

Central Middle School Handbook

2020-2021

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Central Middle School is located just outside of Quincy Center at 875 Hancock Street. In 2013, we welcomed students into a state-of-the-art new building. Technology was thoughtfully integrated into many aspects, assuring students have access to the training they need to compete and succeed in their future. Included in the building are a 484 seat auditorium, wireless internet access, computer labs and more.

A dedicated staff provides quality education to approximately 650 students in grades six, seven and eight. In addition to teaching students from the Merrymount, Beechwood Knoll, Bernazzani and Wollaston neighborhoods, Central services gifted and talented students in the city's Advanced Placement Center (APC).

At Central, students enjoy many opportunities to meet new friends and to expand horizons through the sharing of ideas and experiences. This allows them to become richer individuals and to gain strength by developing an appreciation of their diversities and their similarities. All students enjoy a supportive climate where they are challenged to work hard and reach their full potential. Central's spirit is guided by our Ram mascot and the school colors of maroon and gold.

Middle School Hours

8:15 AM – 2:30 PM

Early Release Days

Generally held on the second and fourth **Wednesdays** of each month

8:15 AM – 12:15 PM

Lunch will be served

Student Services

Nurse and Medical Information

A school nurse is on site during school hours to assist with the medical needs of the students.

Quincy Public Schools have a medication policy that requires certain consents to be in place before any medication is taken in school. This policy is in place to protect both your child and the other students in the building.

When a student is required to take medication prescribed by a physician during school hours, two prerequisites are needed:

- Written permission for the nurse to dispense the medicine must be signed by a parent and the doctor before any such medicine will be dispensed.
- The medicine, which is limited to five-day supply, must have the prescriptive label. The medicine will be kept in a locked cabinet and dispensed by the nurse. If necessary, the form must be updated at the request of the school nurse.

Need more information? Please visit the [QPS Health Services Page](#)

School Counseling Services

School counselors are professionally trained to assist all students in academic, personal, behavioral, and social-emotional areas. Counselors in each school work with students individually, in small groups, and in the classroom. Observation and teacher/ parent consultations allow counselors to understand the whole child and to plan positive interventions and referrals when necessary. Counselors emphasize preventive and developmental approaches to provide students with the life skills needed to deal with life's pressures.

Middle School Counselors facilitate communication between students, parents/guardians, teachers, administrators and peers.

Parents are encouraged to contact the counselors when necessary, but especially if there are events occurring in their child's life which may affect the child at school.

[Central Google Support Services Page](#)

Curriculum and Instruction

Our teachers have developed a syllabus for each of the courses that they teach. These syllabi will provide an overview of the major topics that are covered in each course at each grade level, and these topics are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks in each academic area. In addition to the major topics, the syllabus contains a list of important text and learning materials, types of assessments that will be used, and a homework policy and grading policy.

The focus of instruction is on the basic subjects of language arts, social studies, mathematics, science, reading/study skills, and Spanish and French. In addition, a wide program of general education is provided in music, art, health, physical education, technology, and library media.

Central serves to meet the needs of all learners. Some students receive additional support or services deemed necessary through an Individualized Educational Plan, English language support for students for whom English is not their first language, advanced coursework, or for those students identified as gifted and talented, through the system-wide Advanced Placement (APC) program.

Student Support Block (SSB)

The Student Support Block is a 30 minute block of time which will occur daily. All students return to their homeroom teacher during SSB unless otherwise assigned. The flexibility of this block of time enables us to build relationships, re-teach when necessary, communicate important announcements, distribute notices, and help students with organizational skills.

Attendance

Attendance Policy

Daily attendance at school is required by state law. Truancy or willful, deliberate absence from school is not allowed and will result in disciplinary action. Regular attendance is the foundation of success in school.

Any student absent for 28 days or more may be recommended for summer school or a program established by the principal. The student may be retained in his/her current grade at the principal's discretion.

Parents/Guardians must call the school before 9:00 AM, on the day of the absence. If a call isn't received, our attendance aide will call that home to be sure the student is homesick. All absences require a note of explanation from the parent/guardian.

