

Elementary  
Handbook  
2017-2018



***for Parents, Students and Staff***

Melrose Public Schools

# Handbook Translation Information

If you need this document translated, please contact your child's school.

## Portuguese

Se você precisa este documento traduzido, entre em contato com a escola do seu filho.

## French

Si vous avez besoin de traduire ce document, s'il vous plaît contacter l'école de votre enfant.

## Chinese

如果你需要这份文件翻译，请联系您的孩子的学校。

## Spanish

Si necesita este documento traducido, por favor comuníquese con la escuela de su hijo.

## Arabic

يرجى الاتصال بمدرسة طفلك/طفلتك، إذا كنت تحتاج /تحتاجين إلى ترجمة هذه الوثيقة إلى اللغة العربية

# Melrose Public Schools Administration

Cyndy Taymore.....*Superintendent of Schools*

Marianne Farrell.....*Director of Finance/Administrative  
Affairs*

Patricia White-Lambright.....*Assistant Superintendent of Pupil  
Personnel Services*

Margaret Adams.....*Assistant Superintendent for Teaching  
and Learning*

Jason Merrill.....*High School Principal*

Cari Berman.....*Assistant High School Principal*

Bryan Corrigan..... *Assistant High School Principal*

Brent Conway.....*Middle School Principal*

James Parsons.....*Assistant Middle School Principal*

Donna Rosso.....*Franklin Early Childhood Director*

Carol Weldin.....*Hoover School Interim Principal*

Mary Ellen Cobbs.....*Horace Mann School Principal*

Jenny Corduck.....*Lincoln School Principal*

Mary Beth Maranto.....*Roosevelt School Principal*

John Maynard.....*Winthrop School Principal*

*Dear Parents and Guardians,*

Welcome to the Melrose Public Schools. Our schools represent a place where talents are developed and recognized. We strive to help each child achieve his/her highest potential. We firmly believe that the process of education is both life long and team oriented. A high level of involvement and good communication between administrators, teachers, parents and students is essential in reaching our goals.

This handbook serves as a guide which will be the cornerstone of communication as we work together. It is important that you understand our policies and procedures so that we can have a successful partnership. Please share the information contained in this handbook as appropriate with your child(ren).

*Your student(s) will bring home an acknowledgement page for you to sign and return to school.*

We look forward to a successful school year!

Sincerely,

The Elementary Administrative Team

# Table of Contents

Elementary School Contact Information	7
School Hours	8
Attendance Requirements	9
Pets on School Property	11
Lunch	11
Snack	12
Visitors/Volunteers	12
Social Media	14
Recess	14
Communication	14
Emergency Response Drills	15
METCO	15
Report Cards	16
Procedure for Discussing School Related Concerns	16
Multi-Tiered System of Support/IST	17
Pupil Personnel Services	17
Registration	19
Change in Residence (within Melrose)	20
Instrumental Music Program	20
Emergency Health Care	20
Emergency Contact Information	21
Medications	21
Immunizations and Physicals	22
Communicable Diseases	24
School Site Council	25
Field Trips	25
Gifts for Teachers/Staff	28
Library	30
Internet and Technology Use	30
City of Melrose Health and Wellness Policy	32

Transfer Policy	32
Homework Policy	33
Testing and Assessment	35
Promotion and Retention Policy	35
Code of Conduct	37
Substance Abuse	39
Melrose Elementary Behavior Expectations	40
Disciplinary Code of Action	44
Chapter 222 of the Acts of 2012	46
Disciplinary Due Process	46
Record Regulations	48
Rights of Families Regarding Student Records	52
Bullying and Harassment	52
Physical Restraint	57
Holiday and/or Cultural Events Celebration Policy	58
Statement of Non-Discrimination	59
Title IX	63
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act	64
Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity Statement	64
Infringement of Civil Rights	65
PPRA Notice and Consent/Opt-Out for Specific Activities	65
Sexual Education Policy	66
Patriotic Ceremonies	67

## Elementary School Contact Information

Hoover School                      Administrative Assistant: Sandra Bransfield  
37 Glendower Road                      sbransfield@melroseschools.com  
Main Office: 781.979.2180  
Tardy/Absence Line: 781.979.2182                      Nurse: 781.979.2183

Horace Mann School                      Administrative Assistant: Alisha Parsons  
40 Damon Avenue                      aparsons@melroseschools.com  
Main Office: 781.979.2190  
Tardy/Absence Line: 781.979.2192                      Nurse: 781.665.6865

Lincoln School                      Administrative Assistant: Maura Conlan  
80 West Wyoming Avenue                      mconlan@melroseschools.com  
Main Office: 781.979.2250  
Tardy/Absence Line: 781.979.2255                      Nurse: 781.979.2255

Roosevelt School                      Administrative Assistant: Molly Waitt  
253 Vinton Street                      mwaitt@melroseschools.com  
Main Office: 781.979.2270  
Tardy/Absence Line: 781.979.2270#61                      Nurse: 781.979.2272

Winthrop School                      Administrative Assistant: Peggy Sorrentino  
162 First Street                      psorrentino@melroseschools.com  
Main Office: 781.979.2280  
Tardy/Absence Line: 781.979.2282                      Nurse: 781.979.2282

## School Hours

Students are admitted to the building at 8:10 a.m. Adult supervision begins at 8:05 a.m. Children arriving prior to 8:00 is prohibited unless a child is registered for \*Early Bird, is attending a before school extra help session or extracurricular program. School specific information regarding morning entrance routines will be communicated by each individual elementary school. When the weather is inclement, students will not be allowed into the building prior to 8:05 a.m. Parents are encouraged to remain on school property while students enter the building. However, due to security purposes, parents may not escort their child to his/her classroom.

The school day ends at 2:22 p.m. Children/adults are not permitted to return to classrooms for forgotten items without permission from the Main Office. Parents are required to pick up students promptly at the end of the day. School specific dismissal routines will be communicated by each individual elementary school.

There may be times (extra-curricular activities, extra help session or disciplinary action) when having a student remain after school will be necessary or benefit him/her. Teachers will make arrangements ahead of time with parents to enable the child to remain after dismissal. In the case of disciplinary action, parents will be notified by the teacher or principal that the child will remain after school from 2:22-2:50 p.m. on that day. Transportation or pick up arrangements are the responsibility of the parent.

**Early Release Days** occur once a month. Dismissal is at 12:22 p.m. and lunch IS served. There are two times a year, November 25<sup>th</sup> and the last day of school, when school dismisses at 12:00 p.m. and lunch is NOT served. Please see the district calendar at the following link for specific dates:



<http://melroseschools.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/2017-2018-school-year-calendar-FINAL-1.pdf>

Parents may register students to attend a tuition based Education Stations Enrichment Program from 12:22 – 2:22 p.m. on the above mentioned early release days (EXCEPT on 11/25 & last day of school). Information regarding this program and registration form is available on the district website please see the following link:

<http://melroseschools.com/families/education-stations/>.

\*Before school care (“Early Bird”) varies by elementary school. Please email your elementary school Administrative Assistant for specific details.

Tuition based, “Education Stations”, (after school care) is available until 6:00 p.m. at all elementary schools. Please see the following link for more information: <http://melroseschools.com/families/education-stations/>.

## Attendance Requirements

Massachusetts law requires compulsory attendance for all students. Chapter 75, Section 1 of Mass General Laws states that all children between the ages of six and 16 must attend school.

Melrose Public Schools require a high level of participation and engagement. Regular class attendance enables students to benefit from classroom discussions and interactive activities. These shared academic and social experiences are integral to the learning process and cannot be recreated or duplicated.

### Absence and Tardy Information

Students are expected to attend school every day, unless prevented by personal illness or family emergency. *A phone call to the school's absence line is required before 8:00 a.m. on the day of the absence.* At the discretion of the principal/school nurse a doctor's note maybe required for re-entry to school regarding the nature of the illness. A reason for the absence should be stated when calling the school absence line. Children who are absent from school due to chronic or reoccurring illness or accident (14 + days) are eligible for home tutoring. Please contact your principal for more information.

School starts promptly at 8:15 a. m. and students must be in class by that time. Students arriving after 8:15 must report to the Main Office. *Parents will be contacted by the principal after the student reaches his/her sixth tardy in one trimester.* Habitual tardiness may result in: loss of recess to make up missed work, after-school detention, or suspension. However, in extreme circumstances or instances it may require the school to solicit assistance from the COURT or DEPARTMENT of CHILDREN and FAMILY SERVICES.

#### Non-Scheduled Vacation Policy

Parents should schedule vacations during natural breaks from school. If a vacation occurs resulting in missed school days teachers are not responsible to provide the student with missed work, tests, quizzes or homework before or after the absence. Any absence of this nature is highly discouraged and considered unexcused.

#### Individual Early Dismissal

If your child will be leaving during the school day, please send a note to the teacher indicating time of dismissal. Plan to sign your child out and meet him/her at the Main Office. A student returning to school after being dismissed must report to the Main Office with his/her parent.

