

**Dedham School
Student Handbook
2024-2025**

Dear Dedham School Students,

Welcome to the Dedham School Family! Our school boasts exceptional facilities and a dedicated, hardworking staff committed to your success. We hold high expectations for your achievements, and to meet them, it's crucial that you make thoughtful choices and take responsibility for your actions.

We look forward to partnering with you, your parents, and the community to support your journey toward excellence. By fully engaging with the opportunities our school offers, you can make your education more meaningful and enjoyable. Remember, each of you has the potential to be a significant contributor to our school. Choose wisely to make the most of this opportunity.

This handbook is here to help you understand the rules and procedures at Dedham School. It aims to address many of the everyday questions you might have about our school's expectations. We appreciate you taking the time to read through it and familiarize yourself with its contents. Following these guidelines consistently is crucial for the smooth operation of our school and our collective success.

Sincerely,

Larry Clement
Principal
Dedham School

DEDHAM SCHOOL VISION

We, the Dedham School Department, believe that by developing the whole person, students will take pride and responsibility in their performance. We believe all students can be successful in the journey to be productive citizens. We will encourage cooperation and individual development through a safe and nurturing environment. We are committed to the task of cultivating knowledgeable individuals who strive for excellence in their endeavors and the highest achievement in pursuit of lifelong learning.

DEDHAM SCHOOL BELIEF STATEMENTS

- All students want to succeed and can achieve.
- All students can learn to become critical thinkers and problem-solvers.
- Each student must strive to reach his/her potential in all areas.
- Students and staff need a clean, healthy and safe environment in which to grow.
- The school will celebrate the diversity of all its students.
- School is an inviting place that operates on mutual respect.
- Policies are consistent with our school's vision and are consistently applied.
- Decisions are made in consideration of what is best for the students.

DEDHAM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STAFF

School Committee:

Amy Allen
Tim Bush
Erika Cronkhite
Casey Monnier
Laura Wardwell

District Administration:

James Stoneton, Superintendent
Rebecca Enman, Business Manager
Mary Ellen Seymour, Director of Pupil Services
Frank Rapp, Technology Coordinator
Ben Walton, Director of Maintenance

DEDHAM STAFF:

Larry Clement, Principal	Donna Cutliffe, Administrative Assistant
Erika Haulk, SS/Math/Grade 7/Assistant Principal/Director of Athletics	
Catherine Melton, Pre-K Teacher/ Ed Tech	Annie Goodwin, Kindergarten
Jaida Beaulieu, Grade 1	Kathy Daigle, Grade 2
Brittany Ochs, Grade 3	Dee Frederick, Grade 4
Anna Spaulding, Science/Grade 5 Homeroom	Agnes Robinson, Art/Math/Grade 6 Homeroom
Beth Smyth- Handley, ELA/Grade 8 Homeroom	

Debbie Blanchard, Special Education	Ryan Enman, Special Education
Cyndi Kuhn, Ed Tech Special Ed	Nicole Hodge, Ed Tech Special Ed
Kim Lincoln, Ed Tech Special Ed	Erica Mott , Ed Tech Special Ed
Joelle Parker, Ed Tech Special Ed	Corinne Rogers, Ed Tech Special Ed
Kathy Snyder, Ed Tech Special Ed	Michelle Taylor, BCBA

Anne Wortman, Reading Recovery/Title I	Michelle Phillips, Ed Tech Comp/Lib
Michelle Briggs, Music/MS Math	Tim Pearson, Physical Education
Gil Maxwell, Outdoor Education	Lizbeth Richards, Speech Therapy
Heather Simpson, Occupational Therapy	Bethany Harlow, School Nurse
Hillary Crossman, School Counselor	Patti Currie-Wright, Gifted and Talented
Lisa Wallace, Mgr. Cook	Lynn Nelson, Asst Cook
Stephen Spann, Head Custodian	Alex Caruso, Custodian

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WHAT SHOULD I KNOW?

ABOUT MY SCHOOL

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Announcements are made in the morning following the National Anthem and Pledge of Allegiance. Students should listen carefully for school news and information.

