

TORRINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK
2024-2025



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Non-Discrimination

Compliance with Non-Discrimination Laws: The Torrington Board of Education complies with all laws prohibiting the exclusion of any person from any of its educational programs or activities, or the denial to any person of the benefits of any of its educational programs or activities, including all academic, extra-curricular, and school-sponsored activities, on the basis of any protected characteristic (or protected class) including race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, veteran status, status as a victim of domestic violence or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law (“Protected Class”), subject to the conditions and limitations established by law.

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Reporting: Students, parents/guardians and/or third parties who wish to report concerns about discriminatory conduct, including, but not limited to harassment based on race, color, or national origin, are asked to promptly report the concerns about discrimination, harassment and/or retaliation to the District. To report discrimination, harassment or retaliation, please follow the link to complete the **Discrimination Complaint Form**. Reports should be sent to the Director of Human Resources located at 355 Migeon Ave., Torrington, CT. Reporting forms are also available in the main office of each school and program operated by the District, and reporting forms may be submitted in writing with any district administrator. District employees are required to report incidents of alleged student-to-student and staff-to-student discrimination, harassment or retaliation that may be based on a Protected Class that District employees witness or of which they have received reports or information, whether such incidents are verbal or physical or may be considered discrimination, harassment or retaliation in other forms.

Access to Policies: Click here to access **Board of Education Policy # 5021**

Table of Contents

- **Welcome to Torrington Middle School** - pg. 5
 - Letter from Administration - pg. 5
 - Torrington Middle School Mission Statement - pg. 6
 - Who's Who at Torrington Middle School - pg. 7
 - Staff Directory - pg. 8
- **Academics** - pg. 11
 - Overview of Academic Program at TMS - pg. 11
 - Assignment Retakes and Redo's - pg. 13
 - Extra Credit - pg. 14
 - Grading - pg. 12
 - Extra help - pg. 14
 - Homework - pg. 14
 - Homework Center - pg. 14
 - Honor Roll - pg. 14
 - Late Work and Missing Assignments - pg. 15
 - Learning Lab - pg. 15
 - Library Media Center (LMC) - pg. 15
 - Lost and Damaged Textbooks - pg. 15
 - Missed Work due to Absence - pg. 16
 - Promotion/Retention - pg. 16
 - Report Cards and Progress Reports - pg. 16
 - Standardized Testing - pg. 16
 - Summer School - pg. 16
- **Daily Operations** - pg. 17
 - Arrival and Dismissal - pg. 17
 - Early Dismissal - pg. 18
 - Attendance, Absences, Tardy to School - pg. 18
 - Backpacks and Lockers - pg. 19
 - Breakfast and Lunch - pg. 19
 - Guidelines for Appropriate Dress - pg. 19
 - Lost and Found - pg. 20
 - School Hours - pg. 20
 - School Schedule - pg. 21
 - Transportation - pg. 26
 - Visitors - pg. 26
- **Expectations for Behavior** - pg. 27
 - Overview: Philosophy and General Expectations - pg. 27
 - Behavior Infractions - pg. 27
 - Practices to Address Behavior - pg. 30
 - Due Process - pg. 32

- **Health and Safety** - pg. 34
 - **Health Office Overview** - pg. 34
 - **Allergies** - pg. 35
 - **Emergency Medical Contact Information** - pg. 35
 - **Emergency Procedures and Drills** - pg. 35
 - **Illness/Injury** - pg. 35
 - **Medications at School** - pg. 36
 - **Physicals** - pg. 36
 - **Screenings** - pg. 36
- **Parent Responsibilities** - pg. 37
 - **Change of Address & Contact Information** - pg. 37
 - **Parent Concerns: Protocol for Addressing Problems** - pg. 37
 - **Student Records** - pg. 37
 - **Withdrawal from Torrington Public Schools** - pg. 37
- **Parent and School Communication** - pg. 38
 - **Google Classroom** - pg. 38
 - **ParentSquare** - pg. 38
 - **PowerSchool** - pg. 38
 - **PTO** - pg. 38
 - **Questions and Next Steps - Quick Reference Guide** - pg. 39
- **Student Life** - pg. 40
 - **Overview** - pg. 40
 - **Athletics** - pg. 40
 - **Clubs and Activities** - pg. 41
 - **Field Trips** - pg. 42
 - **School Functions** - pg. 42
- **Student Supports** - pg. 43
 - **504 Services** - pg. 43
 - **Response to Intervention (RTI)** - pg. 43
 - **School Counselors and Social Workers** - pg. 43
 - **Special Education** - pg. 44
- **Technology** - pg. 45
 - **Airpods, Cell phones and Yondr** - pg. 45
 - **Chromebooks** - pg. 45
 - **Use of Computers and Network** - pg. 47
 - **Torrington Public Schools Acceptable Use Form** - pg. 47
- **Appendix** - pg. 49
 - **TMS Consequences for Reported Computer Damage** - pg. 50

WELCOME TO TORRINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Letter from Administration

On behalf of the Torrington Middle School family, I would like to welcome you back for the 2024-2025 school year. I am incredibly proud and humbled to serve as the principal of Torrington Middle School. The entire staff is dedicated to providing students with a safe and nurturing learning environment which supports academic and personal growth. Our goal is to help each student meet success so that they see themselves as capable learners and strong self advocates who can change the world.

The Middle School is a large diverse learning community of just under one thousand students. In order to foster strong relationships between students and staff, students are divided into three houses: Emerald, Sapphire, or Ruby. Each house consists of five core teachers, one administrator, one social worker, and one counselor supporting just over one hundred students. Typically students remain in the same house for their three middle school years.

We are dedicated to providing engaging and challenging learning experiences for ALL students that enter our building each day. A key to our students' success is providing them with the support they need in the classroom and in our community. We are committed to partnering with our community and families to eliminate obstacles to our students' success. In order for your child to take full advantage of the learning opportunities offered at TMS, he or she must attend school regularly. When a student is absent, he or she misses valuable classroom learning opportunities.

This handbook provides information on attendance, procedures, academics, behavioral expectations, and school schedules. Please review this information with your student so that he or she is fully prepared to take advantage of the opportunities available at Torrington Middle School. Should you have any questions, contact information for administrators and student support personnel are included in this handbook.

If you would like to contact me, my email address is srinaldi@torrington.org. You can also reach me by phone at 860-496-4050. Our administrative team is looking forward to welcoming our students back and working with our families to support students as they work toward an academically successful school year.

Sincerely,

Shelley Rinaldi

Mrs. Shelley Rinaldi
Principal
Torrington Middle School

School Hours

Regular Day	Early Dismissal	2 Hour Delayed Opening	3 Hour Delayed Opening
7:50 am - 2:50 pm	7:50 am - 12:50 pm	9:50 am - 2:50 pm	10:50 am - 2:50 pm

Torrington Middle School Mission Statement

Torrington Middle School fosters a challenging learning environment that inspires high expectations for achievement through instructional practices that embrace individual differences and learning styles. Our school values respect, responsibility and safety. We believe education is a shared responsibility of the school, student, home and community.

The First Steps to Achieve Success

How do we help our students achieve the goals outlined in the school's mission statement? It all begins with our core values: Respect, Responsibility and Safety. These are words students will hear frequently at Torrington Middle School, and all students are expected to demonstrate these characteristics at all times. If we all commit to living by these values, our school community will flourish!

Characteristic	Definition	Where should I demonstrate this characteristic?
RESPECT	Demonstrate the value of people, places and things	Classrooms Hallways/Stairwells Cafeteria Bathrooms Buses/Bus Stops Auditorium Gym/Locker Room
RESPONSIBILITY	Take control of your words and actions and learning	
SAFETY	Make healthy and informed choices	

Who's Who at Torrington Middle School

<u>Principal</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mrs. Shelley Rinaldi (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1158
<u>Administrative Assistant</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Heather Roy (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1199
<u>Supervisor of Student Support Services</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ms. Sue McMahon (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1162
<u>Emerald House</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mr. Gavin Craig- Assistant Principal (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1100 ● Mrs. Elena Sileo - School Counselor (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1156 ● Mrs. Christel Doyle - Social Worker (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1214 ● Mrs. Kimberly Petzel- Secretary (860)-496-4050 Ext. 1152
<u>Ruby House</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mrs. Michelle Meyers - Assistant Principal (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1163 ● Ms. Jessica Bernardi - School Counselor (860) 469-4050 Ext. 1169 ● Mrs. Sarah Furtak - Social Worker (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1129 ● Mrs. Amber Gurtowsky - Secretary (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1164
<u>Sapphire House</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mrs. Hilary Sterling - Assistant Principal (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1157 ● Ms. Megan Kupec - School Counselor (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1159 ● Ms. Kate Davis - Social Worker (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1131 ● Mrs. Kim Kelleher - Secretary (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1165
<u>Parent Liaison/Translator</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mr. Luis Gonzalez (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1147

Key Contacts

Attendance	Mrs. Amber Gurtowsky	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (860) 496-4050 Ext. 1164 ● tmsattendance@torrington.org
Registration Alternate Bussing Forms Change of Information Withdrawal from Torrington Public Schools	Mrs. Kimberly Petzel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (860)-496-4050 Ext. 1152 ● tmsbus@torrington.org (for daily bus notes only) ● kpetzel@torrington.org
Nurses	Mrs. Deb Majewski Mrs. Kara Centrella	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 860-496-4050 Ext. 1143 ● dmajewski@torrington.org ● kcentrella@torrington.org

TMS CERTIFIED DIRECTORY 2024-2025

860.496.4050/Fax 860.496.1089

Name	Position	Rm #	Voice mail	Email Address
Alduini, Deborah	Gr. 7 Math Sapphire	223	3168	dalduini@torrington.org
Allen-Cardona, Tara	World Language- Spanish	311	3108	tallencardona@torrington.org
Artruc, Sherry	Gr. 6 Math Ruby	106	3163	sartruc@torrington.org
Aviles, Zuheill	Bilingual	321		zaviles@torrington.org
Barnett, Patricia	Gr. 8 Language Arts Sapphire	318	3103	pbarnett@torrington.org
Beckett, Jason	Gr. 8 Science Ruby	308	3104	jbeckett@torrington.org
Berch, Adam	Digital Video Production	142		aberch@torrington.org
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Buyak, Jacki	Gr. 6 Social Studies Emerald	110	3109	jbuyak@torrington.org
Calabrese, Angelo	Gr. 8 Language Arts Emerald	302	3110	ascalabrese@torrington.org
Calder, Alexis	Thrive Teacher	215	3124	acalder@torrington.org
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Craig, Gavin	Assistant Principal Emerald	Office 6	1100	gcraig@torrington.org
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Day-Canty, Julie	Gr. 6 Integrated Reading and Writing Ruby	104	3320	jdaycanty@torrington.org
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Ferrante, Lorraine	Life Skills	134		lferrante@torrington.org
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Frederick, Sarah	Art Teacher	121	3157	sfrederick@torrington.org
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<u>Oberheim, Carol</u>	Speech & Language	330	1215	coberheim@torrington.org
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<u>Whaley, Gina</u>	Gr. 8 Science Emerald	303	3184	gwhaley@torrington.org
<u>Whitney, Abigail</u>	Gr. 6 Integrated Reading and Writing Sapphire	117	3167	asterpka@torrington.org
<u>Wood, Katherine</u>	Gr. 7 Language Arts Ruby	204	3116	kwood@torrington.org

ACADEMICS

Overview of Academic Program at TMS

At TMS, students are scheduled for 5 core classes and 2 encore classes. The following chart shows the general core program of studies by grade level. Encore classes are in the following areas: Music, Art, World Language, Digital Art, Digital Video and 6th grade Physical Education. There may be some scheduling exceptions due to students' individualized needs.

