

# **Arlington Public Schools**

## **Elementary Handbook**

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Office of the Superintendent  
Arlington High School  
P. O. Box 167  
869 Massachusetts Avenue  
Arlington, MA 02476-0002

Telephone  
(781) 316-3500  
Fax  
(781) 316-3509

Dear Elementary Parents and Guardians:

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the Arlington Public Schools where we are committed to ensuring that every student is offered the opportunity to grow and learn in a positive, safe, and caring environment. Our dedicated and talented staff strives to encourage and support each and every student to reach his or her potential.

We believe that parent involvement and strong school/parent relationships are essential for student success. We encourage you to partner with us to provide the best possible educational experiences for your child. It is our hope that you will work with us in the development and achievement of our district and school goals. You are invited to join the PTO and School Councils and to work with us on activities planned by parents and teachers. We also encourage you to volunteer in the school and in our classrooms.

To facilitate communication between families and our schools, this handbook is designed to provide you with beneficial information regarding expectations, services, and programs available to you and your children. It includes descriptions of practices, policies, procedures, as well as staff information. You are encouraged to contact your school's administration and faculty whenever you have questions, comments or concerns. If we can assist you in any way, please don't hesitate to call or e-mail.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Bodie, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

*An Equal Opportunity School System with a High Commitment to Diversity*

## **Arlington Public Schools Nondiscrimination Statement**

“Arlington Public Schools does not discriminate in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs and activities, on the basis of race, color or national origin, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis or sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination Act of 1974 (Age Discrimination Act), or on the basis of sexual orientation or religion in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71B and 151B.”

*Title I: Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of employment.

*Title VI: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the based on race, color and national origin.

*Title IX: Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972*

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits in educational programs based on sex.

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

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on disability.

504 Coordinator, Cindy Bouvier [cbouvier@arlington.k12.ma.us](mailto:cbouvier@arlington.k12.ma.us)  
Arlington High School - 781-316-3570

*MGL, Ch. 76, Section 5: Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 5*

Prohibits discrimination in all public schools on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion and sexual orientation.

The Coordinators of the above statutes are as follows:

Arlington Public Schools Individual School Principals  
Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent of Schools

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

Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of educational programming and activities.

## Arlington Elementary Schools

Note: Individual school staff directories and school information can be found on each elementary school website listed below.

<b>Bishop Elementary School</b> 25 Columbia Road, Arlington, MA 02474	
Principal: Mark McAneny - <a href="mailto:mmcaneny@arlington.k12.ma.us">mmcaneny@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	781-316-3791
Safe Arrival/Absentee Line	781-316-3790
Website: <a href="http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/bishop/home.html">www.arlington.k12.ma.us/bishop/home.html</a>	

<b>Brackett Elementary School</b> 66 Eastern Avenue, Arlington, MA 02476	
Principal: Stephanie Zerchykov <a href="mailto:szzerchykov@arlington.k12.ma.us">szzerchykov@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	781-316-3705
Safe Arrival/Absentee Line	781-648-2576
Website: <a href="http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/brackett">www.arlington.k12.ma.us/brackett</a>	

<b>Dallin Elementary School</b> 185 Florence Avenue, Arlington, MA 02476	
Principal: Tara Rossi <a href="mailto:trossi@arlington.k12.ma.us">trossi@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	781-316-3730
Safe Arrival/Absentee Line	781-316-3725
Website: <a href="http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/dallin">www.arlington.k12.ma.us/dallin</a>	

<b>Hardy Elementary School</b> 52 Lake Street, Arlington, MA 02474	
Principal: Deborah D'Amico <a href="mailto:ddamico@arlington.k12.ma.us">ddamico@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	781-316-3781
Safe Arrival/Absentee Line	781-316-3780
Website: <a href="http://www.hardyschool.com">www.hardyschool.com</a>	

<b>Peirce Elementary School</b> 85 Park Avenue Ext., Arlington, MA 02474	
Principal: Karen Hartley <a href="mailto:khartley@arlington.k12.ma.us">khartley@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	781-316-3737
Safe Arrival/Absentee Line	781-316-3298
Website: <a href="http://peirceschool.info/">peirceschool.info/</a>	

<b>Stratton Elementary School</b> 180 Mountain Avenue, Arlington, MA 02474	
Principal: Sheri Donovan <a href="mailto:sdonovan@arlington.k12.ma.us">sdonovan@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	781-316-3754
Lead Teacher: Jackie Daley <a href="mailto:jdaley@arlington.k12.ma.us">jdaley@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	
Safe Arrival/Absentee Line	781-316-3767
Website: <a href="http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/stratton">www.arlington.k12.ma.us/stratton</a>	

<b>Thompson Elementary School</b>	
<i>For 2011-2012 &amp; 2012-2013 school years, Thompson students will attend Stratton School K-2; Hardy School Gr. 3-5; &amp; Bishop School Gr. 5.</i>	
Principal: Sheri Donovan <a href="mailto:sdonovan@arlington.k12.ma.us">sdonovan@arlington.k12.ma.us</a>	781-316-3754
Safe Arrival/Absentee Line	<i>See specific schools for Safe Arrival Lines</i>
Website: <a href="http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/thompson/">www.arlington.k12.ma.us/thompson/</a>	

## **Arlington Public Schools Mission Statement**

The mission of the Arlington Public Schools is to educate students by promoting academic excellence, by empowering students to achieve their maximum potential, and by preparing students for responsible participation in an ever-changing world.

The Arlington Public Schools are committed to helping every student achieve emotional, social, vocational, and academic success.

## Kindergarten Information

### Entrance Age

Incoming kindergarten students must be five (5) years old by August 31 of the year they will enter kindergarten.

### First Grade

Students must be six (6) years old by August 31 of the year that they will enter First Grade.

### Kindergarten Registration and Orientation

Registration and Orientation Activities for families with children entering kindergarten the following school year take place between January and March. Specific information including dates and times for these school based events are posted on the Arlington Public Schools and the APS Kindergarten websites. Information is also posted in the Arlington Advocate and on Arlington Cable.

For more information, visit the kindergarten website  
[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/kindergarten/](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/kindergarten/)

### Kindergarten Screening

As mandated by state and federal law, the Arlington Public Schools conducts a screening of all incoming Kindergarten children. The screening is a one step process whose purpose is to identify children who may have learning needs so that any needed interventions may be introduced as soon as possible. The screening process is a non-intensive scan of a young child's overall developmental skills. Skill areas screened include; speech-language, math, fine and gross motor skills, cognition, developmental history and a review of the child's general health. The screening is not a readiness test or an evaluation. Screening activities are designed to find those children who may require extra support in school or may require further evaluation. Our goal is for you and your child to have a successful year in kindergarten.

### Frequently Asked Questions About Kindergarten

**Q:** Where is full day kindergarten available?

**A:** All elementary schools have full day programs.

**Q:** Is my child guaranteed a full day slot?

**A:** Arlington Public Schools offer full day kindergarten to all students.

**Q:** How many children attend full day Kindergarten?

**A:** Most children attend full day kindergarten. Typically, fewer than 1% of children attend half-day kindergarten.

**Q:** *What is the fee for full day?*

**A:** *The tuition fee for the 2009-2010 school year was \$2,400.00. Tuition fees are*

set in the spring prior to each school year. See APS website for current fee: [www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent\\_forms/Kindergarten\\_Fee.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent_forms/Kindergarten_Fee.pdf)

**Q:** Why is there a fee?

**A:** Arlington is required to provide kindergarten students with a half-day program. The \$2400.00 fee provides the resources necessary to program the additional hours. Arlington Public Schools will not deny access to full day programs because of financial need. Please see fee waiver policy for further information.