ASSEMBLY PROGRAMS:

Assemblies will be held once a week for the purpose of promoting school unity, a positive school climate, and addressing any problems that might arise. Students are encouraged to perform at the assemblies. Students will be seated by class and are expected to be a respectful and disciplined audience.

BICYCLES/SKATEBOARDS:

Students in grades 5-8 may ride bicycles to school with parental permission. Students must be cautious as Rt 1A is a very busy highway. A note for the year is sufficient.

Skateboards may not be used on school property without permission, safety gear, and supervision from a teacher.

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:00 Students Arrive
 8:10 Tardy
 8:10 Morning Announcements
 8:15 Classes Begin
 11:20-11:45 K-4 Lunch
 11:50-12:20 K-4 Recess
 12:00-12:20 5-8 Lunch
 12:20-12:40 5-8 Recess
 2:50 Student Pick Up Dismissal
 3:00 Student Dismissal

Students will be considered TARDY if they are not in their homerooms by 8:10.

EARLY ARRIVALS:

Teachers have meetings and preparations to attend to before school begins. Buses arrive at 7:55 am. Students may arrive ten minutes early and go directly to the gym to wait for the buses. Please try not to be dropped off any earlier.

FIELD TRIPS:

Class field trips are provided to supplement lessons. A general permission slip is included on the back of the emergency forms. Notices of all trips will be sent home to keep you informed. Sometimes, special permission slips will be sent home to be signed.

FIRE/LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Fire/Lockdown drills are required by state law. Students will receive directions regarding drill procedures. No running is allowed and do not enter the building until told to do

so by a staff member.

HOMEWORK

Homework plays an important part in the learning process. It extends classroom learning and serves to strengthen a student's sense of responsibility. Students and parents should expect up to 1-2 hours of homework every school day depending on grade level. Students should keep an assignment book to record assignments and will be held accountable in grades 5-8. If students are absent, it is their responsibility to check with their teachers to collect and complete missed assignments. Students wanting or needing help with their work should arrange a study time with their teacher.

LIBRARY

The library is used by students to enhance their learning and for reading enjoyment. The library is used extensively for research and as a place to study. Books may be signed out for one week. Please be prompt about returning them. Teachers also have extensive classroom libraries.

LOCKERS

Students in grades 2-8 and some others will be assigned lockers. Locks from home are only permitted in the locker room for PE class or after school practices by providing the school with a copy of the key or the combination to the lock. Lockers are the property of the school and should be kept neat at all times. Locker inspections will be held on occasion and may be subject to search if there is reasonable cause.

STUDENT VISITORS

Student visitors to Dedham School must be approved by the Principal and the classroom teacher. Visitors to school dances must have prior approval from the Principal.

TELEPHONE PRIVILEGES

The school phone is mainly for school business. Students will be allowed to use the phone in the office to call parents between classes with permission from their teacher. The phone MAY NOT be used from 2:30-3:15 PM due to the large volume of incoming calls. The phone is for local calls only and may be monitored. It is still necessary for students who are ill to report to the office to call home.

Students with cell phones may not use them during the school day or make/ receive calls or text messages. Teachers may allow use of phones for classes upon occasion. Teachers will collect cell phones and store them safely until 2:50 each day. If students misuse the privilege, their phones may be taken from them by teachers or Principal and picked up in the office at the end of the day.

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ?

ABOUT MY BEHAVIOR

We are here to learn. Any behavior which inhibits the learning process, either yours or someone else's or inhibits the teacher's ability to teach will not be tolerated. Safety and mutual respect in the school environment are essential and expected. Students are expected to follow the directions of any school staff member.

BUS RULES

See appendix

CLASSROOM RULES

Success in the classroom rests with a positive student attitude. The following guidelines will help you be more productive.

1. Be on time and ready to go to work with all the materials you will need for class.
2. Cooperate and follow directions.
3. Remain on task
4. Keep arms, hands, feet objects and inappropriate comments to yourself.
5. Students are expected to abide by the classroom rules developed by individual teachers and students.