Core Studies by Grade Level						
Grade 6	Grade 7			Grade 8		
Core Math	Core Math			Core Math (or Algebra)		
Core Science	Core Science			Core Science		
Core Social Studies	Core Social Studies			Core Social Studies		
Core Integrated Reading and Writing	Core ELA			Core ELA		
ELA	Drama	PE and Health	3D Printing	Math Explorations	PE (Health in Encore)	Robotics

The **English Language Arts** program is designed to increase the skill level of students in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, and listening through active participation in the learning process. The Language Arts program utilizes process writing and a literature-based approach to expose students to a wide range of learning experiences. Students are encouraged to read a variety of materials for pleasure. Students will be provided with 2 ELA classes in their 6th grade year.

The **Mathematics** program is designed to expand the mathematical understanding of our students and provide real world application of concepts. Utilizing a blend of inquiry and traditional methods, students will demonstrate their performance in a student-centered atmosphere. Students will be provided with 2 Math classes in their 8th grade year.

The **Social Studies** program is designed to develop civic competence, to examine global connections, and to recognize the contributions of past and present cultures. The social studies program promotes active participation in the learning process through teacher/student discussions, cooperative learning, individual and group projects, and technology.

The **Science** program's curriculum, aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards, is written for students to demonstrate their knowledge in various topics of study in the life and physical sciences. Students will also learn how energy works through Earth's systems. Students are actively involved in our performance-based science program.

Additional guaranteed core classes for 7th and 8th grade students include **Drama**, **Physical Education and Health**, **3D Printing** and **Robotics**.

- Through these classes, students will engage in hands-on learning and practice skills such as public speaking, collaboration, communication, creativity, problem solving, and real-world application.
- These classes will meet for one trimester.

In addition to the core program outlined above, students will take Encore classes:

Encore Subjects, offered on a trimester basis, give students the opportunity to explore and expand their interests and talents. Encore subjects include art, music, world language, physical education (6th grade), digital video and digital art. These courses are aligned with the high school and can be continued through the Torrington High School pathways program.

- The **Music** program offers band, chorus, and orchestra for our students. Students are provided small group lessons weekly. Students are encouraged to join a music program. Research shows playing an instrument helps students to succeed in other academic areas. We encourage students to take advantage of our award-winning musical program.
- The **Physical Education** program follows Connecticut law which requires that physical education be part of the public school curriculum for all grades (CGS § 10-16b(a)). Physical activity is essential to establishing a healthy lifestyle. Teamwork and individual skill development are the focus of these classes.
- The **World Language** program provides students the opportunity to explore Italian and Spanish. In this program students will learn to communicate, study the culture of regions where the languages are spoken, and develop insight into the nature of language.
- The **Art** program provides students the opportunity to practice visual media skills. Students learn how to communicate through various mediums. The arts allow students the opportunity to practice visual-spatial skills, self-expression, perseverance, and creativity. Torrington Middle School offers Painting, Drawing, and 3D Art.
- The **Digital Video** program provides students the opportunity to explore the media production process, from pre- to post-production. Students create media productions such as public service announcements, intros, outros, business logos, advertisements, and film trailers.
- The **Digital Art** program provides students an opportunity to explore online programs such as Canva and ArtWeaver to develop basic skills in graphic design. Students integrate art theory and technology to create beautiful designs!

Grading

The overall grading system is as follows:

A+ = 100-98	A = 97-94	A- = 93-90
B+ = 89-88	B = 87-84	B- = 83-80
C+ = 79-78	C = 77-74	C- = 73-70
D + = 69-68	D = 67-65	F = below 65

- **INC = Incomplete**
 - Incomplete grades at the end of each marking period must be made up within 10 school days. If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher.

Parents can routinely check their child's learning progress by referring to the class grade in Powerschool. TMS teachers utilize a building-wide grading protocol. Assignments in each category will be weighted as follows:

	Major Assessments	Minor Assessments	Classwork	Homework
Math, Social Studies, ELA	30%	30%	30%	10%
World Language	10%	40%	50%	n/a
Science, ESL, Drama, Media, Essentials	40%	30%	30%	n/a
Music	30%	20%	50%	n/a
PE	20%	10%	70%	n/a
Art, Stem, Digital Art, Digital Video	70%	n/a	30%	n/a

Major Assessments:

- *Purpose:* To assess student mastery of content and skills from a unit of study. Major assessments cover larger chunks of material over a longer period of time.

Minor Assessments:

- *Purpose:* To assess student understanding of a section of content from a unit that students need to master before moving on to the next part of the unit. Teachers have the opportunity to provide feedback to the student and will plan shifts in instruction.

Classwork:

- *Purpose:* To provide students with purposeful practice of material introduced in a lesson. Teachers have the opportunity to provide feedback to the student and will plan shifts in instruction.

Homework:

- *Purpose:* Purposeful practice of material introduced in a lesson done by the student independently out of class. Teachers have the opportunity to provide feedback to the student and will plan shifts in instruction.

* Teachers will determine the appropriate category for each assignment.

Assignment Retakes and Redos

Assignment retakes and redos may be offered at the teacher’s discretion, according to the guidelines below:

- Should a teacher choose to allow assignment retakes/redos, the opportunity shall be offered to all students.
- Should a teacher choose to allow assignment retakes/redos, the teacher’s policy will be stated in writing and distributed to families and students.
- Any retake/redo attempt by a student may not result in the student receiving a lower grade in PowerSchool than his original grade.

Extra Credit

Should a teacher choose to offer extra credit, it shall be offered to all students. Extra credit opportunities will serve to further learning and will be directly related to the curriculum.

Extra Help

We encourage students to reach out to teachers for clarification of classroom content or for extra help as needed. Students may seek extra help from a core teacher during a daily learning lab period or by making arrangements to meet with a teacher before/after school or during lunch.

Homework

The completion of homework is important, as it helps students review what has been taught in class and practice skills that have been introduced. Some homework assignments are designed to help prepare students for lesson activities that will take place in class the next day. This is considered the “flipped” instructional model.

- Every teacher will explain his/her homework policy.
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to reach out to their child’s teacher if homework assignments appear to be taking an inordinate amount of time to complete.
- The school follows [BOE policy #6110](#). Please refer to this policy for more information.

Homework Center

The homework center will be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays for students wishing to work on assignments.

- Students wishing to stay for the homework center must sign up the day before.
 - For example, a student wishing to stay for homework center on Tuesday must sign up on Monday. Sign ups will take place during Advisory.
- The homework center will be staffed by TMS employees.
- Students are expected to follow all behavior guidelines and rules.
- Students may not use cell phones during homework center. Cell phones must remain in Yondr pouches.
- Students may ride the late bus home if attending Homework Center.

Honor Roll

The following criteria is used for qualifying students for the Honor Roll:

- High Honors with Distinction is achieved by a student with every grade being a 94 or above.
- High Honors is achieved by a student with every grade being a 90 or above.
- Honors are achieved by a student with all grades 80 or above.
- No student with a grade below an 80 will be permitted to qualify for the Honor Roll.

Late Work and Missing Assignments

- **Late work** will be accepted without penalty according to the guidelines below. (Teachers may make exceptions for extenuating circumstances or per individual student plans.)
 - 6th Grade -
 - Trimester 1 - Late work will be accepted up to 3 weeks past the initial due date of the assignment.
 - Trimesters 2 and 3 - Late work will be accepted up to 2 weeks past the initial due date of the assignment.
 - 7th Grade -
 - Trimesters 1 and 2 - Late work will be accepted up to 2 weeks past the initial due date of the assignment.
 - Trimester 3 - Late work will be accepted up to 1 week past the initial due date of the assignment.
 - 8th Grade -
 - All trimesters - Late work will be accepted up to 1 week past the initial due date of the assignment.
- **Missing Assignments:** Assignments not turned in to the teacher will receive a “zero” in PowerSchool.

Learning Lab

Learning Lab is a quiet time for students to complete homework assignments and unfinished classwork, study for assessments, check grades, work with a teacher or read a good book. Students are expected to come to Learning Lab prepared with something to work on independently for the period. All students are expected to respect the learning of peers. Students are assigned to a certified teacher for supervision and support during Learning Lab.

Library Media Center (LMC)

The Library Media Center has many resources including print, non-print, digital and audio materials and equipment to serve the Torrington Middle School students. Materials are selected to support the curriculum, classroom instruction and to inspire students with a vast array of reading interests. The Media Center is open during regular school hours. Students are responsible for any materials signed out. Please visit the school’s [LMC webpage](#) for links to digital books and other resources available for our students.

Lost and Damaged Textbooks

All textbooks are the property of Torrington Middle School. If a book is lost, destroyed or defaced, another book will be issued after the student has paid for the lost or destroyed book. All books must be returned prior to the end of the school year. Lost books must be paid for (new books at full cost, one year or older at replacement price).

For Lost or Damaged Chromebooks, see page 46-47.

Missed Work due to Absence

Students who are absent can check their teachers' Google classroom to complete required work. Students can email teachers for clarification on assignments when necessary. Students who miss school due to family vacation will not receive assignments prior to the trip. Students should work with their teachers to determine a plan for submission of assignments. It must be noted that no amount of makeup work is equal to the quality of instructional time in the classroom. Homework and classroom assignments will be provided for students who are serving out-of-school suspension.