Following an absence, the student is expected to make-up missed work at the discretion of the teacher. Extended absences require formal written documentation.

Students are responsible for completing all make-up work due to absences. Make-up work will be provided for absences with advanced notice. If an extended absence is to take place, arrangements can be made for work to be provided ahead of the scheduled absence.

Attendance Procedures

Middle school administrators and staff use many strategies, programs, and incentives to promote regular attendance. For students who exhibit a pattern of excessive absenteeism, the following procedures **may** be taken at the discretion of the principal:

- The attendance aide shares cumulative absences with the assistant principal/guidance counselor.
- The nurse/counselor follows up on consecutive absences or after a pattern of absences by speaking to the student individually and to the parent/guardian.
- The student is discussed at Student Support Services meetings.
- A letter may be sent to the parent/guardian.
- A parent/guardian meeting may be held.
- An attendance hearing may be held with the supervisor of attendance.
- The supervisor of attendance may visit the home.
- A referral to outside counseling may be recommended.
- A referral to the "Family Assistance Conference" may be made.

In extreme cases:

- A referral to the Department of Children and Families may be made.
- A CRA petition may be filed with the court by the supervisor of attendance.
- A "Failure to Send" petition may be filed with the court by the supervisor of attendance.

Tardiness Procedures

All tardies require a note of explanation from the parent/guardian.

- ***Unexcused and/or excessive tardies may result in detention.***
- A letter may be sent to the home at the discretion of the principal.
- Repeated tardiness may necessitate an attendance hearing.
- Interventions may include a home visit by the supervisor of attendance.
- Other strategies, e.g., community service and incentives, will be used to promote promptness.
- A referral to outside counseling may be recommended.
- A referral to the "Family Assistance Conference" may be made.

- **Dismissals**

For other dismissals, a student wishing early dismissal must present a note from a parent or guardian to the homeroom teacher during the morning homeroom period. The note should state the reason and time for dismissal. Parents or authorized persons must come to the office and sign out students who are being dismissed. **We do not allow students to leave on their own at any time during the school day.** Students will not be dismissed from school by telephone request.

No School Announcements and Communication

If school is cancelled for any reason by the Superintendent, announcements will be made over local radio and television stations. An instant messenger system will also be utilized to communicate school closings to households.

- Television
 - WBZ-CBS Channel 4 - [Click here to view closings](#)
 - WVCB-ABC Channel 5 - [Click here to view closings](#)
 - WCVB-ABC Channel 5 - [Click here to sign up for automatic alerts](#)
 - WHDH- Channel 7 - [Click here to view closings](#)
 - NBC Channel 10 - [Click here to view closings](#)
 - Fox Channel 25 – [Click here to view closings](#)
 - Channel 22-Quincy Education Channel
- Radio
 - WBZ AM 1030 – [Click here to view closings](#)

Honeywell Instant Alert System:

Instant Alert for Schools is an essential tool for notification and communication. Within minutes of an emergency, school officials will use Instant Alert to deliver a single, clear message to parents or guardians by telephone, cell phone, email or text message in any combination. Instant Alert can also be used to notify you of a school closing due to inclement weather and to communicate daily information, such as sports schedules, newsletters, attendance notifications and other announcements.

The system is set up for you to create your own profile at <https://instantalert.honeywell.com>. If you have already created a profile in the past we ask that you login to update any information that might have changed since it was first created. We encourage all of you to take advantage of this opportunity, as we will be utilizing this system for most of our school-to-home communication.

If you need assistance with your profile, please go to <https://instantalert.honeywell.com/support/> or contact your child's school. If you do not have access to a computer, please feel free to come into the school to use our facilities. We hope you enjoy this new service!

Telephone Use

Personal messages to students must be limited to emergencies only. Students may use the office and guidance telephones for emergencies (with permission). Some examples may include if the student forgot an important project at home, if the student needed to stay after school, etc.

