

## WELCOME MESSAGE

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Dear Students and Families,

Welcome to another exciting school year at Berkley Public Schools! We are thrilled to have you as part of our vibrant community, where education, growth, and opportunity await at every turn. Whether you are new to our district or returning for another year, we are committed to ensuring that your experience with us is positive, enriching, and filled with opportunities for success.

This handbook is designed to serve as a valuable resource throughout the school year, providing important information about our district's policies, procedures, and expectations. We encourage you to take the time to review it carefully and keep it handy for reference as the year progresses.

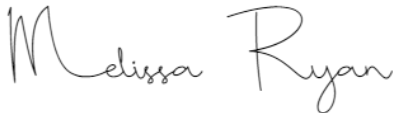
At Berkley Public Schools, we are dedicated to fostering an environment where every student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Our educators, staff, and administrators are here to support you in every aspect of your educational journey. We believe in the power of collaboration between students, families, and the school community, and we invite you to engage with us to make this school year a remarkable one.

This handbook was approved by the Berkley School Committee on **August 18, 2025**. The version posted on our website is always the most up to date. Please note that student agendas were printed prior to this approval and may not reflect all updates.

We are looking forward to a year filled with learning, growth, and memorable experiences. Together, let's work towards achieving our shared goals and making this year the best one yet.

Thank you for being a part of Berkley Public Schools. Let's make this a fantastic year!

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa Ryan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Melissa Ryan  
Superintendent of Schools

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>WELCOME MESSAGE</b>   | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>PROBLEM-SOLVING CHECKLIST</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>BERKLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT PERSONNEL</b>                                  | <b>5</b>  |
| School Committee   | 6         |
| District Administration  | 6         |
| Berkley Community School   | 6         |
| Berkley Middle School  | 6         |
| Berkley Public Schools Resource Officer  | 6         |
| <b>BERKLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS</b>  | <b>7</b>  |
| Berkley Public Schools Mission Statement   | 7         |
| Berkley Public Schools Vision And Core Values                                    | 7         |
| Berkley Public Schools Strategic Plan 2023-2028                                  | 7         |
| Non-Discrimination Policy Including Harassment & Retaliation                     | 7         |
| <b>BERKLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS/DISTRICT COORDINATOR INFORMATION</b> | <b>10</b> |
| <b>BERKLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL POLICIES</b>  | <b>13</b> |
| Bullying Prevention and Intervention   | 14        |
| Harassment/Sexual Harassment Policy  | 15        |
| Internet Use   | 18        |
| Student Pre-Referral Process   | 18        |
| <b>ATTENDING SCHOOL</b>  | <b>18</b> |
| <b>SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS &amp; DELAYS</b>   | <b>20</b> |
| Late Start Days  | 20        |
| Early Dismissal Days   | 20        |
| <b>ARRIVAL &amp; DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL</b>                                       | <b>20</b> |
| Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures [School Specific]                         | 20        |
| Arriving Late Procedures:  | 20        |
| Leaving Early Procedures:  | 21        |
| Bus Transportation   | 21        |
| Bus/Van Rules for Students   | 21        |
| Bus/Van Discipline   | 21        |
| Bus Evacuation   | 22        |
| Bicycles, Skateboarding, Scooters, & Walking                                     | 22        |
| <b>ATTENDANCE</b>  | <b>22</b> |
| Attendance Protocol  | 23        |
| Vacations During School Time   | 23        |
| Homework Expectations  | 23        |
| <b>STUDENT DISCIPLINE/CODE OF CONDUCT</b>  | <b>24</b> |
| Student Behavior Point System (BMS)/PBIS (BCS)                                   | 24        |
| Office Detention   | 25        |
| Loss of Privileges   | 29        |
| BMS Code of Conduct  | 29        |
| Discipline Due Process   | 33        |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Discipline and Students with Disabilities/Notice of Procedural Safeguards | 38        |
| <b>STUDENT APPEARANCE</b>   | <b>40</b> |
| <b>STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES</b>   | <b>40</b> |
| <b>SURROUND CARE</b>  | <b>41</b> |
| <b>COMMUNICATION</b>  | <b>41</b> |
| Non-Custodial Parent Information  | 41        |
| Family Educational Rights And Privacy Act (FERPA)                         | 42        |
| Student and Parent Demographic Information                                | 43        |
| <b>STUDENT RECORDS</b>  | <b>44</b> |
| <b>FAMILY INVOLVEMENT</b>   | <b>44</b> |
| Parent Teacher Organization   | 44        |
| Parent/Caregiver Teacher Conferences                                      | 44        |
| <b>SCHOOL SAFETY &amp; SECURITY</b>                                       | <b>45</b> |
| Mandated Reporting  | 45        |
| CORI Requirement  | 45        |
| Fire Drills   | 45        |
| School Safety Drills  | 45        |
| <b>HEALTH SERVICES</b>  | <b>46</b> |
| Emergency Forms   | 46        |
| Physical Exams and Immunizations  | 46        |
| Medications   | 46        |
| Life Threatening Allergies  | 47        |
| Health Insurance  | 47        |
| Universal Precautions   | 47        |
| Student Illnesses   | 47        |
| Exclusion from School for Contagious and Infectious Diseases/Conditions   | 47        |
| Home or In Hospital Educational Services                                  | 48        |
| Student Accidents   | 48        |
| Concussions   | 48        |
| <b>SCHOOL BASED SCREENINGS</b>  | <b>49</b> |
| Hearing Screening   | 49        |
| Vision Screening  | 49        |
| Scoliosis Screening   | 49        |
| BMI Screening   | 49        |
| SBIRT Screening   | 49        |
| <b>SCHOOL MEALS</b>   | <b>49</b> |
| <b>TEACHING &amp; LEARNING</b>  | <b>50</b> |
| Learning Expectations   | 50        |
| Student Daily Schedule  | 50        |
| Technology  | 50        |
| Broken or Damaged Chromebooks   | 51        |
| Report Cards  | 52        |
| BCS Homework Guidelines   | 52        |

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| BMS Physical Education                         | 53        |
| Substitute Teachers                            | 54        |
| Testing & Assessment                           | 54        |
| Textbooks                                      | 54        |
| Title 1  | 54        |
| Tiered Interventions                           | 54        |
| BMS Honors Classes                             | 54        |
| Videos and Movies                              | 55        |
| <b>OTHER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES</b>                 | <b>55</b> |
| Photography of Students                        | 55        |
| Pictures/Yearbooks                             | 55        |
| Food & Drink in the Classroom/Hallways         | 55        |
| BCS Snack Time                                 | 55        |
| Gum Chewing                                    | 55        |
| Extracurricular Activities                     | 55        |
| Field Trips                                    | 55        |
| Parties  | 56        |
| BMS Socials                                    | 56        |
| BMS Student Council                            | 56        |
| <b>MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS</b>                 | <b>56</b> |
| Athletic Concussion Policy (JJIF)              | 57        |
| <b>STUDENT RECOGNITION</b>                     | <b>57</b> |
| BCS Student of the Month                       | 57        |
| BMS Honor Roll                                 | 57        |
| Publicity                                      | 57        |
| <b>MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT DEVICES</b>           | <b>57</b> |
| Lockers  | 57        |
| Electronic Devices and Toys                    | 58        |
| Lost & Found                                   | 58        |
| Lost, Stolen and Damaged Materials             | 58        |
| <b>Acknowledgement of the Student Handbook</b> | <b>58</b> |

## PROBLEM-SOLVING CHECKLIST

If you have a school-related problem, we want to help solve it. For the fastest resolution to your problem, please call the individuals or offices in the order listed below.

### **Issues Affecting Your Child's Learning**

Teacher(s)

School Adjustment Counselor

Coach/Extracurricular Advisor

Principal or Assistant Principal

Superintendent

### **General School Issues**

Principal or Assistant Principal

Superintendent

### **Discipline/Safety**

Principal or Assistant Principal

Superintendent's Office

### **Special Education Issues**

Teacher

Special Educator / Liaison

Building Administrator (Principal / Assistant Principal) Director of Student Services

## BERKLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT PERSONNEL

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### School Committee

|                         |                              |                |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|
| Daniel Fagan            | Elected 2018; Term Ends 2027 | (978) 912-1544 |
| Kaitlyn Robichaud       | Elected 2021; Term Ends 2028 | (617) 694-1485 |
| Jillean Solomon         | Elected 2020; Term Ends 2026 | (508) 824-4909 |
| Leisel Sullivan         | Elected 2025; Term Ends 2025 | (508)-243-5858 |
| Tara Weber, Chairperson | Elected 2018; Term Ends 2027 | (508) 272-8562 |

### District Administration

|                                      |                |  |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|--|
| Superintendent                       | Melissa Ryan   | (508) 822-5220 ext. 321                  |
| Administrator for Student Services   | Melissa Abrego | (508) 822-5251                           |
| Business Administrator, Food Service | Andrea Tripp   | (508) 822-5220 ext. 313                  |
| Director of Technology               | Curtis DaRosa  | (508) 822-5220 ext.                      |
| Director of Facilities & Maintenance | Charles Bueche | (508) 884-9434 BMS<br>(508) 822-9550 BCS |

### Berkley Community School

|                           |                       |              |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Principal                 | Jennifer L. Francisco | 508-822-9550 |
| Assistant Principal       | Sarah A. Cogar        | 508-822-9550 |
| Nurse                     | Allison Neville, RN   | 508-822-9550 |
| Administrative Assistants | Jennifer L. Pacheco   | 508-822-9550 |
|                           | Karen Gagne           | 508-822-9550 |

### Berkley Middle School

|                           |                     |              |
|---------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Principal                 | Kimberly Hebert     | 508-884-9434 |
| Assistant Principal       | Ryan Andrade        | 508-884-9434 |
| Nurse                     | Melissa Rositer, RN | 508-884-9434 |
| Administrative Assistants | Cristine Lebeaux    | 508-884-9434 |
|                           | Jill Courcier       | 508-884-9434 |

### Berkley Public Schools Resource Officer

|                         |                  |                           |
|-------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| School Resource Officer | Matthew Engstrom | Berkley Police Department |
|-------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|

### District Social Media Accounts

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Website   | <a href="http://www.berkleypublicschools.org">www.berkleypublicschools.org</a>                                      |
| Facebook  | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/BerkleySchoolDepartment">https://www.facebook.com/BerkleySchoolDepartment</a>     |
| Instagram | <a href="https://www.instagram.com/berkleypublicschools_ma/">https://www.instagram.com/berkleypublicschools_ma/</a> |
| Twitter   | <a href="https://twitter.com/mryanbps">https://twitter.com/mryanbps</a>   |

### Staff Directory

A complete staff directory, including emails, can be found on our website at <https://www.berkleypublicschools.org/staff>.

### **Berkley Public Schools Mission Statement**

The mission of Berkley Public Schools is to provide each student with learning experiences that cultivate a community of belonging, create a culture of care, and promote academic excellence.

### **Berkley Public Schools Vision And Core Values**

The Berkley Public Schools will provide every student and staff the opportunity to achieve personal and academic excellence through the following core values:

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>Equity</b>        | Proving a school experience that meets the needs of individual students and staff  |
| <b>Acceptance</b>    | Understanding and valuing individuality  |
| <b>Gratitude</b>     | Demonstrating appreciation and care for others                                     |
| <b>Leadership</b>    | Displaying self-direction and the ability to influence others in a positive manner |
| <b>Effort</b>        | Achieving academic excellence through perseverance and determination               |
| <b>Self-Advocacy</b> | Communicating one's own interests, desires, needs, and rights                      |

### **Berkley Public Schools Strategic Plan 2023-2028**

The Berkley Public Schools Strategic Planning Committee met during the 2022-2023 school year to update the [Strategic Plan](#). The Strategic Plan was created using the [Planning for Success](#) model from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The Strategic Plan will serve as the blueprint for the work we will engage in as a school community for the next five years and can be found on our website.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy Including Harassment & Retaliation**

The Berkley School Committee and Berkley Public Schools are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation. The members of the school community include the School Committee, employees, administration, faculty, staff, students, volunteers in the schools, and parties contracted to perform work for the Berkley Public Schools.

Berkley Public Schools does not exclude from participation, deny the benefits of the District from or otherwise discriminate against, individuals on the basis of race\*, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law in the administration of its educational and employment policies, or in its programs and activities.

This commitment to the community is affirmed by the following statements. The School Committee commits to:

1. Promoting the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
2. Encouraging positive experiences in human values for children, youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups.
3. Working toward a more integrated society and enlisting the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
4. Using all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and address the grievances of individuals and groups.
5. Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school district, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations.
6. Initiating a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school district in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The Berkley Public Schools require all members of the school community to conduct themselves in accordance with this policy.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the school community to engage in any form of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or to violate any other civil right of any member of the school community. We recognize that discrimination can take a range of forms and can be targeted or unintentional; however, discrimination in any form, including harassment and retaliation, will not be tolerated.

It shall also be a violation of this policy for any school community member to subject any other member of the school community to any form of retaliation, including, but not limited to, coercion, intimidation, interference, punishment, discrimination, or harassment, for reporting or filing a complaint of discrimination, cooperating in an investigation, aiding or encouraging another member of the school community to report such conduct or file a complaint, or opposing any act or practice reasonably believed to be prohibited by this policy.

Policy AC-R - Berkley Public Schools will respond promptly to any reports or complaints of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or other violations of civil rights, pursuant to our detailed response protocol. Where it is determined that discrimination or harassment has occurred, Berkley Public Schools will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose developmentally appropriate disciplinary, restorative, and/or corrective action.

Any member of the school community who is found, after investigation, to have engaged in any form of discrimination, including harassment or retaliation, against another member of the school community, will be subject to consequences determined appropriate by the administration. Such consequences may include restorative measures and corrective action, and/or student discipline or staff disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### Definitions

"Discrimination" and "Harassment" are defined as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on any individual's actual or perceived race\*, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law, Discrimination and/or harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading to a person or group described above.
- Verbal abuse or insults about, directed at, or made in the presence of, an individual or group described above.
- Any action or speech that contributes to, promotes or results in a hostile or discriminatory environment to an individual or group described above.
- Any action or speech that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent that it either (i) interferes with or limits the ability of an individual or group described above to participate in or benefit from employment or a program or activity of Berkley Public Schools; or (ii) creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational or working environment.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to, any unwelcome, inappropriate, or illegal physical, written, verbal, graphic, or electronic conduct, and that has the intent or effect of creating a hostile education or work environment by limiting the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from the district's programs and activities or by unreasonably interfering with that individual's education or work environment or, if the conduct were to persist, would likely create a hostile educational or work environment.

Harassment includes Sexual Harassment and Sex-Based Harassment which are more specifically addressed in File ACAB.

"Title IX Sexual Harassment" (effective August 14, 2020) means verbal, physical or other conduct that targets a person based on their sex, and that satisfies one or more of the following:

- A school employee conditioning educational benefits or services on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e., quid pro quo);
- Any unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would find so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's educational program or activity;
- Any instance of "sexual assault", "dating violence", "domestic violence", or "stalking", as those terms are defined by the Clery Act (20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v)) and the Violence Against Women Act (34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), (10) & (30)).



Allegations of Title IX Sexual Harassment shall be reported and investigated pursuant to the Berkley Public Schools Protocol for Investigating Sexual Harassment and Retaliation Pursuant to Title IX.