Promotion/Retention

Students have many supports throughout the year to be successful. Promotion for students in grades six, seven, and eight is based on successful development and academic achievement for the year. Promotion requires adequate yearly progress in major subject areas. Factors considered in determining retention include ability, academic performance, effort, maturity, attendance and age. Retention recommendations are reviewed by a team of people, including teachers, school counselors, school social workers, and the school psychologist. Please refer to Torrington Board of Education [Policy # 6151](#) for more detail regarding promotion and retention.

Report Cards and Progress Reports

Progress reports and report cards are just a few of the many ways teachers provide feedback to students. It is helpful for students and parents to monitor student progress through the parent portal on PowerSchool. Parents are encouraged to call or email teachers with any questions. *Midway and at the end of each trimester, progress reports and report cards are available online.* Report cards are not mailed home unless requested by a parent/guardian.

Standardized Testing

Standardized assessments provide teachers and administrators with valuable information about students' progression toward academic standards as well as overall strengths and areas for improvement. Additionally, these assessments provide information about overall school and district performance. Parents and guardians are also encouraged to review assessment results to keep abreast of their child's performance, skill development and growth.

- STAR testing: Mathematics, Reading (grades 6-8; fall, winter and spring).
- Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA): Mathematics, English Language Arts (grades 6-8, spring)
- Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Assessment: Science (grade 8 only, spring)
- Connecticut Physical Fitness Testing: Physical Fitness (grades 6 & 8, yearly)

Summer School

Torrington Middle School personnel regularly monitor students for success and partners with parents to provide opportunities for academic support. Students with one or more failures in a Core class may be required to participate in a summer learning program. If identified, successful completion of the summer learning program will be required for promotion to the next grade. Please refer to Torrington Board of Education [Policy # 6151](#) for more detail regarding promotion and retention.

DAILY OPERATIONS

Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival

Parent DROP OFF Side doors will be open between 7:25-7:50 am - Please be patient and follow the traffic directions

- Pull into the East Pearl Road entrance and proceed past the soccer fields following the road to the back of the building, follow traffic behind the school (All traffic is ONE WAY around the school)
- **Students in all grades** will be dropped off at the north side of the school by the auditorium.
- Cones will be set up to designate a safe unloading zone. Students should only exit the car in the unloading zone. Staff on duty will move cars forward once all students have exited the zone safely.
- Cars are not allowed to pass the car in front without staff direction.
- Students will enter the side entrance and report to the auditorium welcoming area.

Students arriving by bus:

- Buses will drop students off in one of the two circles in the front of the building.
- Students will enter through the main entrance and proceed to the cafe welcoming area.

***After 7:50 am, all students must enter through the main entrance.**

Upon Arrival Students should report to their assigned morning Welcome Area. Students will remain in the assigned location until dismissed by a staff member, at which time students will proceed to Advisory.

Dismissal

- Students will remain in their last period class until they are dismissed. Each teacher will project the bus dismissal slide and a staff member will announce buses/pick-ups over the loudspeaker as they are dismissed. Students taking a bus home will report to the front of the building once their bus number has been called. Students being picked up by a parent/guardian will report to the designated pick-up area once their grade level has been dismissed.

Parent PICK UP will begin at 2:50 pm

- Pull into the East Pearl Road entrance and proceed past the soccer fields, following the road to the back of the building.
- **Students in all grades** will be picked up at the side doors nearest the auditorium.
- Traffic is ONE WAY beginning at the crosswalk - left lane is for parking to pick up, right lane is to move to the exit lane.
- Traffic will enter the bus loop to exit the campus. Follow staff directions for entering traffic.

****Student safety is of utmost importance. Please follow all traffic rules and staff directions.**

Bus dismissal will begin at 2:50 pm. Students will be dismissed according to the arrival of buses.

Early Dismissal from School

We ask that all appointments (dental, medical, etc.) be scheduled outside of the school day. **Students leaving on early dismissal should be dismissed prior to 2:25 to ensure the safety of all students. (Please note: on early dismissal days, students should be dismissed prior to 12:15 pm.)** If a student must be removed from school due to an appointment:

- Notification of the date, time and duration of the time out of school must be received by the office the morning of dismissal.
- Students being dismissed will be called down once an authorized person has checked in with the main office.
- The parent or authorized person **MUST** show a photo ID and sign the student out with main office staff.
- Students who return to school on the day of a dismissal **MUST** report to the office to receive a pass to return to class.

Students are not allowed to leave school alone to walk to appointments during school hours.

Attendance, Absences and Tardy to School

Attendance and Absences

Consistent attendance at school and in classes is essential to the learning experience and success of all students. According to [TPS Board of Education Policy #5006](#), "Absence" is defined as any day during which a student is not considered "in attendance" at his/her assigned school, or on a school sponsored activity (e.g. field trip), for at least one half of the school day.

A parent or guardian may excuse a student's up to 9 student absences by providing a written note to the school. For a student's tenth (10th) absence and any absence thereafter, a student's absences from school are considered excused only with appropriate documentation, and only for one of the reasons listed in [BOE policy #5006](#). For more information, please see the BOE website.

Parents are expected to report all student absences to the school. To report your child's absence from school, please contact the attendance secretary Mrs. Gurtowsky by email at tmsattendance@tms.org. If you are not able to access email, you may report the absence by phone by calling Torrington Middle School, 860-496-4050 and press 1.

All students who are not in their Advisory class by 7:50 am **MUST** report to the Front Office, receive a pass and are considered tardy.

CANCELLATIONS, DELAYED OPENINGS, EARLY SCHOOL DISMISSAL

If school must be closed or delayed because of inclement weather or some other emergency, a ParentSquare announcement will be sent.

Information concerning closings or delays may also be obtained on the website, www.torrington.org.

Backpacks and Lockers

- Lockers will be issued to students in Advisory at the beginning of the school year upon request.
- Locker and/or backpack searches may be conducted by an administrator in the event there is a reasonable concern regarding the safety and welfare of students/staff.
- Lockers are the property of the school and are provided for students to use during the school day.
- Students are expected to keep lockers clean. Students may not put stickers on either the inside or outside of a locker.
- Students must keep their locker combination private.
- Students are to use only their assigned locker.
- Students who do not request a locker may carry a backpack during the school day.
- The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Never leave money or valuables in your backpack or locker.

Breakfast and Lunch

- **All students will be provided breakfast and lunch at no cost.**
- Students are required to enter their Student ID number when receiving breakfast or lunch.
- Students will eat breakfast during Advisory.
- Students wishing to purchase a second lunch for an additional charge, may do so with cash or by using funds previously added to their individual My School Bucks account.
- Students are expected to follow ALL rules and procedures while using the cafeteria. This includes cleaning up after yourself, staying seated, raising your hand if you need something and listening to ALL adults in the cafeteria.

Guidelines for Appropriate Dress

Students are treated equitably regardless of gender/gender identification, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, body type/size, and religion. It is important to make decisions about your appearance that place you in the best possible light. The purpose of the guidelines for student dress is to reinforce the district's mission to ensure that all students will acquire the academic and social skills to enable them to function successfully as productive 21st Century citizens. Student attire should reflect an atmosphere of mutual respect to the learning environment. Restrictions may be applied when student dress is unsafe or disruptive of the educational process. The serious nature of our school activities and pride in the reputation of our school require cleanliness and appropriate dress.

What follows are the dress code expectations approved by the TMS community:

- Wear clothing that is free from promotion of or reference to drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, and free from violent signs, symbols or words that are obscene, lewd, vulgar, defamatory, or likely to incite.
- Wear clothing that does not reveal parts of the body that should remain covered and/or reveals your torso, or undergarments.
- Hoods or other head coverings that conceal the identity of individual students are not allowed, but head coverings for religious and other purposes are permitted inside and outside.

The school is responsible for ensuring that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, and that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student. Administration will address students whose school attire is not in alignment with the expectations set forth above.

Lost and Found

- Lost and found items are located in two areas - the cafeteria and the main office.

- Found articles of clothing, water bottles, lunch boxes will be placed in the cafeteria.
- Found technology, eyeglasses, jewelry, etc. will be brought to the main office.
- Students who have lost anything should regularly check the appropriate location depending on the type of item.
- All items remaining in Lost and Found will be donated at the end of the school year.
- The school is not responsible for lost or stolen personal items.
- For missing Chromebooks, please see page 46-47 of this handbook.

School Hours

Regular Day	Early Dismissal	2 Hour Delayed Opening	3 Hour Delayed Opening
7:50 am - 2:50 pm	7:50 am - 12:50 pm	9:50 am - 2:50 pm	10:50 am - 2:50 pm

Torrington Middle School - Bell Schedule 2024-2025

Bell Schedule		A Day	B Day	C Day	D Day	E Day	F Day	G Day
Advisory	7:50-8:05	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
Block 1 50min	8:08-8:58	(Period) 1	7	6	5	4	3	2
Block 2 50min	9:01-9:51	2	1	7	6	5	4	3
Block 3 62min	9:54-10:56 G6 ONLY LL 9:54-10:24 Lun 10:26-10:56	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 3 G8 = 3	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 2 G8 = 2	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 1 G8 = 1	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 7 G8 = 7	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 6 G8 = 6	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 5 G8 = 5	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 4 G8 = 4
Block 4 62min	10:59-12:0 1 G7 ONLY Lun.10:59-11:2 9 LL 11:31-12:01	G6 = 3 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 4	G6 = 2 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 3	G6 = 1 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 2	G6 = 7 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 1	G6 = 6 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 7	G6 = 5 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 6	G6 = 4 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 5
Block 5 62min	12:04-1:06 G8 ONLY Lun.12:04-12:3 4 LL 12:36-1:06	G6 = 4 G7 = 4 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 3 G7 = 3 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 2 G7 = 2 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 1 G7 = 1 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 7 G7 = 7 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 6 G7 = 6 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 5 G7 = 5 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab
Block 6 49min	1:09-1:58	5	4	3	2	1	7	6
Block 7 49min	2:01-2:50	6	5	4	3	2	1	7