**Q:** What are the hours for full day?

**A:** The school day begins at 8:10 and ends at 2:15. Hours for half-day kindergarten are 8:10 -11:00.

**Q:** How do I find out about after school programs for my kindergarten child?

**A:** Look for information about after school programs on each elementary school's web site.

**Q:** *Is lunch available? How much does it cost?*

**A:** *Hot lunch is available at all schools. At most schools, children eat lunch in the cafeteria. For the 2010 school year, lunch is \$3.00 and milk is 60¢. School lunch prices are determined in the spring prior to each school year. See APS website for up to date prices: [www.arlington.k12.ma.us/foodservices](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/foodservices)*

**Q:** Is bus transportation provided for kindergarten?

**A:** Because the elementary schools in Arlington are neighborhood schools, transportation is not provided for most students.

## **Elementary Schools General Information**

### **Open Enrollment**

Where enrollment at a grade level is not at maximum capacity, families wishing to apply for registration in a school other than the one in their home district may apply for transfer, provided the room to which the student would be assigned would not then be judged overcrowded and provided that the school is operating within its designed capacity.

Any child accepted for open enrollment shall be considered to be associated with the receiving school through Grade 5 and will not be required to reapply in subsequent years, except when the Arlington Public Schools are redistricting, in which case all open enrollments shall be rendered null and void for the following year. Request for open enrollment received before June 15th will be responded to by June 30th. No open enrollment requests are granted during the summer. Applications received during the summer will be acted upon not later than October 1. If the numbers in June are in doubt, open enrollment will be put on hold until September. In September, requests not granted in June will be considered after an accurate student enrollment count is determined. If the numbers are still too high as of October 1, then the request for open enrollment will be denied for that year.

Enrollment within the district may exceed 21 students per kindergarten class, but enrollment may not exceed 21 due to open enrollments in a kindergarten class (42 for two classes, 63 for three classes, etc.). For purposes of evaluating open enrollment capacity in June, enrollment may not exceed 19 (38, 57, etc.) students per kindergarten class, subject to a review of actual enrollment in September.

In grades 1 through 5, enrollment within the district may exceed 23 home district students per class, but enrollment may not exceed 23 due to open enrollments. For purposes of evaluating open enrollment capacity in June, enrollment may not exceed 21 students per class in grades 1 through 5, subject to a review of actual enrollment in September. If there are 21 children or above enrolled in a class, consideration for open enrollment will not be made in June, and final determination will be made when the number of students stabilize, not later than October 1.

If openings exist in any classroom, K-5, then first priority will be given to siblings of students already enrolled in the school. When there are more applicants for positions than there are actual openings, students other than siblings will be selected by lottery. In the event that sibling requests exceed the number of actual opening, such students will be selected by lottery and no applications from non siblings will be considered.

Those choosing open enrollment must provide their own transportation to and from school and must agree to stay in the chosen school until the end of the school year

### **District Calendar**

The school calendar is posted on the Arlington Schools website. School specific

calendars are posted on the individual school websites.  
[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/calendar/](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/calendar/)

### **School Hours**

The school day begins at 8:10 a.m. and ends with dismissal at 2:15 p.m.

### **Attendance/Safe Arrival/Absences/ Early Dismissals by Parents Procedures**

To report a change in attendance (late arrival, early dismissal, or absence), please contact your child's school. Each school will have its own safe arrival policy and phone number to call.

### **Attendance Policy**

Mass. Gen. L. ch. 76, sec. 2 requires all children between the ages of 6 and 16 to attend school regularly. The school year consists of 180 days. The following policy applies to student attendance:

#### **Definitions:**

**Excused absence:** A valid cause for absence from school, such as a legitimate illness, death in the family, observation of a religious holiday.

**Non-excused absence:** An invalid cause for absence from school, such as family vacations.

1. When students are absent, parents must call the school before 7:45 A.M. and leave the following information: Child's name, your name, child's teacher and the reason for the absence. Since there is answering machine, please contact the school as soon as you know your child is going to be absent, even the night before. Remember to speak clearly and slowly when leaving your message
2. Each child must bring a note from a parent/guardian to reenter school after any absence or it will be considered a non-excused absence/ truant.
3. Upon returning to school the absent note should be given to your child's classroom teacher. All absent notes will be forwarded to the Safe Arrival Office where they will be kept on file.
4. The school will contact the home upon the third non-excused absence to remind parents of the legal requirements for students to be in school.
5. Upon the fifth non-excused absence the student's name will be forwarded to the Attendance/ Court Liaison for referral.
6. The Attendance Office will notify parents and in extreme cases of absenteeism a CHINS (child in need of services) Petition may be filed.

### **Calendar of Early Dismissals**

There are scheduled dates for early dismissal of students each year, primarily for staff professional development. The dates can be found on the district calendar located on the APS website.

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/calendar/](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/calendar/)

### **Inclement Weather**

Closings and delays are reported on the Arlington Public Schools district website and local TV channels and radio stations. If there is a delay, school will begin two hours later at 10:10 a.m. Dismissal time remains the same, and lunch will be served.

Please note that on a no-school day, supervisory staff will not be available. If there is a delay, supervisory staff will not be available until the start of the school day. You cannot leave your child at school prior to 10:10 a.m.

Parental discretion is always advised as to attendance due to inclement weather.

### **Religious Observances**

Student absences due to the observance of religious holidays are considered excused absences for the purpose of attendance. Ample and flexible accommodations will be made to assist students in making up class work with sufficient time to do so with the expectation that they will be neither studying or doing homework on those days. On days of major religious observance where school is in session and it is expected that significant numbers of students will be absent, there will be no tests, quizzes or other such examinations scheduled. Religious observances will be taken into consideration when scheduling school activities such as school photographs, after school and evening programs, etc.

### **Family Vacations**

Families are strongly discouraged from scheduling vacations during school time, especially during the MCAS examination period. Family vacations are marked as unexcused absences. Please contact your child's school if she/he will be absent for a family vacation while school is in session. Students will be required to make-up any work or assessments missed during their absence.

### **Field Trips**

The principal reviews and approves all field trips. There are no special school funds for field trips. The cost of the trip, such as admission fees, bus transportation and insurance, are calculated and then divided among the participants. The schools do not make a profit from these trips. You are asked to pay a fee so that the school can cover its costs.

You are not required to send your child on a field trip; participation is voluntary. However, a permission slip must be signed for any child to participate on a field trip. The School Committee strongly recommends that students participate in these trips because they provide additional education that will benefit the students. If your child does not attend a field trip, he or she is required to spend the day at school doing regular assignments. Teachers at school will supervise your child.

Field trips generally do not extend beyond the normal school day and your child more than likely will be able to go to his/her usual after school activities. In rare instances when we know the schedule is affected, you will be given specific advance notice.

Prescription medication and special needs during the trip should be addressed specifically with your child's teacher and, if necessary, school principal. Please notify the school nurse prior to a field trip so arrangements can be made for your child's medicine during field trip hours.

For more information about field trips and related forms, visit:

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent\\_forms/Field\\_Trip\\_Questions\\_and\\_Answers.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent_forms/Field_Trip_Questions_and_Answers.pdf)

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent\\_forms/Field\\_Trip\\_Permission\\_Form.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent_forms/Field_Trip_Permission_Form.pdf)

### **Lunch Program/Free and Reduced Lunch**

Children from households that meet Federal income guidelines are eligible for free or reduced price meals. Families may apply to participate in the program at any time during the school year. Only one application per family is required. Please include information on all the children in the household. To apply for free or reduced meals, complete and sign Free & Reduced application and return it to the school principal. For application forms visit:

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent\\_forms/Free\\_and\\_Reduced\\_Priced\\_Lunch\\_Application.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/eforms/parent_forms/Free_and_Reduced_Priced_Lunch_Application.pdf)

### **Student Insurance Program**

The Arlington Public Schools offer low-cost accident insurance to the parent/guardians of all duly enrolled public school students. Parents /guardians are encouraged to purchase this insurance as financial protection against accidents although this is essentially a voluntary program. Families will receive information regarding this insurance in the fall of each school year.