Resources: Berkley Public School's Title IX Contact Information  
Melissa Coelho, District Title IX Coordinator: 508-822-5220; [mcoelho@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:mcoelho@berkleypublicschools.org)

Title IX Investigators

Melissa Ryan, Superintendent: 508-822-5220; [mryan@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:mryan@berkleypublicschools.org)  
Jennifer Francisco, BCS Principal: 508-822-9550; [jfrancisco@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:jfrancisco@berkleypublicschools.org)  
Sarah Cogar, BCS Assistant Principal: 508-822-9550; [scogar@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:scogar@berkleypublicschools.org)  
Kim Hebert, BMS Principal: 508-884-9434; [khebert@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:khebert@berkleypublicschools.org)  
Ryan Andrade, BMS Assistant Principal: 508-884-9434; [randrade@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:randrade@berkleypublicschools.org)

The following individual is designated as the District ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment Coordinator, and Grievance Officer for the School Committee, administration, faculty, staff, volunteers in the schools, and for parties who are contracted to perform work for the Berkley Pub Schools, and can be reached at:

Name/Position: Melissa Coelho  
Address: 21 North Main St., Berkley, MA 02779  
Phone: 508-822-5220  
Email: [mcoelho@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:mcoelho@berkleypublicschools.org)

The following individual is designated as the District ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment and Civil Rights Coordinator for students in the Berkley Public Schools:

Name/Position: Melissa Coelho  
Address: 21 North Main St., Berkley, MA 02779  
Phone: 508-822-5220  
Email: [mcoelho@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:mcoelho@berkleypublicschools.org)

Inquiries concerning the Berkley Public Schools' policies and protocols, compliance with applicable laws, statutes, and regulations, and complaints may also be directed to the Superintendent of Schools. Inquiries about laws, statutes, regulations and compliance may also be directed to:

Problem Resolution System Office  
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
135 Santille Highway, Everett, MA 02149  
Telephone: 781-338-3700  
Fax: 781-338-3710  
Email: [DESECompliance@mass.gov](mailto:DESECompliance@mass.gov)  
Director Kelsey LoDuca-Towne  
<https://www.doe.mass.edu/prs/>

The Office for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Education,  
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02109  
Telephone: (617) 289-0111  
Email: [OCR.Boston@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Boston@ed.gov)  
[www.ed.gov/ocr](http://www.ed.gov/ocr)

Massachusetts State Ethics Commission  
1 Ashburton Place, 6th Floor, Room 619  
Boston, MA 02108  
Telephone: 617-371-9500

\*race to include traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length and protective hairstyles.

## **BERKLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS/DISTRICT COORDINATOR INFORMATION**

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All programs, activities, and employment opportunities provided by the Berkley Public Schools are offered regardless of age, color, disability, national origin, homeless status, race, religion, sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Questions regarding implementation of these practices should be addressed to the appropriate coordinator listed below:

**Title VI: *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*** Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on race, color, or national origin in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Title VI is codified at 42 U.S.C. 2000d *et seq.*; regulations have been promulgated under it in the Code of Federal Regulations at 34 CFR Part 100 (available at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/rights/reg/ocr/edlite-34cfr100.html>)

### **Coordinator**

Melissa Coelho  
Human Resource Manager  
21 North Main Street  
Berkley, MA 02779  
508-822-5220  
[mcoelho@berkeypublicschools.org](mailto:mcoelho@berkeypublicschools.org)

### **Section 504: *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973***

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on disability in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance. Section 504 is codified at 29 U.S.C. 794; regulations have been promulgated under it at 34 CFR Part 104 (available at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/rights/reg/ocr/edlite-34cfr104.html>).

### **Coordinators**

Sarah Cogar  
Assistant Principal, Berkeley Community School  
59 S. Main Street  
Berkley, MA 02779  
508-822-9550  
[scogar@berkeypublicschools.org](mailto:scogar@berkeypublicschools.org)

Ryan Andrade  
Assistant Principal, Berkley Middle School  
21 N. Main Street  
Berkley, MA 02779  
508-884-9434  
[randrade@berkeypublicschools.org](mailto:randrade@berkeypublicschools.org)

### **Title IX: *Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972***

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on sex in educational programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. Title IX is codified at 20 U.S.C. 1681 *et seq.*; regulations have been promulgated under it at 34 CFR Part 106 (available at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/righis/reg/ocr/edlite-34cfr106.html>).

### **Coordinator**

Melissa Coelho  
Human Resource Manager  
21 North Main Street  
Berkley, MA 02779  
508-822-5220  
[mcoelho@berkeypublicschools.org](mailto:mcoelho@berkeypublicschools.org)

**IDEA 2004: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004**

Governs special education. Most of IDEA 2004 is codified at 20 U.S.C. 1400 *et seq.*; regulations have been promulgated under it at 34 CFR 300 (available at <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2006-3/081406a.html>), effective October 13, 2006.

**Coordinator**

Melissa Abrego  
Administrator of Student Services  
21 N. Main Street  
Berkley, MA 02779  
508-822-5251  
[mabrego@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:mabrego@berkleypublicschools.org)

**Title 11: Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990**

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on disability in public entities. Title II is codified at 42 U.S.C. 12131 *et seq.*; regulations have been promulgated under it at 28 CFR Part 35 (available at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/rights/reg/ocr/edlite-28cfr35.html>).

**Coordinator**

Melissa Abrego  
Administrator of Student Services  
21 N. Main Street  
Berkley, MA 02779  
508-822-5251  
[mabrego@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:mabrego@berkleypublicschools.org)

**The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act was reauthorized in December 2015**

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act) ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. The McKinney-Vento Act was reauthorized in December 2015 by Title IX, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The McKinney-Vento Act ensures that children who are homeless have equal access to the same free and appropriate public education, including a public preschool education. Information on the McKinney-Vento Act is available through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mv/>.

**Coordinator**

Melissa Abrego  
Administrator of Student Services  
21 N. Main Street  
Berkley, MA 02779  
508-822-5251  
[mabrego@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:mabrego@berkleypublicschools.org)

**Definitions**

The following terms are defined in the McKinney-Vento Act:

**Homeless Children and Youth:** Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. It includes:

1. Children and youth who share the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason live in motels or hotels. Trailer parks or camping grounds, due to a lack of alternative adequate accommodations, are living in emergency or transitional shelters or are abandoned in hospitals.
2. Children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designated for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

3. Children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings.
4. Migratory children (as defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended) qualify as homeless because they live in the circumstances described above.

**Enroll and Enrollment:** Attending classes and participating fully in school activities.

**School of Origin:** The school the child or youth attended when permanently housed or the school where the child or youth was last enrolled, including preschool. When a child or youth completes the final grade level served by the school of origin, the school of origin includes the designated receiving school at the next grade level for all feeder schools.

**Unaccompanied Youth:** Homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian

### **School Placement**

Student placement determinations must be based on the best interest of the student who is homeless. For students who meet the eligibility criteria, Berkley Public Schools must remove the barriers to accessing academic and extracurricular activities, including but not limited to summer school, career and technical education, advanced placement, and online learning.

To determine the best interest, Berkley Public Schools must:

1. Presuming keeping the student in the school of origin until the end of the school year in which the student obtains permanent housing is in the student's best interest except when doing so is contrary to the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth.
2. Consider student-consider factors related to the student's best interest, including factors related to the impact of mobility on achievement, education, health, and safety of the student who is homeless, school placement of siblings, giving priority to the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth.

### **Transportation**

Berkley Public Schools must provide transportation to students who are homeless that meet Massachusetts state law and are comparable to those received by other students. Berkley Public Schools must ensure that transportation is provided at the parent or guardian's request (or, in the case of an unaccompanied youth, the liaison) to and from school. Students who have been homeless during the school year and become permanently housed have the right to remain enrolled in their school of origin with transportation if needed through the end of the school year (June). Furthermore:

1. If the student who is homeless continues to live in the area served by the district in which the school or origin is located, then the district must provide or arrange transportation if needed.
2. If the student who is homeless moves to an area served by another district, through continuing their education at the school of origin, the district of origin and the district in which the student resides must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin.
3. The responsibility and costs must be shared equally if the districts cannot agree upon such a method.

### **Enrollment**

Berkley Public Schools must immediately enroll students who are homeless in school to provide educational stability and avoid separation from school for days or weeks while documents are located. Therefore:

1. Students who choose to enroll in the school where they are temporarily residing must be enrolled immediately, even if they do not bring the records usually required for enrollment with them.
2. If a student who is homeless arrives without records, the previously attended school district is contacted, and the required records are requested.
3. The student who is homeless should be attending school while the records are being requested.
4. Berkley Public Schools must remove barriers to students who are homeless receiving appropriate credit for full or partial coursework satisfactorily completed while attending a prior school.
5. Information about a student's homeless living situation shall be treated as a student education record and not be deemed directory information and, therefore, cannot be shared with the public, including landlords.

6. Berkley Public Schools will not delay enrollment of a student who is homeless as a result of immunization policies.

### **Dispute Resolution Process**

The McKinney-Vento Act requires “procedures for the prompt resolution of disputes regarding the educational placement of children and youth who are homeless. If a dispute arises between Berkley Public Schools and a parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, the following process must be followed:

1. The student must be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, and transportation is provided, pending the final resolution of the dispute, including all available appeals.
2. The parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth is provided with a written explanation of any enrollment decision made by Berkley Public Schools and be informed of the right of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth to appeal the decision to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
  - a. Berkley Public Schools must notify the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth on the day of the denial using the form prescribed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
  - b. The notice provided must be written in clear, easy-to-understand language detailing the dispute resolution process, the right to appeal, and the option to obtain independent information and counsel.
3. Berkley Public Schools must provide the prescribed form to be completed by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, should he or she decide to appeal the school district’s enrollment decision.
4. Berkley Public Schools must assist the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth in promptly submitting an appeal to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in three school days with an extension of up to ten additional days.
5. The dispute resolution process begins at the time Berkley Public Schools denies continued enrollment or the right to enroll a homeless student in the school selected by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth.
6. Suppose Berkley Public Schools does not notify the parents of its enrollment decision or the parent’s right to appeal that decision. In that case, the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth may initiate a dispute by contacting the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
7. Following the receipt of the district’s denial form the appeal by the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth and any other additional requested information, the Commissioner or the Commissioner’s Designee shall promptly issue a decision usually in five to ten school days. The decision of the Commissioner or the Commissioner’s Designee shall be final.

Additional information, data, and resources are posted on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education webpage at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mv/>.

### **BERKLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL POLICIES**

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The School Committee for Berkley Public Schools sets policy to guide the school district's operation. The complete policy manual can be accessed on our website at <https://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/browse/berkleyschool/welcome/root>.

Berkley Public Schools completed a complete review of all district policies and voted to adopt the updated policy manual in its entirety in October, 2024.

The following are current policies set by the Berkley School Committee that we would like to highlight for students and families specifically:

1. Acceptable Use of Technology/Digital Resources (IJND)

2. Anti-Bullying Policy (JICFB): outlines Berkley's commitment to fostering and maintaining a safe and nurturing learning and work environment that is free from harassment, intimidation, and bullying. This policy provides the parameters of the prevention and intervention plan.
3. Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care (JFABF)
4. Educational Opportunities for Children for Military Children (JFABE)
5. English Learner Education (IHBEA)
6. Sexual Harassment (ACAB)
7. Homeless Students: Enrollment, Rights, and Services (JFABF)
8. Non-Discrimination Policy (ACA, AC-R, JICK)

## **Bullying Prevention and Intervention**

### [Berkley Public Schools Prevention and Intervention Plan](#)

#### [JICFB Bullying Prevention Policy](#)

Berkley Public Schools is committed to fostering and maintaining a safe and nurturing learning and work environment that encourages mutual respect, dignity, and equality and is free from all forms of harassment, intimidation, and bullying for both students and staff. The following policy and plan applies to students and school staff, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletics coaches, advisors to extracurricular activity, and paraprofessionals. Students or staff members may be targets of bullying. Students and staff members may be aggressors.

The purpose of this policy is to prevent harassment, intimidation, and bullying between or among any members of the school community and to offer persons who believe they have been subject to bullying an efficient and effective means by which to end it. The school system will endeavor to involve as few people as possible, with the goal of protecting all parties involved and stopping the behavior. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of anonymous reports. Students, parents, guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided with practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member or with the principal or designee.

Berkley Public Schools recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. Berkley Public Schools will take the following steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community and provide students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies necessary to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing:

- School adjustment counselors, board-certified behavior analysts (BCBA), nurses, school psychologists, and the child study team can help identify a variety of therapeutic interventions and services for students who may be vulnerable to being bullied, harassed, teased, or being an aggressor. Supports may include social-emotional support, crisis intervention, and community-based counseling referrals.
- Berkley Public Schools will utilize a universal social-emotional screener to help identify students who may be at risk and require academic, social, emotional, and/or behavioral support.
- The district will utilize a social-emotional curriculum to help provide students with skills and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.
- Berkley Public Schools will collaborate with parents and families to identify individual supports and services needed for students who are more vulnerable.
- Berkley Public Schools host parent-teacher conferences annually and will specifically speak to parents about a student's vulnerability to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

Any person who violates this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including but not limited to warning, reprimands, physical restraint/restrictions, discharge, suspension, or expulsion. Student disciplinary action will be in accordance with each school's discipline procedure.

Any person who believes that they have been subjected to or has witnessed acts of intimidation or bullying in the educational environment is encouraged to bring their complaint to the immediate attention of an adult or staff member for assistance in resolving the matter. Complaints are not promised confidentiality; however, the district will enforce the anti-retaliation provisions of the Anti-Bullying policy to protect complainants and witnesses.

Behavior interpreted as retaliatory in response to a bullying complaint being filed violates this policy and is subject to the same reporting and investigative procedures as the initial complaint. Filing or false reports is also in violation of the Anti-Bullying Policy. Persons found to be filing false reports of bullying or harassment will be subject to disciplinary action.

The full Anti-Bullying Policy can be found on our [website](#) under Section J: Students.

All complaints will be investigated by the Assistant Principal, Principal, and/or Superintendent. All appropriate steps will be taken to resolve the complaint. Disciplinary action will be in accordance with each school's discipline procedure. To report incidents of bullying you can contact one of the school administrators below or use of the other methods of reporting. Incidents only need to be reported once and using one reporting method.

**Berkley Community School**

Jennifer Francisco, Principal  
[jfrancisco@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:jfrancisco@berkleypublicschools.org)  
508-822-9550

Sarah Cogar, Assistant Principal  
[scogar@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:scogar@berkleypublicschools.org)  
508-822-9550

**Berkley Middle School**

Kimberly Hebert, Principal  
[khebert@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:khebert@berkleypublicschools.org)  
508-884-9434

Ryan Andrade, Assistant Principal  
[randrade@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:randrade@berkleypublicschools.org)  
508-884-9434

**[Bullying Incident Reporting Form](#)**

**Phone Number to Report Bullying:** 508-822-5220 - state you are calling to report a bullying incident

**Email Address:** [reportbullying@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:reportbullying@berkleypublicschools.org)

**Mailing Address to Report Bullying**

Berkley Public Schools  
21 N. Main Street  
Berkley, MA 02779  
Attn: Bullying Investigator

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). Information can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/prs>. Emails can be sent to [compliance@doe.mass.edu](mailto:compliance@doe.mass.edu), or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information are also available at the Superintendent's office.

**Harassment/Sexual Harassment Policy**

It is the policy of the Berkley Public Schools, as well as state and federal law, that sexual harassment of a student, present or prospective employee, visitor, or any other individual associated with the school system, shall not be tolerated. Berkley Public Schools are committed to providing everyone a safe, positive learning and working environment. Therefore, we prohibit discrimination/sexual harassment/harassment/harassment in any form.

A formal complaint may be filed at any time by a student, employee, administrator, and/or applicant who believes that his/her rights, as outlined in this policy, have been violated.

A written complaint shall be filed with one of the discrimination/sexual harassment/harassment officers. In the case of a student, the complaint may initially be discussed with any responsible adult with whom the student is comfortable. This adult will then serve as the liaison between the student and the discrimination/sexual harassment/harassment/Harassment Officer. Any complainant can file his/her complaint directly with the Superintendent of Schools.

Any written complaint shall be investigated promptly. Within a maximum of 10 school days from the receipt of the complaint, Discrimination/Sexual Harassment/Harassment Officers will conduct an investigation which will consist of, but not be limited to, the following actions:

- Interview(s) with the complainant,
- Interview(s) with the individual alleged to be the harasser,
- Interview(s) with other employees, students, or witnesses,
- Interview(s) with other individuals at the discretion of the discrimination/sexual harassment/harassment officers,
- Review of pertinent records.

#### DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS

Due process protections include the following:

- a. A presumption of innocence throughout the grievance process, with the burden of proof on the school;
- b. A prohibition of the single investigator model, instead requiring a decision-maker separate from the Title IX Coordinator or investigator;
- c. The clear and convincing evidence or preponderance of the evidence, subject to limitations;
- d. The opportunity to test the credibility of parties and witnesses through cross-examination, subject to “rape shield” protections;
- e. Written notice of allegations and an equal opportunity to review the evidence;
- f. Title IX Coordinators, investigators, and decision-makers must be free from bias or conflict of interest;
- g. Equal opportunity for parties to appeal, where schools offer appeals;
- h. Upon filing a formal complaint, the school must give written notice to the parties containing sufficient details to permit a party to prepare for any initial interview and proceed with a factual investigation. For K-12 schools, a hearing is optional, but the parties must be allowed to submit written questions to challenge each other’s credibility before the decision-maker makes a determination. After the investigation, a written determination must be sent to both parties explaining each allegation, whether the respondent is responsible or not responsible, including the facts and evidence on which the conclusion was based by applying either the preponderance of the evidence or the clear and convincing standard; however, a school can use the lower preponderance standards only if it uses that standard for conduct code violations that do not involve sexual harassment but carry the same maximum disciplinary sanction. As long as the process is voluntary for all parties, after being fully informed and written, both parties provide consent, a school may facilitate informal resolution of a sexual complaint.

#### FALSE COMPLAINTS

False complaints of discrimination/sexual harassment/harassment are treated seriously by the Berkley Public Schools. It should, therefore, be noted that anyone making false or malicious complaints may have disciplinary action taken against them up to and including dismissal or expulsion.

#### SANCTIONS

Suppose the discrimination/sexual harassment/harassment officers determine that discrimination/sexual harassment/harassment has occurred. In that case, they will take action to end the harassment and to ensure that it is not repeated. Remedial actions will depend upon the severity of the incident(s).



Because of the private nature of certain incidents, and the emotional and moral complexities surrounding such issues, every effort will be made to resolve problems, where appropriate, on an informal basis.

At the informal level, efforts will be aimed toward sensitizing the person at fault to the effects of such behavior, to be constructive, and not unduly punitive, in disciplinary action. An informal resolution may consist of an admission of guilt, an acknowledgment of verbal warning, a promise not to commit such abuse again, and/or a letter of apology.

If informal resolutions are not adhered to, or if allegations involve conduct for which informal resolutions are not appropriate, discrimination/sexual harassment/harassment Officers may deem it necessary to take formal actions that may include but are not limited to police/court involvement (for violations of Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 272 and Chapter 119, Section 51A). For formal actions involving students, the discrimination/sexual harassment/harassment officers will provide results of the investigation and recommendations for suspension and/or expulsion to the principal. For formal actions involving employees, the discrimination/sexual harassment/harassment officers will provide results of the investigation and recommendations for a letter of reprimand, suspension, or termination of employment to the Superintendent.

The Superintendent of Schools will be notified in writing by the discrimination/sexual harassment/harassment officers of all formal investigations and sanctions to be imposed. If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the complaint, he/she may appeal to the Superintendent. The Sexual Harassment/Harassment Officers can recommend Crisis Team intervention and/or referral for counseling during the abovementioned procedures.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

To the greatest extent possible, all complaints and subsequent proceedings will be held in confidence by all persons directly or indirectly involved in them. The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and the accused, will be respected, consistent with the Berkley Public Schools' legal obligations and with the necessity to investigate misconduct allegations and take corrective action when this conduct has occurred. The Superintendent shall keep the School Committee apprised of all complaints and sanctions imposed as he/she deems appropriate.

#### RETALIATION

Retaliation in any form against any person who has filed a complaint and/or cooperated in an investigation relating to discrimination/sexual harassment/harassment/harassment is forbidden. If it occurs, it could be considered grounds for dismissal of staff personnel and/or removal from the educational setting for a student.

The full Harassment/Sexual Harassment Policy can be found on our [website](#) under Section A: Foundations and Basic Commitments.

To report a harassment or sexual harassment complaint, contact:

Melissa Coelho  
Human Resource Manager  
21 North Main Street  
Berkley, MA 02779  
508-822-5220  
[mcoelho@berkeypublicschools.org](mailto:mcoelho@berkeypublicschools.org)

Reports can also be made to the school principal or the Superintendent.

## Internet Use

The School Committee supports the rights of students, employees, and community members to have reasonable access to various information formats and believes it is incumbent upon users to utilize this privilege in an appropriate manner. The district provides ongoing student instruction that develops a digital citizenship skill set for using technology as a tool. Information and communication technology are an integrated part of our curriculum across subjects and grades in developmentally appropriate ways and are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and standards. Internet service is provided to teachers, staff, and students to promote educational excellence in the Berkley Public Schools (BPS) by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. All students in grades 2-8 are issued Gmail accounts. Students will also have access to Google Classroom as part of their learning.

The full Acceptable Use of Technology Policy can be found on our [website](#) under Section I: Instruction.

## Student Pre-Referral Process

When any student experiences classroom difficulties, every effort is made to offer assistance in the regular classroom. However, if it is necessary, systematic referral procedures are initiated. The prereferral process cannot delay or deny a student's evaluation as requested by a parent or teacher.

Pre-referral documentation on any student in need of assistance is tracked through the Teacher Assistance Teams (TAT). Within the context of TAT meetings, a concerned teacher may discuss a student who is experiencing difficulty in the classroom. Suggestions are gathered, documented, and implemented in an attempt to help the student with any ongoing academic or behavioral difficulty. Parent input and/or that of other professionals who know the child may be sought at this point.

The leader of the TAT meetings maintains a dated log of specific concerns, initial suggestions, and follow-up information regarding any accommodations or interventions attempted. A variety of methods may be attempted within a designated time period. If the student continues to experience difficulty, the matter may be referred to the Screening Team. After reviewing pre-referral documents such as the child's current report card and/or progress reports and other relevant data, the Screening Team may consider Special Education Assessment or make other recommendations such as classroom observation by an appropriate specialist, informal assessment, and interviews with appropriate professionals.

## ATTENDING SCHOOL

In order to attend Berkley Public Schools, a student must actually reside in the Town of Berkley. "Residence" is the place where a person dwells permanently, not temporarily, and is the place that is the center of his or her domestic, social, and civic life. Proof of residency is needed for student acceptance into Berkley Public Schools. Temporary residence in the Town of Berkley, solely for the purpose of attending a Berkley Public School, shall not be considered residency.

The residence of a minor child is presumed to be the legal residence of the parent(s) or guardian(s) who have physical custody of the child. Any student 18 years or older may establish a residence apart from his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) for school attendance purposes.

| A  | B  | C   |
|--|--|---|
| Verification of Berkley Address                            | Verification of Current Residency at this Address                      | Verification of Identity  |
| 1. Copy of Deed and record of most recent mortgage payment | A utility bill or work order dated within the past 60 days, including: | 1. Valid driver's license<br>2. Valid vehicle registration<br>3. A W-2 form dated |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| 2. Copy of lease agreement and most recent rent payment<br>3. Legal affidavit from landlord affirming tenancy and record of most recent rent payment<br>4. Section 8 agreement | A. Gas bill<br>B. Oil bill<br>C. Electric bill<br>D. Cellular/landline bill<br>E. Cable bill | within the past year<br>4. Excise tax bill dated within the past year<br>5. Property tax bill dated within the past 60 days<br>6. Payroll stub<br>7. Bank or credit card statement |
|--|--|--|

In order to verify residency, Berkley Public Schools reserves the right to request additional documents and/or conduct an investigation. Because residency can change for students and their families during the school year, Berkley Public Schools may verify residency at any time.

All new applicants are required to present the required proofs.

*“Proof of Residency”* does not apply to homeless students and families. If you are staying in a shelter, bring a letter from the shelter staff stating that you are living there.

### **Student Transfers**

Parents should notify the main office as soon as possible should the family decide to move out of the school district. To facilitate a change in schools, a copy of the student's health records and a transfer card may be picked up at the office, at this time, a parent will need to sign a release of information form so that records may be sent to the new school.

### **School Choice**

Berkley Public Schools accepts students through the Massachusetts School Choice Program, whereas students of non-Berkley residents who are interested in enrolling in Berkley Public Schools may do so in grades K-8 based on availability. To be considered for the School Choice Program a School Choice application must be completed and returned to the Principal of the school of choice. After a student receives a letter from the Superintendent accepting them as School Choice student the registration process noted above needs to be completed.

Students accepted for School Choice with Berkley Public Schools are only accepted through Grade 8. Acceptance for School Choice does not apply to Somerset Berkley High School.

Berkley Public Schools does not provide transportation for school choice students. Transportation is the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

### **Insurance Coverage**

Berkley Public Schools provides accidental insurance coverage for students who may be injured while participating in interscholastic/intramural sports and physical education classes. The school district and/or the Town of Berkley does not provide insurance coverage for any injury that may occur under any other circumstances during the school day or school activities (i.e., playing during recess, utilizing playground equipment, etc.). Optional student accidental medical insurance coverage can be found on our website under the Parents, Families, and Community section.

### **School Calendar**

The 2025-2026 Calendar for Berkley Public Schools can be found on our website at [www.berkleypublicschools.org](http://www.berkleypublicschools.org). The School Calendar includes information regarding school opening, vacation days, holidays, in-service days, and early release days.

## SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS & DELAYS

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School may be canceled due to snow or other weather-related emergencies. If school is canceled for the day, students will receive a recorded phone message at the first contact number that is given to the school at the beginning of the year. In addition, announcements are made on a number of area radio and television stations. These stations include WBZ 1030, WBZ TV Channel 4, and WCVB TV Channel 5. Please ensure the office has all current information to receive global connect calls.

### Late Start Days

On certain days the superintendent may choose to start school later than on regular days. The following guidelines are used for Late Start Days:

1. With a delay, the school would begin 90 minutes later than usual, and bus pick-up would also be delayed by 90 minutes.
2. Announcements of a late start day would be made on the same stations that announce school cancellations and via the same recorded phone message system.
3. The decision to institute the late start schedule does not preclude the cancellation of school for that day.
4. In the event of a late start, morning Surround Care and morning preschool are both canceled.

### Early Dismissal Days

On certain days the superintendent may choose to dismiss school earlier than on regular days. The following guidelines are used for Early Dismissal Days:

1. With an early dismissal, the school will notify families of the exact dismissal time for each school.
2. An early dismissal would be announced on the same stations that announce school cancellations and via the same recorded phone message system.
3. In the event of an early dismissal, Surround Care will close at 4:00 p.m. unless otherwise specified.
4. All after-school and evening activities will be canceled unless otherwise specified.

## ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

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### Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures [School Specific]

(BCS) Student Arrival is promptly at 8:55, and students are dismissed beginning at 3:10. Parents picking up students should arrive at 3:05 to provide their name and identification to the staff monitoring the pick-up process. PickUp Patrol is the system we use to manage dismissal time and for parents to communicate changes to their student's regular dismissal plans. Parents receive an email with instructions for how to register. Changes can be entered from a smartphone or computer days, weeks, or months in advance and at any time up until 2:30 pm on the day of the change. After 2:30 pm, changes will not be accepted except in the case of an emergency. The end of the day is a busy time. To ensure the safety of all students, please plan accordingly and limit these exceptions to emergencies ONLY.

(BMS) Students should arrive at school between 7:55 AM. and 8:05 AM. Students will be allowed into the building starting at 7:40 a.m. for breakfast. The official start time for school is 7:55 a.m. and the official dismissal time is 2:20 p.m. Afternoon announcements start promptly at 2:20 p.m.

### Arriving Late Procedures:

The student must check in at the main office and get a late pass/tardy slip before proceeding to their scheduled class.

### **Leaving Early Procedures:**

Early dismissal from school is justified only in cases of extreme necessity. When possible, parents should notify the school of the need for early dismissal either electronically via Pick-Up Patrol at BCS or in writing by the parent/guardian to the Middle School Office. Parents/Guardians must enter the building to sign out their child in the office. The students will not be called down for dismissal until the parent/guardian arrives. An I.D. will be required of the person signing a student out of the building. Students will only be dismissed to those indicated as their emergency contact.

If any court documentation would restrict dismissal to only certain identified adults, the parent will need to provide a copy of such documentation for office personnel.

### **Bus Transportation**

The school day begins when students board their bus in the morning and ends when they depart from the bus in the afternoon. Therefore students are expected to follow all bus rules/guidelines as well as the school rules. Students must ride their assigned bus. Requests to do otherwise must be made in writing to the Principal. Assigned seating on buses is strictly enforced. All bus seating is at the bus driver's and school administrators' discretion. Please be aware at the elementary school level that a parent/guardian/caretaker must be visible to receive students off the bus in the afternoon to be released. Berkley Public Schools, Bloom Transportation, and their staff are not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items belonging to students.

### **Bus/Van Rules for Students**

To ensure a safe bus ride/van ride, responsible behavior is expected for students. Riding a school bus or van is a privilege and as such it can be removed by the school principal if a student misbehaves on a school bus/van. Rules for student conduct on school buses/vans are:

1. Remain seated at all times in assigned seats.
2. The aisle of the bus/van must remain clear at all times.
3. Speak quietly and respectfully to the driver and other students.
4. Assist the driver in keeping the bus/van clean by not eating or drinking while on the bus/van.
5. Respect for bus/van equipment is expected. Damage or defacing the bus/van is strictly prohibited and will be paid for by the offender.
6. Bus/van equipment, such as the service door and the emergency door, should only be operated by the driver, except in cases of emergency.
7. Windows may be opened or closed with permission from the driver.
8. Remember to take all books, backpacks, lunches or other articles off the bus. Bus/van drivers are NOT responsible for items left on the bus.
9. Electronic devices with earphones are permitted for middle school students only.

### **Bus/Van Discipline**

The enforcement of bus rules is the responsibility of the bus driver. An infraction of the bus rules will be brought to the attention of the students involved by a verbal explanation and warning by the driver or a change in seat assignment.

### **PROCEDURE**

If a verbal warning is not sufficient, the driver will complete a written report on the form provided "Bus Conduct Report" with copies to the parent, driver, principal and the bus company.

### **PROBATION**

A student will be placed on probation if in the judgment of the Principal/Assistant Principal, the student's behavior has been unacceptable. A student on probation may be suspended from the bus if there is an infraction of bus rules during the probationary period.

### **SUSPENSION**

A student shall lose the privilege of riding the bus for infractions which, in the judgment of the Principal/Assistant Principal affect the safety of the driver and/or other students on the bus, or for acts of deliberate vandalism. Certain behaviors may result in immediate suspension from the bus. These behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Horseplay or fighting
- Deliberate vandalism
- Use of tobacco and related products (lighters, etc.)
- Extending arms or other parts of the body of the window
- Possession/use of dangerous items
- Throwing objects in, out or at the bus

## **NOTES**

If a student is suspended from bus transportation, the Principal shall notify the student/family in writing of this decision. A student receiving a bus suspension at the end of a school year may have the suspension continued into the following school year. Students with special needs are to comply with the same bus rules. Discipline procedures will be the same unless noted on the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

## **Bus Evacuation**

Bus evacuation drills are conducted annually. During these drills students will practice evacuating the bus through the rear door and front door. These drills are done to prepare children for a possible emergency. Bus evacuation drills are executed by the students under the direction of the driver and a school administrator.

## **Bicycles, Skateboarding, Scooters, & Walking**

Walking or riding bicycles, skateboards, scooters, etc. to school is a privilege for middle school students only. Walker/riders will be dismissed after all buses have left the school grounds. State law (MGL Ch.85, Section 11 B) requires students 16 years and younger to wear an approved helmet while riding a bike. The Berkley Middle School strongly encourages the use of bicycle safety helmets by all riders at all times. Parents of middle school students must give written permission for their child to walk/ride to or from school. Berkley Public Schools are not responsible for damaged or stolen bicycles or charging electric bicycles/scooters on school property.