DETENTION SYSTEM

We believe in a school environment that promotes learning by bringing out the best in each and every learner. A fair and clearly defined system for maintaining the school rules provides students with the security they need to learn. The detention system is meant to be a deterrent for students who display inappropriate school behavior; and past practice has shown that it has worked successfully for a large percentage of the students.

Students in grades 6-8 may receive a noontime detention for minor infractions of school rules. While in noontime detention, the student is asked to finish their homework or write an apology to the offended person. Detentions are earned for such infractions such as;

- Lack of physical respect. (hitting, pushing, tripping etc.)
- Lack of verbal respect. (swearing, harassing, backtalk etc.)

When a student has earned 3 detentions, parents are notified and he/she is asked to serve an after school detention from 3-4:00pm.

For more serious infractions where a student may be sent to the office (fighting, swearing at a teacher etc.), parents will be notified and a record will be kept of the incident and appropriate consequences given. Consequences range from an after school detention to a 10 day suspension from school.

Once consequences have been served, students always have the opportunity for a fresh start.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SYSTEM

Dedham School has implemented a Positive Behavior System where we recognize students who demonstrate positive social skills/interactions with others and exemplify our core values of honesty, responsibility, respect, kindness and compassion. Bucketfiller coupons are used in PreK-4 and Gotchas in grades 5-8.

DRESS CODE/ PRE K - 8TH GRADE

The dress code was rewritten as a policy and approved by the school board in the Spring of 2005. Please read and become familiar with the Pre K- 8 policy.

HALL RULES

When in the hallways, students should obey the following rules:

1. Be polite
2. Talk quietly
3. No pushing, shoving, tripping or running.
4. No profanity

HARASSMENT/ BULLYING

The Dedham School does not tolerate harassment/bullying in any form. Students and staff should report any cases. Complaints will be taken seriously.

SCHOOL WIDE RULES

1. Respect all school staff, employees, and other students.
2. No profanity or obscene language.
3. Keep noise down.
4. Be on time for all classes, activities and appointments.
5. No gum chewing.
6. No spitting
7. Leave objects unrelated to the classroom at home.
8. Playground rules are posted in the hallways and in the classrooms.

VANDALISM

Damage to the building, buses and grounds can be a serious and expensive problem. Offenders will be expected to pay for damages.

WHERE SHOULD I GO?

Office/Clinic...

ATTENDANCE

Students should report to the office when arriving late or when being dismissed from school. The state requires us to keep strict attendance records and they are kept in the office. Students are considered tardy after 8:10

LOST & FOUND

Clothing and larger items such as lunch bags may be found in a box near the recycling area. Smaller items such as money, watches, rings, jewelry and keys are kept in the office. Try not to bring valuable items to school and don't leave them unattended. Students should turn in any items found. To avoid loss, please mark all belongings with a permanent marker.

MEDICATIONS

State law requires that all medications be kept locked in the office. Trained personnel dispense and record medications given. Students requiring medication must have a permission slip signed by a doctor or the parent (for non prescription meds.) Only medicine that needs to be taken 4 times a day or at specific times will be given at school. Thank you for your cooperation. Students may not carry any medication (except inhalers). Aspirin/Tylenol may be sent and kept in the office with an appropriate note.

MESSAGES

The office will take messages from parents. Students will be called to the office or a note will be written.

SICKNESS/INJURY

All students who become sick or injured while at school should report to the office. A nurse is on duty 1 day a week. At other times, reliable personnel will assess the situation and parents will be called in most cases. Accident reports are filled out by the staff member on duty when the accident happened.

GUIDANCE

Our guidance program is a multi faceted approach to helping children and families. Our counselor helps children proactively before trouble occurs by teaching or reinforcing day-to-day life skills. The counselor is also there to help a child or parent solve problems. The school counselor works with groups of children to settle conflicts, handle divorce or grieving situations etc. The counselor is available 1-2 days a week.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ADVENTURE PROGRAM

Through funding from grants, donations, as well as local funds, we are able to offer this opportunity for our Middle School students. Students work on self esteem, confidence building, group trust and participate in adventure games that teach a lesson. It is a valuable program which helps our students at Camp Roosevelt. Other facilities are also used depending on the year.