**Visitors** - All visitors must report to the school office upon arrival. You must check in with the school secretary. We do this to provide a safe and secure environment for all students and staff.

### **C.O.R.I. Requirements**

It is the policy of the Arlington Public Schools to obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information (C.O.R.I.) from the criminal history systems board of prospective employee(s) or volunteer(s) of the school department including any individual who regularly provides school related transportation to children, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, prior to hiring the employee(s) or to accepting any person as a volunteer.

Refer to *School Committee Policy* ADDA concerning C.O.R.I. Requirements

## Emergency Operations Plans/Drills

Arlington Public Schools worked in conjunction with the Arlington Police and Fire Departments to create a comprehensive plan to address a wide range of potential problems. We are all in agreement that having a clear, comprehensive plan is necessary for student safety.

Emergency Information is posted & updated at: [www.arlington.k12.ma.us](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us)

### Fire Drills

A fire drill is one type of evacuation, which is practiced several times each year under the direction of the Arlington Fire Department.

We now have three different types of emergency plans:

### **Shelter in Place, Lock-Down, and Evacuation.**

**Shelter in Place:** This procedure would be used if there were a danger from outside the school, such as a chemical spill. If this were to happen, students and staff would be alerted via the PA system about the nature of the danger and directed to stay in the school until further notice. Normal school activities would continue with the exception of outside activities.

**Lock-Down:** This procedure would be used if there were a situation inside the school that would make evacuation impractical. We would advise the staff and students about the incident over the PA system, but in this case, all classrooms would be secured and no one, except the police, would be allowed to enter or leave the school. (This includes parents.) Teachers and students would be directed to stay in their classrooms until further notice. Teachers and students outside the school building would be directed to their evacuation site.

**Evacuation:** This procedure would be used in an extreme emergency situation. An evacuation would mean that the staff and students would move quickly to a secure location within the town. (*Individual school evacuation locations are listed in our emergency preparedness plan on the APS website.*) In the event of an emergency, an Emergency Communication Post (ECP) would be set up at Arlington Town Hall where parents would receive information at the ECP about their children. Parents are asked **not** to report directly to the evacuation sites. This would create traffic and safety problems and may put children, staff and parent at great risk of injury. It is important that you go to the Emergency Communication Post at Town Hall. We understand that all this sounds quite concerning, but we hope you will agree that it is better to be prepared with a plan than caught off guard in a crisis. Our students' safety is a priority for us all.

### School Evacuation Sites

Emergency Communication Post and Parent Center

Town Hall

### **Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Policy And Procedures**

School personnel are mandated to report suspected child abuse pursuant to M.G.L. c . 199 section 51A. The Principal/designee will:

- Communicate child abuse/neglect procedures to the school staff annually
- Ensure that all professionals understand that they must notify Department of Children and Families (DCF) immediately if they suspect that a child has been or is at risk of being abused or neglected.

**If abuse is suspected at home:** The reporting person (all teachers/administrators are mandated reporters by law) will:

- Report the suspected child abuse/neglect to the Department of Children and Families immediately by oral communication and by making a written report (Form 51A) within forty-eight hours after such oral communication. Notify the Principal, School Nurse and Counselor and in some cases the parents that a report has been or will be made to the Department of Children and Families.
- Principal will notify the Superintendent (781-316-3501) that a report has been made to the Department of Children and Families.
- Honor the regulation that all follow-up and interviewing will be handled by the Police Department or the Department of Children and Families.

**If abuse is suspected at school** (employee accused, whether by parent or staff member-or child accusations are to be reported to Principal or designee): The Principal/designee will:

- Report the suspected child abuse/neglect to the Department of Children and Families immediately by oral communication and by making a written report (51A) within forty-eight hours after such oral communication.
- Notify the Office of the Superintendent (781-316-3501), Principal (if report filed by designee), School Nurse and Counselor and parent/guardian that a report has been or will be made to the Department of Children and Families.
- Honor the regulation that all follow-up and interviewing will be handled by the Police Department or the Department of Children and Families.

The Superintendent shall develop appropriate procedures and protocols to invoke when a staff member is accused. They will be designed both to protect children and to address issues the accused staff member is experiencing.

## **Student Rights And Responsibilities**

### **Right to an Equal Education**

Federal and State Laws prohibit discrimination in education. All students are guaranteed “an adequate publicly supported education to every child resident.” This right cannot be denied “on the basis of national origin, sex, economic status, race, religion, and physical or mental handicap.” The Arlington Public Schools have established policies that ensure compliance to these laws.

### **Rights of Students with Special Needs**

Federal and state laws, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and M.G.L. c. 71B, require schools to provide students with disabilities access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education. In some circumstances, this also means that a child will be entitled to receive special education and related services. All students between the ages of three and twenty-one, who have not yet obtained a high school diploma or equivalent, are entitled to special education services if he or she is determined to be eligible to receive such services on the basis of a disability. Specific questions and concerns regarding special education, including referral for special education, eligibility and services, can be directed to school personnel or the Special Education Services Office at Central Administration.

### **Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap**

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992 requires that no qualified individual with a disability shall, because the district’s facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs and activities of the district or be subject to discrimination. Nor shall the district exclude or otherwise deny services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability of a person with whom the individual is known to have a relationship or association.

A “qualified individual with a disability” is an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the district.

### **Rights of Homeless Children**

Students who have been displaced from their home and do not have a permanent place of residence are guaranteed the same rights to an education as every other student under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act.

Students have the right to:

- Go to a public school, including preschool
- Obtain free lunch
- Receive transportation if requested
- Participate in school programs (athletics, clubs, and other student activities)

- Receive the same support and services provided to all students, as needed

### **Freedom of Religion**

Arlington Public Schools take responsibility to protect the religious freedom of all students. Students have the right to practice their own religious beliefs as long as they do not violate the constitutional rights of others. Students also have the right to study, discuss, and analyze religious ideas of institutions and cultures related to content within a specific curriculum.

### **Patriotic Observances**

Students have the right to refrain from participation in the salute to the American flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, and the singing of the National Anthem. Students who choose to refrain from these activities should respect the rights and interests of others who do wish to participate and in a manner that does not disrupt the ceremonies. Schools may not force the students who refrain from participation to leave the room or be punished in any manner.

### **Freedom of Expression**

Under the First Amendment, all students have the right to express their own points of view and are protected from those who would inhibit that expression. At the same time, they are responsible for keeping such expression from disrupting the educational process, and should allow other points of view to be expressed. Free speech may not only include verbal expressions, but may also include symbolic speech such as the wearing of buttons, armbands and decals.

### **Right To Privacy**

The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), sometimes called the "Buckley Amendment") requires schools to protect the privacy of student records, and gives parents and students rights including inspection and review of student records. The Massachusetts Student Record Regulations are consistent with the FERPA statute and regulations.

### **Confidentiality of Student Records**

Except where the regulations specifically authorize access by third parties, no individuals or organizations other than the parent, eligible student and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent or eligible student.

School systems are required to provide for the security and confidentiality of student school records. Under these laws, the school principal or his/her designee is responsible for the privacy and physical security of all student records maintained in the school and any computerized systems employed are electronically secure.