#### Change in Dismissal Routine

If your child's normal dismissal (i.e. different person picking him/her up) routine is going to be altered on a particular day, please send a note to the teacher.

### School Cancellation & Delayed Opening

During inclement weather the district consults with the Melrose Department of Public Works and Melrose Police and Fire on a decision to close schools for the day, delay the opening for an 1 hour, 90 minutes or 2 hours, or possibly dismiss early.

- 1 hour "delayed opening" start of school: 9:15 a.m.
- 90 minute "delayed opening" start of school: 9:45 a.m.
- 2 hour "delayed opening" start of school: 10:15 a.m.

The Before School Program (Early Bird) will not operate on a "delayed opening." Additionally, breakfast will not be served in schools that usually offer a breakfast program.

If school is delayed, an announcement is sent through the ConnectEd phone system and email and posted on the district website as an alert on the top of the page. An announcement is also made on the following radio and television stations: WBZ Radio 1030 AM and Channel 4 TV, WHDH Radio 850 AM and Channel 7 TV, and WEEI Radio 590 AM and Channel 5 TV. Local Melrose cable station MMTV posts no school/delays on Channels 3, 15, and 22 on the Comcast Network and Channels 37, 38, and 39 on the Verizon Network.

Although we have never dismissed students early, our plan will be to notify parents with an emergency call through ConnectEd. The Contact 1 and Contact 2 primary phone number and email address that you have provided will be used.

## Pets on School Property

Per a city ordinance, dogs are not permitted on school property during school hours, 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. Service animals (i.e. dogs) are the only exception.

## Lunch

Students may either bring a lunch from home or purchase a school lunch. When bringing a lunch from home, it should be packed appropriately as refrigeration/microwaves are not available. Lunches from home may contain nuts or peanut ingredients. For students who have an identified nut allergy, a separate “peanut free” table is provided (see “Allergy Information” for more details). When purchasing lunch or ala-carte item (milk), a debit system is used. Money must be prepaid or deposited into individual student accounts. Payments to your child’s account may be made on line or sent to school in an envelope *clearly labeled with your child’s name*. Cash or checks (payable to Melrose Public Schools) are the acceptable methods of payment. Students who have a positive account balance can purchase any item(s). Students with a negative account balance will be allowed to purchase a meal for two (2) days. After two (2) days, if money is not deposited into the account, the student will be allowed to receive a lunch of a cheese, peanut butter, or other sandwich, which will be charged to their account. In an effort to prevent negative account balances, the Foodservice Department will periodically send notices home to parents indicating low account balances.

Students may qualify for a free or reduced lunch based on family income; to see if your family qualifies you need to apply. The application is available from the building principal or by following this link: <http://melroseschools.com/families/documents-and-forms/>.

Monthly lunch menus are posted in advance and available through the following link on the district website:

<http://melroseschools.nutrislice.com/>.

## Snack

Students should bring a lite, healthy, peanut/nut free snack including a drink to school.

## Visitors/Volunteers

A visitor or volunteer is considered any person who enters the school other than a student or campus staff member. Anyone wanting access to our school must enter through the main doors and report immediately to the Main Office. Visitors and volunteers must sign in and obtain the appropriate identifying badge (either visitor or volunteer depending on role). This policy helps us ensure the safety and security of our school building. Visitors and volunteers should only be in the location of their designated activity. Entering classrooms and locations other than the ones designated by your role is prohibited. At the conclusion of your visit/volunteering, please stop by the Main Office to sign out. Districts are required to keep track of volunteer hours, which is another reason signing in and out is important.

Volunteers must register with the schools' centralized volunteer program – The Bridge School/Community Partnership. Registration forms can be obtained online at: <http://melroseschools.com/school-departments/bridge/new-volunteer-parent-application/> or from the Main Office. Any questions regarding “The Bridge” please contact the Coordinator of Volunteers, Jennifer McAllister, at [jmcallister@melroseschools.com](mailto:jmcallister@melroseschools.com) or by calling 781-979-2299.

In accordance with Mass General Law Chapter 71, Section 38R, any current or prospective volunteer who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children must agree to a criminal record

(CORI) check. Information obtained will be confidential and will effect decisions about the placement of volunteers and field trip chaperones.

Confidentiality when working in a school setting is extremely important. All volunteers must sign a confidentiality agreement and successfully pass a CORI check. To ensure the privacy and safety of students and staff, information concerning both groups must not be discussed with anyone except the appropriate school personnel. Volunteers who are unable to maintain a professional stance regarding confidentiality or other unbecoming behavior will be asked to discontinue their volunteer work for the rest of the year. Volunteers are not permitted to take photographs of staff or students.

Volunteers who have access to the school's computers, networks, and Internet services are to use them for school-related purposes and performance of job duties. The school retains control, custody and supervision of all computers, networks, and Internet services owned or leased by the Melrose Public Schools. Volunteers have no expectation of privacy in their use of school computers, including e-mail messages and stored files. The School Committee's "Acceptable Use Policy" regarding school computers is available upon request.

## Social Media

Privacy restrictions mandate that group photos or photos of students other than your own child not be posted on social media without explicit permission of the parents of each child present in the photo.

## Recess

Due to time on learning requirements, recess is 20 minutes each day after lunch. Students in grades K-1 may take an additional 10 minute structured movement break in the morning at the discretion of the teacher.

Each school is responsible for assessing the safety and feasibility of outdoor recess. Melrose Public Schools will adhere to standardized weather conditions guidance as reported for the zip code 02176 at [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com). Principals and/or school staff should reconsider outside recess and provide a safe alternative when; the “feels like” temperatures fall below 20 degrees, including the wind chill or the temperature index “feels like” reaches 95 degrees or above.

## Communication

The primary form of all school communication is email. Some examples of such communications may include information related to educational topics, upcoming school or community events, or friendly reminders. Depending on the type of information, it may be generated by the principal, Main Office, PTO or outside community group. If email communication poses a complication, please contact the Main Office to make other arrangements. Other sources of information are our school/district website as well as individual school Facebook pages. Additionally, teachers maintain Aspen website pages. Information about access to individual teacher pages will be provided to parents at the start of the school year.

## Emergency Response Drills

Attending to the safety of our schools is of the greatest importance. In conjunction with our local officials, our response procedures are reviewed yearly so that we can make prompt, responsible decisions in the event of an emergency. Throughout the school year, students and staff practice fire, lock down and off site evacuation drills. In advance of a lock down and off site evacuation drill, parents will be notified.

## METCO

METCO Incorporated is a private, non-profit organization founded in 1966. Currently the program places 3,300 minority students from Boston communities into surrounding school districts. METCO Incorporated is funded through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under the Racial Imbalance Act and is the nation's oldest voluntary school desegregation programs. Please contact Doreen Ward [dward@melroseschools.com](mailto:dward@melroseschools.com) or 781-979-2137 with any questions regarding the METCO program.

The Mission: The METCO mission is to provide Melrose and partnering communities with educational opportunities designed to enrich their academic, personal and interpersonal experiences. It is our belief that the METCO experience should provide a strong academic foundation, as well as an opportunity for cultural, educational, ethnic, and racial diversity.

The Purpose:

- a. To provide the opportunity for an integrated public school education for children of color from racially unbalanced schools in Boston by placing them in suburban schools
- b. To provide a new learning experience for suburban children
- c. To provide closer understanding and cooperation between urban and suburban parents and other citizens in the Metropolitan Boston area.

## Report Cards

Standards based performance reports for Grades 1-5 are distributed three times a year. The purpose is to provide information on a student's progress in all curriculum areas, social/emotional development and work/study habits. Students in Grades K-5 are assessed on their ability to meet standards, which reflect state proficiency levels. Kindergarten reports are issued two times per year; once in January/February and once in June. Students who are on



Individual Education Plans are issued progress reports on a schedule that typically coincides with the distribution of performance reports.

The most effective way to communicate about student progress is through a conference with the teacher. Teachers are available twice a year (fall and spring) for parent conferences. However, we urge you to maintain close contact with the school regarding your child's growth and development. Feel free to contact your child's teacher at any time to set up an appointment.

## Procedure for Discussing School Related Concerns

We believe in a strong partnership between home and school. If you have concerns however, please begin with your child's classroom teacher. If your concern is not resolved, please make an appointment with your building principal. Please see the following link to the "Melrose Chain of Communication" to help you determine who can help with discussing a school related concern:

<http://melroseschools.com/melrose-chain-of-communication-parents/#sthash.UMDwAZPh.dpbs>

## Multi-Tiered System of Support/Instructional Support Team

The Instructional Support Team (IST), which is a function of general education, enables staff members to meet as a team to address the individual needs of children. A student may be discussed at IST because performance data and teacher observation indicates the student is struggling with an aspect of their learning or because the student is performing well above expected grade level benchmarks. At the classroom level, the purpose of the IST process is to identify where accommodation(s) in the classroom can provide intervention or enhancement that will benefit the student. Its primary outcome is to provide direction and guidance so that teachers can differentiate

instruction. The District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) is a document that assists IST members in generating suggests of classroom strategies. The DCAP is posted on line at:

<http://melroseschools.com/families/student-support-services/district-curriculum-accommodation-plan>.