KITCHEN/CAFETERIA

FREE OR REDUCED ELIGIBILITY

Forms are sent home at the beginning of the year to each family. Income guidelines are the determining factor. If income changes, forms are available in the office. Please return the forms as the school receives Title One money and is considered for grants based on our free and reduced numbers.

LUNCHES/BREAKFAST/SNACK

Students will have the choice of an entrée or sandwich each day. Both options will include milk and be free of charge. Breakfast/Snack milk and lunch milk, for cold lunch students, are available for 40¢. Recess/lunch milk money may be paid weekly or you may deposit a lump sum of money in your school lunch account. Calls regarding a debit will be made periodically from the school office.

Breakfast/Snack is Free for students as long as you take all of the required components. Otherwise items are a la carte.

COMPUTERS/LAPTOPS

Students will be taught the basics of computer use, keyboarding skills, as well as to use the computer as a tool to accomplish their work. Middle School students are expected to use school issued computers to enhance all subject areas.

Students in grades 7 & 8 will be issued MLTI laptops. It is the student's responsibility to care for and use the computer properly. Both parent and student must sign a computer/use agreement contract before a laptop may go home. Added insurance will be purchased and the school and family will share the expense for the insurance. Grade 6 students will be issued a laptop and will be able to take them home if they pay the insurance and sign the agreement. The cost of the insurance is \$40.

Students in grades K-4, will be issued school devices. They will not be able to take them home.

INTERNET POLICY

We are hooked up to the Internet through a statewide agreement with NYNEX. Since the Internet contains all sorts of information, we have a policy students and parents must read and sign to be able to use it. (See Appendix for the form)

WHAT CAN I DO?

ATHLETICS

Sports offered by the Dedham School include soccer, cross country, basketball, cheering, track, Mountain Bike team, baseball and softball. "B"team sports may include soccer and basketball. The school sports program is for 6, 7, & 8th grade students. 5th graders may also participate in cross country and spring track (or another sport if numbers are low). Sports are an extension of the classroom. We expect students to be respectful, sportsmanlike and coachable. (See appendix for the sports policy and compacts.) The Dedham School is a proponent of the "Sports Done Right" initiative. This initiative includes core principles and practices to make the sports program in our school a positive learning experience for all.

ACADEMIC AWARDS

Classroom subject awards are given at the end of the year. Eighth grade awards are more extensive.

SPORTS AWARDS

The Dedham School promotes good sportsmanship and teamwork as major components of a successful sports program. Following each sports season, there will be a sports recognition night or assembly to recognize all the student athletes for their hard work and participation during the season. All student athletes will receive a certificate of participation and medal for their efforts. If a team has a championship season during league play, they will also receive individual team awards to commemorate the season.

DANCES

Dances are held during the school year for socialization and entertainment. The following rules are necessary for all participants.

1. Time is usually from 7:00-9:00 pm or 6:00-8:00 pm except for the 7/8th grade end of year spring semi-formal dance.
2. Grades 5-8 only. Outside guests must receive prior approval from the principal.
3. All regular school rules are in effect.
4. No students are allowed outside. If anyone goes outside without permission, he/she will not be allowed to attend anymore dances.
5. Admission will be charged.
6. Regular school dress is permitted.
7. Refreshments will generally be sold.

DRAMA

A school musical will take place in the spring. Students in grades 4-8 may try out for parts and many students are involved in the production.

HOLBROOK RECREATION PROGRAMS

Recreation programs provide opportunities for younger students to participate in sports. Programs offered include Saturday soccer for grades K-8, Pee Wee basketball for grades 4-6, and Little League and Farm League baseball and softball. A basketball skills opportunity is also offered for grades K-3. Sign-ups are announced each season in the newsletter.