All information and data contained in or added to the student record shall be limited to information relevant to the educational needs of the student. Information and data added to the temporary record shall include the name,

signature, and position of the person who is the source of the information, and the date of entry into the record. Standardized group test results that are added to the temporary record need only include the name of the test and/or publisher, and date of testing.

Screening and Assessment Records are accessible by the screening team, the child's teacher, any specialists involved in the assessment process (testing or implementation of services), and the school principal. Screening and assessment results are used to identify areas where a student may need additional testing, intervention, or other support services that will assist in the learning process.

### **Amending the Student Record**

The eligible student or the parent has the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant written material to the student record. The eligible student or the parent shall have the right to request in writing deletion or amendment of any information contained in the student record, except for information which was inserted into that record by an Evaluation Team. Such information inserted by an Evaluation Team shall not be subject to such a request until after the acceptance of the Evaluation Team Educational Plan, or, if the Evaluation Team Educational Plan is rejected, after the completion of the special education appeal process. Any deletion or amendment shall be made in accordance with the procedure described below:

- (a) If such student or parent is of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in the student record, either student or parent shall present the objection in writing and/or have the right to have a conference with the principal or his/her designee to make the objections known.
- (b) The principal or his/her designee shall within one week after the conference or receipt of the objection, if no conference was requested, render to such student or parent a decision in writing, stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the student or parent, the principal or his/her designee shall promptly take such steps as may be necessary to put the decision into effect.

### **Inspection of Record**

A parent or an eligible student has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be made available within ten days after the request, unless the parent or student consents to a delay. The parent and eligible student have the right to receive a copy of any part of the record, although the school may charge a reasonable fee for the cost of duplicating the materials. The parent and eligible student may request to have parts of the record interpreted by a qualified professional from the school, or may invite anyone else of their choice to inspect or interpret the record with them.

## **Destruction of Records**

The regulations authorizes school authorities to destroy a student's temporary record within five years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the school 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. In each case, the school must first notify the parent and eligible student and give them the opportunity to receive a copy of any of the information before it is destroyed.

## **Non-Custodial Parents Rights**

As required by General Laws Ch. 71, Section 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Department of Education Regulations. The Arlington Public School district encourages all parents to be involved in and informed about the education of their children and asks that non-custodial parents follow this process to access their child's records:

- Submit a written request for the records to the school principal
- Include the full name of the student, the name of the custodial parent, and the name of the parent making the request
- When making an initial request, and to facilitate the process, a non-custodial parent may also include a certified copy of a court order indicating that the requesting parent is entitled to:
  - unsupervised visitation with the child
  - eligible to receive student record information pursuant to Section 34H.

School officials are required to contact the custodial parent when they receive such a request in order to determine if the non-custodial parent is entitled to access student record information.

Each school year since the initial request the requesting parent should submit a request indicating that the parent continues to meet the requirements listed above.

## **Freedom from Harassment**

The Arlington Public Schools is committed to providing a safe educational environment that promotes equal access to educational and occupational opportunities for all adults and children regardless of race, gender, color, national origin, sexual orientation, qualifying disability or religion. Consistent with its pledge of equity for all students and staff, discrimination or harassment based on any of the above mentioned characteristics will not be tolerated. It is the goal of the Arlington Public Schools to prevent harassment through on-going and appropriate means of staff and student awareness, staff training, and policy dissemination. However, should an incident of harassment occur, the school system shall provide for swift action to eliminate such harassment or discrimination among or between students and staff.

Harassment includes unwelcome verbal or physical conduct that may or does offend, denigrate or belittle any individual because of, or due to, any of the characteristics described above. Such conduct includes pictures, jokes,

comments, innuendoes or any other behavior, which creates an environment, which is offensive, intimidating, or hostile to anyone. By law, what constitutes harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider as acceptable behavior, another person may reasonably view as harassment. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communications is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

Freedom from sexual harassment is protected by state and federal law Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act defines Sexual Harassment as “Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment.”

### **Student Conduct and Discipline**

Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Any of the following actions may subject a student to expulsion by the Principal under the terms and procedures of Mass State Law (M.G.L. 71:37H):

1. Any student found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance.
2. Any student who assaults a Principal, Assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff member on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related event including athletic games.

The following actions are examples of unacceptable conduct, which are prohibited and could lead to school discipline and may subject a student to suspension, expulsion or School Committee action:

1. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause damage to school or private property; or stealing or attempting to steal school or private property.
2. Intentionally causing or attempting to cause physical injury to another person except in self-defense.
3. Bullying\*, cyber bullying\*\*, name calling (i.e. racial, ethnic, disability, religious, or gender based words or actions) or retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Bullying shall be prohibited on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

All incidents of bullying should be reported to the appropriate elementary principal.

4. Using or copying the academic work of another and presenting it as his/her own without proper attribution.
5. Repeatedly and intentionally defying the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, or administrators.

School principals retain the authority to discipline students for any other misconduct not specifically listed above.

School building administrators may suspend a student, or recommend a student for suspension or expulsion, *if* the student engages in misconduct while on school property, while taking part in a school activity off school grounds or if the student's off campus behavior results in a "hostile environment," a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of another student's education.

Definitions of bullying and cyber bullying according to Chapter 92 of the acts of 2010:

\*Bullying: the repeated use by one or more students of written, verbal or electronic expression of 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 shall include cyber bullying: 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, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber bullying 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. Cyber bullying 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.

### **Discipline of Special Education Students**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C., §1400 et seq.) and related regulations (34 C.F.R. §300 et seq.) (“IDEA”) provide eligible students (“students”) with certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline, as set forth below.

**Short term removals.** Students who violate school rules are subject to removal from their current placement for up to ten (10) consecutive school days to the extent that such a removal would be applied to students without disabilities, without a prior determination of whether the conduct is a manifestation of the student’s disability. Students may be removed for additional periods of up to ten (10) consecutive school days in the same school year for separate incidents of misconduct without a manifestation determination, so long as the removal does not constitute a “change of placement” as described below. However, during such additional removals the district must provide the student with services to the extent necessary for progress in the general curriculum and the student’s Individualized Education Program (“IEP”) goals, as determined by the Principal in consultation with at least one teacher. In addition, if appropriate, the district must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop or revise an existing behavioral plan for the student.

**Change of Placement.** A suspension of longer than 10 consecutive days or a series of shorter term suspensions that constitute a pattern are considered to represent a “change in placement.” Prior to a suspension that constitutes a change in placement, the student’s Team, including the student’s parents, must convene to determine whether the behavior is a manifestation of the student’s disability. In making this determination, the Team must review all relevant information in the student’s file, including the IEP, teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents, to determine if the conduct was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student’s disability, or was the direct result of any failure by the school to implement the IEP.

**Results of the Manifestation Determination.** If the Team determines that the behavior is not a manifestation of the disability, then the school may suspend or expel the student consistent with the policies applied to students without disabilities, except that the district must still provide an appropriate educational program to the student, as determined by the Team, which program may be in a different setting. If the Team determines that the behavior is a manifestation of a

disability, the Team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop a behavioral intervention plan or where a behavioral intervention plan was previously developed, must review the plan and, if necessary, modify it to address the behavior. Except in circumstances involving drugs, weapons, or serious bodily injury as described below, the student will be returned to the placement from which the student was removed unless the placement is changed by agreement or through the Team process.

