized to announce, no codes are used
- **Lockdown:** must include barricade training
- **Inform:** use technology to provide play-by-play information
- **Counter:** interrupt the skill set needed to shoot accurately
- **Evacuate:** get away from danger if possible

## HEALTH PROGRAM

### Communicable Diseases

All communicable diseases (such as measles, mumps, chicken pox, smallpox, scarlet fever, tetanus, tuberculosis, meningitis, whooping cough, strep throat, etc.) should be reported to the school nurse for record keeping and the protection of the children.

### Illnesses or Accidents

The school follows the recommendations of the MA Department of Public Health School Health Unit. The School Health Unit amends these recommendations as illness trends change in the state.

Incident/accident reports are completed regarding any accident that involves physical force or any accident that may require medical intervention.

### Immunizations

All children entering kindergarten and transferring into the school must meet the current immunization requirements of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The following immunizations are necessary before attending the first day of school:

- 4 doses of HIB
- 5 doses of DTaP/DPT
- 4 doses of Polio
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 2 doses of MMR
- 2 doses of Varicella or chickenpox verification
- Lead - any lead result since birth is acceptable

Massachusetts school immunization requirements can be found on the following website:

<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/school-immunizations>

**Medical exemptions** to immunizations are allowed if a health care provider submits written documentation to the school nurse that the immunizations are medically contraindicated. **Religious exemptions** are allowed if a parent/guardian submits a signed statement to the school nurse stating that the immunizations are contrary to their religious beliefs.

**Health Information:** Call the Health Office at 508-869-2209 between 8:15AM and 3:00PM to speak with the school nurse.

### Life-Threatening Allergies and Anaphylaxis

The school nurse must be informed of all student/staff allergies. In addition, the parent/guardian and physician must complete an Individualized Health Care Plan for any student requiring an EpiPen

## Medications

All medications given at school need a physician, dentist, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant's order and written parent permission. Forms are available in the nurse's office. Medications must be in the original prescription bottle that is properly labeled. **No child may transport medications to and from school. An adult must bring medications into the Nurse's Office. Parents should pick up unused medication at the end of the school year.**

See Appendix (Administering Medicines to Students – Policy JLCD)

## Physical Activity Restrictions

All children are kept inside for recess on days with inclement weather or when Child Care Weather Watch chart dictates. If a child is healthy enough to come to school, they should be able to go outside for recess.

Students with physical activity restrictions should provide a doctor's note to the school nurse. When the child is ready to resume normal physical activities, a doctor's note of clearance is also required.

In specific cases, it is understandable that your doctor may request that a child stay inside for a short period of time. **A note from the doctor must be brought to the health office.**

## Physical Exams

Current physical exams (within the past twelve months) are required annually according to the requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. This is also mandatory for students transferring to the school.

## Screenings

In accordance with mandated requirements by the MA Department of Public Health, the following screenings will take place during the school year:

- **Vision Screening** - Pre-K -5
- **Hearing Screening** - Pre-K-3
- **Height/Weight/BMI** - Grades 1 and 4
- **Postural Screening** – Grade 5

NOTE: These screenings are done if they are not performed during the current school year by the student's physician. **If you do not want your child to participate in one or more of the screenings, please notify the school nurse in writing at the beginning of the school year.**

## HOMEWORK

Homework is the means by which children learn and develop skills necessary to become independent, motivated, and successful adults. It is work given to reinforce or extend what is taught in the classroom. It is given at the discretion of the classroom teacher in accordance with the individual needs and abilities of the students. Therefore, various assignments may be given to different students of a single class in a single subject. For further information, please consult our [Homework Policy \(IKB\)](#).

### Suggestions to Parents Regarding Homework

1. **If your child is having problems with homework, or if you think there is too much or too little, check with your child's teacher. Most issues can be clarified with parent-teacher contact.**
2. Provide a quiet place of study for your child.
3. Schedule a regular time for homework. A consistent daily time is desirable.
4. School work is a priority. Limit the child's outside activities if necessary.
5. Encourage your child to use a homework assignment notebook to write daily homework requirements.
6. Encourage the use of the public and school libraries.
7. Give the child your interest, confidence, and encouragement in all work.
8. Guide the child, ask questions, discuss assignments, help the child check the work, but do not do the work for the child.
9. Parents wishing to help a child with some particular area of homework could be more helpful if they contacted the teacher as to the process used in class.