## **ATTENDANCE**

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Schools across the country have experienced an increase in student absences. The Department of Elementary & Secondary Education identifies students as chronically absent when they have missed 18 or more days of school in a single school year. Berkley Public Schools has the goal for students to have less than 5 absences per school year. Classroom participation is an important facet of the education process. Once lost, instruction cannot be recovered in the same manner that it was initially delivered. Thus, students are expected to attend school daily, be on time and stay all day. A student is considered to be tardy if they arrive after the start of the school day. The district understands that there are occasional reasons for a student's absence from school, however, all absences are considered unexcused and reported to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). All absences result in the loss of valuable instructional time. A doctor's note is required any time a student is absent for five (5) or more consecutive school days.

Parents are expected to call the school before the start of the school day to report their child absent or tardy. Students are responsible for completing all work missed during absences.

A student who is absent from school **may not** participate in a school-sponsored program on that day. A student at Berkley Middle School will be considered not eligible to participate in school sponsored activities and programs if they arrive after or are dismissed before 11:30 am without proper documentation.

## **Attendance Accommodation for Religious Holidays**

Schools shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the religious beliefs of students and staff and Federal Law also mandates such accommodations. M.G.L. c. 151C, Section B. If your student is absent in observation of a religious holiday please communicate that with the main office of your school.

**Pregnancy**

Pregnant students shall be encouraged to continue their education with Berkley Public Schools. Students who become pregnant may continue to attend their regular school program until delivery, unless their physician recommends a change from that regular program because of complications. Free academic tutoring is available if a pregnant student is unable to be present in school because of health reasons. Please contact Melissa Abrego, Administrator of Student Services at [mabrego@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:mabrego@berkleypublicschools.org) to access tutoring services.  
<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXII/Chapter71/Section84>

**Attendance Protocol**

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 76, Section 2 outlines the duty of every person in control of a child to attend school. The school district is able to file an attendance complaint with Bristol County Juvenile Court for failure to attend school for seven day sessions or fourteen half day sessions within any period of six months. Berkley Public Schools expects families to comply with the Massachusetts General Law about attendance. If parents/guardians are having difficulty meeting this expectation they should contact the school principal for support.

The administrative team actively monitors attendance data for all students.  
In order to monitor and address student attendance issues consistently the district will:

- Review all student attendance on a regular schedule
- Make contact with parents/guardians regarding student attendance
- Schedule a meeting with parents/guardians to develop truancy prevention plan
- File an Attendance Complaint with Bristol County Juvenile Court

**Vacations During School Time**

Parents are discouraged from taking students out of school for vacations. Absences due to vacations count toward students' overall attendance record and are unexcused absences. A calendar with school vacation dates is published for the school year and should be consulted before making vacation plans. The learning process is more than reading and doing homework; classes include hands-on activities, group learning, class discussion, and student presentations as part of each day's schedule. Every lesson, class and school day is important. Written make-up assignments provide only a small portion of your child's learning experience. Berkley Public Schools will only provide missed work to students when they return.

**Homework Expectations**

Berkley Public Schools believes that Homework, both written and unwritten, is an integral part of the curriculum and should occur nightly. As a child advances through the grades, the number of minutes required to complete their homework assignments will increase. The chart below provides the approximate work time that children will be expected to complete their homework each night.

|              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Kindergarten | 5 - 10 minutes  |
| Grade 1      | 10 - 15 minutes |
| Grade 2      | 20 - 25 minutes |
| Grade 3      | 30 - 35 minutes |
| Grade 4      | 40 - 45 minutes |
| Grade 5      | 50 minutes      |
| Grade 6      | 1 hour          |
| Grade 7      | 1 - 1.5 hours   |
| Grade 8      | 1.5 - 2 hours   |

## **Make Up Work**

When a student is absent from school it is the student's responsibility to make-up for missed work. Students must make-up missed work within an identified time period which is equal to the number of days the student was absent plus one additional day. For example, if a student is absent for two consecutive days they would have three days after returning to school to complete the missed work.

## **STUDENT DISCIPLINE/CODE OF CONDUCT**

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### **Responsibility of a Good Student**

Berkley Public Schools exists primarily to provide students with a positive educational experience. Each student enrolled must conduct themselves in a way that is reflective of the BPS core values. Students are expected to: (a) arrive at school and classes promptly, (b) be in attendance every day except for illness or family emergencies, (c) be prepared for classroom work, (d) contribute in positive ways to the activities of each class, and (e) accept responsibility for any inappropriate actions while working to be sure they are not repeated.

### **Classroom/School Disruption**

No student has the right to behave in a way that hinders the learning process. Every student and staff member has the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Generally, the first response to disruptive classroom behavior is from the classroom teacher. The teacher may move the student's seat, contact the parent/caregiver, conference with the student, or keep the student after school both as a discipline consequence and as an opportunity to discuss the student's behavior. If any of these initial teacher efforts fail to produce a behavior change, the teacher may then send the student to the office to speak with an administrator who may assign an appropriate consequence. Students sent to the main office to speak with an administrator for a discipline infraction, regardless of reason, must report immediately to the Main Office.

NOTE: Teachers will refer students to the office for disciplinary action in extreme cases and/or for repeated infractions after trying several of the following disciplinary measures:

- a. On the spot corrections
- b. Student/teacher conferences
- c. Teacher detention
- d. Notification of Parent/Guardian by phone/email
- e. Student, Teacher, Parent/Guardian conference

In all instances of major violations, the administration will be involved and the parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. If a suspension is deemed necessary, the length and type of suspension is determined by the administration, [due process](#) will be followed, and the opportunity to make academic progress will be provided.

It should be noted that students are functioning under 603 C.M.R. 28.00 (special education) formally referred to as Chapter 766 and P.L. 94-142 (I.D.E.A.) or under a 504 plan will be treated in accordance with the recommendations of their individual educational plans. More information on [discipline with students who have a disability](#) can be found on page 33.

### **Student Behavior Point System (BMS)/PBIS (BCS)**

(BCS - PBIS) Berkley Community School is a community of respectful and responsible citizens. We work together to create a safe and positive learning environment.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) is a system of specific procedures that are followed at Berkley Community School. This system focuses on the core values adopted by BCS: Responsible, Respectful, Safe. The core values will be taught formally in our classrooms so that students can learn what each of the values looks like in the school setting and in the larger community. Students earn Buddy Star Cards from school staff for showing the core



values, and school-wide acknowledgement is given to students as they achieve milestones with their star card collections. Acknowledgement includes school wide announcements, certificates, and small prizes.

(BMS - Point System) The purpose of the point system is to encourage students to work hard both academically and behaviorally in order to earn the privilege of extracurricular activities, such as, athletics, afterschool enrichment, field trips, and any type of school related extracurricular event. We have an expectation that all students will follow common rules and respect the rights of those around them. The learning process demands an environment free of distractions and conflict.

At the start of the school year each September, all students will begin with a clean slate of 0 points. If a student is found in violation of the code of conduct, as outlined in the student handbook, they will be subject to receiving a specified number of points based on the severity of the behavior infraction and the findings from the student due process hearing with administration. If a student accumulates **12 points** at any time during the school year, they will be subject to administrator approval to participate in extracurricular activities. Administration, which includes the principal and/or assistant principal, are the only designees that can issue a student conduct points based on behavior infractions.

A student deemed necessary to be removed from class or any educational activity by a teacher/staff member, which creates any type of disruption to the learning environment, will receive **1 point**.

Based on the severity of the student infraction and the consequence deemed appropriate by school administration:

1. Lunch detention **1 point**
2. Office detention **2 points**
3. Suspension ( In school or out of school ) **4 points**

If a student receives **6 points**, the administration will make an extensive effort to create a student support plan for the individual student, focused on improving the behavior and helping the student to avoid reaching **12 points**. Involvement in the creation of the support plan will include, but not limited to, principal/assistant principal, parent/guardian, school adjustment counselor, classroom teacher, and any appropriate staff member that works closely with the individual student.

At any time, the principal and/or assistant principal reserve the right to revoke a school privilege from any student, whose prior actions create a concern for the well-being and safety of themselves and others.

### **Office Detention**

Students are assigned to office detention by administration. The following offenses may result in an office detention:

- A student may be assigned detention for any instances of repeated unacceptable behavior or for repeated failure to complete required assignments.
- Students may request a postponement of the detention if they have a valid reason (medical appointment, religious education, etc.) Participation in sports, intramurals, clubs, etc. is not considered a valid reason.
- The request for a postponement must be made to the teacher who assigned the detention.
- A day's notice may be given to all students to enable them to obtain alternate transportation.
- Detentions must be served within 3 school days after issue.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for making necessary transportation arrangements.
- Office detention may be served during the day or after school.
- Failure to report to office detention as assigned will result in further discipline at the discretion of the Principal or designee.

### **Notification of Police and other Authorities**

School officials may impose school-based discipline for misconduct in accordance with our code of conduct and procedures. Separate from any school based discipline, if the misconduct involves suspected criminal activity of a serious nature, school administrators may notify the police or other appropriate authorities. Police involvement may occur

without prior notification to parents/caregivers. Acts likely to be reported include but are not limited to assaults that are sexual in nature or that result in serious injury, serious disruption to the school assembly, destruction of property (including graffiti, arson or vandalism), theft, hate crimes and other civil rights violations, bomb threats and other threats of a serious nature, possession or use of a dangerous weapon, possession or distribution of alcohol or a controlled substance as defined by law, or coming onto school property under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. The school staff will also consult with police officials under the district's policy addressing bullying to determine whether to report conduct prohibited by that policy. It is the prerogative of school officials to impose discipline for violations of school rules and policies, whether or not the police or other authorities take action. Likewise, the police and other authorities, rather than school staff, are responsible for making decisions as to the course of their investigation process and proceeding with criminal charges.

### **Security Camera Use**

Surveillance cameras are in use in many areas of the school property. Appropriate disciplinary action may be taken for misconduct that is recorded or observed from that security system. Students and parents/caregivers are hereby notified that the content of recordings may be used in a student disciplinary proceeding. The contents of the recording are confidential student records and will be safeguarded. Recorded events will be retained, only if necessary, for use in a student disciplinary proceeding or other matters as determined necessary by the administration.

### **Berkley Community School Code of Conduct**

The Berkley Community School aims to provide students with a safe environment both physically and emotionally. The learning process demands an environment free of distractions and conflict. We have an expectation that all students will follow common rules of citizenship and respect the rights of those around them. The teacher and all staff members should, at all times, be treated with respect by students. In return, each student has every right to expect members of the staff to treat them with respect.

### **Category 1-Classroom Behavior Addressed by the Classroom Teacher**

It will be a primary role of the classroom teacher to employ classroom management strategies. Teachers utilize classroom management strategies i.e., changing a student's seat, granting or withholding privileges, positive reinforcement, private reprimand, discussion, telephoning a parent/guardian, and/or referral to an administrator.

The following Category 1 student actions or attitudes are irresponsible:

1. To fail to follow homeroom, classroom, playground, cafeteria and/or general school rules
2. To fail to submit assignments or be prepared for class
3. To disturb or distract others from learning
4. To refuse constructive criticism from a teacher
5. To be inattentive to classroom instruction
6. To be rude and/or discourteous to teachers, school personnel, or fellow students
7. To cheat/forgery
8. To fail to carry out reasonable requests from teacher or school personnel
9. To misuse school property, materials, or resources

### **Category 2 & 3-Serious Breaches of the Berkley Community School Code of Conduct**

In all instances of major violations, the parents/guardians will be contacted. If a suspension is deemed necessary, the length and type of suspension is determined by the administration, due process will be followed, and the opportunity to make academic progress will be provided. It should be noted that students who are functioning under 603 C.M.R. 28.00 (special education) formally referred to as Chapter 766 and P.L. 94-142 (I.D.E.A.) or under a 504 plan will be treated in accordance with the recommendations of their individual educational plans. More information on discipline with students who have a disability can be found on page 33.

The following Category 2 acts are considered serious breaches of conduct:

1. To harass and/or intimidate other students
2. To use abusive language including discriminatory language
3. To leave class without permission
4. Fighting and/or rough housing
5. Disrupting assemblies, class trips, extra-curricular activities, and/or social functions
6. Creating a disturbance that results in the hallway or common areas of our school
7. Tampering with computer hardware and/or software

Once these infractions are reported by the teacher(s) witnessing the act, the Principal/Assistant Principal will resolve them. The Principal/Assistant Principal will inform the student of the reported act. A discussion between the Principal/Assistant Principal and the student will take place. Parents will be notified of the infraction and resulting consequence.

The following Category 3 acts are considered very serious breaches of conduct:

1. Threatening/abusive language and/or gestures toward a staff member
2. Theft/extortion
3. Leaving school grounds without permission
4. Malicious vandalism
5. Truancy
6. Defiance of authority
7. Unauthorized opening of a secured outside door
8. Assaulting school personnel
9. Use of illegal substances including alcohol, tobacco illegal drugs in or on the school grounds
10. Possession of a dangerous instrument or weapon, and/or contraband
11. Setting off a false alarm or calling in a bomb scare
12. Arson
13. Hazing (General Laws C.269, s. 17-1: Conduct or method of initiation into any student organization which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student.)

Once these infractions are reported, the Principal and or Assistant Principal will resolve them. The Principal and/or Assistant Principal will inform the student of the reported act. A discussion among the Principal/Assistant Principal and student will take place. Parents will be contacted by either phone, letter, and/or conference. Due process will be followed, and the opportunity to make academic progress will be provided.

As with all issues that arise at Berkley Community School, it is our goal to communicate effectively with the student and their parents/guardians about discipline related issues. Communication about student behavioral issues by school personnel is an important component of the Berkley Community School Discipline Policy. Due process will be followed, and the opportunity to make academic progress will be provided.

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, a principal or designee shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequences for the offense; consider ways to re-engage the students in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternative may include the use of evidenced-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports.

## Cafeteria Rules

To make the cafeteria a pleasant and safe place for everyone, we expect responsible behavior:

| <b><i>Looks Like</i></b>   | <b><i>Sounds Like</i></b>  |
|--|--|
| Students will... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Use the bathroom and wash hands BEFORE entering the cafeteria.</li><li>● Face forward in two lines while waiting to buy lunch. Children wait in their own space until it is their turn to receive their food.</li><li>● Sit at their assigned table with their feet under the table.</li><li>● Raise a hand if help is needed.</li><li>● Take one trip to the barrel to dispose of waste.</li><li>● Ask permission to leave the cafeteria.</li><li>● Clean the table and floor area.</li><li>● Walk in the hallway QUIETLY to get their jackets (if applicable).</li><li>● Place their hands on laps, eyes on the cafeteria leader, and mouths closed to prepare for dismissal.</li></ul> | Students... <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Using appropriate voice levels in the cafeteria.</li><li>● Keeping conversations at their own table.</li><li>● Disposing of waste quietly.</li><li>● Using kind and polite words (please and thank you).</li></ul> Classes are dismissed when the cafeteria is silent. |

Students are monitored at lunch by administration and staff. Students who fail to act appropriately during lunch will be subject to the following actions which include but are not limited to: redirection, time-out, assigned seat, lunch detention or loss of privileges. Infractions termed “serious” or “very serious”, as outlined within the BCS Code of Conduct will result in a referral to the principal/assistant principal for appropriate disciplinary action. Families are not allowed to have lunch in the school cafeteria.

## Recess (BCS)

Recess is a time for exploration and free play. We strive to provide a recess environment that recognizes and encourages safe and appropriate behavior for all children. The following recess rules must be observed:

| <b><i>Looks Like</i></b>   | <b><i>Sounds Like</i></b>   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Staying in assigned areas</li><li>● Lining up on your signal</li><li>● Using equipment correctly</li><li>● Dressing for the weather</li><li>● Playing cooperatively</li><li>● Keeping all body parts to themselves</li><li>● Being aware of your surroundings (for example running through an organized game versus around it, looking before throwing a ball)</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Playing by the rules for a designated game</li><li>● Getting help when needed</li><li>● Taking turns and sharing equipment</li><li>● Welcoming and including all students</li><li>● Trying to problem solve a disagreement respectfully</li></ul> |

Students who fail to act appropriately during recess will be subject to the following actions which include but are not limited to: redirection, time-out, and/or loss of recess. Infractions termed “serious” or “very serious”, as outlined within the BCS Code of Conduct will result in a referral to the principal/assistant principal for appropriate disciplinary action. Please note that students have outdoor recess at BCS during the entire school year, with the exception of severe weather days. Please dress your child appropriately, and provide weather-appropriate outerwear as needed, especially for winter play.