**Exception for Drugs, Weapons and Serious Injury.** Regardless of the Team's decisions regarding the manifestation determination, school personnel may order a change in the placement of a student to an interim alternative educational setting, such setting to be determined by the Team, for not more than forty-five (45) school days if the student (1) carries a weapon to school or to a school function; (2) knowingly possesses, uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person at school, on school premises, or at a school function. Additionally, a Massachusetts Bureau of Special Education Hearing Officer, under certain circumstances, may order a change in the placement of a student with a disability to an interim alternative education setting for up to forty-five (45) days if the hearing officer determines that maintaining the current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others.

When a parent(s)/guardian(s) disagrees with the Team's decision on the "manifestation determination" or with a decision regarding placement, the parent(s)/guardian(s) has a right to request an expedited due process hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals.

Additional information regarding the procedural protections for special education students eligible for services under laws providing for services for students with disabilities can be obtained from the Director of Special Education.

### **Discipline of Students Whose Eligibility for Special Education is Suspected**

The IDEA protections summarized above also apply to a child who has not yet been found eligible for services under the statute if the district is "deemed to have knowledge" that the child was eligible for such services before the conduct that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. The IDEA provides that a school district is "deemed to have knowledge" if: (1) the child's parent had expressed concern in writing to district supervisory or administrative personnel or the child's teacher that the child needs special education and related services; (2) the child's parent had requested an evaluation of the child to determine eligibility for special education services; or (3) the teacher of the child or other school district

personnel had expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior by the child directly to the district's director of special education or to other supervisory personnel. However, a school district is not "deemed to have knowledge" if the district evaluated the student and determined that the child was not eligible for special education services or the child's parent refused an evaluation of the child or IDEA services.

If the school district has no knowledge that a student is an eligible student under the IDEA before taking disciplinary measures against the student, the student may be disciplined just as any other student may be. If, however, a request is made for an evaluation to determine eligibility while the student is subject to disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner. Pending the results of the evaluation, the student must remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion without services. If the student is determined eligible for an IEP as a result of the evaluation, the school district must provide the student with special education and related services in accordance with the IDEA.

### **Discipline of Students with Disabilities Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") provides students with disabilities certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline. Prior to imposing a "significant change in placement" for disciplinary reasons, the district must determine whether the conduct is a manifestation of the student's disability. A significant change of placement results not only from an exclusion for more than 10 consecutive school days, but also from a pattern of shorter suspensions accumulating to more than 10 schools days during a school year. Whether a pattern exists must be decided on a case-by case basis, considering such factors as the length of each suspension, the nature of the alleged conduct, the proximity of the suspensions to one another, and the total amount of time the student is excluded from school.

Prior to any significant change in placement for disciplinary reasons, a group of individuals knowledgeable of the student, the evaluation data, and the school program must determine whether the conduct at issue is related to the student's disability. If the conduct is directly related to the disability, the district will not impose the discipline and will develop an individual behavior management plan if the behavior significantly interferes with the student's ability to benefit from his education. If the conduct is not directly related to the student's disability, the district may discipline the student as it does general education students.

## **Freedom from Corporal Punishment**

Maintaining discipline on school property shall never include the right to inflict corporal punishment on any student.

## **Dress Code**

The School Committee considers dress to be a personal and family matter; students will be expected to exercise good judgment as to appropriate dress. Students should come to school dressed in a fashion that does not inhibit either the teaching or learning processes or promote an unsafe environment. It is expected that students will demonstrate good taste in this manner and will take pride in their personal appearances.

Immediate responsibility for determining what is or is not appropriate dress will rest with the principal.

## **Acceptable Use of Technology**

Every student and their parents/guardians are required to sign an acceptable use policy regarding the use of school computers including access to the Internet. For more information, refer to the APS Acceptable Use Policy.

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/ijndb.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/ijndb.pdf)

## **Health And Wellness Information**

### **Health Office Information**

Each school has an assigned qualified nurse who is trained and certified in the specialized practice of School Nursing that advances the well being, academic success, and lifelong achievement of students. To that end, school nurses facilitate positive student responses to normal development; promote health and safety, intervene with actual and potential health problems; provide case management services, and actively collaborate with others to build student and family capacity for adaptation, self-management, self-advocacy and learning.

Arlington school nurses provide:

- Illness and care
- Injury prevention and treatment of injuries that occur in school
- Medication administration and monitoring
- Individualized health care planning and case management for students with special healthcare needs
- Health counseling and health promotion
- Management of student health records
- Health screenings (vision, postural, hearing, height, weight)
- Communication with students, parents, the school community and health care providers

- Access to health care services and insurance
- Emergency preparedness and response

When a child becomes ill at school, a parent or guardian will be notified and are expected to come for the child immediately.

### **Student Attendance During Illness**

There are times when a student should remain at home for his/her own welfare and the protection of other students. Your child should remain at home if he/she has:

- Uncontrollable and/or productive cough
- Fever over 100.4 degrees within past 24 hours
- Vomiting or diarrhea within past 24 hours
- Sore throat and swollen glands
- Undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions
- Earache, severe headache or drainage from eyes

Students should remain home for 24 hours after an acute illness or after starting antibiotics for a diagnosed infection

### **Medication Policies**

#### **Daily Medication**

In order to ensure the health and safety of children requiring medication during the school day, the following procedures must be followed:

The Health Office requires that the following forms be completed and returned to the nurse before medication is given at school.

- Signed consent by the parent/guardian to give the medication
- Medication order signed by the child's physician. The medication order should be taken to your child's licensed prescriber (doctor, nurse practitioner) for completion and returned to the school nurse. This order must be renewed as needed and at the beginning of each academic year.
- If the child requires an EPI-PEN and/or and Individual Health Care Plan (for ex. Asthma, Life Threatening Allergies, Diabetes, Seizure Disorder), please contact the school nurse as soon as possible to discuss and have the appropriate forms signed

You or a responsible adult whom you designate should deliver the medicines to the school in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container. Please ask your pharmacist to provide separate bottles for school and home. No more than a thirty-day supply of medicine should be delivered to school.

#### **Short Term Prescription Medication**

No medication should be brought to school, unless prescribed to be given at school. In order to protect all school children, the following procedure is used when a child must take a medication during school hours on a short-term basis.

1. The parents is requested to ask the physician if it is possible to prescribe the medication other than during school hours.

2. If the medication must be taken during the school hours, the parent/guardian will send **no more than a thirty-day supply**.
3. The accurate dose will be sent in a container labeled by the pharmacy with the following information: name of child, name and dosage of medication, date prescribed, name of prescribing physician.
4. The parent/guardian will send a note to the nurse giving permission to take the medication **as prescribed**. Only the nurse is allowed to dispense the medication. The note will be attached to the child's health record.
5. If the medication is for more than ten days a form will be sent home to be completed by the MD and returned to the nurse.
6. Over the counter medications are **not** encouraged to be administered in school, except in unusual circumstances and only by the nurse with written permission.
7. Metered dose inhalers prescribed for Asthma and Epipens prescribed to prevent anaphylaxis may be carried by a student and self administered with written permission and after discussion with the school nurse.
8. Students are not allowed to have medications on their possession at school. There may be exceptions to this rule and such will be approved by the school nurse.

### **Guidelines For Students With Life-Threatening Allergies**

Allergic reactions can span a wide range of severity of symptoms. The most severe and potentially life threatening reaction is anaphylaxis. The Arlington Public Schools cannot guarantee to provide an allergen-free environment for all students with life threatening allergies, or prevent any harm to students in emergencies. The goal is to minimize the risk of exposure to food allergens that pose a threat to those students, educate the community, and maintain and regularly update a system-wide protocol for responding to their needs. A system-wide effort requires the cooperation of all groups of people within the system. The goal of the Arlington Public Schools regarding Life Threatening Allergies is to engage in a system-wide effort to:

- Prevent any occurrence of life threatening allergic reactions
- Prepare for any allergic reactions
- Respond appropriately to any allergy emergencies that arise

School nurses, in conjunction with the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and the primary care provider/allergist will prepare an Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan for any student with a life threatening allergy. The plans will be reviewed by the school nurse, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) and primary care provider and/or the student's allergist, and signed off by the child's physician to indicating that he/she deems it to be adequate. The Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan will be available in the nurse's office and homeroom in the student's homeroom at the elementary level. Epi-pens will be available in the nurse's office and those prescribed for individual students will be kept in that child's homeroom and in other clearly designated locations as specified in the AAP/IHCP.