If, after a variety of instructional interventions and differentiation strategies the data indicates that more information about the student is necessary, the IST will refer the child for an evaluation to determine other options, including special education.

## Pupil Personnel Services

The Department of Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) offers a broad range of diagnostic services and programs for students in the Melrose Public Schools whose learning challenges cannot be addressed through the general education program alone.

As outlined above, the building based Instructional Support Team (IST) collaborates to address individual needs of students. Most often the interventions recommended by the team help to resolve concerns. In some cases, however, it is deemed appropriate by the school staff and/or the child's parents to refer the child for further evaluation by the Department of Pupil Personnel Services. We also accept direct parent referrals although we strongly encourage parents to work collaboratively with the school staff in submitting a referral.

The evaluations performed as a result of the referral address the areas of need defined by those who know the child best: the school staff and the parents. Evaluations may include educational testing, psychological testing, speech and language testing or other testing based on areas of need.

At the conclusion of the evaluation, parents and school staff will meet together to discuss the testing results and determine whether or not special learning needs exist. If it is determined that they do exist, a discussion will take place around what program modifications or adaptations need to be developed, and what consultative and/or direct services need to be implemented in order to address the child's needs and help that child maximize his/her potential to learn.

Our goal is to offer services that meet students' needs while putting the least restrictions on the students' schools experience. Services may include in classroom and small group pull-out. The objective is to keep a student with his/her peers, participating in a standards-based education to the greatest degree possible.

If you think your child may have a disability that is interfering with his/her progress at school, talk to your child's teacher and principal. They will assist you in facilitating a resolution to your concerns, either at the building level or by referring your child to the Instructional Support Team.

The Special Education Program at our schools has been designed so as to comply with G.L. c. 71B and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA-04), every student must be given an adequate and appropriate education with special services and special programs when needed. A full range of programs are available to provide assistance to children who may be experiencing difficulties in school. An Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.), signed by the parent/guardian, is required for service delivery. Specialists are actively involved in diagnosing and prescribing individual student needs, sharing instructional materials/techniques with classroom teachers, and providing consultation to teachers and parents. Support services provided by trained specialists may include academic support,

speech/language therapy, counseling services, and occupational or physical therapy.

## Registration

Parents will be required to provide the following documents at the time of registration:

- Original Birth Certificate with seal (copy will be made and the original returned)
- Acceptable proof of current residency (copy will be made the original returned).

Prior to entry into school, parents will also be required to submit immunization information.

### Age Requirements

Students entering Kindergarten must be 5 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Students entering First Grade must be 6 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Please see the following link for more detailed registration information

<http://melroseschools.com/families/student-registration/>.

## Change of Address (within Melrose)

Should a student's residence change within the City of Melrose and a parent needs to request a change of address; appropriate proof of residency is required. Please contact your child's school for more information.

## Instrumental Music Program

Instrument lessons are offered to students in grades 3-5 through our Fine Arts Department. Lessons are fee based, scheduled once a week and are conducted during the school day. Therefore, please be aware that your child will miss part of his/her typical school day when the lesson is scheduled. The rental of the instrument and music book is an additional cost. Please see the following link for more information:

<http://melroseschools.com/school-departments/fine-and-performing-art/elementary-instrumental-lessons/#sthash.FZCnfVfR.dpbs>.

## Emergency Health Care

The school nurse is able to administer first aid as it relates to the immediate and temporary care given in case of an accident or sudden illness. There are times when a child becomes ill at school and parents are not able to provide transportation. If a responsible person is at home, the nurse, the principal or secretary may, at their discretion and with parent's permission, arrange for dismissal and/or transportation home. Please contact the school immediately if there is a change in the care provider or if you will be away on vacation. It is imperative that you make arrangements for whoever will assume care should an emergency arise. A sick/injured child cannot be kept at school. Careful planning in advance can prevent a very difficult situation.

Children should not come to school if they appear to be ill. In keeping with health regulations, we request you keep your child home if he/she has a severe cold, constant coughing or sneezing, or an undiagnosed rash. Additionally, students should be free from vomiting and/or diarrhea for at least 24 hours before return to school. If they have been prescribed an antibiotic for a bacterial infection they must have taken it for at least a full 24 hours before returning to school. Children should be fever free for at least 24 hours **without the use of Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen**.

## Emergency Contact Information

At the beginning of each school year parents are asked to provide emergency information for each of their children. This information is vitally important for the wellbeing of the child. In the event of illness or injury, the parent will be notified and asked to provide transportation home. Two emergency numbers are requested in case of the parent's

absence from home. Please keep this information updated in the school office.

Confidential health information is also required for the school nurse. This gives the nurse valuable information such as previous illnesses your child might have had, diseases or conditions, medications taken by the child, emergency contacts, health insurance provider names and primary care physician information. One Confidential Health Form is required for each child each academic year at all grade levels.

## Medications

- Parents are urged to give medication(s) at home before or after school whenever possible. It is our policy to have all medications administered by the School Nurse. Medications are kept in a locked cabinet in the Health Office with the exception of inhalers and Epipens
- All medications brought from home to the school should be delivered to the School Nurse by a parent or other designated adult. The medication must be in a pharmacy-labeled container with the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage and frequency of administration. Both the parent and the prescribing physician must sign consent forms for administration in school. For short-term medication such as antibiotics, parents must sign consent but the pharmacy-labeled bottle or package will take the place of the physician's order
- All non-prescription medicine must be delivered to the nurse by an adult in its original packaging with the child's name labeled on it and with dosage instructions. The parent must sign a consent form for use in school
- All Health Offices have access to a nebulizer machine. If your child is in need of this service please contact your School Nurse

- All reasonable accommodations are met in regard to sending medication on field trips. If accommodations cannot be made safely, the parent/guardian will be asked to give the medication or to make other arrangements
- Acetaminophen is available as needed to all students in grades Pre-K – 12 during regular school hours administered by the School Nurse. Parents may indicate permission for as-needed medications on the Confidential Health Form submitted at the beginning of each school year. No as-needed medications will be given without parental consent. If the child has a fever, the parent will be notified that dismissal from school is necessary.

## Immunizations and Physicals

All children entering Preschool must have an up to date physical and immunization form on file with the School Nurse **before the first day of school**. Preschool state immunization requirements are: 3 doses Hepatitis B, 4 doses DTaP, 3 doses Polio, 1-2 doses MMR, and 1-2 doses Varicella or a physician documented history of the disease.

All children entering Kindergarten must have a five-year physical and record of immunization on file with the School Nurse **before the first day of school**. If you registered your child for Kindergarten with a five-year physical **and** updated immunizations, no further action is required. If your child has a five-year physical **and/or** updated immunizations after Kindergarten registration has taken place, please mail the updated information to the school your child will be attending, care of the School Nurse. Kindergarten state immunization requirements are: 3 doses Hepatitis B, 5 doses DTaP, 4 doses Polio, 2 doses MMR, and 2 doses Varicella, or physician documented history of the disease.

An up to date physical and immunization form is required from any grade 1 student who did not attend Kindergarten, or any child

transferring from another school system before their first day of school, unless school records are transferred with the child demonstrating an adequate health appraisal in the school year of transfer.

If your child is not up to date with their immunizations at any grade level they will be excluded from school, unless they have a medical or religious exemption, or are progressing through a physician documented catch-up series of vaccines. All state requirements are subject to change according to Mass. Gen. Laws and DPH requirements. Up to date physicals and immunization forms are recommended for grades 3, 7 and 10. Please send all forms to the School Nurse.

Any student who does not have a primary care provider or health insurance should contact their School Nurse immediately for assistance. The Children's Medical Security Plan provides health insurance for all students up to the age of 19 who are Massachusetts residents.

## Communicable Diseases

If a child contracts a communicable disease, that child will be excluded from school. If the illness is found at school the school nurse will assess the student regarding his/her condition and determine the need for exclusion. The nurse will then contact the parents to remove the child from school. Students will be readmitted to school according to the criteria for the specific illness found in the School Health Manual. A note from the student's primary care provider may be required at the discretion of the school nurse/principal upon re-entry. Examples of excludable illnesses are: Chicken pox, conjunctivitis, impetigo, measles, mumps, meningococcal illness, scabies, strep throat and ringworm.

Any child with a temperature of 100.0 or higher will be excluded from school and should not return until he/she has been fever-free for at least 24 hours **without the use of fever-reducing medication such as**



**Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen.** Students should be free from vomiting and/or diarrhea for at least 24 hours before return to school.

Pediculosis (head lice): Upon discovery of lice or nits, the student's parents will be contacted and next steps will be discussed. Head lice are not a health hazard or a sign of poor hygiene and are not responsible for the spread of any disease. Therefore, students will not be excluded from school. While undergoing treatment for lice, the student must check-in with the nurse upon entering school. The parent should be prepared to have a conversation regarding the treatment used, the number and viability of any remaining nits, and the ability to diagnose a re-infestation. For more information please see: <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/id/epidemiology/factsheets.html>.