TMS Extended Advisory - Bell Schedule 2024-2025

Bell Schedule		A Day	B Day	C Day	D Day	E Day	F Day	G Day
Advisory	7:50-8:35	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
Block 1	8:38-9:20	(Period) 1	7	6	5	4	3	2
Block 2	9:23-10:05	2	1	7	6	5	4	3
Block 3	10:08-11:10 G6 ONLY Lun. 10:08-10:38 LL 10:40-11:10	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 3 G8 = 3	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 2 G8 = 2	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 1 G8 = 1	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 7 G8 = 7	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 6 G8 = 6	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 5 G8 = 5	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 4 G8 = 4
Block 4	11:13-12:15 G7 ONLY Lun. 11:13-11:43 LL 11:45-12:15	G6 = 3 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 4	G6 = 2 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 3	G6 = 1 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 2	G6 = 7 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 1	G6 = 6 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 7	G6 = 5 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 6	G6 = 4 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 5
Block 5	12:18-1:20 G8 ONLY Lun. 12:18-12:48 LL 12:50-1:20	G6 = 4 G7 = 4 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 3 G7 = 3 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 2 G7 = 2 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 1 G7 = 1 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 7 G7 = 7 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 6 G7 = 6 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 5 G7 = 5 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab
Block 6	1:23-2:05	5	4	3	2	1	7	6
Block 7	2:08-2:50	6	5	4	3	2	1	7
Dropped Period		7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Torrington Early Dismissal - Bell Schedule 2024-2025

Bell Schedule		A Day	B Day	C Day	D Day	E Day	F Day	G Day
Advisory	7:50-8:04	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
Block 1	8:07-8:38	(Period) 1	7	6	5	4	3	2
Block 2	8:41-9:12	2	1	7	6	5	4	3
Block 3	9:15-9:46	3	2	1	7	6	5	4
Block 4	9:49-10:20	4	3	2	1	7	6	5
Block 5	10:23-11:10 G6 ONLY Lun.10:23-10:53 LL 10::55-11:10	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 5 G8 = 5	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 4 G8 = 4	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 3 G8 = 3	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 2 G8 = 2	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 1 G8 = 1	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 7 G8 = 7	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 6 G8 = 6
Block 6	11:13-12:00 G7 ONLY Lun.11:13-11:43 LL 1145-12:00	G6 = 5 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 6	G6 = 4 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 5	G6 = 3 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 4	G6 = 2 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 3	G6 = 1 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 2	G6 = 7 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 1	G6 = 6 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 7
Block 7	12:03-12:50 G8 ONLY Lun.12:03-12:33 LL 12:35-12:50	G6 = 6 G7 = 6 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 5 G7 = 5 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 4 G7 = 4 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 3 G7 = 3 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 2 G7 = 2 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 1 G7 = 1 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 7 G7 = 7 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab
Dropped Period		7	6	5	4	3	2	1

TMS 2Hr Delay - Bell Schedule 2024-2025

Bell Schedule		A Day	B Day	C Day	D Day	E Day	F Day	G Day
Advisory	9:50-10:04	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
Block 1 31min	10:07-10:38	(Period) 1	7	6	5	4	3	2
Block 2 47min	10:41-11:28 G6 ONLY Lun.10:41-11:11 LL 11:13-11:28	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 2 G8 = 2	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 1 G8 = 1	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 7 G8 = 7	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 6 G8 = 6	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 5 G8 = 5	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 4 G8 = 4	G6 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G7 = 3 G8 = 3
Block 3 47min	11:31-12:18 G7 ONLY Lun 11:31-12:01 LL 12:03-12:18	G6 = 2 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 3	G6 = 1 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 2	G6 = 7 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 1	G6 = 6 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 7	G6 = 5 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 6	G6 = 4 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 5	G6 = 3 G7 = Lunch/ Learning Lab G8 = 4
Block 4 47min	12:21-01:08 G8 ONLY Lun.12:21-12:51 LL 12:53-1:08	G6 = 3 G7 = 3 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 2 G7 = 2 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 1 G7 = 1 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 7 G7 = 7 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 6 G7 = 7 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 5 G7 = 5 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab	G6 = 4 G7 = 4 G8 = Lunch/ Learning Lab
Block 5 31min	1:11-1:42	4	3	2	1	7	6	5
Block 6 31min	1:45-2:16	5	4	3	2	1	7	6
Block 7 31min	2:19-2:50	6	5	4	3	2	1	7
Dropped Period		7	6	5	4	3	2	1

TMS 3Hr Delay - Bell Schedule 2024-2025

Bell Schedule		A Day	B Day	C Day	D Day	E Day	F Day	G Day
Advisory	10:50-10:58	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory	Advisory
Block 1	11:01-11:31	G6 = Lunch G7 = 1 G8 = 1	G6 = Lunch G7 = 7 G8 = 7	G6 = Lunch G7 = 6 G8 = 6	G6 = Lunch G7 = 5 G8 = 5	G6 = Lunch G7 = 4 G8 = 4	G6 = Lunch G7 = 3 G8 = 3	G6 = Lunch G7 = 2 G8 = 2
Block 2	11:34-12:04	G6 = 1 G7 = Lunch G8 = 2	G6 = 7 G7 = Lunch G8 = 1	G6 = 6 G7 = Lunch G8 = 7	G6 = 5 G7 = Lunch G8 = 6	G6 = 4 G7 = Lunch G8 = 5	G6 = 3 G7 = Lunch G8 = 4	G6 = 2 G7 = Lunch G8 = 3
Block 3	12:07-12:37	G6 = 2 G7 = 2 G8 = Lunch	G6 = 1 G7 = 1 G8 = Lunch	G6 = 7 G7 = 7 G8 = Lunch	G6 = 6 G7 = 6 G8 = Lunch	G6 = 5 G7 = 5 G8 = Lunch	G6 = 4 G7 = 4 G8 = Lunch	G6 = 3 G7 = 3 G8 = Lunch
Block 4	12:40-1:10	3	2	1	7	6	5	4
Block 5	1:13-1:43	4	3	2	1	7	6	5
Block 6	1:46-2:16	5	4	3	2	1	7	6
Block 7	2:19-2:50	6	5	4	3	2	1	7
Dropped Period		7	6	5	4	3	2	1

Transportation

Riding the school bus is an extension of a school-based activity. As a result, behavior on the bus is a student responsibility, and **school behavior policies apply to buses.**

- Conduct on the bus must allow for the safety of all riders, including the driver.
- The bus driver has the authority to enforce rules while students are on the bus.
- Students must ride on their assigned bus.
- Appropriate behavioral expectations (i.e. all school rules) extend to the time period in which students are waiting at the bus stop, as this is a school-related activity.
- If a long-term alternate bussing arrangement is needed, an [Alternate Busing Form](#) **must** be completed and submitted to tmsbus@torrington.org or Mrs. Petzel in the Student Support Center at least 2 school days prior to the date the change is needed.
- Students are encouraged to ride their regularly assigned bus at all times. However, in the event that a student must ride an alternate bus home, the parent/guardian should send an email to tmsbus@torrington.org by 12:00 pm (11:00 am on early dismissal days).
 - The note must specify the name of the person the child is going home with and the bus number they need to ride.
 - Should a parent not have access to email, a written note may be brought to the Student Support Center by the student and given to Mrs. Petzel prior to the end of block 1.
 - **Students will not be allowed to ride an alternate bus without written permission from a parent/guardian AND approval from an Administrator.**
 - Once approval is granted, students will receive a bus note signed by an administrator. This note must be given to the bus driver.

Consequences for violation of the bus rules may result in the loss of bus riding privileges (CT General Statutes 10-233c).

*Questions related to bus stop locations or reasons why the bus may be running late should be directed to All Star Transportation, which may be contacted at 860-489-3444.

Visitors

- During the school day, visitors must ring the doorbell. Visitors should follow staff instructions for assistance.
- All visitors will need a license or valid ID to sign in.
- Visiting students are not permitted during the school day.

EXPECTATIONS FOR BEHAVIOR

Overview: Philosophy and General Expectations

PHILOSOPHY

Torrington Public Schools has a belief that strong academics are positively linked with appropriate learning behaviors while students are in school. The faculty also believes that school-home partnerships are critical for ensuring strong learning. Our philosophy is one that includes building community among students and all members of the school district and the development of strong interpersonal problem solving skills, which a student will carry through life. Our school-wide expectations of Respect, Responsibility, and Safety are demonstrated throughout the school. For students in our schools, the classroom is a smaller version of home and family. Students who violate the rights of others or who violate district or school rules shall be subject to disciplinary measures. The classroom teacher is the best person to handle school discipline, and in most cases the discipline is managed well at the classroom level. However, there are times when student behavior warrants administrative involvement. In each instance of an office referral, the school administration will determine the appropriate consequence.

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS FOR BEHAVIOR

At Torrington Middle School we value the core principles of respect, responsibility and safety. Students are taught expectations of these core principles throughout the school year. It is always expected that a student shall follow reasonable requests of teachers, administrators, and other district employees and shall respond to requests for information from these persons in a truthful manner.

Expectations are based upon:

- **Respect** - Demonstrate the value of people, places and things
- **Responsibility** - Take control of your words and actions
- **Safety** - Make healthy and informed choices

Behavior Infractions

AGGRESSION: Aggression/Risk of Injury—any behavior aimed at causing harm or pain, psychological harm, or personal injury or physical distraction. An important aspect of aggressive behavior is the intention underlying the actor's behavior. Aggression can be direct or indirect, active or passive, and physical or verbal which may lead to a risk of injury. A risk of injury is an unexpected or undesirable event, especially one resulting in damage or harm to an individual.

ASSAULT OR HAZING: Physical assault, striking without provocation or retaliation or requiring physical actions as part of an initiation to a club, team and/or group.

BULLYING ([Board of Education Policy #5010](#)): Any act by a student or a group of students directed against another student with the intent to ridicule, harass, humiliate or intimidate electronically the other student while on school grounds, at a school-sponsored activity or on a school bus which acts are committed more than once against any student during the school year.

CAFETERIA MISBEHAVIOR: Behavior that interferes with a civilized eating experience. Examples include but are not limited to: shouting, running, horseplay, failure to clean up after oneself, and throwing food.

CELL PHONE/PERSONAL TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES: [PER BOE policy 5041](#), privately owned technological devices may not be used during instructional time, except as specifically permitted by instructional staff. Use of any such device for an improper purpose is prohibited. Failure to comply with policy will result in the following disciplinary action:

- **First Offense:** The administrator or designee takes the cell phone and holds it until the end of the school day.
- **Second Offense:** The administrator or designee takes the cell phone and contacts the parent/guardian to discuss the incident and to schedule the retrieval of the phone.
- **Third Offense:** The student will receive a 1 day In-School Suspension (ISS) and the phone will be retrieved by the parent/guardian.
- An accumulation of disciplinary infractions, including those related to cell phone misuse and defiance, may lead to suspension or possible expulsion if chronic non-compliance is evident.

CHEATING / PLAGIARISM: Quoting or paraphrasing work without proper citation. Submitting work as your own that was copied from or taken from another student/or source.

CLASS CUT: Unauthorized absence from class.

DEFIANCE OF AUTHORITY: Not following a reasonable request from an adult.

DISRUPTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS: Behaving in a way that interrupts the learning environment for self and/or others.

DRUG/ALCOHOL ([Board of Education Policy #5050](#)):

Over-the-counter medication distribution/possession: Non-prescription medicines are not allowed in school except as noted in the medication policy.

Possession, consumption of or being under the influence of Controlled Substances, Prescription Drugs, and Alcohol on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event: A student shall not be in possession or under the influence of drugs or alcohol at any time during school, on school transportation or at any school-sponsored activity.

Possession of smoking or other tobacco use: Students may not possess or use tobacco products of any kind in school or at school-sponsored activities.

Sale, distribution, or intent to distribute Controlled Substances, either prescription or non-prescription drugs or alcohol: A student shall not sell, offer to sell or distribute.

FIGHTING: Mutual combat or physical interaction involving 2 or more participants.

FORGERY/IDENTITY THEFT: Signing someone else's name to a document and/or pretending to be someone else.

GAMBLING/GAMING: Gambling or playing games of chance for money or anything of value.

HARASSMENT: Offensive physical, verbal or visual comments or actions which are racial, ethnic, sexual or religious in nature. The exposure of intimate parts of the body will not be tolerated at any time during the school day or during school sponsored activities.

HATE CRIME: Intimidation based on prejudice or bias when such person cruelly, and with specific intent to intimidate or harass another person because of the actual or perceived race, religion, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity or expression of such other person, does any of the following: causes physical contact with such other person; damages, destroys or defaces any real or personal property of such other person; threatens, by word or act, to cause physical harm to an individual or group.

INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR: Language or behavior which is offensive, humiliating and/or hurtful, including comments that are verbal or written and offensive in nature regarding race, religion, ethnic background, sexual orientation, disability, or personal appearance.

LEAVING SCHOOL BUILDING/GROUNDS: Students should not be outside the school building/off school grounds or attempt to re-enter after unauthorized exit without permission.

LOITERING/ROAMING: Presence outside of assigned area without permission and /or without a pass.

REPORTING OR CONSPIRACY TO REPORT A FALSE ALARM OR BOMB THREAT: Calling in, leaving a written message or pulling a fire alarm.

TARDY TO CLASS/SCHOOL: Entering building or class after start time.

THEFT:

Possession of Stolen Goods: Possession of items without permission of owner.

Robbery: Taking property from another by force, threat, and/or aggression.

THREATENING: The stated or implied threat of bodily harm in verbal or written form or by gesture.

TRANSPORTATION:

Bus infraction: Referral by bus driver or Bus Company for inappropriate behavior on the bus.

TRUANCY: See [Board of Education Policy #5006](#)

MISUSE OF PRIVATELY OWNED TECHNOLOGICAL DEVICES: See [Board of Education Policy #5041](#) for more information

- possession or use of a privately owned devices such as, but not limited to, cell phones, airpods, personal computers, or other personal devices

VANDALISM TO SCHOOL PROPERTY: Damage or defacement of school property.

VIOLATION OF ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY: Any violation to the Internet Acceptable Use policy found under Internet Use in this handbook.

WEAPONS/FIREWORKS: No student shall use or possess a weapon or fireworks on school property or at any school function.

Practices to Address Behavior

PROCESS:

In each instance of an office referral, an administrator or designee will determine the appropriate consequence. The classroom teacher is typically the best person to handle behavior that affects the classroom environment. However, there are times when student behavior warrants administrative involvement. Office referrals for discipline are a last resort.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES:

Torrington Middle School staff will use restorative practices, when appropriate, in order for students to repair harm done and give a voice to those that have been harmed.

DETENTION:

Detentions are of three types, **teacher-assigned lunch detention, administrator-assigned lunch detention, and administrator-assigned after school office detention.**

If a student fails to report for a teacher-assigned lunch detention, the teacher will attempt to contact his/her parents/guardians and then, based upon that outcome, the teacher will attempt to reschedule the detention and if unsuccessful will refer the student to the appropriate Administrator. If a student is referred to the Administrator for missing a teacher lunch detention, he/she will be assigned an administrator-assigned detention. After school administrator-assigned office detentions may be held on any school day Monday through Thursday.

SUSPENSION ([Board of Education Policy #5030](#)):

The administrative staff of the school shall have the right to suspend any student for breach of conduct for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days.

By telephone, the Administrator or designee shall make reasonable attempts to immediately notify the parent or guardian of a minor student following the suspension, and state the cause(s) leading to the suspension.

- Whether the telephone contact is made with the parent or guardian of such minor student, the Administrator or designee shall forward a letter to such parent or guardian to the last address reported on school records (or to a newer address if known by the Administrator or designee) within one school day of the suspension action where practicable, and offer the parents or guardian an opportunity for a conference to discuss the same.
- Notice of the original suspension shall be transmitted by the Administrator or designee to the superintendent of schools or designee.
- The student shall be allowed to complete any class work, including examinations, without penalty, missed while under suspension.
- The decision of the Administrator or designee with regard to disciplinary actions up to and including suspensions shall be final. In cases where the student has already been suspended or such suspension will result in the student being suspended, more than fifteen (15) times or fifty (50) days in a school year, whichever results in fewer days of exclusion, the student shall, prior to suspension, be granted a formal hearing before the Board of Education. The Administrator or designee shall report the student to the Superintendent or designee and request a formal Board hearing.

DETERMINING IN-SCHOOL OR OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION:

At TMS, our goal is to keep as many students as possible in school and in a positive learning environment. In accordance with Section 10-233c of the Connecticut General Statutes, the conduct of a pupil that leads to suspension by the school administration is due to the following:

- Violation of a publicized policy; or
- Disruption of the educational process; or
- Endangerment to persons or property.

When the conduct of the pupil occurs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity, then one or more of the above elements must be established for disciplinary action.

If the conduct occurs off school grounds, then both of the following elements are necessary to lead to disciplinary action:

- Violation of a publicized policy; and
- Disruption of the educational process.

Similarly, if the conduct of the pupil occurs while the pupil is awaiting or receiving Transportation to and from school, the following elements are required:

- Violation of publicized policy; or
- Endangerment to persons or property.

Suspensions shall be in-school suspensions unless during the hearing the school administrator determines that the pupil being suspended poses such a danger to persons or property or such a disruption of the educational process that the suspension should be out-of-school.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) each contain a set of procedural protections to be applied when children with disabilities are subject to school disciplinary activity.

PRINCIPAL HEARING:

In cases of repeated disruptive or unacceptable behavior, the appropriate Administrator has the option of referring the offending student to disciplinary hearing. During the hearing, the Principal will meet with the student, parent/guardian and appropriate school personnel to review the academic and disciplinary record of the student involved. As a result of the hearing, the Principal will take appropriate disciplinary measures to possibly include restorative practices, disciplinary probation, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension and/or referral to outside agencies (counseling, probation, police, etc.). It is understood that the Disciplinary Hearing process will be used in appropriate cases in an effort to avoid referral to the Superintendent of Schools for consideration for expulsion from school.

NOTICE TO PARENTS:

In disciplinary situations, parents often ask “What happened to the other student? Did the other student receive consequences?” State and federal laws protect student confidentiality. Therefore, administrators will not be able to provide you with information about another child.

PROCEDURES GOVERNING EXPULSION:

School administrators **may consider recommendation** for expulsion of a student in a case where he/she has cause to believe the student has engaged in conduct on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity which endangers persons or property, is seriously disruptive of the educational process or is in violation of a publicized Board policy.

School administrators must recommend expulsion proceedings in all cases against any student whom the administration reasonably believes:

- Was in possession on school grounds or at a school-sponsored activity of a deadly weapon, dangerous instrument, martial arts weapon or firearm as defined in 18 USC 921 as amended from time to time; or
- Off school grounds, possessed and used a firearm as defined in 18 USC 921, IN VIOLATION OF Conn. Gen. Stat. 29-35, or possessed and used a firearm as defined in 18 USC 921, deadly weapon, a dangerous instrument or a martial arts weapon in the commission of a crime; or
- Was engaged on or off school grounds in offering for sale or distribution of a controlled substance (as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. 21a240[9]), whose manufacturing, distribution, sale, prescription, dispensing, transporting, or possessing with intent to sell or dispense, offering or administering is subject to criminal penalties under Conn. Gen. Stat. 21a-227 and 21a-278.
- A "firearm" as defined in 18USC 921 means any weapon that will, is designed to, or may be readily converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; the frame or receiver of any such weapon; any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, including a bomb, a grenade, rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, a mine, or a similar device.
- "Deadly weapon" means any weapon, whether loaded or unloaded from which a shot may be discharged, or a switchblade knife, gravity knife, bill, blackjack, bludgeon, or metal knuckles.
- "Dangerous instrument" means any instrument, article, or substance which, under the circumstances in which it is used or attempted or threatened to be used, is capable of causing death or serious injury, and includes a 'vehicle' as that term is defined in this section and includes a dog that has been commanded to attack (except police dogs on duty).
- A "martial arts weapon" includes a nunchaku, kama, kasari-fundo, octagon sai, tonfa, or Chinese star.

Upon receipt of an expulsion recommendation, the Superintendent may conduct an inquiry concerning the expulsion recommendation. If the Superintendent, or his/her designee, determines that a student should or must be expelled, he or she shall forward his/her recommendation to the Board of Education so that the Board of Education can consider and act upon this recommendation. Notice of any suspension or expulsion and the conduct for which the pupil was suspended or expelled must be included in the student's cumulative educational record. Notice of suspension is to be expunged upon high school graduation. Conn. Gen. Stat. 10-233c(e).

Due Process

Due process will be provided according to the following procedures:

- Detention assigned by an Administrator may not be appealed.
- In cases where suspension is imposed, a student shall be entitled to:
 - A formal meeting for discussion of charges and evidence with the Principal.
 - An opportunity to deny charges, rebut evidence
 - A right to appeal to the Principal. All appeals must be in writing, must specifically address the error/misinterpretation of the rules upon which the appeal is based, and must be submitted to the Office. A meeting with the Principal will then be scheduled. The decision of the Principal is final.
- In the cases of expulsion by the Torrington Board of Education, students and their parents shall be provided a formal hearing prior to expulsion which guarantees the following:
 - The right to testify and produce friendly or affirmative witnesses
 - The right to demand that witnesses appear in person to answer questions

The Board may, however, refuse to allow a witness to testify if it is determined that the witness has been intimidated and therefore would provide inaccurate testimony. In this case, a deposition of the testimony will be issued to the student. **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE TITLE VI, TITLE VII (CIVIL RIGHTS ACT, 1964); TITLE IX (EDUCATION AMENDMENTS, 1972); SECTION 504 (REHABILITATION ACT, 1973).**

The Torrington Board of Education adopts the following grievance procedures in order to provide for prompt and equitable resolution of citizen, student, and employee complaints alleging any action, which is prohibited by Section 504, Title VI, VII, and IX.