Staff will be trained to identify and respond to reactions from LTA's, including the use of EpiPens. Any staff involved with students who have LTA's will be informed and provided information from the AAP/HCP of each of these students. School staff will take steps to ensure that these classrooms and instructional areas are as allergen free as possible.

Schools will provide and maintain LTA free tables in each elementary school cafeteria as needed by the Individual Health Care Plan. These tables will be designated by a universal symbol. These tables will be cleaned and sanitized. Elementary schools encourage "NO FOOD TRADING" and "NO UTENSIL SHARING" policies to minimize accidental exposure to allergens.

It is requested that each parent of a student with an LTA inform the school nurse of your child's allergies prior to the opening of school (or as soon as possible after a diagnosis). Parent(s) must arrange to meet with the school nurse to develop an Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan (AAP/IHCP) for the student and provide medical information from the child's treating physician as needed to write the Plans. Parents should provide the school a list of foods and ingredients to be avoided, and provide a list of safe or acceptable foods that can be served to your child.

In addition parents should do the following:

- Provide the school nurse with enough up-to-date emergency medications (including EpiPens) so they can be placed in all required locations for the current school year.
- Complete and submit all required medication forms.
- Provide a Medic ALERT ID for your child.
- Notify nurse of upcoming field trip as soon as possible and provide Epi-pen to be taken on field trips as stated in the field trip policy.
- Encourage students to wash hands before and after handling food
- Teach your child to recognize the first symptoms of an allergic/anaphylactic reaction and to communicate clearly as soon as s/he feels a reaction is starting.
- Not share snacks, lunches or drinks
- Take as much responsibility as possible for his/her own safety

For more information on the LTA policy, refer to:

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/jlccb.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/jlccb.pdf)

## **Wellness Policy**

The Arlington Public School System supports health lifestyles, nutrition and physical activity for everyone. Health and wellness for children relies on the collective efforts of families, the school community, the health system, food industry, and the wider community. The APS recognizes its role in this important community endeavor through the implementation of a district Wellness Policy and the promotion of good nutrition and physical activity.

For more information on the district wellness policy, refer to the APS website.

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/jlce-e.pdf](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/asc/policies/jlce-e.pdf)

## **Communicable Diseases**

The spread of communicable diseases can be controlled by the use of good infection control practices. In the school setting, age appropriate immunization is the key in preventing the transmission of vaccine preventable diseases. Proper hand hygiene, standard precautions, appropriate cleaning and disinfecting are effective methods for preventing the spread of most infectious diseases. These practices are practiced and implemented consistently in the Arlington Public Schools.

A child showing symptoms of any communicable disease for which health officials order isolation is required to be kept out of school as long as the child's illness is considered to be contagious. If symptoms develop at school, administration will notify the parent/guardians that the child must be taken home. In case of contagious or infectious disease, the school nurse shall notify the health officials.

## **Smoking on School Premises**

Use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, school facilities, or on school grounds or school buses by any individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

A student determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the student discipline code and shall receive education on the hazards of smoking.

## **Pets**

Parents and children are reminded that pets are not allowed on school property. This is both a safety issue and a health concern. Please do not walk dogs or other animals on the school grounds. This also applies to families when dropping off and picking up their children

## **Parent Notification Relative to Sex Education**

It is the rights of parents and guardians of our students to determine whether or not their children will participate in curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. At the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students in our schools will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum we offer that primarily involve human sexual or human sexuality issues. If planned curriculum change during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation. Each such notice to parents/guardians will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy, and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

1. exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexual issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school Principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.
2. inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable.

Parents/guardians may arrange with the Principal to review the materials at the school and may also review them at other locations that may be determined by the Superintendent of Schools.

At the elementary school level, the Health Curriculum, The Great Body Shop, includes a unit called “Growing Up” for grade five students. This unit teaches the basic facts about growing up including the role of hormones, the endocrine system, and the biological differences between girls and boys. More information about this curriculum can be obtained from the nurse or principal at the individual schools.

## **Curriculum, Assessments and Progress Reports**

### **Curriculum Documents**

All APS curriculum documents are aligned with the Massachusetts State Frameworks. For more information on Mass Frameworks and Standards, you may go to the MASS Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) website. [www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu)

For detailed information on Arlington curriculum documents, refer to the APS website [www.arlington.k12.ma.us/tl/curr/](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/tl/curr/) Curriculum information that is specific to content areas and grade levels is available in each of the elementary schools. In addition, classroom teachers will be providing specific information to families during orientation and Back to School Nights.

### **Assessments**

Assessments are an important tool in education at all levels. They provide vital feedback regarding student performance, effectiveness of curriculum, and in determining how to better support all students in the learning process. Students in Arlington are assessed using classroom-based assessments, system wide common assessments, as well as statewide tests (MCAS).

APS Common Assessments are administered town-wide throughout the year in Reading, Writing, and Math. Results of these tests provide important information regarding student progress and curriculum delivery. For more information regarding these assessments, see your classroom teachers.

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) is designed to meet the requirements of the Education Reform Law of 1993. This law specifies that the testing program must

1. test all public school students in Massachusetts, including students with disabilities and limited English proficient students;
2. measure performance based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework learning standards;
3. report on the performance of individual students, schools, and districts.

**State Mandated Assessment Tests** (MCAS) are administered in the spring of each year in grades 3, 4, and 5.

**Grade 3** - ELA Reading and Math

**Grade 4** - ELA Reading Comprehension, ELA Composition, and Math

**Grade 5** – ELA Reading Comprehension, Math, Science and Technology

Test results are forwarded to parents after the results are received from the State.

As required by the Education Reform Law, students must pass the grade 10 tests in English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science as one condition of eligibility for a high school diploma (in addition to fulfilling local requirements). In addition, the MCAS program is used to hold schools and districts accountable, on a yearly basis, for the progress they have made toward the objective of *No Child Left Behind*, that all students be proficient in Reading and Mathematics by 2014.

## **Progress Reports**

Standards-based progress reports are distributed for students in grades 1-5 three times a year in December, March, and June.

Standards-based progress reports for students in Kindergarten are distributed two times a year in December and May.

The grade level progress reports and rubrics may be found on the APS website at [www.arlington.k12.ma.us/tl/progressreports/](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/tl/progressreports/)

## **Parent Teacher School Conferences**

First term report cards are sent home right before Thanksgiving, and conferences are typically scheduled over a three-day period after Thanksgiving break and include one evening conference. On average, teachers generally allow 20 minutes per conference and 5 minutes in between conferences.

Kindergarten teachers hold a second set of formal conferences prior to the end of the year. Parents are welcome to schedule additional conferences by contacting their child's teacher.

In an effort to streamline the process of scheduling parent-teacher conferences, Arlington Public Schools has implemented an online registration system. This system allows parents to schedule conferences with their child's teachers and also view, print or email their conference schedule. Teachers are provided listings of all parents who have requested a conference. Registration instructions are provided on the Arlington Public School Website. Your school will announce upcoming conference dates. If you have a question or require assistance, please contact the secretary at your child's school.