## Consequences for Violations of the Code of Conduct [Place at end of Discipline section for each school]

Classroom Consequences-Student may be assigned consequences such as losing classroom privileges, loss of recess, etc. at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

### Loss of Privileges

During the school year, various extra-curricular and intra-curricular activities are offered to students if their behavior is unacceptable by school standards. In addition, a student may be considered academically ineligible to participate in a given activity if their schoolwork is not being performed to expectation and/or assignments are not completed.

Lunch/Recess Detention- Students may be assigned lunch and/or recess detention, during which eat lunch in an alternate location and may be provided an assignment related to their infraction (i.e. writing an apology letter)

Detention-Students are assigned to office detention by the Principal/Assistant Principal.

- A student may be assigned detention for any instances of repeated unacceptable behavior or for repeated failure to complete required assignments.
- Parents/Guardians are responsible for making necessary transportation arrangements.
- Office detention is completely silent and work centered. A writing assignment may be provided by the administrator and/or teacher.

In School Suspension- Assignments will be served in a designated area under the supervision of the Principal or designee. Students will be separated from other students for the duration of the suspension. Students will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities until the suspension is complete.

Out of School Suspension- Assignments will be served away from school under the supervision of the student's parents/guardians. Students will be expected to make up all missed work upon their return to school. Students will not be allowed to participate in extracurricular activities until the suspension is complete.

Expulsion - Students may be excluded from Berkley Public Schools permanently for extreme violations of the Discipline Code.

### **BMS Code of Conduct**

The following are guidelines and the administration reserves the right to assign consequences for behaviors and actions, which may not be listed. In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, a principal or designee shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequences for the offense; consider ways to re-engage the students in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternative may include the use of evidenced-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports.

| OFFENSE   | DESCRIPTION   | POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES                                  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Illegal Substances including Alcohol, Drugs, Smoking, Vaping, etc.</b> | A student will not knowingly possess, use, transmit any illegal substances:<br><ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. On the school grounds during and immediately before or after school hours;</li><li>2. On the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by any other school group;</li><li>3. Off the school grounds at a school activity, function or event.</li></ol> | Consequences include but are not limited to suspension |
| <b>Arson</b>  | Maliciously, voluntarily, and willfully setting fire to the building, buildings, or other property.   | Consequences include but are not limited to suspension |

| <b>Assault and Battery (on staff)</b>  | Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school sponsored and school related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.  | Consequences include but are not limited to suspension or expulsion   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Assault and Battery (on student)</b>  | An assault is to be defined as an aggressive, belligerent act initiated and sustained by an individual or group upon another in a willful attempt to inflict harm, pain, or injury.  | Consequences include but are not limited to suspension or expulsion   |
| <b>Being in the Building Prior to or After school (unauthorized entry)</b>                     | A student may not enter the building prior to the start of school. A student who is in the building before or after school hours without permission from a staff person.   | Detention or suspension, depending on the circumstances and frequency   |
| <b>Being rude and discourteous to teachers or school personnel or students</b>                 | Students are responsible for showing respect. Students must use only acceptable and courteous language.  | Detention depending on circumstances and frequency.   |
| <b>Cell Phones &amp; Electronic Devices</b>  | Cell phones and electronic devices must be kept in a student's locker during the school day. Students are not allowed to have cell phones or electronic devices on their person or in their pocketbooks/backpacks during the school day. No recording of any kind without the express permission of the person/group: on buses, in classrooms, or school common areas. | Detention depending on frequency and circumstances<br><br>The device may need to be picked up at school by the parent/guardian.   |
| <b>OFFENSE</b>   | <b>DESCRIPTION</b>   | <b>POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES</b>  |
| <b>Cheating/Plagiarism</b>   | Texting other students; use of apple watches; copying another student's work, allowing another student to copy your work, copying an author's work or website verbatim/paraphrasing; etc.  | The assignment will not be accepted by the teacher and/or the student will receive no credit for the assignment and the student may be assigned a detention depending on circumstances and frequency. |
| <b>Cutting Class or Leaving class without permission and or not reporting to class on time</b> | Students are expected to fulfill their scheduled commitments.  | Detention or in-school suspension depending on the circumstances of the offense   |

| <b>Disobedient/Defiance of Authority/Failure to follow an administrative direction</b>   | Any staff member has the authority to enforce school policy and correct a student. Students should not defy authority; to do so will only get that student in more trouble.  | Consequences include but are not limited to suspension or expulsion  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Disruption (Classroom) Being inattentive to classroom instruction</b>   | Actions that disrupt the educational process are never acceptable. Continuous talking, making noises, throwing objects, defacing or marring classroom materials, excessive use of bathroom privileges during class time, and general disobedience will be punished. Eating or drinking liquids other than water in the classroom without teacher permission. | Detention or suspension depending on the circumstances and frequency |
| <b>Disturbance of the school assembly (includes academic school days, assemblies, lunch, class trips, after school programs, and/or social function)</b> | A student will not engage in conduct, not urge other students to engage in conduct, by use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threat, intimidation, fear, passive resistance, or any other conduct for the purpose of causing the substantial and material disruption or obstruction of any lawful mission, process, or function of the school.            | Detention or suspension depending on the circumstances and frequency |
| <b>Extortion</b>   | Extortion is the act of obtaining money or other property from a person by use of force, coercion, or threats of bodily harm. In order to protect students from possible extortion, any passing of money, for whatever reason, between students will be considered a violation of this rule.   | Consequences include but are not limited to detention or suspension  |
| <b>OFFENSE</b>   | <b>DESCRIPTION</b>   | <b>POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES</b>   |
| <b>Fighting/Physical Interaction</b>   | Fighting and /or inappropriate physical interaction will not be tolerated.   | Consequences include but are not limited to detention or suspension  |
| <b>Forgery (parent or staff signature)</b>   | Forgery is the act of signing another name falsely in order to deceive.  | Consequences include but are not limited to detention or suspension  |
| <b>Harassing and/or intimidating other students Bullying/Cyber bullying</b>  | Bullying, harassment (emotional, physical, verbal, sexual, electronic, etc) will not be tolerated.   | Consequences include but are not limited to detention or suspension  |
| <b>Inappropriate display of affection</b>  | Kissing, hugging, hand holding, etc.   | Consequences include but are not limited to detention or suspension  |
| <b>Leaving school building or grounds without permission</b>   | Leaving school grounds before the end of the school day  | Consequences include but are not limited to detention or suspension  |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Misuse or Destruction of School Property</b>                | Intentionally misusing, destroying, or vandalizing school property.  | Consequences include but are not limited to detention or suspension   |
| <b>Opening outside door/admitting people into the building</b> | Any student who opens an outside door without permission from an authorized person for the purpose of admitting someone.   | Consequences include but are not limited to detention or suspension   |
| <b>Profanity/Vulgarity/Inappropriate Language</b>              | Vulgar language, swearing, racial epithets, or derogatory remarks which are intended to ridicule or demean another student or staff member will not be tolerated | Consequences include but are not limited to detention or suspension   |
| <b>Possession and/or use of Weapons</b>                        | Any item that could be used to inflict harm on another.  | Consequences include but are not limited to detention, suspension, or expulsion                               |
| <b>Rough Housing/Horseplay</b>                                 | Wrestling, punching or in any other way invading each other's personal space or behaving in a disruptive manner.   | Consequences include but are not limited to detention or suspension   |
| <b>Tampering with computer hardware and/or software</b>        | Any attempt to change/damage current hardware and software   | Consequences include but are not limited to detention or suspension and may include loss of technology access |
| <b>Threat to a student or staff member</b>                     | Verbal or written threats, including on electronic devices and social media with intent to scare or harm others  | Consequences include but are not limited to detention or suspension   |
| <b>OFFENSE</b>   | <b>DESCRIPTION</b>   | <b>POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES</b>  |
| <b>Theft</b>   | The taking of personal or school property that doesn't belong to you   | Consequences include but are not limited to detention or suspension   |

### Cafeteria Rules

To make the cafeteria a pleasant and safe place for everyone, we expect responsible behavior:

1. Students must enter in an orderly manner.
2. Students are expected to be courteous and respectful at all times.
3. Students must not touch the food or belongings of others.
4. When finished with lunch, students will dispose of garbage and wait until dismissal.
5. Students should not throw any food at the lunch tables.
6. Students must leave table areas clean.
7. Students are to use accepted table manners and etiquette.
8. Students must remain seated unless given permission to do otherwise.
9. Students may not take food or beverages of any kind into the hallway.
10. Students must receive permission from one of the supervising teachers and/or aides to leave the cafeteria.
11. Students will be dismissed by signal at the end of lunch and are to proceed to the next assigned class in an orderly manner.



Students who fail to act appropriately during lunch may receive consequences including detention or suspension depending on circumstances and frequency. Our students are monitored at lunch by administration and staff. Families are not allowed to have lunch in the school cafeteria.

### **Discipline Due Process**

Berkley Public Schools follow Massachusetts General Laws related to student discipline and access to educational services. Chapter 222 of the Acts of 2012 states the objectives to:

- A. to limit the use of long-term suspension as a consequence for student misconduct subject to G.L. c. 71, §37H ¾ until other consequences have been considered and tried as appropriate, and
- B. where exclusion from the classroom or school occurs for any type of disciplinary offense, to require schools to make education services available so the student has an opportunity to make academic progress while suspended or expelled.

The Principal will be judicious in determining whether suspension is the appropriate consequence for 37H ¾ offenses. As noted on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website, research has shown that suspending students from school for non-violent offenses, and particularly suspending them repeatedly, has limited effectiveness in improving their behavior and performance, and causes the students to fall behind academically. School leaders in Massachusetts and across the U.S. have found that by improving school climate through positive behavioral interventions, supports, and strategies, including restorative practices and conflict resolution, they not only reduce suspensions but also promote greater school safety, discipline, and academic success.

For these reasons, the statute directs principals to exercise their discretion, consider ways to re-engage the student, and "avoid using long-term suspension from a school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried." For example, exclusion from extracurricular activities or attendance at a school-sponsored event instead of removal from the classroom or school may have a greater impact on changing a student's behavior. Exclusion from such extracurricular activities is not considered suspension because participation is a privilege.

#### **Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71, Section 37H addresses:**

- Possession of dangerous weapon
- Possession of controlled substances
- Assault on a member of the educational staff

***Consequences may include:*** exclusion for an amount of time up to expulsion; the principal may suspend and not expel as they deem appropriate.

***Due Process includes:*** prior notice to the student and parent/caregiver and written notice of right to hearing prior to expulsion or suspension for more than 10-days; and the right to representation at a hearing and to present evidence and witnesses at a hearing.

#### ***Appeal from Principal's Decision:***

- Right to appeal expulsion decision to the Superintendent;
- Timeline for requesting an appeal is 10 days from the the date of expulsion
- Right to counsel at the hearing
- Superintendent can make factual determinations as well as determine consequences

***Provisions for Education Services:*** Any student who is expelled from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress towards meeting state and local requirements, through the school wide education service plan.

#### **Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71, Section 37H ½ covers addresses:**

- A felony charge or felony delinquency complaint
- Conviction, adjudication, or admission of guilt with respect to a felony

**Consequences may include:** Felony charge or felony delinquency complaint: suspension for a period of time deemed appropriate by principal if the principal determines the student's continued presence would have a substantial detriment on the general welfare of the school. Felony or felony delinquency conviction or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony: removal for a period of time up to expulsion (i.e. permanent exclusion) if the principal determines that the student's continued presence would have a substantial detriment on the general welfare of the school.

**Due Process includes:** written notice of the charges and of the reasons before the suspension takes effect; Principal may determine the appropriate amount of time for suspension; written notice of the right to appeal to the Superintendent; and suspension remains in effect pending appeal to the Superintendent.

**Appeal from Principal's Decision:**

- Timeline for requesting appeal is no later than 5 days following the effective date of the suspension/expulsion;
- Superintendent must hold the hearing within 3 calendar days of receipt of request and issue a decision within 5 calendar days;
- Superintendent may overturn or alter the decision;
- At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on their behalf, and shall the right to counsel;
- The Superintendent will render a decision on the appeal within 5 calendar days of the hearing. Such a decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the suspension.
- A student may appeal a suspension decision and the subsequent expulsion decision (following the conviction, adjudication, or admission of guilt) regarding the same offense.

**Provisions for Education Services:** A district that suspends or expels a student for more than 10 consecutive days shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion.

**Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71, Section 37H ¾ addresses:**

- Any offense not covered in Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71, Section 37H or 37H ½

**Consequences may include:** avoid suspending a student from school long-term (i.e. more than 10 days) until other remedies and consequences have been considered; consider ways to engage the student in learning; consequences other than suspension may draw from evidence-based strategies such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and behavioral interventions and supports; and no student may be suspended for more than 90 school days in a school year.

**Emergency Removal:** Nothing in 603 CMR 53.00 shall prevent a principal from removing a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal shall not exceed two school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall:

- (a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters set forth in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
- (b) Provide written notice to the student and parent as provided in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
- (c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with 603 CMR 53.08(2) or (3), as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.
- (d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(2)(c) and (d) or (3)(c) and (d), as applicable.

(2) A principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

***In-School Suspension:*** The principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses. The principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under 603 CMR 53.10, provided that the principal follows the process set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(3) through (5) and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as set forth in 603 CMR 53.13(1).

The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally as soon as possible of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such a meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(4), if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

***Due Process includes:*** Except as provided in 603 CMR 53.07 and 603 CMR 53.10, a principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing. The principal shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language:

- A. the disciplinary offense;

- B. the basis for the charge;
- C. the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- D. the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
- E. the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- F. the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
- G. if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal:
  - 1. the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08 (3)(b); and
  - 2. the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification. Written notice to the parent may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and parent.

The principal shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense. If the consequence may be long-term suspension from school, the principal shall afford the student, at a minimum, all the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08(3) in addition to those rights afforded to students who may face a short-term suspension from school.

#### **Principal Hearing - Short-term Suspension**

- A. The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05. The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
- B. Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.
- C. The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(1). The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.
- D. If the student is in a preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

#### **Principal Hearing - Long-term Suspension**

- A. The purpose of the hearing is the same as the purpose of a short-term suspension hearing.
- B. At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights:
  - a. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
  - b. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
  - c. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and
  - d. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; and
  - e. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording provided to the student or parent upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
- C. The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
- D. Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:
  - a. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
  - b. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
  - c. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
  - d. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(4)(a);
  - e. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:
    - i. the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven additional calendar days; and that
    - ii. The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.
- E. If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing

an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

***Provisions for Education Services:*** Any student who is expelled from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress towards meeting state and local requirements, through the school wide education service plan.

### **Discipline and Students with Disabilities/Notice of Procedural Safeguards**

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related regulations require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services. Students who have been found to have a disability that impacts upon a major life activity, as defined under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act, are, generally, also entitled to increased procedural protections prior to imposing discipline that will result in the student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or where there is a pattern of short term removals exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year.

The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

1. The IEP for every student eligible for special education or related services shall indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code of the school or whether the code should be modified to address the student's individual needs.
2. Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for up to ten (10) school days to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from their program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given school year or subjected to a pattern of removal constituting a "change of placement", building administrators, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team will meet to within 10 days of the decision to suspend to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information from the parents, to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was a direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP - "a manifestation determination."
3. If building administrators, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the student's conduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students but the district must still offer:
  - a. services to enable the student, although in another setting, to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress towards IEP goals; and
  - b. as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications, to address the behavior so that it does not recur.
4. The student's Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan or, where appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment.
  - a. If building administrators, the parent(s)/guardian(s) and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the conduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will not be subjected to further disciplinary removal or exclusion from the student's current educational program based on that conduct (except for conduct involving weapons,

drugs, or resulting in serious bodily injury to others) unless the IEP or 504 Team develops, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent to a new placement or until the District obtains an order from a court or from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) authorizing a change in the student's placement. The student's Team shall also review, and modify as appropriate, any existing behavior intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan.