- Any student, citizen, or employee will, in the case of an alleged violation, attempt resolution of the issue through the Administrator of the building in which the practice has allegedly occurred.
- If a person is not satisfied with the complaint response of the building Administrator, he/she may appeal the decision within ten calendar days, in writing. The appeal should be forwarded to the designated non-compliance officers. A review of the written complaint will take place within twenty calendar days.
- If the complainant is not willing to abide by the system-wide Non-Discrimination Compliance Officer's recommendation, he/she may submit a written appeal for a hearing to the Board of Education within fifteen calendar days of receiving the decision.
- With at least ten calendar days' notice given prior to the hearing, the Board of Education shall inform all parties involved of the date, the time and place of the hearing and of the right to present witness(s) and to legal counsel or other representation, if desired. The Board of Education shall hear all aspects of the appeal and shall reach a decision within thirty calendar days of the receipt of the written appeal. The decision shall be presented in writing to the complainant at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Secretary of the Board of Education shall inform the parties of the Board's action within five working days of the Board's meeting.

It is the policy of the Board of Education that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law is prohibited, whether by student, Board employees or third parties subject to control of the Board. The Board's prohibition of discrimination or harassment in its educational programs or activities expressively extends to academic, nonacademic and extracurricular activities, including athletics, as well as the district website. It is also the policy of the Board of Education to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics such as race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, disability (including pregnancy), gender identity or expression, or veteran status.

For the purposes of this policy, "gender identity or expression" means a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose.

For the purposes of this policy, "veteran" means any person honorably discharged from, or released under honorable conditions from active service in, the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Air Force and any reserve component thereof, including the Connecticut National Guard.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health Office Overview

The school nurses work with parents to promote the health of their child so that the child may fully benefit from their educational program. It is important that parents notify the nurse of any medical problem that may influence the students; performance at school or that may require the assistance of the nurse during the school day. Please contact the school nurse at 496-4050 ext. 1143 in regard to any health problems or concerns. Please visit the [Torrington Public Schools Health Website](#) for more information.

Staying Home When Sick: In a collaborative effort to keep all students and staff healthy, the Torrington Public Schools ask that any person who has symptoms of respiratory or gastrointestinal infections, such as cough, fever, sore throat, vomiting, or diarrhea, should contact the school and stay home in order to rest and recuperate. Those children with severe coughs and/or a fever will be sent home from school. Any child waking up with a severe cough and/or fever should be kept home. As always, a student must be fever free for 24 hours prior to returning to school.

COVID-19: Testing is recommended for people with symptoms of COVID-19 as soon as possible after symptoms begin. If a person with COVID-19 symptoms tests negative for COVID-19, they should consider getting tested for other respiratory illnesses that could be spread to others, such as flu. People who are at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19 who test positive should consult with a healthcare provider right away for possible treatment, even if their symptoms are mild. Staying home when sick can lower the risk of spreading infectious diseases, including COVID-19, to other people. We realize that the CDC and DPH guidelines no longer mandate a five-day isolation as in the past. However, students who test positive and are experiencing fever and symptoms, should isolate for five days or until the fever and symptoms break for 24 hours. Obviously, if a child has COVID, we want them to rest and get better. *Students may return once they are fever free for 24 hours and no longer have symptoms.* The CDC and DPH also recommend that anyone who returns after a COVID positive test result should wear a mask for five additional days. However, once again the CDC and DPH guidelines do not mandate a five- day mask period.

Extended Absences due to illness or injury: In the event of significant illness or injury, a physician's note is required for an extended absence of more than five (5) days. Following surgery, traumatic injury or a contagious illness, a physician's note is required to return to school. We urge parents to notify the school nurse of any significant illness or injury prior to the student's return to school. This will allow the nurse to arrange any necessary accommodations for the student. *MOBILE CRISIS (211)– In the event of a student in need of mobile crisis intervention, a written note from a medical professional is required prior to the return to school.*

HEALTH OCCURRENCES

By medically evaluating each student who comes into the health office, i.e., examining the student's temperature, ears, blood pressure, or listening to the lungs, if necessary, for congestion along with a health interview, the school nurse can better assess whether a student should remain or be dismissed from school. **A parent or authorized emergency contact is always contacted by the nurse before dismissal.**

Please contact the school nurse at 496-4050 ext. 1143 in regard to any health problems or concerns.

Allergies

FOOD ALLERGIES

The Torrington School District recognizes that life threatening food allergies are an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all pupils with food allergies. In order to minimize the incidence of life threatening allergic reactions, the Torrington School District maintains a procedure for addressing life threatening allergic reactions and maintains an Emergency Action Plan for any student whose parent/guardian and physicians have informed the school in writing that the student has a potentially life threatening allergy. A parent or guardian of a student with food allergies is responsible for providing all food for his/her own child. Snacks will be kept in a separate snack box or chest provided by the parent or guardian.

LATEX ALLERGIES

Due to the possibility of students and staff suffering from latex severe allergies, **no latex balloons or products are allowed** in school or on school grounds.

Emergency Medical Contact Information

We urge parents to notify the school, through the nurse, of any information regarding health, illnesses, injuries or medical conditions as well as changes to contact information. This information will be handled discreetly, but ensures that we are aware of and understand the special needs of our students.

Emergency Procedures and Drills

TMS has established procedural guidelines (i.e. evacuation and lockdown) in the event of an emergency. Crisis Response Drills and Fire Drills are scheduled throughout the school year. Evacuations, secure school, shelter in place, and lockdown drills are held at regular intervals. Students must follow emergency protocols and/or adults in charge.

Illness/Injury at School

The primary responsibility of the school nurse is to treat illness and injury that occurs at school. It is important that the parents notify the nurse of any serious injury or illness that would influence a student's performance at school or that could require the assistance of the nurse during the school day.

Medications at School

With each new school year, it is important to review the policy for the administration of medicine in schools, as set forth by the State of Connecticut. Therefore, it is very important that you read the following information:

- Medication should be given at home if at all possible. Most medications, including antibiotics, can be spread out over a 24 hour period.
- A required medical form must be completed. This includes a written order from a physician or dentist and a written authorization from a parent or guardian.
- All medications must be delivered to school by a parent or other responsible adult and given directly to the school nurse or in her absence, the Administrator.
- No more than 45 school days supply of a medication shall be delivered to school. Those parents who purchase medication in bulk supplies must advise their suppliers (Pharmacies) to package medication in the 45 day increments for use in the school.
- All of the above applies to non-prescription medication (i.e., Benadryl or Tylenol) as well. Non-prescription medication must be delivered in a sealed container.
- All prescription medication must be delivered in the original container and labeled with: name of child, name of drug, strength, dosage, frequency, physician or dentist's name.

Physicals

According to CT State Law, students entering 7th grade must have a current physical on file with the school nurse in order to begin school. To ensure the safety of all students and staff, students who do not have a current physical on file will not be permitted to enter the building until a physical has been completed and submitted. Questions regarding physicals may be directed to the school nurse at 860-486-4050 ext. 1143. [Link physical form.](#)

Screenings

In compliance with the Connecticut General Statutes, Public act 80-440, the Torrington Board of Education will provide screenings for your children. Please be advised that screenings do not take the place of periodic medical evaluations. Screenings using procedures recommended by the State Board of Health and Education are:

- Vision – Grade K-6 inclusive; Grade 9
- Hearing – Grade K-3 inclusive; Grade 5 and 8
- Postural - Grade 6*- 9 inclusive; * Postural screening is done as a part of the mandated Health Assessment in Grade 6
- Head Lice – Periodic checks as necessary.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Change of Address & Contact Information

Please notify the main office immediately if you have a change of address or other contact information such as phone number or email address. This information is necessary should the school need to contact you regarding the safety of your child. **You may call Mrs. Petzel at kpetzel@torrington.org or 860-496-4050 extension 1152.** Parents will also be asked to review contact information at the beginning of the school year and provide information for emergency contacts in case you can not be reached.

Should your address change during the school year, proof of residency will be required. Please submit the [Change of Information Form](#) to the main office as well as acceptable documentation as listed on the form.

CUSTODY

It is also necessary that school records be accurate and current regarding parental custody. The school needs proof of custody arrangements in our files. In order to protect the child and the rights of the custodial parent, it is important that the school be given a photocopy of the custodial agreement. Without this document in our files, we must legally release a child to either parent. If there are changes to a custodial agreement during the school year, a copy of the changes must be provided to the school for our files.

Parent Concerns: Protocol for Addressing Problems

Parents should first contact the classroom teacher with any questions or concerns that arise. If necessary, parents may reach out to the school counselor depending on the nature of the concern. Teachers can be reached by email, phone, or ParentSquare. Parents should reach out to an administrator if their concerns have resolved after speaking with a teacher and/or counselor.

- Emerald House School Counselor - Elena Sileo (esileo@torrington.org)
- Ruby House School Counselor - Jessica Bernardi (ibernardi@torrington.org)
- Sapphire House School Counselor - Megan Kupec (mkupec@torrington.org)

Student Records

Parents have a right to review their child's records. If you wish to do so or have any questions regarding your child's records, please contact his/her Administrator. For more information about student records, please see [BOE Policy #5028](#).

Withdrawal from TPS

If your family is planning to move out of the Torrington Public School system, the parent/guardian must complete the [Authorization for Release of Information](#) form to Mrs. Petzel at kpetzel@torrington.org or 860-486-4050 extension 1152. This form can be completed as soon as the move is known and returned to the main office.

PARENT AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Google Classroom

Teachers use Google Classroom to communicate information with students regarding classwork assignments, projects, assessments, and other classroom activities. Homework is also listed on Google Classroom. Students will use Google Classroom on a daily basis, both at school and at home, not only to access information posted by teachers but also to submit assignments. If a student is absent, he should log onto Google Classroom to complete any assignments posted. This is especially important in the case of an extended absence to prevent a student from falling too far behind in his classes. Should a student have questions about materials or assignments posted on Google Classroom, he should email the teacher.

ParentSquare

Parent-school communication is essential to students' success. ParentSquare will be the primary mode of communication with parents during the school year. This online platform allows teachers, administrators, and other staff members to message parents with important updates about the classroom as well as general information about Torrington Middle School.