## **Homework**

Homework enriches and extends the learning experience of the school day and stimulates interest in learning outside of the classroom. Additionally, homework supports learning through practice and the development of study skills such as time management, independence, and growth in responsibility.

For elementary students, learning at school is supplemented by homework. Homework is assigned for grades 1 and above. A general guideline is that a child spends about 10 minutes per grade level on an evening's assignment (first grade: 10 minutes, second grade: 20 minutes, etc.). Reading at home with a parent or independently is strongly encouraged. Parents are also encouraged to review homework and the schoolwork brought home each day to promote the quality of each child's work with regard to its completeness, accuracy and presentation.

## **Additional Programs**

### **Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity (METCO)**

The Arlington Public Schools participates in one of the country's largest and longest running desegregation programs, known as METCO. The METCO program provides the opportunity for an integrated public school education for children of color from racially imbalanced schools in Boston by placing them in suburban schools. METCO also provides a new learning experience for suburban children and provides a closer understanding and cooperation between urban and suburban parents. There are no income requirements for participating urban families.

For more information, contact Steve Pereira, APS METCO Director  
Phone: 781-316-3566      E-mail: [SPereira@arlington.k12.ma.us](mailto:SPereira@arlington.k12.ma.us)

### **Enrichment**

Parent Teacher Organizations from each school enthusiastically plan and implement a variety of cultural and academic events to enrich the curriculum. Each school's events may differ but some past offerings have included such programs as:

- Entertainment from multigenerational ensembles, a cappella groups, instrumental groups, and marionette demonstrations.
- Interactive experiences where the children participate in the productions.
- Science programs incorporating magnets, plants, star gazing, and live animals.
- Mock elections in which the students follow real voting procedures.

For school specific information, go to your neighborhood school website.

## **Student Support Services**

### **Counseling**

Counseling services are available in each elementary school to support students with school adjustment, social and emotional development, and normative life crises. Referrals are made through the classroom teacher, Teacher Assistance Teams and/or the school principal. (See below.)

### **English Language Learners (ELL)**

The ELL Department is responsible for providing English language instruction to ELL students.

The current laws in the United States and in the state of Massachusetts require that ELL students receive special English instruction until they are proficient in English. School districts are required to identify children who can benefit from

ELL services as they come into the district so they are first screened to assess their English proficiency.

For more information, visit the ELL website.

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/departments/English\\_Language\\_Learners](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/departments/English_Language_Learners)

## **Reading Intervention in Regular Education K-5**

**The Three Tier Model** is a research based service delivery model designed to deliver reading services to K-3 students. It utilizes the skills and training of classroom teachers, reading teachers, reading coaches, and SPED staff for reading instruction. The classroom-reading program will remain the core reading program for all students.

**Tier I** reading instruction is the comprehensive literacy program which student receives in the regular classroom setting. In addition, the classroom teachers will give supplemental, targeted support to students who are struggling to master the reading skills and concepts taught at that grade level.

**Tier II** is an intervention level of service for the students who have been identified as needing reading support based on district and state criteria. These students will receive an additional 30 minutes of support five times a week provided by the classroom teacher, the reading teacher, reading coaches, or SPED staff.

**Tier II.5** is a more intensive level of support provided to students who have participated in at least one year of comprehensive intervention, such as Tier II, and have failed to close the gap in their reading achievement. This generally will entail a program on five times a week for 30 minutes with a targeted group of students with similar needs. The services include an appropriate mix of phonics, fluency, and comprehension based on student need. It may also involve additional weekly sessions of intervention beyond the five times a week for 30 minutes, depending on individual needs and student progress.

**Tier III** is the most intensive level of intervention for students who are performing at least one grade level below expectations AND have already received Tier II/II.5 or another similar level of comprehensive instruction and intervention without showing sufficient progress in reading achievement. This level of intervention occurs 5x60 minutes in addition to classroom reading instruction. Students will receive daily instruction in Wilson/OG/Fundations. Part of each session will also be devoted to fluency and reading comprehension.

For more information, contact one of the District Elementary Reading Coaches: Linda Hanson ([lhanson@arlington.k12.ma.us](mailto:lhanson@arlington.k12.ma.us)), or Evelyn DeRosa ([ederosa@arlington.k12.ma.us](mailto:ederosa@arlington.k12.ma.us)) or visit the Reading website: [www.arlington.k12.ma.us/tl/curr/ela/k-5/reading](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/tl/curr/ela/k-5/reading). Questions can also be submitted via the “Ask a Reading Coach” link on the district reading page.

## **Teacher Assistance Teams (TAT)**

Students experiencing learning difficulties can be helped through a wide array of instructional supports. Once a problem has been identified, teachers meet with the principal and other teacher/specialists to explore classroom or school-based accommodations to help support the student. This instructional support can include, but is not limited to, reading intervention, accommodations to curricula, behavioral contracts, counseling, after school help, and teacher/parent/guardian conferences. State law requires schools to meet the needs of students within the regular education program using instructional supports before considering a Special Education Evaluation, often referred to as Response to Intervention.

Each of Arlington's schools has a TAT made up of teachers and specialists that serves as an important resource. The TAT often develops additional instructional support activities to help the student better access the general curriculum. Typically, TAT members review student data, documents, and interventions used within regular education. If the documentation shows that the instructional support services are producing positive results, and the student is making effective progress in the regular education setting, no further intervention is necessary. If, however, the documentation shows that the student is not responding to the interventions, a referral may be made for a Special Education Evaluation. Parents or guardians have the right to refer a student for a special education evaluation as well.

## **Special Education**

If a student is found eligible for special education services through district evaluation, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be developed by the IEP team to address the individual instructional needs of the student. Special Education in Arlington is provided as one aspect of a continuum of supportive services and programs. It is Arlington's philosophy that ALL students can learn and should be full participants in the life of the school.

For more information on the referral process, please contact the building principal, building team chairperson, or the Director of Special Education Services.

## Parent Involvement

### Volunteers

There are many opportunities for volunteering. Please contact your PTO or classroom teacher for more information. All volunteers must submit a CORI check. The CORI is required even for a one-time event. CORI forms are located in each elementary school office.

### Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)

The PTO organizes most of the fundraising and special events at each elementary school. Parents and teachers are strongly encouraged to join the PTO and become active members. It's a great way to volunteer for one hour or even the entire school year. PTO meetings are typically held one a month for two hours. Committee heads, the principal, and teachers report and evaluate past activities and discuss current and upcoming activities ahead. Students and teachers rely on their PTO for support in numerous ways. Parent volunteers are appreciated. Please contact your schools PTO, classroom teacher, or principal and help make a difference in your child's education.

Bishop Elementary:

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/bishop/community.asp](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/bishop/community.asp)

Brackett Elementary:

[www.brackettelementary.org/index](http://www.brackettelementary.org/index)

Dallin Elementary:

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/dallin/pub/dallinPTO.html](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/dallin/pub/dallinPTO.html)

Hardy Elementary:

[www.hardyschool.com/pto](http://www.hardyschool.com/pto)

Peirce Elementary:

[www.peirceschool.info/Peirce\\_School\\_PTO.html](http://www.peirceschool.info/Peirce_School_PTO.html)

Stratton Elementary:

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/stratton/announcements.htm](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/stratton/announcements.htm)

Thompson Elementary:

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/thompson/pto.htm](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/thompson/pto.htm)

### School Councils

According to MA State Law (Chapter 71, Section 59C), every public school in the commonwealth must have a school council consisting of the school principal, who co-chairs the council, parents of students attending the school who are

selected through an election by parents, teachers who are elected by the teachers in the school, and members of the community. The council meets regularly with the principal of the school and assists in the identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school, in the review of the annual school budget, and in the formulation of a school improvement plan. For more information on the school council in your neighborhood school, go to the individual school websites.