## School Site Council

The Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 provides for a comprehensive strengthening of local school system leadership for school improvement. The school-based planning responsibilities of school councils form the foundation for a more focused, responsive and accountable system of serving our students. The councils are an advisory vehicle for involving more parents and teachers in school decision-making and for strengthening the bonds between schools and the communities they serve. Site Council representatives are elected and serve for three years. Elections are held at the start of every school year. Interested staff and parents should contact their school principal.

### *What is a school council?*

A school council is a representative, school building-based committee composed of the principal, parents, teachers, community members and, at the secondary level, students, which each school is required to establish.

### *What are the main areas of responsibility for school council?*

The law outlines four major areas of responsibility for councils. School councils are to assist principals in:

1. Adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide student performance standards
2. Identifying the educational needs of students attending the school
3. Reviewing the annual school building budget
4. Formulating a school improvement plan.

## Field Trips

Field trips are a voluntary extension of classroom activities and serve to enrich the curriculum. All students who do NOT choose to participate in a field trip must still attend school. A student, whose behavior in the days prior to a field trip is deemed unsafe for the field trip, may be required to remain at school, at the discretion of the principal. A supplementary lesson will be provided. The Code of Conduct that is applicable within the school also applies to field trips. Students participating in field trips must submit a signed, "Parent Consent and Release from Liability Agreement Form" for each trip.

Chaperones are vital to the success of a field trip. The student/teacher ratio normally does not exceed 10-1. All chaperones must be registered with The Bridge Volunteer organization which requires a CORI and acknowledgement of the Confidentiality Agreement.

We appreciate it when parents take time from their busy day to assist us with these activities. Listed below are some guidelines for chaperones. Classroom teachers may have other requests in addition to the following.

- Review the list of students you have been assigned
- Stay with students you have been assigned for the entire duration of the trip
- Sit with students on the bus (not with other parents)
- Avoid confrontations with students. Ask a teacher for assistance if someone is not listening to you
- Inform the teacher of anything that happened which should not have happened. The teacher will determine what action, if any, should be taken
- Report any serious problems to the teacher and administrator
- Injured students should be taken to the teacher or person in charge of first aid
- Chaperones are not allowed to bring guests on the bus
- Chaperones should TAKE A HEAD COUNT SEVERAL TIMES THROUGHOUT THE TRIP
- Teachers are required to TAKE A HEAD COUNT BEFORE THE BUS DEPARTS.

#### Field Trips - Student Participation and Behavior

- Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with disabilities to allow them to participate in field trips
- A student may not be allowed to participate in a field trip if he/she is serving a suspension, expulsion or other form of exclusion from school due to violations of the school district's code of conduct and/or school-based rules at the time of the field trip
- A parent/guardian meeting will be convened at the discretion of the building principal to develop a course of action to ensure successful participation of the student on the field trip, whose behavior in school is such that overnight trips would prove to be of extreme challenge to the safety and well-being of students and staff

- Students are subject to the authority of the staff and chaperones at all times during a field trip
- Student safety is of the utmost concern on any field trip
- Students participating in a field trip are expected to take part in all planned group activities unless excused by a staff member
- All students must leave and return with the group on all field trips unless the student is leaving or returning with his/her own parent/guardian, or the student's parent/guardian has signed a written waiver granting permission for the student to leave or return from the field trip by himself/herself
- Students participating in a field trip are expected to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the circumstances of the trip, including but not limited to adhering to general school rules and codes of conduct, as well as any rules that have been established for the trip. Participation in field trips is a privilege, not a right
- In the event that a student fails to meet these expectations, the school staff may contact the student's parents. The teacher will have the authority to send the student home, following notification to the student's parent/guardian or emergency contact if the parent/guardian cannot be reached
- The student's parent/guardian will be responsible for any additional expense incurred as a result of the decision to send a student home earlier than the scheduled return date or time due to the student's unacceptable conduct. Students may also be disciplined in accordance with the school's code of conduct
- Students and their parents/guardians will be held responsible for any damage done to hotels, rental properties, real property or personal property by the student during a field trip. Parents/guardians must agree to pay for any damage that may be done by their son/daughter and/or aid school officials in collecting money necessary to do so.

## Gifts for Teachers/Staff

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 268, the State Ethics Commission prohibits any public employees, including teachers, from accepting gifts worth \$50 or more that are given to them because of the position they hold, or because of some action they could take or have taken in their position.

Teachers and other public employees may accept gifts that are worth less than \$50, but they have to disclose in writing the fact that they have done so if, based on the circumstances, a reasonable person would think that the teacher might unduly show favor to the giver or the giver's child because of the gift. G.L. c. 268A, § 23(b)(3).

A teacher who is offered an end-of-the-year gift worth \$50 or more should not accept it, unless it is a permissible class gift. The Commission created an exemption in its regulations at 930 CMR 5.08(14) to permit parents and students of a class, acting together, give a gift worth up to \$150 to a teacher, provided that the gift is identified only as being from the class, and the names of the givers and the amounts are not given to the teacher. A single class gift worth up to \$150, or several class gifts during the school year with a total value up to \$150, may be given. A teacher may not accept any other gift from someone who has contributed to a class gift. Therefore, if an individual gift is offered, before accepting it, the teacher must confirm that the giver did not contribute to the class gift.

A gift given to a teacher to use solely in the classroom or to buy classroom supplies is not considered a gift to the teacher personally, and is, therefore, not subject to the \$50 limit on personal gifts to teachers. Parents may give to the classroom or the school in accordance with the rules of the school district. A teacher who receives such a gift must keep receipts documenting that the money was used

for classroom supplies. Please see the following link for more information:

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartIV/TitleI/Chapter268a>.

## Library

Each school has a parent run library for students and staff. Books should be returned in good condition. Payment for lost books or irreparable damage to books will be the responsibility of the parent.

## Technology Responsible User Agreement

Philosophy: It is the goal of Melrose Public Schools to facilitate and promote the ethical, responsible, and educational use of classroom technologies. Through access to technology, students have the opportunity to learn about and explore a wide variety of digital resources that connect them to local and global communities. As 21st century learners, students will advocate and practice safe and legal use of information and technology while modeling leadership in a connected world.

### Privacy and Information Security

All Melrose students are provided with a personal Google account and its suite of online productivity and educational applications. It is the expectations of Melrose Public Schools that students will use these tools in a positive manner and take a proactive approach to the security of personal information. Students should recognize that information security begins with responsible individual behaviors; including, but not limited to, a secure password, signing out of any and all devices, and exercising caution when viewing personal information.

Within reason, freedom of speech and access to information will be honored and all accommodations will be made to ensure the availability of necessary scholarly information and resources.

The Melrose Public Schools Code of Conduct applies to all digital interactions on the school network. As such, students are subject to the behavioral expectations included therein in addition to a prohibition on the online-specific actions outlined below:

- Any attempts to gain access to other student or teacher accounts
- Using another student's account or posing as anyone other than yourself in an online environment
- Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Unauthorized access or use of another's folders, work, or files
- Damaging school-owned devices, systems, or networks
- Intentionally wasting or monopolizing limited network resources.

### Digital Citizenship

In the 21st century, students will need a constantly evolving set of abilities that rely on a core set of digital literacy skills. Melrose Public Schools students are expected to recognize human, cultural, and societal issues related to use of technology and act within our evolving understanding of each. In addition, students will practice both legal and ethical behavior in a connected environment while adhering to the same behavioral expectations as all traditional school environments.

Students will be expected to:

- Advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information
- Recognize and respect established legal frameworks regarding age restrictions on various forms of digital and social media
- Demonstrate a willingness and ability to collaborate both in and out of school

- Recognize the expectation for originality and proper attribution that results from unfettered access to the totality of human scholarship. Online cheating is still cheating.

In all digital interactions, students will be expected to model behaviors that are considered appropriate in one's physical (non-digital) life.

## City of Melrose Health and Wellness Policy

Over the past several years, the Melrose Public School system has worked to create a safer and healthier environment for our students. The city's Health and Wellness Policy states that we will take measures to address healthy eating habits, as well as food allergies. There has been an increase in students with life-threatening food allergies. **All food coming in for classroom snack must be nut-free.** Students are not allowed to share food with each other. When a celebration includes a "treat" parents/guardians will supply their child with their own individual food. The lunchroom has a designated nut free area. Therefore, there are no food restrictions in the lunchroom. The Health and Wellness Policy states that the schools must, "Uniformly minimize the amount of cake, cupcakes, etc. being brought into school by encouraging families to bring in nonfood treats while also addressing life-threatening food-allergy concerns." Therefore, we have also eliminated the distribution of food being brought in for birthdays/celebrations.

## Transfer Policies

### Transfers to Another Community

Parents should notify their child's teacher and the Main Office when they become aware that they will be withdrawing their child from school. Under 603 CMR 23.07 (4) (g), consent is no longer required to forward a transferring student's records. Parents will complete a Transfer Slip (obtained at the Main Office) indicating the name and



address of the new school. The Main Office will mail the student's records to the receiving school.