- b. If a student with a disability possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a weapon, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school function, the District may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. A court or BSEA Hearing Officer may also order the placement of a student who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days. Federal Special Education Regulations 34 CFR ~300.519 – 300.529. In either case, the interim alternative education setting enables the student to continue in the general curriculum and to continue receiving services identified on the IEP, and provide services to address the problem behavior.
5. Not later than the date of decision to take disciplinary action, the school district notifies the parents of that decision and provides them with written notice of procedural safeguards. If the parent chooses to appeal or the school district requests a hearing because it believes that maintaining the student's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others, the student remains in the disciplinary placement, if any, until the decision of the hearing officer or the end of the time period for the disciplinary action, whichever comes first, unless the parent and school district agree otherwise.

The following requirements apply to a student who is not yet eligible for special education:

1. If prior to the disciplinary action, a district had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability; then the district makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:
  - a. a parent had expressed concern in writing; or
  - b. the parent had requests a evaluation; or
  - c. distinct staff had expressed directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

The district may not be considered to have prior knowledge if the parent has not consented to evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determination of ineligibility.

2. If the district had no reason to consider disabled, and the parent requests an evaluation subsequent disciplinary action, the district must have procedures consistent with federal requirements to conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility.
3. If the student is found eligible, then they receive all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

#### NOTES:

If the designated person in charge in the absence of the Superintendent and/or Principal deems it necessary to suspend a student from school, an attempt to contact the Superintendent and/or Principal shall be made before such action is taken. The Superintendent will be informed of all cases of suspension and drug-related problems. In cases of in-school and/or out of school suspension, parents will be notified by letter.



The Berkley Public Schools complies with the provisions of 603 CMR Section 46.00 dealing with restraint of students in the public schools. To that end, the policy developed pursuant to those regulations is available upon request from the principal, Director of Special Education and the Superintendent's office.

### **Educational Service Plan**

Following Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 71, Sections 37H, 37H ½, and 37H ¾, the Berkley Public School District must provide opportunities for students to earn credits, make-up assignments, tests, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during a period in which the student is suspended. Furthermore, the district shall develop an educational services plan for any student expelled or on long-term suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive school days. The principal or designee shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

The following educational services may include but are not limited to:

- Access to tutoring services
- Access to online or distance learning
- Alternative Placement

It is the responsibility of the principal or the designee to notify and identify, in collaboration with the parents/guardians, the educational services necessary for the student to continue to make academic progress compared to all students. Each plan is individualized to the student's needs and is developed in collaboration with the Office of Student Services and classroom teachers as applicable. Once an educational service plan is established and implemented for a student, the principal or designee must verify student enrollment and participation.

### **STUDENT APPEARANCE**

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Students should wear appropriate clothing to school. A student's appearance helps create a positive learning atmosphere. Student attire should be neat and clean.

The following guidelines should be observed:

- Clothing promoting drugs, alcohol, or tobacco is unacceptable
- Clothing containing words or pictures and/or double expressions that could be deemed offensive or derogatory toward any individual/group is unacceptable
- Clothing that is highly revealing is unacceptable
- Appropriate footwear must be worn (no slippers, shoes with wheels, etc.)
- Hats, decorative headbands, hoods and other headwear are not to be worn in school, except as required for health or safety reasons or during school sponsored events.
- Chains and/or other items that could be potentially dangerous/safety concerns are prohibited.

Parents may be contacted in instances where a student's attire is considered to be in violation of these guidelines.

### **STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

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The social emotional learning team of Berkley Public Schools; including the School Psychologist, School Adjustment Counselors, Behavior Specialist, and School Administrators are available to help students and/or parents/guardians. This team can provide support for students with a wide variety of challenges, including but not limited to making new friends, getting along with classmates, organizing time to complete all assignments, making responsible decisions, or how to plan for the future. If you or your child is in need of support from the social emotional learning team, please contact your child's building principal or utilize the school district website to contact a specific service provider directly.



## SURROUND CARE

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The Berkley Surround Care Program operates within each school. The Surround Care Program is an on-site before and after school program for children PK-8. The program extends its services to families before and after the school day, during school vacations, and in the summer. The program is financially self-supporting and funded entirely by program tuition and runs at no cost to the school department or community of Berkley. If you are interested in learning more about the Surround Care program, please contact Michelle Terrien, Program Administrator at 508-822-9550 x304 or at [mterrien@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:mterrien@berkleypublicschools.org).

## COMMUNICATION

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Parents/Guardians are encouraged to contact the child's school at any time assistance is needed. If you have a classroom concern, it is best to contact the classroom teacher directly via phone or email. If the matter is not resolved, the principal may be contacted.

To encourage responsibility, phone calls home by students for their sneakers, library books, etc. will be carefully monitored in order to ensure that this does not become a habit. Families should access our school website for vital information about school events at [www.berkleypublicschools.org](http://www.berkleypublicschools.org). Families may also refer to our website to access our staff directory of email addresses as an additional means of communication.

|                          |              |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Berkley Community School | 508-822-9550 |
| Berkley Middle School    | 508-884-9434 |

### Non-Custodial Parent Information

[Massachusetts's General Law 603 CMR 23.07\(5\)](#), non-custodial parents are eligible to obtain access to their children's student records *unless* the school or district has been given documentation that:

1. The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or;
2. The parent has been denied visitation, or;
3. The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or;
4. There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

When a parent who does not have physical custody of the child/student (non-custodial parent) requests access to the student's student record or other information regarding the student, the non-custodial parent is required to submit a written request to the building principal for the student record. Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07 (5)(a)

Any such records provided to the non-custodial parent shall be marked to indicate that they may not be used to enroll the student in another school. Non-custodial parents are required by law to submit a written request for access to their child's student record information each year.

Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

Non-Custodial parents can submit a written request to receive student information to:

**Berkley Community School**  
Jennifer Francisco, Principal  
[jfrancisco@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:jfrancisco@berkleypublicschools.org)  
508-822-9550

**Berkley Middle School**  
Kimberly Hebert, Principal  
[khebert@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:khebert@berkleypublicschools.org)  
508-884-9434

### **Family Educational Rights And Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
  - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
  - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
  - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
  - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
  - Accrediting organizations;
  - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
  - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
  - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

To file a FERPA Complaint please access the "FERPA Complaint Form" at [FERPA.Complaints@ed.gov](mailto:FERPA.Complaints@ed.gov). Once you have completed the form, you may either email it to SPPO, or mail it to the following address:

U.S. Department of Education  
Student Privacy Policy Office  
400 Maryland Ave, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-8520

## Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

PPRA (20 U.S.C. § 1232h, 34 CFR Part 98) affords parents of students certain rights regarding, among other things, participation in surveys, the collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include, but are not limited to, the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following eight protected areas (protected information survey) if the survey is funded as part of a program administered by the U.S. Department of Education (Department) (applicable program):
  1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
  2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
  3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
  4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
  5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
  6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
  7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or 8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:
  1. Any protected information survey administered or distributed to a student by an local educational agency that is a recipient of funds under an applicable program (LEA) if the protected information survey is either not funded as part of a program administered by the Department or is funded as part of a program administered by the Department but to which a student is not required to submit;
  2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening required by an LEA as a condition of attendance; administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and, that is not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, with some exceptions; and
  3. Activities of an LEA involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or sale (or to otherwise distribute such information to others for that purpose), with some exceptions.
- Inspect, upon request:
  1. Protected information surveys and surveys created by a third party, before the administration or distribution by an LEA of the surveys to a student;
  2. Any instrument used by an LEA to collect personal information for the purpose of marketing or sale (or otherwise distributing such information for that purpose), before the instrument is administered or distributed to a student, with some exceptions; and
  3. Instructional material, excluding academic tests or academic assessments, used by an LEA as part of the educational curriculum for a student. These rights transfer from the parents to the student when the student turns 18 years old or becomes an emancipated minor under applicable State law.

Parents who seek additional resources on student privacy under PPRA may visit the Department's Student Privacy Policy Office website at <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/>. Parents who believe their PPRA rights have been violated may file a complaint online by selecting the PPRA complaint form option at <https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/file-a-complaint> or by mailing the form to the following address:

Student Privacy Policy Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20202

## Student and Parent Demographic Information

A large amount of school outreach occurs via email. Please provide a valid email address to the school and update the school in the event the address or phone number changes.

## **Directory Information Notice**

Berkley Public Schools has designated certain information contained in the education records of its students as directory information for purposes of the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Student Record Regulations at 603 CMR 23.00. The following information regarding students is considered directory information: 1) name 2) address 3) telephone number 4) date and place of birth 5) major field of study 6) participation in officially recognized activities and sports 7) weight and height of members of athletic teams 8) dates of attendance 9) degrees, honors and awards received 10) post high school plans of the student. Directory information may be disclosed for any purpose at the discretion of the principal, without the consent of a parent/caregiver or an eligible student. Parents/guardians of students and eligible students have the right to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information. In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent/caregiver or student, or otherwise allowed by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00. Parents/caregivers or students refusing to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed must file written notification to this effect with the school principal on or before October 1 of that school year. Copies of the federal or state student records regulations will be provided upon request.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

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There are specific regulations regarding student records to ensure parents' and students' rights or confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of student records, and to assist school authorities in carrying out their responsibilities under state and federal law.

In accordance with Massachusetts regulations, an eligible student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) shall have access to the student record. In no event shall such access be delayed more than ten (10) days after the initial request, unless the requesting party consents to a delay. Upon such request for access, the entire student record regardless of the physical location of its parts shall be made available. Upon request, copies of any information contained in the student record shall be furnished to the eligible student or their parent. A reasonable fee not to exceed the cost of reproduction may be charged.

**Destruction of Records:** The school system will maintain a copy of a student's transcript for at least 60 years after the student leaves the school system. Temporary records will be destroyed within seven (7) years after a student leaves the system. Before any records are destroyed, the student and their parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given notice and an opportunity to obtain a copy of any records to be destroyed.

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

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### **Parent Teacher Organization**

The Berkley Parent Teacher Organization (BPTO) exists to provide support for each school's programs and special events. Each school has its own Activities Committee that plans and implements fundraising and activities for the school. The funds raised by each school's Activities Committee are used by that school to enhance the educational experience of its students. The BPTO oversees the expenditures of each school's funds. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to join these groups. Meeting dates and times are published in the monthly school events calendar.

### **Parent/Caregiver Teacher Conferences**

Parent Teacher Conferences occur in the fall and spring. Parent Teacher Conference dates are listed in the school calendar. In addition to school-wide dates, conferences between teachers and parents/guardians are encouraged and may be scheduled at any time during the school year by contacting the student's teacher(s) and/or the Principal/Assistant Principal's office.

## SCHOOL SAFETY & SECURITY

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All school building exits will be locked during school hours. The main entrance to each school building is equipped with a monitoring and communication system. All visitors must use the main entrance to gain access to the building and must report immediately to the school office upon entering the building. All visitors must report to the main office and be prepared to present identification in order to be screened prior to being granted entry to the building. Unscheduled visitors will not be allowed outside of the main office during the school day.

The Berkley Public School System is a tobacco free, chemical-free and weapons-free district. The guidelines for student behavior and the discipline code adopted for each building are designed to protect students from the irresponsible behavior of others. Most importantly, all students are directly accountable for the consequences of their behaviors. In accordance with federal and state laws, there is no smoking, drinking, or uses of illegal drugs on school property, including the parking lot, by any individual, at any time.

To ensure the safety and security of all students in the schools, the Berkley Public School System reserves the right to conduct searches of student possessions and school lockers without a warrant providing that there is a reasonable basis for the search. Therefore, students should have no expectations of privacy in these areas.

### **Mandated Reporting**

School personnel are mandated reporters. Massachusetts law requires mandated reporters to immediately make an oral report to DCF when, in their professional capacity, they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 years is suffering from abuse and/or neglect. The Berkley Public Schools recognize the important responsibility of the mandated reporting requirement, however, we strive to maintain positive relationships with all families in our school district. It is vital that families understand that we do not investigate or make determinations or judgements about families based on the mandated reporting requirements.

### **CORI Requirement**

To protect the safety of our students as well as to comply with state law, all persons who are employed by and volunteer in the Berkley Public Schools are required to have a current Criminal Offenders Records Inquiry (CORI) on file. This pertains to all volunteers, chaperones, etc. A CORI is valid for two years, however, the district retains the right to request updated CORI forms at any time. A CORI form may be submitted to the Superintendent's Office or the Principal's office. Please note that you must submit a copy of your driver's license with this form. The Berkley Public Schools urge all parents/guardians who may be interested in working with our students in any way to submit a form at the beginning of the school year. Please note that regulations require that the form be delivered to the Superintendent's office or Principal's office in person.

A CORI Request form can be found on our website at <https://www.berkleypublicschools.org/> by accessing the Parent, Families, and Community Section using the Menu.

### **Fire Drills**

Fire Drills are required by law and are an important safety precaution and are held several times during the school year. During drills all students and staff practice building evacuation procedures and at times are observed by officials from the Berkley Police & Fire Departments. Exit routes are posted in all classrooms and teachers review fire drill procedures regularly.

### **School Safety Drills**

The staff of the Berkley Public Schools in conjunction with the Berkley Police and Fire Departments regularly receives training in procedures designed to enhance school safety. Emergency drills including lockdown drills and site evacuation are held during the school year.

## HEALTH SERVICES

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A child's health is important to the child, the parent/guardian, and the school staff. To achieve our common goal of keeping your child as healthy as possible, policies and procedures have been compiled regarding health issues. All inquiries regarding health services/issues should be forwarded to your student's school nurse.

**It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the school nurse of any changes in their student's health status, especially related to allergic reactions, medication, asthma, etc.**

### Emergency Forms

It is important that you complete your child's Annual Student Health Card and Student Emergency Contact Form and return it to the school. Keeping the information current allows the school staff to easily contact the appropriate authorized persons if your child becomes ill or is hurt while in school. For the safety of all children, the child will be released only to those people listed on the Student Emergency Contact Form.

### Physical Exams and Immunizations

All students must have written proof of a current physical exam (within one year of entrance date) and for grades K, 1, 5 and 7. Immunization dates, including the date of lead screenings, as well as physical exam, must be on file at the school prior to school entrance. No child will be admitted to school without being properly immunized. The school nurse may exclude students from school for failure to provide documentation of up to date immunizations. Exemptions to immunizations include students who are homeless or experiencing housing instability and documented (annually) religious exceptions.

### Medications

Medication includes all over the counter medications such as Tylenol, Motrin, Benadryl, cough drops and topical skin creams. Certain procedures regarding the administration of medication at school must be followed to ensure the safety of all children. No medication will be given, including over-the-counter products, without parental and medical authorization for administration. Relevant side effects and all other specific information must be filled out by the child's parent and the child's physician. Forms may be obtained through the school website as well as through the school nurse.

**If your child needs to be on medication in school, please follow these guidelines:**

1. All medication must be delivered to the school by the parent/guardian or a responsible adult designated by the parent. **Do not** send any medications in the school with the student.
2. All medication must have a written medical order from your child's primary care provider. (Orders sent via fax are acceptable). A parent/guardian permission form must also be signed and accompany the medication. *This order must be renewed as needed and at the beginning of each school year.*
3. Short term medication, such as antibiotics, may be given without medical order, but must be brought into school in a pharmacy labeled container. They must also be accompanied by a letter from the parent/guardian with the times medication is to be given.
4. All prescription and non-prescription drug container labels must include the name of the drug, expiration date, and the dosage. No more than a thirty day supply should be delivered to school. Baggies, unlabeled containers as well as expired medications are **NOT** ACCEPTABLE.
5. All prescription and non-prescription drug container labels must include the name of the drug, expiration date, and the dosage. No more than a thirty day supply should be delivered to school. Baggies, unlabeled containers as well as expired medications are **NOT** ACCEPTABLE.
6. No over the counter medications including Tylenol and cough drops will be given in school without the required, signed medication forms. **No student should be in possession of over the counter drugs, including Tylenol and cough drops, while in school.**

School personnel will not administer any medications to students unless they have received a medical order, a signed parent/guardian consent form and the medication has been received in an appropriately labeled container. In fairness to those giving the medication and to protect the safety of the child, there will be no exceptions to this policy.