### **SEPAC (Arlington Special Education PAC)**

SEPAC is a parent volunteer group that acts as an advisor to and provides resources for parents and children with disabilities in the Arlington Schools. For more information, visit the website [www.arlington.k12.ma.us/sepac](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/sepac) or via email [arlingtonsepac@yahoo.com](mailto:arlingtonsepac@yahoo.com)

### **Community Resources**

Arlington has many resources for you and your family.  
[www.town.arlington.ma.us](http://www.town.arlington.ma.us)

- **Arlington Boys & Girls Club**  
[www.abgclub.org/](http://www.abgclub.org/)  
As a nonprofit institution, the Club is committed to affordable opportunities for enriching constructive activities that many children would not otherwise have.
- **Arlington Center for the Arts**  
[www.acarts.org/](http://www.acarts.org/)  
The Arlington Center for the Arts (ACA) is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit arts organization that offers more than 250 programs annually in the visual, literary, and performing arts, many of which are free to the community. Programs include classes and workshops for adults and children, vacation arts programs for students aged 4-14, art exhibits, theater and music performances, lectures, arts festivals, and many more programs designed to make art accessible to all.
- **Arlington Children's Theater**  
[ACT.arlington.ma.us/](http://ACT.arlington.ma.us/)  
ACT, a non-profit organization run entirely by parent volunteers, hires professional theater artists to work with the children to bring high production values to the shows.
- **Arlington Community Television**  
[arlingtonstudio.com/](http://arlingtonstudio.com/)  
Public, Educational and Governmental Access Television on RCN, Comcast, and Verizon.
- **Arlington Education Foundation**  
[www.arlingtoneducationfoundationma.org/](http://www.arlingtoneducationfoundationma.org/)  
AEF is a 501(c)3 corporation that raises money to support and enrich the Arlington Public Schools.
- **Arlington Family Connection**

[www.arlingtonfamilyconnection.org](http://www.arlingtonfamilyconnection.org)

Non-profit organization for families with children ages six and under in Arlington.

- **Arlington Friends of the Drama**  
[www.afdtheatre.org/](http://www.afdtheatre.org/)  
AFD Theatre (Arlington Friends of the Drama) has presented award-winning productions to the community for 85 years. Actors, production staff, behind the scenes supporters, and members are always welcome.
- **Arlington Historical Society**  
[www.arlingtonhistorical.org/](http://www.arlingtonhistorical.org/)  
The Arlington Historical Society promotes and encourages knowledge of the history of the Town of Arlington from its earliest days (1635) to modern times. It preserves, documents, and shares Arlington history through exhibits at the Smith Museum, through conserving and offering tours of the Jason Russell House, an eighteenth century home and Revolutionary War battle site, and by hosting a yearly lecture series, school group visits, and academic and family researchers.
- **Arlington Hockey and Figure Skating Club**  
[www.Arlingtonice.com/](http://www.Arlingtonice.com/)  
Offers programs for children 5 – 19 in figure skating and hockey.
- **Arlington Housing Authority**  
[www.arlingtonhousing.org/](http://www.arlingtonhousing.org/)  
The Arlington Housing Authority operates several housing assistance programs, which provide direct housing in government-owned developments or subsidized housing in privately owned dwellings for persons of low or very low income.
- **Arlington List**  
[www.arlingtonlist.org/](http://www.arlingtonlist.org/)  
Email list for Arlington residents. You can think of the list as a long, long back fence, where neighbors can chat, trade stories—and get some useful information about Arlington.
- **Arlington Parents List**  
[www.arlparents.org](http://www.arlparents.org)  
The Parents list is a conversational email list for parents to discuss parenting and Arlington events for parents with other area residents.
- **Arlington Pop Warner**  
[www.arlingtonpopwarner.com](http://www.arlingtonpopwarner.com)
- **Arlington Recreation Commission**  
[www.town.arlington.ma.us/Public\\_Documents/ArlingtonMA\\_Recreation/index](http://www.town.arlington.ma.us/Public_Documents/ArlingtonMA_Recreation/index)  
Arlington Recreation, a self-sustaining department of the town of Arlington, offers safe, quality and affordable programs and facilities for citizens of all ages and abilities. Staff members are qualified professionals, dedicated to serving the community with excellence and pride.
- **Arlington Soccer Club**  
[www.arlingtونسoccerclub.com/](http://www.arlingtونسoccerclub.com/)
- **Arlington Youth Consultation Center (AYCC)**  
AYCC works towards the treatment, prevention, and resolution of problems relating to the children and youth of the Town, and advises and

assists other agencies concerned with such matters. AYCC provides counseling services (individual, group, and family), crisis intervention services, referral services, and pharmacological services to children and youths and families. The services are available to all Arlington residents whose problems involve children and adolescents ages 3 to 21. Located at 670R Massachusetts Avenue. Call 781-316-3255.

- **Child At Risk Hotline**

[www.mass.gov/](http://www.mass.gov/)

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) is the Massachusetts state agency responsible for protecting children from child abuse and neglect. To report abuse or neglect, call the Child-at-Risk Hotline anytime of the day or night at 800-792-5200.

- **Child Care Resource Center Inc.**

[www.cccinc.org/](http://www.cccinc.org/)

CCRC works to ensure that children thrive. Promote the care and education of all children through advocacy and programs that serve families, professionals and communities.

- **The Children's Room**

[www.childrensroom.org/](http://www.childrensroom.org/)

Center for Grieving Children and Teenagers, Inc. 819 Massachusetts Ave. Arlington, Massachusetts 02476 781-4741

- **Fidelity House**

[www.fidelityhouse.org/](http://www.fidelityhouse.org/)

Fidelity House is dedicated to meeting the needs of Arlington families by providing flexible, diverse and quality programs for all ages. Youth development is the primary purpose of the center. It's mission is the promotion of good citizenship, increasing self-reliance and furthering the social, physical and emotional growth of the individual.

[www.arlington.k12.ma.us/departments/english\\_language\\_learners/](http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/departments/english_language_learners/)

- **Little Fox Shop**

[www.lwva.com/](http://www.lwva.com/)

A volunteer-run children's resale shop in support of the Fox Library. The shop carries an array of children's toys, books, games, clothes, infant equipment, and maternity wear. Quality donations are accepted and volunteer opportunities are available.

- **Fox Library**

[www.robbinslibrary.org/about/fox-branch](http://www.robbinslibrary.org/about/fox-branch)

The Fox Branch of the Robbins Library has a variety of fiction and nonfiction titles for adults, young adults and children, as well as newspapers and magazines. Small collections of videos and Large Type Print books rotate from the Robbins Library to the branch on a regular basis. CD-ROM games for children are available to borrow. Infant-toddler programs, preschool story times and sing-alongs are offered

- **Massachusetts Stand for Children**

[www.stand.org/Page.aspx?pid=1380](http://www.stand.org/Page.aspx?pid=1380)

A statewide citizen voice for children. Their mission is to give every child in Massachusetts a fair chance in life by advocating for quality public

schools, early childhood education, and other essential children's programs. Based in Cambridge, with teams in Arlington.

- **Robbins Library**

[www.robbsinlibrary.org/](http://www.robbsinlibrary.org/)

The library maintains a high quality collection of current materials to meet residents' desires for leisure reading, listening and viewing, recreational and cultural enrichment.

- **Walking in Arlington**

[www.walkinginarlington.org/](http://www.walkinginarlington.org/)

A group concerned about issues involving pedestrians.