## LOCKERS AND SEARCHES

**Students may have no expectation of privacy in their desks or cubbies.** Desks and cubbies should be kept clean and neat at all times. **The school district is not responsible for any belongings stored in desks or cubbies.**

A school administrator has the right to inspect and search a students' desks and cubbies, and a student's person, if the administrator has reasonably trustworthy information creating a reasonable suspicion that performing a search has a moderate chance of finding evidence of wrongdoing.

See Appendix (Interrogations and Searches – Policy JIH)

## BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND SNACKS

The school serves breakfast and nutritious hot lunches as well as an alternative lunch every day. **The USDA has extended free breakfasts and lunches to all students through the 2024-2025 school year.** Breakfast options may include cereal, muffins, bagels and cream cheese, yogurt, Nutrigrain bars, fruit,

and Pop-Tarts, and will be served between 8:25-8:40. Water, milk (if not accompanying a school lunch), and extra servings must still be purchased. Please contact Jenny Wright ([jwright@bbrsd.org](mailto:jwright@bbrsd.org)) if you have any questions on our food services.

Sharing of snacks or lunches among children is not permitted for many reasons, but primarily out of concern for children with known and unknown food allergies who could suffer negative reactions to some foods.

## Snacks

For the same reasons mentioned above, parents are asked to provide their children with nutritious snacks such as fruit, carrots or celery sticks, or cheese and crackers. Please do not send candy or soda, or any item packed in a glass container. As stated previously, there is an expectation that students will not share snacks or lunches with their classmates. Learning sound nutritional habits is part of our school's curriculum. Help us put their health knowledge into practice.

Your child's teacher will notify you if there are any food allergies in the classroom.

## PARENTS IN THE SCHOOL

Visitors may only enter at the front doors. After ringing the bell, you may be asked to identify yourself. You will be buzzed in and then you can sign in and take a visitor's sticker.

Thank you for your cooperation, understanding, and patience. These procedures have been established for the safety of all our students and staff.

## Deliveries

In an effort to build independence and responsibility in our students (especially in Grades 2-5), parents are **strongly discouraged** from delivering forgotten items or materials to school, such as snack or lunch money, homework, sneakers, notebooks, and musical instruments.

Students should be guided to organize their belongings, but they also need to develop responsibility to manage their own affairs. When you bring these items into school, while well intentioned, you are inadvertently reinforcing habits that are not productive in the long run.

Parental delivery of materials does not guarantee that those items will be delivered to the child. No class will be interrupted for such purposes. Your support in this regard is appreciated.



## **Volunteers**

School volunteers play a key role in meeting the needs of BES students. When parents or other community residents work with the children or faculty at the school a number of benefits are derived.

These include:

- increased school/community awareness of the role the school plays in the community and the role the community plays in the school;
- increased awareness on the part of the children of the cooperative relationship between the school and the community;
- an opportunity to utilize the skills and interests of parents and other community residents in relating the experience of those outside of the school to that which is taught within the school;
- increased sense of active participation in the educational process.

Volunteers can provide a variety of services such as working with small groups of students in the classroom, reading to students, cataloging, shelving and checking out books in the school library, chaperoning class field trips, adding to the experience of children by sharing interests, hobbies, and skills with them, supporting activity centers and classroom projects, and lending support and assistance on school and parent group sponsored programs and activities.

Parents and community residents are encouraged to contact the teacher or principal in order to volunteer their time or services. Your help will be greatly appreciated. All volunteers will be required to complete a CORI prior to volunteering within the building.

## **PARENT GROUPS**

### **Boylston Education Collaborative**

Boylston Elementary School previously had two parent groups devoted to serving the students, staff and community - PTO and BEF. These groups have merged to form the Boylston Education Collaborative.