### **Life Threatening Allergies**

In order to minimize the possibility of a life-threatening allergic reaction, the Berkley Public Schools maintains a district wide classroom food policy along with procedures for addressing life-threatening allergic reactions and maintains an emergency care plan/504 for students with physician documented potentially life- threatening allergies. The district maintains a 24 hour food policy, in which a parent/guardian must supply the school nurse with the actual package with ingredients listed at least 24 hours prior to the food being consumed in the classroom. This allows time for nurses to check for food allergies and gives students who may not be able to have this particular item time to bring in something they can safely eat.

### **Health Insurance**

Massachusetts 2006 Health Reform Statute was enacted as Chapter 58 of the Acts of 2006 of the Massachusetts Legislature, entitled: An Act Providing Access to Affordable, Quality, accountable Health Care. The law was designed to require health care coverage for nearly all of the residents of Massachusetts. Every child in Massachusetts has a right to health insurance. Please indicate on the Annual Student Health Card your insurance information. If you are in need of health insurance, please contact the school nurse. The school nurse can provide you with further information regarding the application as mandated under the Massachusetts Health Reform Law.

### **Universal Precautions**

Berkley Public Schools follows the safety policies of the practice of Universal Precautions for all exposure to blood and certain bodily fluids from any student or staff member, regardless of the person's blood borne infection status.

The full Universal Precaution Policy can be found on our website at <https://www.berkleypublicschools.org/page/policies> under the Section A: Foundations and Basic Commitments.

### **Student Illnesses**

A child's ability to learn, perform, and behave can depend on how they feel physically. Children who are sick should remain home if their illness is potentially contagious. The school nurse is available on a daily basis. If your child becomes ill at school, they should report to the classroom teacher and will then be directed to the nurse's office. The nurse will decide if it is necessary for the student to be dismissed. The school nurse will notify parents/guardians when any significant injury takes place. If your child has any special health problems please inform the school nurse.

#### **When to Keep Your Child Home**

- **TEMPERATURE** - Your child **MUST** remain home if they have an elevated temperature of 100.4 degrees or above. Your child must be fever-free, without medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.
- **DIARRHEA** - Diarrhea that cannot be controlled.
- **VOMITING** - Your child must not have vomited for 24 hours prior to returning to school.
- **COUGH**- Continuous, uncontrollable coughing.

If a child is absent for five or more consecutive days a written note from your child's health care provider will be required for re-entry to school.

### **Exclusion from School for Contagious and Infectious Diseases/Conditions**

With all contagious/infectious diseases, please send your child back to school with a doctor's note stating that they have been properly treated. Please note that some contagious diseases are required to be reported to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MA DPH).

#### Guidelines for specific illnesses are as follows:

- *Chicken Pox*: Until all blisters have formed scabs. Usually 6-10 days after the rash first appears.
- *Colds*: Until the child is without fever for 24 hours and feels well enough to participate in school activities.
- *Strep Throat*: Following the doctor's note and fever free for 24-hours.

- *Bacterial Conjunctivitis*: Until 24 hours after treatment begins. Viral Conjunctivitis requires no treatment.
- *Impetigo*: Until sores are healed or can be covered with a bandage or until the child has been treated with antibiotics for at least 24 hours.
- *Ringworm*: For ringworm of the body, exclusion until 24 hours after treatment has begun, and infected area must be covered while in school. For ringworm of the scalp, exclusion until 24 hours of treatment has been completed, and students must cover their head with a hat until shedding is complete.
- *Scabies*: Until 24 hours after treatment begins.
- *Lice*: When live lice are present students should remain home from school and undergo treatment.

### **Home or In Hospital Educational Services**

Regulations require school officials to offer educational services for students confined to the hospital or home for medical purposes for a period of not less than fourteen school days in a school year. Such educational services shall not be considered special education unless the students have been determined eligible for such services, and the services include services on the student's IEP. The criteria for home/ hospital services is as follows:

1. The student's physician must complete a Department of Education form 28R13; Physician's Statement for Temporary Home or Hospital Education 603 CMR 28.03(3) (c) and submit it to the Administrator of Student Services for approval.
2. At a minimum the physician's signed notice must include information regarding:
  - a. The student was admitted to a hospital or was confined to home;
  - b. The medical reason(s) for the confinement;
  - c. The expected duration of the confinement;
  - d. The medical needs of the student should be considered in planning the home or hospital education services; and
  - e. A specific anticipated date of return to school.

Forms must be completed by a physician, including pediatricians, or any other M.D. but will not be accepted from a Ph.D. or Ed.D.

Students whose medical condition permits them to complete their course work with the assistance of the tutor will receive credit for the course. The district will assign an appropriate tutor selected from district staff, privately contracted tutors, or an agency. Every attempt will be made to provide tutoring in each subject area. The school district determines the number of instructional hours per day or per week based on the educational and medical needs of the individual student

### **Student Accidents**

Students sustaining injuries such as a minor cut or bruise will be attended to by the school nurse. If a student receives an injury that may require more involved medical attention, or if an emergency situation arises, parents/guardians will be contacted. At the discretion of the school nurse, and without parental permission, a student may be transported by ambulance to receive medical care at a hospital.

### **Concussions**

In accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulation 105 CMR 201.000 if a student is injured at home or at school, including extracurricular activities, and a concussion is suspected, the student will need to be evaluated by a medical professional who has received Department approved training before they can return to physical education class or extracurricular physical activities.



## SCHOOL BASED SCREENINGS

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### **Hearing Screening**

According to Massachusetts State law, annually for all children in grades K-3 and once in grades 6-8 as well as children who have failed the hearing screening in the past, have a yearly hearing screening at school. If the student fails the screening, a form letter is sent home with the student informing the parent/guardian and requesting follow up with an audiologist. Documentation of the follow up must be returned to the school nurse.

### **Vision Screening**

According to Massachusetts state law all children through grade 5 and students in grade 7 have a vision screening in school. If the student fails the screening, a form letter is sent home with the student informing the parent/guardian and requesting follow up with an eye doctor. Documentation of the follow up must be returned to the school nurse.

### **Scoliosis Screening**

According to Massachusetts State Law, Scoliosis screenings are required annually in grades 5-8. Screenings are performed during physical education class by trained staff. Students are given prior notice so they can wear a sports bra or bathing suit top if they wish. A parent/guardian has the opportunity to request, in writing, that their student not participate in the screening.

### **BMI Screening**

According to Massachusetts State Law BMI (Body Mass Index) Screenings are required for all students in Grade 1, 4, and 7. A parent/guardian has the opportunity to request, in writing, that their student not participate in the screening.

### **SBIRT Screening**

According to Massachusetts State Law, SBIRT screening is required to be done one time in grades 6-8. Berkley Middle School typically completes this screening in grade 8. SBIRT is a verbal screening tool to screen students for substance use disorders. A student or the student's parent/ guardian may opt out of the screening, in writing to the school, at any time prior to the screening.

### **Social Emotional Academic Behavior Rating Scale (SAEBRS) Screening**

SAEBRS is a brief screening tool to help identify those students who may be at risk for social-emotional behavior (SEB) problems that may interfere with successfully accessing their school day. Teachers complete the SAEBRS rating scale for students in grades K-8 three times per year. The student companion assessment called mySAEBRS, which allows students in grade 2-8 to self-assess their social, emotional, academic, and behavior is completed simultaneously to the teacher ratings. The information gained from these assessments are reviewed by the Social Emotional Learning team. Parents/Guardians are contacted if it appears a student would benefit from support based on the SAEBRS data. Parents can request a copy of the screening questions by contacting the office of the Superintendent of Schools.

### **Dynamic Indicator of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) Screening**

Berkley Public Schools utilizes the DIBELS 8th Edition literacy assessment, which is a battery of short fluency measures that can be used for universal screening, benchmark assessment, and progress monitoring in Kindergarten through grade 6. DIBELS is used as the required dyslexia screening tool for students in grades Kindergarten and through grade 2. Parents/guardians of students in grade Kindergarten through Grade 2 receive a report of their students' scores following each benchmark period. Students participate in the DIBELS benchmark assessment three times a year.

## SCHOOL MEALS

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During the 2025-2026 school year, there will be no cost for school breakfast, lunch, or milk; however this is subject to change based on federal funding support. At Berkley Middle School, students may purchase ala carte items (i.e. cookies, ice cream, bottled drinks, etc.) Berkley Public Schools uses My School Bucks as an online payment option so students do not need to bring money to school. Parents can load money onto their student account by going to our website and

logging into their My School Bucks Account or a check can be sent in to the cafeteria made out to Berkley Public Schools. For any questions about your students lunch account please contact the Cafeteria Director, Andrea Tripp at [atripp@berkleypublicschools.org](mailto:atripp@berkleypublicschools.org) or at 508-822-5220.

School Lunch Menus are accessible on our website, complete with allergy information.

## TEACHING & LEARNING

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### Learning Expectations

Every student is expected to try their best at all times. Each student is expected to spend time in addition to scheduled class instruction to study and to perform written assignments. The following guidelines for students are in place:

1. Students should bring necessary materials to class, listen well, be active participants in class discussions, and ask questions if they don't understand.
2. When doing school work, students should read the directions carefully, think before answering, answer questions fully, and proofread work for spelling and grammar before turning it in.
3. Students should put forth their best effort when completing school work.
4. Students should produce neat work and take pride in all assignments.

### Curriculum

The District's curriculum functions as both window and as mirror, in order to reflect and reveal most accurately a multi-cultural world and the students themselves. Education needs to enable the student to look through window frames in order to see the realities of others and into mirrors in order to see their own reality reflected (Emily Seed, Curriculum as Window and Mirror). As such, the district's curriculum includes diverse individuals and beliefs in order to provide opportunities for students to reflect their experiences (mirrors) and provide students with insights into the experiences of others (windows) (National SEED Project. (2023, June 16). *Curriculum as window and mirror*. <https://www.nationalseedproject.org/Key-SEED-Texts/curriculum-as-window-and-mirror>).

Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, 603 CMR 26.05(1), the Berkley Public Schools, through its curricula and materials, encourages respect for human and civil rights of all individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. In accordance with district guideline, families may request information from the building principal on available accommodations related to curriculum content.

### Student Daily Schedule

Berkley Public Schools uses a six-day cycle rather than a weekly cycle for scheduling purposes. This type of cycle allows flexibility and resolves the issue of missed classes due to holidays and/or snow days. If a weekday is a no school day for any reason (holidays, snow day etc.), the cycle resumes following the day off.

### Technology

Berkley Public Schools provides students in grades 2-8 a Chromebook as a 1:1 device to be used as part of the student's educational access and experience. Students in grade PK-1 have access to devices within their classrooms. Students are expected to follow the Acceptable Use Policy, as well as adhere to the following expectations while using devices issued by Berkley Public Schools:

- Chromebooks and related accessories, as well as other technology devices provided to students are the property of Berkley Public Schools.
- Chromebooks and related accessories, as well as other provided technology devices must be returned to school at the end of school year.
- Chromebooks must be brought to school by students every day, fully charged.
- Software, apps, and extensions should only be added to a Chromebook by the Technology Department for Berkley Public Schools.

- Students should not let anyone borrow their Chromebook and/or charger or add additional Google profiles to their Chromebook.
- Damage to the Chromebook or a Chromebook that is not working properly should be reported to the Technology Department immediately by submitting a technical repair ticket to <https://berkeleypublicschools.incidentiq.com/>.
- Students should not leave their Chromebook or other provided devices in areas of extreme heat or cold temperatures.
- Students should not eat or drink near their Chromebook.
- Students should not take pictures using their Chromebook unless directed to do so by a teacher/staff member.

### **Broken or Damaged Chromebooks**

Berkley Public Schools maintains and repairs Chromebooks that experience occasional, unexpected problems due to normal wear and tear on the device. These issues are remediated at no cost to students and parents and loaner devices will be provided to the student while their device is being repaired. Repairs to a Chromebook can be submitted electronically at <https://berkeleypublicschools.incidentiq.com/>.

Chromebooks that are intentionally damaged or damaged due to ongoing neglect will be charged for replacement costs. At the beginning of each school year students will be provided a chromebook, case, and charger. Families will be charged for lost items. A bill will be issued to families for the full cost of the repair for intentional damage. Students who intentionally damage a Chromebook will only be provided a replacement device for in-school use only. Repairs costs include:

- Full device replacement \$325
- Keyboard and trackpad \$40
- LCD Screen \$40
- Hinge and bezel \$20
- Charger \$20

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic honesty is essential for the well-being of a school community. Berkley Public Schools expects every student to be intellectually honest in the preparation of homework, class work, projects, lab reports, take home tests, essays, assessments, and other academic activities. Effective evaluation of student work and instruction can only take place in an environment where intellectual honesty is respected.

Students are expected to seek clarification from a staff member if they are uncertain about the requirements for any assignment. Students should constantly monitor their work to assess its originality and seek explanation when they are uncertain. When a violation of academic honesty is suspected, the individual teacher/staff will discuss the matter confidentially with the student. The consequence for academic dishonesty will include but is not limited to a zero for the assignment.

All members of our school community should understand the definitions of academic dishonesty. These include:

**Cheating:** an act of deception, including giving and/or receiving information, by which a student misrepresents that they have mastered information on an academic exercise that they have not mastered.

**Plagiarism:** the presentation of words, concepts, sequence of ideas, graphs, or other visual representations of others as one's own. A student's work that is not primarily his or her own creation with copied, paraphrased, or summarized material without citation of sources is considered plagiarism. Unintentional plagiarism is still plagiarism.

**Artificial Intelligence:** Use of artificial intelligence software constitutes academic dishonesty.

## Report Cards

Report cards that record a student's academic progress as well as conduct and effort are issued three times per year. Please reference the monthly important dates, as well as the Principal's Newsletter and website for the specific dates report cards will be distributed.

At the middle school level, parents/guardians are encouraged to monitor their students' progress via our online Parent portal grading system.

## Placement of Students

(BCS) The classification and placement of students for instructional purposes is the responsibility of the school with the involvement of the parents/guardians. The sole purpose of careful classification and placement procedures is to place each student in classroom and group settings in which optimal learning will take place. Please note that parents/guardians may not request a specific teacher for their child.

Berkley Community School follows the district's placement and retention policy.

Berkley Community School offers varied programming to meet the needs of preschool aged students. The preschool enrollment policy is being updated to detail the manner in which student placement is determined. Placement is a team decision, based on individual student need, appropriate number of role models, and overall classroom makeup.

## (BMS) Grading Explanation for Grades 5-8

| Excellent Quality   |        | Very Good Quality |       | Acceptable Quality |       | Poor Quality   |       | Failing |      | Other |            |
|---|--------|-------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|--|-------|---------|------|-------|------------|
| A+  | 97-100 | B+                | 87-89 | C+                 | 77-79 | D+   | 67-69 | F       | 0-59 | I     | Incomplete |
| A   | 93-96  | B                 | 83-86 | C                  | 73-76 | D  | 63-66 |         |      | W     | Withdrawn  |
| A-  | 90-92  | B-                | 80-82 | C-                 | 70-72 | D-   | 60-62 |         |      | P     | Pass       |
| <b>Effort and Conduct Key</b><br><b>ME</b> Met Expectations<br><b>NI</b> Needs Improvement<br><b>U</b> Unsatisfactory |        |                   |       |                    |       | <b>Unified Arts Grading</b><br><b>E</b> Exceeds Expectations<br><b>ME</b> Meets Expectations<br><b>NI</b> Needs Improvement<br><b>U</b> Unsatisfactory |       |         |      |       |            |

## BCS Homework Guidelines

Teachers and parents share one common goal: to help each student in our school be successful. Each teacher and parent has an important role in student performance and achievement. Students learn best when they, their parents, and their teachers work together. Homework is one way that parents and teachers can cooperate to improve students' learning and help them achieve their educational potential.