### In-District Student Transfer Policy

Please contact your student's principal or the Parent Information Center (781.979.2000) for information regarding the in-district transfer policy.

## Homework Guide

<http://tinyurl.com/MelroseHomework>

### Rationale and Purpose of Homework

The purpose of homework is to provide reinforcement and practice skills that should be able to be completed independently. Homework may also serve as a means for families to learn more about students' classroom work and the curriculum.

The most important element of homework in elementary school is reading. The goal of reading homework is to foster a love of reading. While sometimes specific reading assignments may be given, most of the time students are allowed to read whatever material or genre he or she enjoys. The teacher may recommend a certain number of minutes that students in that grade are assigned to read, but, of course, extra reading is encouraged and applauded.

There are several types of homework assignments teachers may assign over the course of a year:

- Practice homework helps students' master skills and reinforces in-class learning. Learning spelling words and completing math problems on IXL are examples of this type of homework

- Preparation assignments prepare students for an upcoming lesson or quiz. Reading a chapter in preparation for discussion, pretests, and surveys are examples of preparation homework
- Extension homework helps students take what they learn in class and connect it with real life. It requires students to transfer specific skills and concepts to new situations. Journal writing and conducting experiments at home are examples of extension homework
- Creative homework helps students integrate multiple concepts and promotes the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills. This type of homework often takes the form of open-ended questions and long term projects that allow students a choice.

### Guidelines

Students are expected to work towards the goal of homework completion. However, at times, not every student may be able to complete assignments for various reasons. Parents and families should communicate with the teacher when the *student* finds homework challenging or disruptive to home life. Expectations can and should be modified to meet student and family's individual needs.

Homework does not need to be completed in one sitting. For example, students might complete reading for pleasure before going to bed while having completed math homework right after school.

Grade	Time	Homework May Consist of
Kindergarten- First Grade	Recommended 20-30 minutes of reading does not have to be consecutive  Primary Focus: Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student reads, is read aloud to, or talking about books.</li> </ul>
2nd-3rd grade	Recommended 30-45 minutes total; which	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20-30 minutes of consecutive reading where the student reads independently or</li> </ul>

	includes 20-30 minutes of reading  Primary Focus: Reading and Practice Homework	with someone else. However, it should meet the needs of the student and families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fifteen minutes of IXL or other math practice</li> <li>• Some other extension and creative projects may be assigned.</li> </ul>
4th-5th Grade	Recommended 40-50 minutes a night total; (not to exceed 60 minutes) which includes 20-30 minutes of reading  Primary Focus: Reading, Independent Practice, Extension, Creative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20-30 minutes of consecutive reading where the student reads independently or with someone else. However, it should meet the needs of the student and families</li> <li>• Fifteen minutes of IXL or other math practice</li> <li>• Long term projects as assigned</li> <li>• Students may be asked to study materials to support upcoming class assessments.</li> </ul>

## Testing and Assessment

Evaluation of students through standardized achievement tests or required state assessments are conducted periodically. Parents will be notified of the dates, results and educational impact. Throughout the school year, students will also participate in benchmark tests to assess their acquisition of reading and math skills. Data from these assessments is used to inform classroom instruction and provide necessary intervention and differentiation. Teachers will share with parents their individual student scores. District and school wide aggregate data for both our local as well as state assessments is available on each school’s website under “Data Dashboard.” To view the district dashboard, please see the following link:

<http://melroseschools.com/administration/district-dashboard/#sthash.4Lw5MJk3.dpbs>

## Promotion and Retention Policy

Nothing in the following procedures for promotion or grade placement should be construed to restrict the appropriate placement of children for educational, emotional, or social adjustment when in the judgment

of the principal, after consultation with the teacher, a higher or lower grade placement would be to an individual child's advantage. Report cards should reflect accurately the achievement levels in the subject areas, and any special grade placements or transfers of children will be so noted on report cards and permanent record cards and signed by the principal.

Decisions on promotion shall be made by the teacher for students in grades 1-5. If a student is retained, notification will be made to parents by the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday in June.

When making decisions regarding promotion and retention, all phases of a child's development will be considered. Major criteria taken into consideration are:

1. Academic achievement based on sufficient data demonstrating lack of attainment of grade level material and overall poor performance in reading and/or math
2. Chronological age
3. Cognitive maturity
4. Social maturity
5. Emotional maturity
6. Physical development.

Progress of students with Individual Education Plans (IEP) will be measured in accordance with the student's Educational Plan as it pertains to the above criteria and the specific goals and objectives of the plan, which are determined by the special education team.

### Classroom Placements

Classroom placement is determined by the current team of grade level teachers and other staff members such as: the principal and special education personnel. Many factors are taken into account when creating class lists. A considerable effort is made to balance gender,

interpersonal dynamics and most importantly, learning profiles of students and their needs.

Classroom teacher notifications are mailed to families in August prior to the start of the school year.

## Code of Conduct

The following code of conduct has been prepared to help all stakeholders understand the disciplinary philosophy, policies and practices of the Melrose Public Schools. A collective and joint approach to supporting all students academically and behaviorally is essential to any successful school culture. To that end, each elementary school is in varying stages of implementing a school-wide approach that builds a proactive framework for creating and sustaining a safe and effective elementary school environment. In our schools an emphasis is placed on prevention of problem behavior and the development of pro-social skills. Ultimately, the goal is to increase the capacity of our schools to educate and support all students.

### Conduct Expectations

It is expected that all adults and children who are on school property: the playground, bathrooms, hallways, gymnasium, all purpose room/cafeteria, classrooms, abutting field and adjacent sidewalks at any time (during operating school hours, before/after school, at a school sponsored event) conduct themselves in a polite, respectful manner. Under no circumstances will physical altercations, the use of profanity or obscene gestures, acts of sexual behavior, bullying, harassment or vandalism (act that defaces playground structure, school building or damages property) be tolerated. Individuals found violating any of the above rules will be held accountable for their actions (community service appropriate to the offense, suspension and/or expulsion) and when necessary punished to the fullest extent of the

law. These rules are intended to ensure a safe, respectful relationship among all members of our community.

### Weapons

Possession or use of dangerous weapons, firearms, knives, razor blades, clubs, explosives, mace, or possession of a dangerous object of no reasonable use to the student at school such as a mock gun, brass knuckles, or a sharpened stick on a person/persons at school or school-sponsored events is prohibited. In addition, school department personnel shall report in writing to their immediate supervisor an incident involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises at any time. Supervisors who receive such a weapon report shall file it with the Superintendent, who shall file copies of said weapon report with the local chief of police, the department of children and families, the District's office of student services, and the School Committee. M.G.L. c.71, §37L.

### Personal Property

Children are expected to respect property of others. Theft or damage to school or an individual's property may result in required restitution.

### Personal Injury

A student shall not intentionally do bodily injury to any person or threaten any person with or without any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon:

- a. On the school grounds, during and immediately before or immediately after school hours.
- b. On the school grounds at any other time when the school is being used by a school group.
- c. Off the school grounds at any school activity, function or event.
- d. On the way to and from school.

### Electronic Devices

Individual electronic equipment may not be used during school hours. These devices must be concealed and turned off. Students who violate this policy will have their device(s) confiscated and returned at the discretion of the school administration.

### Dress Code

In accordance with Massachusetts State Law, there is an expectation that students dress in keeping with reasonable standards of safety, health, and cleanliness so as not to detract from the educational process. We expect students to dress in a manner that is appropriate for school, a place of work and study.

All students should keep the following dress code guidelines in mind:

- Torn, ragged or dirty pants and/or shirts are inappropriate
- Bare midriffs are inappropriate
- Shirts, buttons, etc. which are obscene and/or suggestive, pornographic, racist or sexist that cause substantial disorder or disruption within the school, are inappropriate and banned
- Hats will not be worn indoors
- *Flip flops may not be worn in school.*

If a student is wearing inappropriate clothing in school, parents will be notified of the requirement to bring an appropriate change of clothes to school.

### Substance Abuse

Our schools have been designated drug and tobacco free zones according to the law. Any infraction can carry the maximum legal consequence at the discretion of the principal. Students will not possess, use, transmit or be under the influence of any drug (with the exception of those medications administered under doctor's orders by the school nurse), alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. All

employees, visitors, and students are not permitted to smoke, use, or possess tobacco products on school property, in the school building, on school buses, or at school sponsored events. Per an amended revised ordinance, Chapter 11, any student who violates this expectation in regard to tobacco will be subject to the following:

- 1<sup>st</sup> and subsequent violations - A \$50 non-criminal fine ticket is initiated by the principal or administrative assistant and issued to the student. A cover letter is sent to the parent/guardian outlining the violation and future plan of action. This fine will be paid to the city clerk within 21 days. Failure to comply will result in a summons issued by the Malden District Court. A recommendation will also be made that the student should attend a tobacco cessation program.