The Boylston Education Collaborative is a parent-led nonprofit organization whose mission is to enhance the education and social experience at Boylston Elementary School through volunteer and financial support. The BEC fosters collaboration between families, school and community to enrich the learning environment of our students.

Please contact us at [boylstoneducationcollaborative@gmail.com](mailto:boylstoneducationcollaborative@gmail.com) for more information. Everyone with a student attending BES is welcome to join!

## **School Council**

School Council is a committee composed of the principal, parents, teachers, and community members. They serve in an advisory role to the principal in school related matters and review the School Improvement Plan, Family Handbook, and support the principal in making student centered decisions.

## **SEPAC**

SEPAC is the Special Education Parent Advisory Council. This advisory group (required for every school district), supports parents and guardians of children who have an IEP, 504 accommodation plans, or Out-of-District placements. This group also advises the administration on matters that pertain to Special Education. SEPAC meets monthly to discuss issues related to school success, legislative and socialization issues for children, and to provide support to parents. Membership is free and open to all parents and guardians of children with special needs as well as other interested parties. Meeting dates and topics are posted at each school monthly as well as at <http://www.sepac-berlin-boylston.org/>

## **PROGRAMMING**

### **Special Education Programs**

Special education programs, under the direction of the Director of Pupil Personnel Services, are designed to assist students who are unable to progress effectively in a regular education program because of a diagnosed impairment of learning. Children as young as 2.5 years of age may be evaluated and/or serviced by our programs.

The programs are constructed to offer assistance in the areas of:

- a. remediation of learning disabilities
- b. speech and language difficulties
- c. counseling
- d. tutorial assistance
- e. occupational and/or physical therapy

Modified programs are also provided for developmentally delayed, hearing impaired, visually impaired, physically challenged, and other special needs students. As part of the Team Evaluation process, testing and evaluation are also provided. Inclusion of students with disabilities means their involvement in all aspects of school life alongside peers who do not have disabilities. This includes placement in regular classes and participation in extracurricular activities. The implementation of special education services is provided for students by the cooperative planning and teaching of the entire faculty. These services are  
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primarily given within the regular classroom. It is our goal that students respect individual differences and enjoy a sense of belonging.

## **Reading Program**

At Boylston Elementary School, we utilize an integrated reading and language arts program in kindergarten through Grade 5. The instruction is meaning-based and integrates listening, speaking, reading, writing, spelling, and thinking. Integrating language arts instruction across the curriculum enables students to make critical connections to all subject areas. Authentic literature provides a richness of opportunities for children to interact with concepts and ideas, setting the foundation for a lifelong love of reading.

Children are presented with many varied and interesting activities involving reading. Students are encouraged to read independently and have access to the school library. In addition, we encourage our children and parents to take advantage of the town library resources.

We would like to stress the importance of continual and frequent reinforcement of the child's reading skills at home. In order to become a fluent reader, it is necessary to use the skills as often as possible. All children are encouraged to read for enjoyment and to make use of a variety of reading sources such as books, magazines, etc.

## **Special Subjects**

**ART** is offered to all children in grades k-5 on a weekly basis throughout the school year. Students are introduced to a variety of art media at their respective levels. The goal of the art program is to provide a good understanding of the basics necessary to produce independent, worthwhile endeavors in creativity.

**MUSIC** is offered to all children in grades k-5 on a weekly basis throughout the school year. Students are introduced to a variety of musical activities and experiences designed to provide the opportunity for children to express their creativity in song. Studies of instrumentation, composers, musical notation, and styles are an important part of the vocal music program.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION** is offered to all children in grades k-5 once per week throughout the school year. Students are introduced to a wide range of individual and group activities which are designed to assist them in developing their physical capabilities in a structured and noncompetitive way.

**TECHNOLOGY** is offered to all children in grades k-5 once per week throughout the school year. Students are introduced to a variety of important technology standards and will be introduced to technology as a learning tool.