PowerSchool

Parents and students are strongly encouraged to access the Parent Portal Site of Power School to monitor assignments, check on student progress, check quiz and test grades, homework completion, check attendance, check academic progress, and communicate with teachers. Each student will have a unique Username and Password to access his/her grades and schedule on PowerSchool. Students should keep passwords confidential.

Parents will also be assigned a unique Username and Password to allow access to their child's grades and assignment information. Parents are encouraged to check PowerSchool frequently to monitor their child's progress in each class. Please keep in mind that larger projects and long term assignments may require additional time to post. If you have any issues accessing PowerSchool, please contact the main office. If you have any questions about a grade or assignment, please contact your child's teacher.

PTO

All parents and teachers are encouraged to become members of the Torrington Middle School P.T.O. This organization sponsors many events that will enrich your child's experience during their time here. School administrators and teachers want and encourage parent involvement.

Use of school funds through PTO will follow the school activity funds policy ([BOE Policy #3050](#)).

Meetings will be held each month from September through June. Elected offices are President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. P.T.O. will provide a list of officers at the beginning of each school year which will be posted in the Main Office. Please refer to the TMS PTO website for periodic updates.

QUESTIONS AND NEXT STEPS - Quick Reference Guide

There may be times during the school year when parents/guardians or students have questions. There are many people at Torrington Middle School who can help you! Please use the chart below to determine where to start with your questions or concerns.

Question/Concern	What to do
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I have questions about my child’s schedule ● I have questions about options for high school ● I have concerns about my child’s overall academic performance ● I have concerns about my child’s overall social-emotional well-being ● Where should I direct my child if I have concerns about her interpersonal relationships with peers? 	Contact your child’s school counselor - (860) 496-4050 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emerald House - Elena Sileo (ext 1156) (esileo@torrington.org) ● Ruby House - Jessica Bernardi (ext 1169) (jbernardi@torrington.org) ● Sapphire House - Megan Kupec (ext 1159) (mkupec@torrington.org)
I have questions about an assignment, grade, or individual class.	Contact the classroom teacher
I have general questions about sports teams, clubs, or other extra-curricular activities (ex: when tryouts will take place, when clubs meet, dates for after school events).	Information will be shared on ParentSquare. If you still have questions, please contact the main office.
I have specific concerns or questions about a club/ extracurricular activity.	Contact the club advisor
I have questions about Final Forms or specific questions related to a sport my child is playing (or would like to play/is trying out to play).	Contact the coach of the specific sport or Athletic Director Mr. Mike Fritch at mfritch@torrington.org
I have questions about my child’s bus stop.	Contact All-Star Transportation at 860-489-3444
I have questions about Alternate Bussing (ex: need to set up an alternate bus stop for an extended/recurring period of time).	Contact Mrs. Kim Petzel at kpetzel@torrington.org or 860-496-4050 ext 1152
I have questions about withdrawing my child from Torrington Public Schools.	Contact Mrs. Kim Petzel at kpetzel@torrington.org or 860-496-4050 ext 1152
I have questions about attendance (ex: my child was marked absent but was in attendance at school)	Contact Mrs. Amber Gurtowsky at agurtowsky@torrington.org or 860-496-4050 ext 1164
My child receives special education services through an IEP. I have questions related to the IEP.	Contact your child’s case manager or Supervisor of Student Services, Sue McMahon at smcmahon@torrington.org or 860-496-4050 ext 1162
Where should I direct my child if his Chromebook is damaged or missing?	Student should come to the Student Support Center to complete a Student Report Form (also see page 46-47 of this handbook)

STUDENT LIFE

Overview

The bulk of educational research demonstrates that participation in extracurricular activities provides many benefits to our students. Participation in extra-curricular activities provides students an opportunity to create a positive and voluntary connection to their school, which can lead to an increase in academic achievement, a reduction in disciplinary issues while at school, and an increase in graduation rates. In addition, students learn lessons in leadership, teamwork, organization, analytical thinking, problem solving, and time management through working with others on various projects and activities.

Athletics

Selection to an athletic team at Torrington Middle School is both an honor and a privilege. Student-athletes assume a leadership role and become representatives of the school, as well as the team. Our school teams, called the “Vikings” compete with neighboring schools as part of our sports program.

All students are invited to try out and be selected as a member of a sports team. Prior to attending tryouts, students and parents will need to complete the sign-up process with FinalForms, an online forms and data management service the TPS Athletic Department has transitioned towards using. Along with completing these online forms, students will also need to provide a sports physical form performed within the last 13 months.

Any student who makes a team will have their grades from the previous semester reviewed to ensure the student-athlete is passing all classes with a minimum grade of 65. A student-athlete who does not meet the passing criteria for all subjects will be expected to work with a counselor to develop an academic support plan. The plan will be in place for the duration of the sport’s season. Failure of a student to agree to a support plan or follow through with a support plan, will result in the student not being eligible to be part of the team. Student-athletes have a responsibility to serve as positive role models for other Torrington Middle School (TMS) students on the playing fields/courts, in the classroom and in the Torrington community.

In order to remain eligible for the entire season, students must be passing all subjects at the time of progress reports. At TMS, the term “student athlete” first emphasizes academics. Coaches and teachers reserve the right to limit athletes’ participation throughout the season as academic needs dictate. If a student misses a practice or game because of detention or suspension the coach of the team has the authority to place the student on suspension or probation.

Programs that ***may*** be offered:

	FALL	WINTER	SPRING
INTERSCHOLASTIC	Cross Country Volleyball (Girls) Soccer (Boys/Girls) Unified Sports	Basketball (Boys/Girls) Dance Team Unified Sports	Softball Baseball Track Unified Sports

Torrington Middle School has a proud tradition of hospitality and good sportsmanship. All athletes, students, and spectators are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects positively on our school and community.

Clubs and Activities

Many clubs and activities advised by faculty members meet periodically after school. Announcements concerning these upcoming clubs and activities are made during morning announcements in Advisory. These announcements keep the students informed about the time, location, and specific details of clubs and other extracurricular activities offered at our school.

The following clubs and activities **may** be offered:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Art Club</i>• <i>Drama Club</i>• <i>Jazz Band</i>• <i>Youth Entrepreneurs</i>• <i>PRIDE Club</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Debate Team</i>• <i>Comic Book Club</i>• <i>Environmental Club</i>• <i>Best Buddies</i>• <i>Student Newspaper</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Student Leadership Council</i>• <i>Yearbook</i>• <i>Cheer Club</i>
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Students may also propose their own ideas for a club or activity! Students should submit a proposal for a new club or activity Mrs. Rinaldi, TMS Principal. Be sure to include why other students would benefit from the club/activity, when the club/activity would meet, and what specific types of activities students would do during meeting times. Students must find a faculty member willing to serve as an advisor.

NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

Membership in the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) signifies commitment to the values of scholarship, service, leadership, character, and citizenship. These five pillars have been associated with membership in this organization since its inception in 1929. NJHS chapters are found in all 50 states, US Territories, and around the world. Chapter membership not only recognizes students for their accomplishments in all of these areas, but challenges them to develop further through involvement in school activities and community service.

Students who have a cumulative GPA of 92% or higher from the time they enter Torrington Middle School through the first trimester of their 7th grade year, will be invited to apply to become a member of the National Junior Honor Society. Students who apply will be required to submit teacher recommendations, explain how they have demonstrated a commitment to leadership, service and citizenship within their community, and provide other general information. Their application packet will be reviewed by the National Honor Society Faculty Board Members. Those students who meet all the criteria, will be inducted into NJHS in the fall of their 7th grade year.

To maintain member status, students will need to complete a number of volunteer service hours, continue to maintain their excellent academic standing, and strive to be a role model in relation to leadership, service, character, and citizenship for the remainder of their time at Torrington Middle School.

Field Trips

Teachers may schedule field trips to enhance student learning. When students go on trips, they represent our school and the Torrington community and are expected to exhibit school appropriate behavior.

- Signed parent permission slips are required to attend any field trip. Field trip permission slips must be submitted by designated deadlines.
- All TMS rules apply while students are on field trips.
- Dress appropriately per the school and BOE guidelines. ([BOE Policy #5040](#))
- Administrators reserve the right to limit student participation on field trips for those students who have been involved in serious or consistent behavioral difficulties.
- On days when entire grades or teams are going on a field trip, students who are not going are expected to be in school. These students will be assigned an alternate schedule for the day.

School Functions

There may be times during the school year when students have the opportunity to attend after school functions such as school dances. Students must meet TMS behavior expectations to earn the privilege of attending after school functions. Administrators may remove the privilege of attending an after school function or activity as a consequence of behavior.

- Tickets will be sold prior to any after-school event. No tickets will be sold at the door.
- No one will be allowed to enter without a ticket.
- Only Torrington Middle School students may attend an after school function/dance.
- If the dance/school function is planned for a specific grade level, only students in that grade level will be allowed to attend/participate.
- Students may not attend a dance/school function if they were absent from school on the day of the dance/school function or were suspended on the day of the dance/school function.
- All TMS rules apply while students are in attendance.
- Appropriate dress per the school and BOE policy is required.
- Once students enter the building, they may not leave until the end of the dance/school function or until a parent/guardian picks them up.
- Students must be picked up promptly at the end of the dance/school function. Repeated occurrences of late pick-ups will result in the loss of the privilege to attend future dances/functions.

STUDENT SUPPORTS

504 Services

School counselors, in collaboration with administrators, develop plans for eligible students requiring accommodations under Section 504 American with Disabilities Act . Accommodations are individualized according to student needs. More information is available by contacting your child’s school counselor.

- Emerald House School Counselor - Elena Sileo (esileo@torrington.org)
- Ruby House School Counselor - Jessica Bernardi (ibernardi@torrington.org)
- Sapphire House School Counselor - Megan Kupec (mkupec@torrington.org)

Response to Intervention (RTI)

Response to Intervention aims to help struggling students be successful. Students identified for RTI services in either math or reading will work with a teacher on foundational skills in a small group setting. The teacher will frequently monitor student progress and communicate progress to the parents or guardians.

School Counselors and Social Workers

The School Counseling Department’s primary goal is to assist students in gaining an understanding of themselves so that they may make informed decisions regarding their present and future directions. The School Counseling Department is composed of counselors, social workers, and office support personnel. Referred students will also have access to the Behavior Health Specialist through Center for Youth and Families (CYF).

FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES

All students of Torrington Middle School and their parents/guardians are encouraged to utilize the school’s Pupil Personnel Services through an appointment to see their school counselor or social worker. Learning lab may be used for these individual sessions. Parents are encouraged to call for an appointment so that time can be set aside for their needs.