## Melrose Elementary Behavior Expectations

Melrose Public School's core values are Respect, Responsibility, and Safety. The way in which we teach these core values is by embedding elements of "Social Emotional Learning" (SEL) into our schools. SEL involves the processes through which students and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Through each school's specific positive behavior intervention system (PBIS), we explicitly teach children what core SEL values and behaviors look like in every setting in our schools (classrooms, hallways, playground, lunch, etc). The staff is an integral role in reinforcing behavior and is invested in supporting all students.

The ultimate decision about whether a specific action breaks our school code rests with the staff member, and ultimately with the Principal. Consequences will be applied based on the frequency and severity of



the action(s) at the discretion of the Principal or the Principal's designee. Following is a general outline of the behaviors that may result in disciplinary consequences.

Minor behaviors may often be addressed by the classroom teacher or school personnel, until such behaviors become major, become a safety issue, or interfere with the learning of one's self or of others. When such behaviors create these conditions, school administrators rely on a spiral of logical consequences to help end unwanted or unsafe behaviors

**Type of Problem: Minor**

Examples: Throwing another's ball out of a game, problem with taking turns or sharing

Component of Consequences:

- Investigation; listening to involved parties
- Problem solving discussion with staff member and/or administrator
- Rule associated with behavior was identified and options for better choice(s) were discussed
- Apology and solution agreed upon.

*\*\*\*Parents/Guardians not usually contacted*

**Type of Problem: Major**

Examples: Repeated minor problems, major fight, theft, physical assault of adult, defiance of adult direction, significant dangerous behavior (attempting to leave school, throwing or knocking over furniture), inappropriate touching, repeated lying, and bullying

Component of Consequences:

- Investigation; listening to involved parties

- Problem solving discussion with staff member and/or administrator
- Rule associated with behavior was identified and options for better choice(s) were discussed
- Parents/Guardians contacted
- Apology and solution agreed upon.

<b>Physical and Emotional Safety Descriptors</b>		
<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Severity</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
<b>Physical Contact</b>	<b>MINOR</b>	Student engages in non-serious, but inappropriate physical contact. Student touches another student or gets in another student's space without permission and in such a manner that makes the other student uncomfortable.
	<b>MAJOR</b>	Student engages in actions involving serious physical contact where injury may occur, such as hitting, punching, hitting with an object, kicking, hair pulling. Student touches another person's private areas or displays own private areas.
<b>Lying/ Cheating</b>	<b>MINOR</b>	Always a MAJOR offense.
	<b>MAJOR</b>	Student delivers message that is untrue and/or deliberately violates rules.
<b>Classroom Disruptions</b>	<b>MINOR</b>	Student engages in low-intensity, but inappropriate, disruption
	<b>MAJOR</b>	Student engages in sustained or high intensity disruption. Behavior causing an interruption in a class activity. Disruption includes sustained loud talk, yelling, or screaming; noise with materials; horseplay or roughhousing; and/or sustained out-of-seat behavior.

<b>Inappropriate Language</b>	<b>MINOR</b>	Student delivers low-intensity verbal messages/gestures that include swearing, name calling, or use of words in an inappropriate way.
	<b>MAJOR</b>	Student delivers abusive, profane verbal messages/gestures that include swearing, name calling, or use of words in an inappropriate way and directed at others.
<b>Vandalism/ Property Misuse</b>	<b>MINOR</b>	Student engages in low-intensity misuse of property.
	<b>MAJOR</b>	Student engages in an activity that results in damage, disfigurement, or destruction of property.
<b>Defiance, Disrespect, Non-Compliance</b>	<b>MINOR</b>	Student engages in brief or low-intensity failure to respond to adult requests (for verbal disrespect, see Inappropriate language).
	<b>MAJOR</b>	Student engages in sustained (or high-intensity) failure to respond to adult requests (for verbal disrespect, see Inappropriate Language).
<b>Technology Violation</b>	<b>MINOR</b>	Student engages in non-serious, but inappropriate use of cell phone, computer, camera, or other technology device.
	<b>MAJOR</b>	Student engages in serious and inappropriate use of cell phone, computer, or other technology equipment.
	<b>MINOR</b>	Always a MAJOR offense.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Theft</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MAJOR</b></p>	<p>Student is in possession of, having passed on, or being responsible for removing someone else's property or has signed a person's name without that person's permission.</p>
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For specific information regarding **Bullying/Harassment** please see: <http://melroseschools.com/administration/administrative-procedures/melrose-bullying-prevention-and-intervention-plan/#sthash.wyJD0pUj.dpbs>

## Disciplinary Code of Action

Level 1 - Unacceptable behavior in violation of school policy. Behavior is dealt with by staff members.

Level 2 –Continued behavior in violation of school policy previously dealt with by staff members with little effect. Staff refers student to the building administrator. Parents will be notified and appropriate interventions will be put in place.

Level 3 – Behavior requires immediate administrative referral. Parents will be notified and appropriate interventions will be put in place.

Level 4 – Severity of behavior requires immediate consideration for suspension (one day or greater depending on the severity of the behavior) or expulsion based upon the regulations established by the School Committee.

*The severity of the infraction will determine the appropriate level of intervention.*

Offenses that may trigger review for possible suspension/expulsion from the school or school district include (Level 4):

- Damage to school/private property; theft of school/private property or attempt thereof
- Use of profanity, abusive language, obscene gestures, or other speech which creates any disruption or disorder within the school
- Violation of other's civil rights
- Bullying, harassment or retaliation that creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the victim's rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operations of the school
- Severe physical aggression, acts, threats or assault
- Acts of a violent nature
- Aggressive behavior of a sexual nature
- Leaving or attempting to leave school grounds without permission
- Setting off smoke detectors or fire alarms without just cause
- Use of tobacco in any form
- Use, possession, or being under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind. (Any prescription drug should be turned over to the school administrator or school nurse in accordance with school and public health policy.)
- Possession or transmission of any firearm, knife, explosive, incendiary device or other dangerous object appropriate to these categories
- Assault of a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, volunteer, visitor, or other school staff on school premises or at school sponsored/related events, including athletic games.

The suspension of a student from school is a severe disciplinary measure. It is reserved for instances of repeated offenses and/or blatant disregard for school rules in the form of behavior that has the

potential to cause serious injury to members of the school community or major disruption of the educational process at the school.

Therefore, when reasonable efforts to provide positive remedies are ineffective, suspension remains the right of the school and will be instituted in accordance with appropriate due process. Please see the following section regarding a student's suspension from school as outlined by: Chapter 222 of the Acts of 2012 and the Disciplinary Due Process.

## Chapter 222

DISCIPLINARY DUE PROCESS of the Acts of 2012; 603 CMR 53.00

Nothing in 603 CMR 53.00 shall prevent a school administrator from conducting an investigation, including student interviews, of a school-related disciplinary incident.

1. Short Term Disciplinary Sanctions:

*Prior* to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that may result in a student's suspension from school for ten (10) consecutive school days or less, (other than those suspensions under M.G.L. c. §§ 37H and 37H 1/2) the student will be given oral notice of the offense with which he/she is charged and an opportunity to respond. In the event the principal determines that the student will be suspended from school, the student and parent/guardian must *first* receive notification by telephone (or in person) and in writing of the charges; the reasons for the suspension or exclusion; the opportunity to meet with the principal or designee to discuss the charges; and the reasons for the suspension or exclusion taking effect. The student will have the opportunity to make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make continued academic progress.

2. Long Term Disciplinary Sanctions:

Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in the student's suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expulsion, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given written notice of a hearing at which they may be represented by an attorney at their expense and may examine and present witnesses and documentary evidence.

Following this hearing, the decision maker (principal) will issue a written decision. The written decision shall inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) and student of the student's right to receive education services, such as the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. This notice shall be provided in English and the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, and the notice shall include the school's Education Service Plan, which provides a list of the specific education services that are available during the student's removal from school and contact information for school personnel who will be able to provide information about accessing such services.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) will have the right to appeal any decision imposing a long-term exclusion from school. Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, the student shall have ten (10) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the superintendent of schools. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H1/2 and M.G.L. c.71, 37H 3/4, the student shall have five (5) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the superintendent. For exclusions imposed by the School Committee in accordance with M.G.L. c.76 §17, the student shall have the right to file a written request for reconsideration by the

committee within ten (10) days of the effective date of the exclusion. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect. M.G.L. c. 76 §17, M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, M.G.L. c. 71 §37H1/2. M.G.L. c.71, §37H 3/4.

3. **Students with Disabilities:** Students who have been identified as students with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or who the school has reason to believe might be eligible for special education services are entitled to additional procedural protections when a disciplinary exclusion is considered. Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that would result in a change in placement; the student's Team will meet to determine whether the student's conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability. If the Team determines that the conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability they shall review any existing behavior plan or, if no such behavior plan exists, conduct a functional behavioral assessment. In many cases, a student with a disability will be entitled to services identified by the student's Team as necessary to provide the student with a free appropriate public education during periods of disciplinary exclusion exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. For additional information regarding the rights of students with disabilities in the context of school discipline please contact the Melrose Public Schools Assistant Superintendent for PPS or the building principal.