**HEALTH** is offered to all children in grades K-5 once per week throughout the school year.

## Chorus and Band

All children in Grades 4 and 5 are presented with the opportunity to participate in the chorus and/or the school band.

The chorus is open to all students who express an interest in developing their vocal talents in a group setting.

The school band is open to all students who express an interest in developing their instrumentation talents in a group setting. A formal band rehearsal is held once a week under the direction of the instrumental/band instructor. In addition, small group instruction is available once per week in order to provide additional practice. **Small group instrumental instruction takes place during an academic teaching block. Children are responsible for work missed.** It is expected that students who choose to participate in chorus and band will commit to the program for the entire year.

The chorus and band perform at school programs and combine with the Berlin chorus and band in the spring of each year for the presentation of a district-wide concert.

## Library/Media Center

The goal of the library program is to encourage students to develop a life-long interest in reading and to become effective users of information.

Students in grades k-5 visit the library once a week according to a weekly schedule. During this time, students have an opportunity to check out books and enjoy the BES library collection. Each week a lesson focusing on library, literature, or research skills will be presented.

Library books are checked out a week at a time and may be renewed one time. If books are forgotten on library day students may place books on hold, and with their teacher's permission, come to the library the following day to return the forgotten books and pick up their new books. Overdue notices will be sent home as a reminder.

Kindergarteners and first graders may take out one book a week, second graders may take out two books a week, and third through fifth graders may take out as many books as needed.

Lost or damaged books will need to be paid for in order for a student to continue checking books out of the library.

Parents may borrow books during the school year, and are encouraged to volunteer in the library and help with library related functions.

## Field Trips

Field trips are scheduled throughout the school year. Specific sites are selected for their interest and value in broadening the experience of the children relative to the academic curriculum. When possible,  
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field trips are scheduled so as to allow children to return home on the regular 3:00 PM school bus. However, at times children may return to school after the end of the regular school day in which case alternative home transportation must be provided by parents. Permission slips will be sent home at least one week prior to a field trip for parent permission.

## **STUDENT TRANSFERS**

When a family leaves the community for another place of residence, student records will be issued to the new school based upon a request from the parents or the new school. If the student is going to a public school in Massachusetts, a records release is not required. Student records may be sent via email, fax or the U.S. Postal Service to the new attending school. Copies of pertinent information from the student records will be made available to parents for hand delivering to the new attending school upon parental request.

## **TESTING SCHEDULE**

The MCAS testing schedule will be published on the school website.

## **VALUABLES BROUGHT TO SCHOOL (MONEY, ELECTRONIC DEVICES, ETC.)**

When children bring money to school we ask that parents place the money in an envelope, include a note inside stating the reason for the money being sent, and include both the child and the teacher's name on the envelope. We ask that children not bring large amounts of money or other valuable objects to school.

## **BLUETOOTH DEVICES**

Students may bring bluetooth devices to school; however, these devices must be turned off when entering BES, remain off, and be kept in their backpack. Consequences for accessing a bluetooth device are as follows:

- 1st offense: Teacher confiscates device and notifies parents
- 2nd offense: Device is sent to office and parent must pick it up there
- 3rd offense: Student is no longer allowed to bring devices to school

**We cannot assume responsibility for any damage, loss, or theft that may occur.**

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

### **Class Parties**

We encourage classrooms to have “snack in a bag” during their classroom celebrations. This ensures

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that students are able to avoid potential allergens while at the same time having a special treat provided by their families.

### **Private Party Invitations**

Unless the whole class is to be invited to a party outside of school, it is requested that party invitations be mailed from home and not passed out during school time. Children attending home parties after school are not allowed to ride a school bus to the party, unless it is their regularly assigned bus.

### **Selling**

Solicitations or the sale of merchandise by students is prohibited.

### **Videotaping**

Videotaping Boylston Elementary School children on school grounds must have prior approval of the principal. The public dissemination of photographs or videotapes of student groups, without prior consent of the Principal, is prohibited. Students are not allowed to use electronic devices to videotape or photograph other students at school or on the bus