Services provided:

ACADEMIC	PERSONAL/SOCIAL	CAREER
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Counseling• Scheduling• Study Skills Training• Student Success Team• Attendance Support• Community Tutoring Referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal Counseling• Mental Health First Aid• Suicide Prevention• Problem Solving• Goal Setting• Behavioral Contracts• Advocacy• Agency Referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student Success Planning• Career Exploration• Post-Secondary Exploration• Long Term Goal Setting• Soft Skills Training

Modes of service:

- Individual student meetings (planned or responsive)
- Group Meetings/Sessions
- Comprehensive Classroom Lessons
- Informational Sessions
- Collaboration within and outside school

Confidentiality is an important part of all professional relationships. It is essential to know, however, that by law or by sound ethical practices, there are situations whereby a counselor is required to disclose information that affects student safety or the safety of others. To avoid any misunderstanding between the student and counselor, it is best for the student to clarify any issue that is expected to be held in confidence.

Special Education

We offer a continuum of special educational services ranging from Least Restrictive Environment to self-contained classrooms based on the individual needs of students as outlined in their IEPs.

REFERRAL PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS POSSIBLY NEEDING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

All students who may need special education services must go through the Response-To-Intervention (RTI) process. This process ensures that each student has a variety of modifications or accommodations. The RTI team monitors these interventions for several months to determine if a special education referral is needed. If you have any questions about the process, you may contact your child's counselor.

PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

The Special Education department provides services for students with a broad spectrum of skills. Programming is based upon students' needs with parents playing a critical role in the planning process.

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The parent of a child who requires or may require special education and related services is guaranteed procedural safeguards in accordance with the federal law entitled "Individuals with Disabilities Education Act" (formerly titled "Education of the Handicapped Act") and with the state laws and regulations concerning children requiring special education.

More information is available by contacting the Supervisor of Special Services, Mrs. Susan McMahon at 860-496-4050 or smcmahon@torrington.org.

TECHNOLOGY

Airpods, Cell Phones and Yondr

Per [BOE Policy #5041](#), students may bring cell phones to school but must ensure that they are turned off or on silent mode and locked in a district issued cell phone pouch (Yondr pouch) throughout the entire school day. Students will lock their cell phone pouches upon entry into the school building and unlock them at dismissal. Students will be issued a Yondr pouch at the beginning of the school year. Should a student need a new Yondr pouch during the school year, please contact the main office.

- Students are prohibited from using cell phones in all school areas, including the lunchroom and bathroom.
- Students are prohibited from the unauthorized recording, listening into, streaming, or broadcasting (photo/audio/video) of another individual without the permission of the individual or a school staff member.
- Students are prohibited from damaging Board of Education technology resources, including Yondr pouches.
- Students are responsible for their own property they choose to bring to school. Students and parents should be aware that the school is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged cell phones or other personal technology/property.
- Students are prohibited from wearing Airpods at school.

Violation of the cell phone policy will result in the following disciplinary action, per [BOE Policy #5041](#):

- 1st Offense - The administrator or designee will take the cell phone and hold it until the end of the day, at which time it will be returned to the student.
- 2nd Offense - The administrator or designee will take the cell phone and contact the parent/guardian to schedule a time to retrieve the device.
- 3rd Offense - The student will receive a 1 day in-school suspension (ISS) and the parent/guardian will be contacted to retrieve the device.
- 4th Offense - An accumulation of disciplinary infractions, including those related to cell phone misuse and defiance, may lead to suspension or possible expulsion if chronic non-compliance is evident.

Chromebooks

Computers, computer networks, electronic devices, Internet access, and e-mail are effective and important technological resources. The Board of Education provides computers, a computer network (including Internet access) and e-mail in order to enhance the educational opportunities for our students. All students will be provided with a Chromebook. Chromebooks will be issued at the beginning of the school year and turned in at the end of the school year.

- Chromebooks are the property of Torrington Public Schools. Students are expected to take care of their Chromebook while borrowing them during the school year. Damage to school property, including Chromebooks, will result in disciplinary action.
- Students should take their Chromebook home each night. Chromebooks should be charged while at home and brought back to school the next day.
- Students may borrow a Chromebook from the Library Media Center (LMC) for extenuating circumstances.
- Because students are issued Chromebooks from Torrington Public Schools, students are not permitted to bring their own devices such as laptops or other computers.
- Chromebooks must be kept in school-provided protective cases.
- Parents are strongly encouraged to purchase the district-provided protection plan in case of loss or damage of a device.
- **Students will not be issued a Chromebook without a completed Internet Acceptable Use Form.**

What if a student's Chromebook is damaged?

- The student should bring the damaged device to the Media Center.
- A member of the library staff will help troubleshoot minor issues. If the library staff is not able to fix the Chromebook, the student will complete a tech ticket.
- The student will be given a loaner computer until his Chromebook can be repaired.
- **Repairs that are repetitive, intentional, or caused by extreme carelessness will be reported to administration. Consequences may be issued. See the Technology Damage Progression of Discipline Chart included at the end of the handbook, in the Appendix.**

What if a student's Chromebook is missing?

- The student should fill out a student report in the Student Support Center.
- The student will be given a loaner computer.
- If the student's computer is not found within 24 hours, an administrator will follow through with the appropriate investigative process.
- The student will be assigned a new device (or given their original device back should it have been found).

Use of Computers and Network Policy Policy 5042

Torrington Public Schools provides computers and internet access to students as an educational tool; these tools are to be used for education related uses only. The goal of the Board of Education is to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation and communication.

- As the owner of both the computers and internet network, Torrington Public Schools reserves the right to monitor and review any and all activity. This includes, but is not limited to: internet site access, emails sent and received, students' access to blogs, electronic bulletin boards and chat rooms, and documents. **All users must be aware that they should not have any expectation of personal privacy in the use of these information systems.**
- Students are permitted to use the district's information systems for educational purposes only. Conduct which constitutes inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to:
 - Sending any form of harassing, threatening, or intimidating message, at any time, to any person
 - Gaining or seeking to gain unauthorized access to school information systems
 - Damaging computers, computer files, information systems or computer networks
 - Downloading or modifying computer software of the district
 - Using another person's password under any circumstances
 - Trespassing in or tampering with any other person's folders, work or files
 - Accessing or attempting to access any material that is obscene
 - Accessing information on the Internet for non-educational purposes
 - Cyberbullying
 - Accessing or attempting to access social networking sites without a legitimate educational purpose
- *Per [Board of Education Policy #5042](#), Misuse of the information systems, or violations of the policies and regulations listed above, may result in loss of access to such information systems as well as other disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion, depending on the specific conduct.*

Students District Assigned Device and Rules Board Policy 5042.1

Torrington Public Schools provides for the use of 1:1 devices and the network, including the internet, as a tool for research and education. 1:1 devices and the network, like any other school property, must be used for the educational purposes for which they are intended. The district owned devices issued to students are the property of Torrington Public Schools. Please see [Policy 5042.1](#).

**All Torrington Public School Board of Education Policies
are available on the TPS website.**

www.torrington.org

Click [HERE](#) to access all TPS Board of Education Policies

Internet Acceptable Use Policy # 5021 and 5042.1

Students and parents will be required to sign the Internet Acceptable Use Policy Form as indicated below when they begin school. Violations of this policy will be handled according to the discipline policy.

USER AGREEMENT 2024-2025 INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF TORRINGTON, CONNECTICUT

Student Users: I understand and will abide by this Internet Acceptable Use Policy. I further understand that violation of terms and conditions is contrary to acceptable use in the Torrington School District. I also understand that school staff may monitor my use of the Internet. Should I commit any violation, my individual access privileges may be revoked and disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action may be taken. The use of the network and equipment purchased by district is a privilege and not a right. Students and staff have no expectation of privacy in any material that is stored, transmitted or received via the District's network or computers.

Note: If you are under the age of 18, a parent or guardian must also read and sign this agreement.

STUDENT NAME: _____

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____

SCHOOL: _____ **Grade:** _____ **Date:** _____

Parent or Guardian: As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read the Torrington Internet Acceptable Use Policy as stated above. I understand that access to the Internet is designed for educational purposes and the Torrington School District has taken precautions to eliminate material that is inappropriate in school. I understand that the Torrington School District will, to the extent possible, control access to network news sources, chat groups, and electronic bulletin boards that are considered inappropriate. However, I also recognize that it is impossible for the Torrington School District to restrict access to all controversial materials. Accordingly, I will not hold the school district responsible for materials acquired on the network. I further understand that this student's privileges may be restricted or suspended and school disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action may be taken for failure to adhere to any provision of this policy. I hereby give my permission for my child to use the Internet in school.

PARENT OR GUARDIAN: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

Note: This form will be completed by all students and parents, if appropriate, in grades 4 through 12.

Appendix

Consequences for Reported Computer Damage - pg. 51

TMS Consequences for Reported Computer Damage

Title	Damage that are repetitive/ caused by extreme carelessness	Damages that are intentional
1st Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call home by administration ● Meeting with student and documented administrative warning and lunch detention ● Invoice as determined by the IT dept protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call home by administration ● Meeting with student ● 1 day ISS ● Invoice as determined by the IT dept protocol
2nd Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call home by administration ● Meeting with student and documented Afterschool Detention ● Invoice as determined by the IT dept protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call home by administration ● 1 day ISS ● Meeting with student to complete Technology Removal Contract - Computer removed for 10 school days ● Invoice as determined by the IT dept protocol
3rd Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call home by administration ● Meeting with student to complete Technology Removal Contract - Computer removed for 10 school days ● Invoice as determined by the IT dept protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call home by administration ● 1 day OSS ● Meeting with the student to complete Technology Removal Contract - Computer removed for 20 school days beginning on day of return. ● Invoice as determined by the IT dept protocol
4th Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call home by administration ● Meeting with student to complete Technology Removal Contract - Computer removed for 20 school days ● Invoice as determined by the IT dept protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call home by administration ● 1 day OSS ● Meeting with student to complete Technology Removal Contract - Computer removed for 40 school days beginning on day of return ● Invoice as determined by the IT dept protocol
5th Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call home by administration ● Meeting with student to complete Technology Removal Contract - Computer removed for 40 school days ● Invoice as determined by the IT dept protocol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call home by administration ● 1 day OSS ● Meeting with student to complete Technology Removal Contract - Computer removed for remainder of the school year upon day of return ● Invoice as determined by the IT dept protocol
6th Offense	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call home by administration ● Meeting with student to complete Technology Removal Contract - Computer removed for remainder of school year ● Invoice as determined by the IT dept protocol 	