MUSIC PROGRAM

BAND

Fourth graders and up are offered beginning band instrumental lessons. Students may be in the advanced band once they complete their first course. Students meet weekly by sections and also as a whole band. Regular practice at home is necessary for a student to make good progress in learning an instrument. A concert is performed in the winter and spring.

CHORUS

The chorus practices weekly in preparation for a winter and spring concert. Chorus is composed of students in grades 5-8.

CLASSROOM MUSIC

Each classroom has music instruction once a week. Students are taught a progression of skills appropriate to their grade level for the joy and appreciation of music.

SCHOOL LETTERS

Letters are earned by students in grades 5-8 by earning 12 pts. Bars are given for earning 2nd and 3rd letters. Points may be earned for academics, athletics, music, drama, and community service. Teachers have the tally sheets and students record their points periodically. When 12 points are earned, students are presented with their letter at an assembly.

STUDENT COUNCIL

Student Council allows students in grades 5-8 to become leaders of their class and practice the democratic principles of student government. Elections take place in the fall and the student council sponsors several school events throughout the year.

WHAT SHOULD MY PARENTS KNOW?

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is one of the most important factors in student success. Students are expected to be in school every day that school is in session unless legally excused. The Dept. of Education and the school system consider the following as legal excuses for missing school:

1. Personal health, including the person's physical, mental and behavioral health
2. An appointment with a health professional that must be made during the regular school day
3. Observance of a recognized religious holiday when the observance is required during the regular school day
4. A family emergency
5. A planned absence for a personal or educational purpose that has been approved in advance

ABSENT FROM SCHOOL

Any child missing a day of school should bring a written note from his/her parent/guardian. A call to the office is helpful. Please try to call the office if your child is to be absent. It is a check for your child's safety and we will know that he/she didn't just miss the bus.

TARDINESS

School starts at 8:00 and classes start at 8:15. Students arriving after 8:10 are considered tardy, and should report to the office before going to class. Classroom business such as lunch count, attendance and preparation for the day occurs from 8-8:15. Tardiness affects not only the student arriving late, but also the teachers and classmates. **PLEASE** be sure your child arrives at school on time.

VACATIONS

Please try to schedule family vacations during scheduled school breaks. A school calendar is in the appendix of this handbook. Please note testing dates. When students miss school, it is difficult to make up for classroom instruction and missed work. Teachers are not required to gather work prior to a student's absence.

ANIMALS

Animals are not to be brought into the school building for safety and health reasons.

BUSES

Students should be ready on time. Any student wishing to get off the bus at a friend's or babysitter's **MUST** have a note from a parent. Any student staying after school or being picked up by a parent should also have a note. Otherwise, the student will go home on the bus.

CONFERENCES

Parent/Teacher conferences are held in November. It is important to attend conferences and have a connection with your child's teacher. Research has shown that parents involved in their child's education have children with more successes in school.

D.A.R.E.

The Drug Abuse Resistance Program is offered to 5th graders annually through an agreement with the Hancock County Sheriff's Dept. The 10 week program culminates with a graduation.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION FORMS

These are to inform us how you wish us to act in an emergency. We keep those on file for your child's protection.

NO SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS

School is generally in session Monday-Friday except for vacations and workshops as provided in the school calendar. If school is closed due to inclement weather or for health or safety reasons, notice will be given via text or phone call as well as over radio and television stations. If school remains in session, it is up to the parent to choose whether or not their children should attend school under existing conditions.

OPEN HOUSE

Open House is held at the beginning of each year. Please come and meet your child's teacher and tour the school. An Open House night is also held in March.

PTF

The Parents, Teachers and Friends Group meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 5:30pm to discuss ways to help the school serve our students better. Many programs sponsored by the PTF are not provided for in the school budget. Come and join this group of volunteers helping the school.

PARENTAL CONCERNS/COMPLAINTS

The chain of command for concerns begins with the classroom teacher and progresses to the Principal, and then to the Superintendent. If there is no resolution parents can contact the school committee. Please, if you have concerns, contact the school to come in and discuss them.