## Record Regulations

The State Board of Education Regulations apply to all information kept by a School Committee on a student in a manner such that he or she may be individually identified. The regulations divide the record into



sections: the transcript and the temporary record. Please note: The general provisions of parent/student rights (603 CMR 23.00) are now available in brochure form and can be obtained from the building principal or at the office of Pupil Personnel Services. Listed below are six items that come under the broader category of Student Record Regulations.

### Transcript

The transcript includes only the maximum information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress. This information includes the name, address, course, titles, grades, credits and grade level completed. The transcript is kept by the school system for at least sixty years after the student leaves the system.

### Temporary Record

The temporary record contains the majority of the information maintained by the school about the student. This may include such things as: standardized test results, class rank, school sponsored extracurricular activities, and evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons as well as other similar information. The student may take the temporary record at the end of the senior year or it is destroyed within five years after the student leaves the system.

### Inspection of Records

A parent or a student who has entered the ninth grade or is at least 14 years old has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be made available to the parent or student no later than two days after the request unless the parent or student consents to a delay. Parents and students have the right to receive copies of any part of the record, although a reasonable fee may be charged for the cost of duplicating the materials. Finally, the parent and student may request to have parts of the record interpreted by a

qualified professional of the school or may invite anyone else of their choosing to inspect or interpret the record with them.

### Confidentiality of Records & Access to Student Records by Third Parties

Ordinarily, student record information may not be disclosed to third parties without the written permission of the parent or eligible student. State and Federal law, however, provide that student records may be released without such consent in certain circumstances, including the following:

- To authorized school personnel who have a legitimate need for such information in the performance of their duties (for example, administrators, teachers, counselors, nurses, and clerical staff, to the extent necessary, to enable them to do their jobs)
- To a person or company to whom the school district has outsourced services or functions for which it otherwise would use its own employees (for example, an auditor, attorney, medical consultant or therapist)
- Upon request, to officials in the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families, the Department of Youth Services, judicial officials and probation officers under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 119, Sections 51B, 57, 69 and 69A respectively
- Upon receipt of a court order or lawfully issued subpoena
- To appropriate parties when the release of such information is necessary to protect the health or safety of a person (for example, the local police department and local health officials).

### Amendment of Records

The parent and student have the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written materials to the student record. In addition, the parent and student have the right to request that information in the record be amended or deleted. The parent and

student have the right to a conference with the school principal to make their objections known. Within a week after the conference, the principal must render a decision in writing. If the parent and student are not satisfied with the decision, the regulations contain provisions through which the decision may be appealed to higher authorities in the school system.

### Destruction of Records

The regulations require that certain parts of the student record, such as the temporary record, be destroyed a certain period of time after the student leaves the system. School authorities are also allowed to destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information in the record from time to time while the student is enrolled in the school system. Before any such information may be destroyed, the parent and student must be notified and have an opportunity to receive a copy of any of the information before its destruction.

### Public Record Law

As a result of the Public Records Law, professional information relating to public employees and members of licensed professions, including public school teachers and administrators, is a public record under the state public records law G.L. c.4, s.7. Under this law, any person, whether or not s/he has a child in school, is entitled to ask for and receive the following professional information in regard to staff members: name, certification/licensure status, and degrees earned, including field of study and the institution that awarded the degree/s. Parents must put their request in writing to the building principal. Principals will respond in writing within 10 business days. The public records law specifically exempts from disclosure employees' personnel and medical files and any other individual data the disclosure of which may constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

### Health Records

Records of a school-based health clinic are subject to medical, not student, record regulations. Health records are confidential and must be issued separately from school nurse to school nurse when a student transfers. Special protection exists for certain health information (AIDS, HIV, etc.). A health care provider cannot disclose any information with respect to the same without specific, informed, written consent. Physician's records are confidential and may not be released to any third party without written consent.

## Rights of Families Regarding Student Records

To facilitate the educational process and to provide students with appropriate instructional and related services, the Melrose Public Schools collects and maintains certain information regarding students and their families, including information of a confidential nature. The Massachusetts Student Records regulations and the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provide that parents (including legal guardians), eligible students, and school officials are entitled to have access to such information, but protect such private information from disclosure to most third parties without the prior consent of a parent or eligible student. Relevant provisions of the laws and regulations are summarized below. Questions concerning student records that are not addressed in this Handbook should be directed to the Principal.

## Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment of students can create an atmosphere of fear and anxiety for all members of the school community. Bullying can affect the ability of a student to attend school; to learn and progress effectively in school; and to participate in activities inside and outside of school, including traveling to and from school, walking in the corridors, eating in the school cafeteria, playing in the school yard and

participating in special or extracurricular activities. Bullying behaviors that are not addressed can lead to serious adverse consequences for students, including academic, attendance or psychological problems. The failure to address bullying behaviors also gives other students the message that it is permissible to engage in negative behaviors.

The bullying law in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was signed on May 3, 2010, by Governor Patrick. This comprehensive legislation addresses bullying in schools. “An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools”, Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, requires all schools to create and implement strategies to prevent bullying, and to address bullying promptly and effectively when it occurs. Please see the following website link for more information:

<http://melroseschools.com/families/student-support-services/bullying-prevention-and-intervention/>.

Melrose Elementary Schools have a Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, as required by law, which prohibits bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. Provisions of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan mandate that all school employees are required to report immediately an instance of bullying or retaliation that they witnessed or become aware of to the principal or assistant principal, who shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the principal determines bullying has occurred:

1. The Melrose Police Department and/or School Resource Officer will be notified if the principal believes criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator
2. The principal will take appropriate disciplinary action
3. The principal will notify parents or guardians of the perpetrator
4. The principal will notify parents or guardians of the victim and provide them with the action taken to prevent further acts of bullying.

Bullying is prohibited on school grounds, property adjacent to school grounds, at school-sponsored events or school-related events. Bullying that does not take place on school grounds is also prohibited when such bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the victim's rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operations of the school. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, and/or witnesses or has reliable information, is also prohibited.

### Prohibition Against Bullying and Harassment

Bullying of students occurring in the schools is prohibited by law and will not be tolerated by the Melrose Public Schools. For purposes of this policy, "school" includes schools buildings, school grounds, school-sponsored activities, including social events, field trips, sports events, and similar school-sponsored events and functions, and travel to and from school and/or school-sponsored events.

### Definition of Bullying

The repeated use by one or more students or by a member of school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, or a paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying also includes cyberbullying, which is defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which

shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic device, photo electronic or photo-optical system, including but not limited to electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications or texts. Cyberbullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive of the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive of the definition of bullying.

- Physical aggression against students, including assaults on student property
- Intimidation or extortion, in any form, including cyber-bullying
- Oral or written threats
- Threatening looks or gestures
- Teasing, name-calling or putdowns
- Cruel rumors
- False accusations and
- Social isolation, such as shunning.

### Intervention and Response to Alleged Bullying

The Melrose Public Schools takes allegations of bullying or retaliation seriously and will respond promptly to complaints and allegations of bullying or retaliation. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, school officials will conduct an investigation and impose

corrective action as necessary. The investigation will be completed within fourteen school days from the date of the report. The parents/guardians will be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or will be taken. *While any student could be subject to bullying and harassment, the District recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics.*

### Reporting Procedures

Any school employee or school volunteer who becomes aware or has a reasonable belief that harassment, bullying, discrimination, retaliation, or a hate crime has occurred or may have occurred on school property or in a school-related activity must promptly report the alleged incident(s) to the building Principal.

Any student or other person (who is not a school employee) who becomes aware or has a reasonable belief that such behaviors took place is strongly encouraged to and should promptly report the incident(s) to the building Principal.

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously; provided, however, that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. The building principal will further investigate anonymous reports. Please see the following link for the Melrose Public Schools Harassment Form:

<http://melroseschools.com/families/student-support-services/bullying->



[prevention-and-intervention/](#), which may be completed by anyone who wants to file an (anonymous) report.

### False Charges

Any person who makes knowingly false charges or brings a malicious complaint is subject to disciplinary and/or corrective action.

### Disciplinary and Corrective Actions

Violation of this Policy is a serious offense. Violators will be subject to appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective action to correct and end the conduct, prevent its reoccurrence, and protect the complainant and other similarly-situated individuals from harassment, discrimination, hate crimes, retaliation, and bullying in the future.

As a result of FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR part 99), school officials cannot tell a parent how they disciplined another student, even if his or her child was directly targeted by that student. School Officials must obey state and federal laws which mandate that they keep student records confidential and private.

## Physical Restraint

In rare cases, schools may need to physically restrain children to protect a student and/or member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm - 603 CMR 46.00. Physical restraint should be used only in emergency situations with extreme caution after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate. The principal and parent(s) or guardian(s) will receive notification if physical restraint has occurred. Further, in cases where a student threatens the safety of self or others, the school may require a risk assessment by a qualified professional before allowing the student to continue in school.

## Holiday and/or Cultural Events Celebrations Policy

The Melrose Public Schools recognizes that, “Holidays are a time to promote greater understanding and tolerance among students of different traditions while respecting and adhering to the First Amendment’s prohibition against school-sponsored endorsement or promotion of religious beliefs of any kind.”