Berkley Community School recognizes that every child is an individual, and that homework may need to be adjusted to meet individual needs. If your child is struggling to complete the assignments in a timely fashion or their homework does not appear to be challenging enough, please contact the classroom teacher.

### Homework Is Assigned:

1. To Help Students Learn Better: The Out-Of-Class Time Spent Working On A Specific Skill Will Help Develop, Reinforce And Strengthen That Skill.
2. To Help Parents Become Involved With Education: Students, Parents, And Teachers Must Work Together. Homework Is One Way Parents Can Make A Meaningful Contribution To Help Their Children Achieve.
3. To Help Students Develop Self-Discipline And Organizational Skills: Through Homework, Students Learn How To Manage Their Time. They Learn To Be Responsible For Their Own Achievements.

### Parents:

Homework is given to help students improve skills and take charge of their own learning. There are some specific ways that you can help your child do the best possible job on homework.

1. Stress that homework is important. Help your child find a time and place for homework. Help your child to schedule their time. Some families, for instance, institute a rule – no television until homework is completed. Others set up a specific “Homework Time” that is used on a daily basis. Students should be encouraged to read, practice math facts, and study sight word cards on a daily basis.
2. Sometimes it is helpful to review the main points of a study assignment by talking with someone. Let your child know you’re available to listen and support their learning.
3. When your child has completed a study session, reinforce the idea that the study will help them do better in school, and praise them for a job well done.
4. Help your child pack their homework and school supplies so they are organized to return it to school.

### **BMS Promotion / Retention Policy**

Any student receiving a letter grade of F as a final average in two or more major subjects may be required to repeat that school year. Every failing student has the option to attend Summer School at their parent/guardian’s expense. It is the purpose of the summer school to help students make up work that they have failed during the regular school year. If a student who has failed two or more subjects successfully completes the summer school program, then every consideration will be given to placing that student in the next higher grade. The school principal will have the authority to make final grade placement.

### **BMS Homework Guidelines**

Homework is defined as tasks assigned to students that are to be completed during non-instructional and/or non-school hours. Because education is a lifelong process it is important that students recognize that learning occurs at home and out in their community. Homework is one means of teaching the necessary skills of independent study and learning outside of school. In the Berkley Public Schools homework includes not only written work, but also related activities such as reviewing ideas taught in class, reading from the textbook, long-term assignments, research projects, recreational reading and other activities that are related to what is being taught in the classroom.

Parents can be supportive of their child’s efforts in school by regularly checking the student agenda/planner, providing a consistent time and suitable place for work to be completed, by promoting a positive attitude toward homework and by contacting the child’s teacher(s) in a timely fashion, if problems with homework develop.

Homework agenda planners are provided for students to assist with recording and transporting their daily homework, as well as providing an easy means for communication back and forth with the teacher. These planners also can assist parents who can check each day as to what the homework is supposed to be.

All homework assignments should be valued by the teacher and the student. Students are expected to complete assignments carefully and teachers are expected to review all homework during the following day. Homework counts as part of each student’s grade in each subject where homework is assigned. Failure to complete and submit assigned homework may result in negatively impacting a student’s grade(s) and may also result in disciplinary action (detention). Within the context of district/school programs, each teacher develops their own specific system for handling homework, and shares this with parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year.

### **BMS Physical Education**

The physical education program is offered to children on a scheduled cycle. The classes emphasize the development of the child through individual, as well as group activities. All children must participate in physical education classes. The only exceptions will be students who are in possession of an excuse from a physician. Physical education at this level is mandated by state law. Repeated failure to take part in physical education classes will be treated as a disciplinary matter (defiance). At Berkley Middle School, students are responsible for bringing appropriate clothes to physical education class.

### **Substitute Teachers**

A substitute teacher is an important person in our school. This person replaces a teacher who is absent or attending meetings. All students should be polite, helpful, and considerate with such individuals. Students are expected to follow all classroom rules as they would if their regular teacher was present.

### **Testing & Assessment**

Throughout the school year, multiple methods are used to assess students. Individual student progress is monitored through the use of classroom assignments, assessments, and observations. Students are assessed on their attainment of skills in Mathematics, English Language Arts and Integrated Content Areas throughout the school year. Students' development of age appropriate social skills and self-help skills are assessed through classroom/school observation.

Students educated with Massachusetts public funds are required by federal laws and the 1993 Massachusetts Education Reform Law, state law M. G. L. Chapter 69, section 1I, to participate in statewide testing. The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System is administered to students in grades 3-8 in the spring in the areas of English Language Arts, Mathematics and in Science and Technology in grades 5 & 8, and Civics in grade 8. The schedule for MCAS testing is included in the monthly important dates and/or newsletter. Results report on the performance of individual students, schools, and districts. Parents will be notified each year of their child's test results and of the school's status under the state's accountability system.

### **Textbooks**

Textbooks are valuable learning tools and must be treated with care by students. If a textbook is lost or damaged, a student should report it immediately to their teacher. If the book is damaged or lost, students are expected to pay the cost of replacing the lost textbook. In order to take proper care of textbooks, any hardcover textbooks should be covered.

### **Title 1**

Berkley Community School is a Title I school. At the beginning of each school year, a district that receives Title I funds shall notify the parents of each student attending Title I schools that the parents may request, and the district will provide in a timely manner, information regarding the professional qualifications of their child's classroom teachers.

### **Tiered Interventions**

Berkley Public Schools is committed to providing exceptional educational opportunities for all students. A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) or Tiered Interventions provides differentiated instruction and interventions based on individual students' needs. Tiered Interventions are aligned with a data system, a student support team, and Positive Behavior Interventions (PBIS). Berkley Community School has Reading Interventionists that provide instruction to small groups of students.

Berkley Community School offers a Reading Clinic for students that need targeted, short-term interventions in order to develop skills and make academic progress.

### **BMS Honors Classes**

Berkley Middle School offers Honors level courses in grades 7 for Mathematics and in Grade 8 for Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies/Civics. Based on set criteria, the Honors courses are designed for students who have excelled in their previous courses. Students who enter into Honors courses should be self-motivated, independent learners who are able to master new material at a fast pace. Based on the structure of the Master Schedule at BMS students are able to take 1, 2, or 4 honors courses. Criteria for placement in honors classes will be provided to students and families in the fall of their grade 7 year.

### **School Library Use**

Students are able to borrow books from our school library. There will be no fines for overdue books, however, families will be charged for books that are damaged or lost.

## **Videos and Movies**

(BCS) As part of a student's classroom experience, teachers may choose to show video clips or full length G rated movies, as it pertains to their curriculum content. Teachers wishing to show a movie that is rated PG-13 will send home individual permission slips.

(BMS) As part of a student's classroom experience, teachers may choose to show video clips or full length movies, as it pertains to their curriculum content. These movies may be rated G, PG or PG-13, when appropriate. If for any reason you do NOT wish your child to view these video clips/movies, please send in a signed note stating your decision.

## **OTHER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

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### **Photography of Students**

Your child's photograph may or may not appear on our school's website, other school social media or any local newspapers. If for any reason you do NOT wish your child to be photographed, please send in a signed note stating your decision at the beginning of each school year.

### **Pictures/Yearbooks**

Individual pictures are taken during the school year. Students and parents/guardians will be notified of the date and costs. Purchase of pictures is optional. Yearbooks may be ordered October through April (BMS) .

### **Food & Drink in the Classroom/Hallways**

Students are allowed to bring water bottles to class (no glass bottles, soda, or energy drinks of any kind). Water Filling Stations are available throughout the schools (BMS).

### **BCS Snack Time**

Students may bring a snack and drink daily for snack. Snacks should be small and easy to eat in the classroom setting. There should be no glass bottles, soda, or energy drinks of any kind.

### **Gum Chewing**

Gum chewing is not allowed anywhere in the school building because it creates a major problem in keeping the school clean. Detention may be assigned for this offense and repeat offenders will be referred to the office.

### **Extracurricular Activities**

The Berkley Public Schools offers an enrichment program of after school activities based on student and staff interest. These and other extra-curricular activities give students an opportunity to explore and develop their interest and talents. Berkley Public Schools encourages students to be active in one or more of these programs. Watch for fliers throughout the school year.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips can be an excellent way to extend classroom learning, and may be scheduled at various times throughout the school year. In terms of student expectations and behavior, a field trip day is just like any other school day. Field trips are planned to teach students in a special way, and it is up to each student to follow the rules to learn effectively on a field trip. Students are expected to follow all instructions from supervisors and adhere to all bus safety rules during the trip. A respect for the reputation of the school and for private and public property is most important. Students who miss class work or homework on a field trip day are responsible for completing the missed work. In some instances, for health and safety reasons, parents/guardians may be asked to accompany their child(ren) on a field trip. Field trips are at the discretion of the school administration.

## **Parties**

Parties for teachers and fellow students are not allowed unless the Principal grants permission. If you wish to recognize your child's birthday by sending food into your child's classroom, please check with the child's teacher about a convenient time for the snack, and most importantly to be sure that the food is safe for all children in the classroom, particularly those with food allergies. Any food sent for classrooms must be sent **24 hours in advance** in order to allow for the items to be checked by the nurse for allergens.

## **BMS Socials**

In cooperation with the parent – teacher organization and student council, the school sponsors several socials throughout the school year. The parent – teacher organization and/or student council typically sell refreshments.

Please remember these rules so that socials will continue to be a success:

1. All socials are scheduled from 2:30 to 4:00 PM.
2. All food and drink must be consumed in the designated area.
3. Coats, bags, and jackets will be placed in a designated area.
4. Students may not leave the building until the conclusion of the social without the permission of a chaperone.
5. A student may not attend a social if they are absent on that day, or received a consequence the week of the social.
6. A signed permission slip and payment must be turned in prior to the event.

## **BMS Student Council**

Each year, student body officers are elected by the students of the school. Homeroom representatives, selected by the students in each class, and council officers assist in the climate and culture of the school. Every homeroom in the school elects representative(s) to serve on the student council.

Each student interested in running for the office of President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer must follow the election process outlined by the school. There are several requirements that students must meet in order to remain in office. Eligibility requirements for student council are the same as those for athletics.

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETICS**

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Interscholastic athletics are offered to students in grades 6-8 in soccer, volleyball, fall & spring cross country, basketball, cheer, baseball, and softball.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

Students desiring to participate in Student Council and interscholastic sports must earn a passing grade in all core subjects in order to remain eligible to participate. Student performance will be measured by using grades earned at the midpoint and report cards. In addition to this requirement, any student receiving an unsatisfactory in conduct will be considered ineligible. If a student is deemed ineligible for either of the aforementioned reasons they will be placed on probation. The following steps will be followed in regards to probation:

- One week from the issue of warning notices or report cards, students will not be able to participate in any event, including practices.
- At the completion of one week, students must obtain a written report from the teacher, from the "unsatisfactory" in conduct or the failing grade, stating the student has shown improvement in the area of deficiency. If the student has shown sufficient improvement, the student will be reinstated.
- If the student has not shown sufficient improvement, weekly reports must be obtained from the teacher where the students earned "unsatisfactory" or a failing grade. When sufficient improvement is displayed, the student will be reinstated.
- If improvement is not displayed by the next report card or warning notice, the student will be dismissed from the extracurricular activity or interscholastic team.



## Athletic Concussion Policy (JJIF)

In accordance with MA Law & Athletic Concussion Policy #6320), all students and parents/guardians must complete concussion online training and return the completed certificate to the school if the student is participating in any sports-related programs. The Online training website address for parents is:

<https://www.train.org/cdctrain/course/1089862/details> Training is required once per school year.

The full Concussion Policy can be found on our website at <https://www.berkleypublicschools.org/page/policies> under the Section J: Students.

## STUDENT RECOGNITION

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### BCS Student of the Month

Each month, teachers select Students of the Month based on class effort, conduct, participation, personal growth and/or involvement in class projects. Students may be honored for high achievement, but also for their growth in skills or personal achievements that have been noted by their teacher. One student per classroom in grades 1-4 is selected monthly. Students of the Month are chosen for art, music, physical education, computer, discovery zone and speech/language. Students' names and pictures are displayed and students receive recognition in their classrooms.

### BMS Honor Roll

Basic Philosophy of Honor Roll- An honor roll provides recognition to those students whose efforts have enabled them to fulfill their academic responsibilities at a level worthy of distinction. It distinguishes those who have attained a superior level of performance in all their educational endeavors. If students are to receive this recognition, they should also be above average in character and reliability.

1. In order to make the Honor Roll at the Berkley Middle School, you must have A's and B's in all subjects and maintain a grade of "Met Expectation" in conduct and effort.
2. Our school maintains two Honor Roll categories: *High Honors*- Receive "A's" in all graded subjects and "Met expectations" in conduct and effort. *Honors* - Must have a "B" or better in all graded subjects and "Met expectations" in conduct and effort.

### Publicity

We vigorously attempt to publicize the excellent work our students do in print, on the district website or using social media. Your child's photograph may or may not appear in any or all of these publications. If for any reason you do NOT wish your child to be photographed, please acknowledge on your handbook sign off at the start of each school year or send in a signed note stating your decision.

## MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT DEVICES

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### Lockers

Students will be assigned lockers in grades 3-8. Books, clothing, and school-related objects may be stored in these lockers. Students are responsible for the content of their locker. Lockers are the property of Berkley Public Schools. At no time do the Berkley Public Schools relinquish the exclusive control of lockers for the convenience of students. School authorities for any reason may conduct periodic general inspections of lockers at any time, without notice, without student consent and without a search warrant.

At the elementary level, locks of any kind are not permitted.

At the middle school level, combination locks are provided to all students. If a child loses their lock, the replacement fee is \$10.00. Checks or money orders should be made out to "Berkley Middle School."

Students are reminded not to leave money or expensive items in their locker. The school is not responsible for any lost items. No student should go to their locker, except during specified times or when given permission by a teacher. It is the responsibility of each student to keep his or her locker clean.

### **Electronic Devices and Toys**

At the elementary school level, electronics and toys are not permitted in school or on the school bus. Please do not allow your child to bring items such as: iPOD's, cell phones, tablets, laser lights, electronic games, toys, trading cards, stuffed animals or similar objects. Apple/Smart watches are not permitted. These items distract students and do not provide a suitable atmosphere for learning.

At the middle school level, cell phones, smart watches, and electronic devices must be kept in a student's locker during the school day. Students are not allowed to have cell phones or electronic devices on their person or in their pocketbooks/backpacks during the school day, unless they are being used in a lesson facilitated by the classroom teacher. If any communication device is visible in school, the device will be turned in to the office by a staff member.

The school district assumes no financial liability for lost, stolen, or damaged articles.

### **Lost & Found**

A Lost and Found bin is located in each school. Please ask your child to check this bin if they are missing something. Please make an effort to label your child's belongings (i.e. jacket, lunchbox, backpack). The lost and found is periodically emptied, so please check in a timely fashion if you are missing something.

### **Lost, Stolen and Damaged Materials**

Students assume financial responsibility for all materials and equipment issued to them by the school. In the event such material is lost, stolen, damaged, or defaced, teachers will notify the student and the office of the material involved and the fee to be assessed.

Charges for lost, damaged, or defaced material and equipment will be applied according to the following:

- First Year (new material) full replacement cost
- Second Year 80% of the replacement cost
- Third Year 60% of replacement cost
- Fourth Year 40% of replacement cost
- Fifth Year and older 20% of replacement cost or \$15.00 rebinding fee, whichever is greater.

### **Acknowledgement of the Student Handbook**

The Berkley Public Schools Student Handbook is a collection of key expectations, policies, and procedures that guide student activity and conduct within the district. The handbook is not exhaustive, and additional situations may arise that require administrative discretion or reference to other district and state policies and regulations. Parents/Guardians may request a hard copy of the handbook at any time by contacting the school office. Parents/Guardians will be asked to sign an acknowledgement of this handbook annually.