RECESS

All students are expected to go out for recess and should be dressed for the season. A note from home is required for a student to stay inside. Teachers and students alike need a break. During inclement weather, indoor recess will be provided for all students.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be issued 3 times this year. Teachers should remain in contact with parents at the mid-trimester if there are concerns. The progress report/report card (or envelope) should be signed and returned to school so that we know you received them. Conferences can be set up at mutually convenient times.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The School Committee meets the first Wednesday of each month at 6:00pm in the school. The public is always invited and encouraged to attend.

SCHOOL NURSE

This service is provided on a regular basis. Our nurse will assist parents, children and teachers concerning health programs. The nurse maintains health records on all pupils and does vision, hearing and scoliosis screenings.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

School accident insurance is offered at the beginning of each school year.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Pictures of each child are taken in the fall of each school year. The photo company offers packages for parents to purchase.

SCHOOL PHYSICALS

The school requires physicals for all students involved in athletics. There will be a fee of \$10.00 per student. Physicals are offered in May. Students may have one at school or through their own physician. Physicals are good for two years.

SMOKING/ DRUG/ALCOHOL POLICY

The Dedham School Committee has a policy prohibiting the use of tobacco by anyone within the school building or on the premises. The sale , use or possession of all drugs, including look alike substances are prohibited on school grounds. A complete policy is available for reviewing.

SCENT FREE SCHOOL

Due to the increase in allergies and asthma among students and staff, we ask that ALL staff, students and volunteers refrain from using scented products, sprays or room fresheners.

SPECIAL SERVICES

1. SPECIAL EDUCATION

The Resource Room is a program for students with specific learning or behavior challenges who have been evaluated after being recommended by a teacher or parent. An Individual Education Plan is formed and parents are kept informed every step of the way.

2. SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

This is part of our special education program and is available to students who have been screened or recommended by a parent or teacher. The IEP process is necessary to receive services. Parents will be notified.

3. TITLE ONE

This is a remedial program sponsored by the Federal Government for students who have difficulty with reading and math. Students who are less than two years below grade level or below the 30th percentile on achievement tests are eligible. Parents will be notified.

4. READING RECOVERY

This program is designed to accelerate the first graders who may be having difficulty learning to read in the traditional manner. Parents will be notified.

5. GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION

It is the intent of the Dedham School to identify gifted and talented students in grades 3-8. A team consisting of the classroom teacher, an administrator and another person with knowledge of the students will determine which students may need programming beyond that provided in the regular classroom. Parents will be notified and additional testing may be necessary. We are committed to helping all children realize their full potential and the needs of gifted children will be extended through curriculum differentiation at all grade levels.

6. PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINER

Testing is done by a licensed examiner to help us identify children requiring special education services.

7. PHYSICAL THERAPY

Students requiring help with gross motor control may be recommended through the IEP for this service.

8. OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Students requiring help with the fine motor control may be recommended through the IEP for this service.

STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION

At times throughout the year we have requests for student directory information. The PTF may use this information to request volunteer help or food for parties. Parents may request this information for parties. By directory information, we mean a child's name, grade and home telephone number. If you do not want this information released by us during the coming school year, please write a note indicating such.

VIDEO PERMISSION

Throughout the year, many teachers ,parents and possibly the television stations will videotape events at school. If for any reason you do not wish to have your child participate, please notify the school in writing.

VISITORS- SIGN IN

We welcome visitors to our school and classrooms. It is best to arrange a mutually convenient time. When picking up children, please stop at the office and the secretary will call them down. In addition, for the safety of our students and visitors, we ask that all visitors sign in and out at the office.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are enriching our school by providing extra help to our students and teachers. Volunteers may sign up at any time and coordinators will match volunteers to jobs. A brief training session to go over guidelines and expectations must be attended before starting. We are excited about the volunteer program as it helps provide a strong link between the community and the school.

BUILDING USE FORM

Any group or organization should fill out a building use form at the beginning of the year for recurring meetings.