Diverse holiday and/or cultural event celebrations or assemblies should:

- Advance a child’s knowledge of society’s rich cultural and religious heritage
- Focus on several different religions or holidays
- Express the diverseness of beliefs and customs
- Never promote one religion over another.

Religious music:

- Must not dominate or be the focus of a holiday concert
- Should not be limited to a particular holiday or religious denomination.

Classroom decorations:

- Should only reflect those symbols that have come to have a secular meaning (e.g., snowflakes, candles, dreidels, Christmas trees, Star of David, star and crescent). Crosses and nativity scenes must not be displayed.

At no time should one holiday or religion be discussed exclusively. Throughout the course of the year, there should be a balanced discussion of different religions, cultures and holidays as they occur. Children should not be expected to be the authorities on their particular religion or holiday celebration.

## Statement of Non-Discrimination

The faculty and staff of Melrose Public Schools are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment in which high expectations are held for all. All members of our community should be able to feel safe and to expect that their person, property and opinions will be respected. As such, all members of our school community are expected to contribute to an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. This handbook is intended to explain to students their individual rights and responsibilities to themselves and their community. School should be a setting where respect for rules and common decency are accepted by all as the necessary structure for both learning and community, and where those in authority strive to strike a balance between individual rights and the general good.

Student Rights:

## I. RIGHT TO AN EQUAL EDUCATION

### A. Non-Discrimination Policy:

State and federal laws prohibit discrimination in education (see MA G.L. c. 622 and c. 282). In the Melrose Public Schools, we do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, sex, gender identity, homelessness, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation with regard to admission, access to programs or activities, or employment opportunities.

In the Melrose Public Schools:

- No individual shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefit of, or subjected to discrimination, or subjected to harassment in any program or activity of the school because of such student's race, color, age, sex, gender identity, homelessness, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation (i.e., protected status)
- English language learners have the right to counseling and course information in a language they understand. Families of English language learners have a right to school information in a language and/or way they understand. School staff will arrange for interpreters for conferences or meetings related to the education of their child.

Melrose Public Schools has identified Amy Lindquist, Assistant City Solicitor for School and Labor, as the district's Civil Rights Officer. She may be reached at: 781-462-3235.

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990;
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972;
- Age Act.

B. Definitions:

- A "Complaint" is defined as an allegation that a student or employee has been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or religion.
- "Discrimination" means discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, age, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or religion that is excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of the school.
- "Harassment" means unwelcome conduct on the basis of race, age, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or religion that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive to create a hostile environment for the individual at school. Harassment may include insults, name-calling, off-color jokes, threats, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct which rises to the level of a hostile environment.
- "Sexual Harassment" means unwelcome, sexually offensive or gender-based conduct, which is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive to create a hostile environment for the individual at school. Additionally, under M.G.L. c. 151C, § 1, the term "sexual harassment" may also include, but is not limited to, sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (i)

submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the provision of the benefits, privileges or placement services or as a basis for the evaluation of academic achievement; or (ii) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's education by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive educational environment.

- Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. When determining whether an environment is hostile, the school district examines the context, nature, frequency, and location of the sexual or gender-based incidents, as well as the identity, number and relationships of the persons involved. The school district must consider whether the alleged harassment was sufficient to have created such an environment for a reasonable person of the same age, gender, and experience as the alleged victim, and under a similar circumstance.

- Retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of school officials or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Melrose Public Schools. Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the school administration and/or School Committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

c. Procedure for Filing Complaints Related to Discrimination or Harassment:

- If an individual feels he or she has been discriminated against, harassed or has been subjected to retaliation, the student may lodge a complaint with appropriate school staff, the principal of his or her school, or the Superintendent.

- District staff is expected to report possible incidents of discrimination or harassment of students and fellow employees. Parents and other adults are also encouraged to report any concerns about possible discrimination or harassment of students or employees, which have allegedly occurred on school grounds, at school related events, or actions, which occurred outside of school but possibly create a hostile environment for a student or employee while he/she is at school.
- All reports of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation will be investigated promptly and in an impartial and as confidential a manner as possible, to ensure prompt and appropriate action.
- The appropriate civil rights coordinator, or his or her designee, will conduct a prompt, impartial investigation. Interviews and gathering of information, except in circumstances in which more time is necessary to complete the investigation, will be completed within approximately fifteen (15) school days of the receiving of the complaint. The parties to the complaint will be provided opportunity to be heard as part of the investigation including the opportunity to provide relevant information and identify witnesses for the investigator's consideration.
- Within ten (10) school days, the civil rights officer or designee will provide written notice of the outcome of the investigation to both the complainant and the individual accused of the discriminatory conduct.
- Any individual who is found, after appropriate investigation, to have engaged in discriminatory conduct, or harassing conduct, or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or termination of employment. Additionally, the Melrose Public Schools will implement remedial and/or corrective measures that are reasonably calculated to eliminate the discrimination and/or harassment.
- If a party is not satisfied with the outcome of the investigation, that individual may appeal, within fifteen (15) calendar days of the notice of the outcome of the investigation by filing a written appeal with the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent will issue a written

response on the appeal to the grievant and the respondent within fifteen (15) calendar days of receiving the appeal. If the individual is not satisfied with the response, he/she may take the complaint to:

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Program Quality Assurance, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4096 or other appropriate federal or state agency.

- All the timelines indicated above will be implemented, as specified, unless the nature of the investigation or exigent circumstances prevents such implementation, in which case the matter will be completed promptly and equitably.
- Harassment may constitute child abuse under Massachusetts law (G.L. c.119, §51A) and/or a violation of criminal law. Melrose Public Schools will comply with Massachusetts law in reporting suspected cases of child abuse, including those involving sexual harassment, to the Department of Children and Families and/or the Department of Children and Families and/or the Melrose Police.

## Title IX

The governing regulations of Title IX, effective July, 1975, covers all aspects of sex discrimination in schools with regard to admissions, treatment of students, and employment. Specifically, Title IX states: “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination, under an educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

## Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Section 504 is an act, which prohibits discrimination against persons with a handicap in any program receiving federal financial assistance. The Act defines a person with a handicap as anyone who:

1. Has a mental or physical impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities (such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working)
2. Has a record of such an impairment or is regarded as having such impairment.

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the Melrose Public Schools recognizes its responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a handicap will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices in the Melrose Public Schools.

The Melrose Public Schools has specific responsibilities under this Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and afford access to appropriate educational services if the student is determined to be eligible under Section 504. If the parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the Melrose Public Schools, he/she has the right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

## Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity Statement

An Act Relative to Gender Identity (Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011), which became effective on July 1, 2012, amended several Massachusetts statutes prohibiting discrimination on the basis of specified categories to include discrimination on the basis of gender identity. Among the statutes amended is G.L. c. 76, § 5, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender identity against students who enroll in or attend the public schools. G.L. c. 76, §5 now reads as follows: Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where he actually resides, subject to the following section. No



School Committee is required to enroll a person who does not actually reside in the town unless said enrollment is authorized by law or by the School Committee. Any person who violates or assists in the violation of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly-attended public schools. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

## Infringement of Civil Rights

No student shall, by the behaviors and/or remarks, interfere with the civil rights of others. This includes sexual harassment, reference to race, religion, gender, handicap, sexual orientation, age or ethnic background.

## PPRA Notice and Consent/Opt-Out for Specific Activities

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. § 1232h, requires the Melrose Public Schools to notify you and obtain consent or allow you to opt your child out of participating in certain school activities. These activities include a student survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following eight areas (“protected information surveys”):

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
3. Sexual 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 relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

The Melrose Public Schools will provide parents, within a reasonable period of time prior to the administration of the surveys and activities, notification of the surveys and activities and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out, as well as an opportunity to review the surveys. (Please note that this notice and opt-out transfers from parents to any student who is eighteen years old or an emancipated minor under State law. If the school does not receive notification that a parent wishes to opt their child out of participation in the survey, passive parental consent for participation will be assumed.)

## Sexual Education Policy

Melrose Public Schools affords parents/guardians the flexibility to exempt their fifth grade son/daughter from any portion of any course that teaches or involves human sexuality education or human sexuality issues. Prior to these topics being taught, parents/guardians will receive a letter stating the anticipated timeframe. In order to exempt your child from any portion of any class that pertains to these issues, the parent/guardian must provide written notification to the school principal. Please note, no student so exempted shall be penalized by reason of such exemption. Every reasonable effort will be made to help support the educational needs of the student. To the extent practicable, curriculum materials will be available for review.

## Patriotic Ceremonies

Certain rights and privileges pertaining to patriotic ceremonies are afforded by the First Amendment. A student may decline to participate in the salute to the flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the singing of the National Anthem. The school may not force the student to leave the room or otherwise punish the student. Students who choose to refrain from participation have a responsibility to respect the rights and interest of others who do wish to participate in the ceremony. The student may refuse to perform the ceremony in a manner that will not disrupt the ceremony for other persons.