Safety and Security

Central continually reviews and practices various safety and security procedures. **We are monitored by video cameras and our doors are kept locked at all times. Entry for all visitors must be by ringing the front door bell and identifying oneself.**

All visitors must report to the office. Identification badges are provided and must be worn by any visitor within the building. Other than staff personnel, no one may visit or enter any classroom without the permission of the Principal.

Grading Policies and Procedures

Aspen

Central Middle School is “paperless” with both Interim Reports and End of the Term Grades. They will be available online through the student portal, Aspen. This means that parents will have access to this information throughout the year.

Central Middle School would like to make sure that all parents are able to access Aspen and/or receive the help necessary to access the Aspen system. To access the **Aspen Portal** visit:

<http://aspen.quincypublicschools.com>.

Frequently Asked Questions

1) How do I retrieve my forgotten password?

On the login page, look under the login box for “I forgot my password.” Click on this link, follow the directions, and your password will be sent to the registered email address.

2) How do I find out my username?

All usernames are your student’s 8-digit local id number; your student’s school counselor can help you if did not receive this information.

3) How do I change the email address associated with this account?

In the upper right hand corner click on “Set Preferences.” You will then see a pop-up box. Choose the security tab at the top and change your email address and press “OK.”

4) What if my account is disabled?

If you have tried to log-in unsuccessfully 3 or more times, your account will be disabled. Please contact your child’s school counselor.

For additional information or assistance please contact your child’s school counselor at 617-984-8725.

Grading

The letters A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, or F represent the quality of work in most subjects. A teacher comment section provides additional information. This is also a record of conduct, attendance and tardiness.

Specialist Course Grading

E = Excellent S = Satisfactory U = Unsatisfactory

Grade Reporting

The Quincy Public Schools Middle Schools are divided into trimesters. At the middle of each trimester a student will receive an Interim Reports which indicates the student’s academic standing at that point in time. At the end of each trimester a student will receive an End of the Term grade.

Promotion

Any student who fails two or more academic subjects for the year and/or is absent 30 or more days, may be retained in his/her current grade, unless the student successfully completes an agreed upon summer school program (as approved by the principal) or in the opinion of the principal extenuating circumstances exist which make the student's retention inappropriate. It is the responsibility of the student personnel team to provide the principal with the pertinent data and a placement recommendation for any student who is in danger of retention.

It is incumbent upon the principal to notify the student's parents or guardians when poor classroom performance and/or attendance indicate that a child is in danger of being retained. The principal has the final responsibility for placement of any retained student.

Homework

Homework is given, as needed, to reinforce and extend the work done in the classroom. Some long range project assignments and independent study work will be given and enrichment reading is always encouraged.

It is the student's responsibility to see that the homework is turned in on time and to check with teachers for make-up homework that is due as a result of absences. All work missed during an absence should be made up in a timely manner.

Student Life

Lockers

You are expected to go to your locker only during designated times. Students are responsible for safeguarding their possessions. Lockers are school property and are issued for student use. The school administration has the right to inspect any locker without notice if there is reasonable cause.

Lost and Found

During the course of the year there are many lost and found items: glasses, cell phones, jackets, lunch boxes, etc. Please label items. Articles found in and out of the building should be brought to the office. These items may be claimed by the owner. Students should refrain from bringing unnecessary valuable items to school.

MBTA Bus

Several MBTA bus routes service Central Middle School students. Please contact the MBTA for a schedule or for more information. Student Charlie Cards are available in the main office.

Bus conduct, whether it is a school bus or MBTA bus, requires appropriate behavior. Since bus rides are considered extensions of the school day, students will follow the rules and regulations of the drivers. Misbehavior on buses will be treated similar to in-school infractions.

Student Activities

Beyond our core academic programs, Central offers a variety of activities before, during, and after school. Students are encouraged to participate in these programs so that they have a chance to meet new friends, experience new initiatives, exhibit their talents, and enjoy the complete middle school experience.

Field Trips

Teachers schedule field trips to provide on-site learning experiences. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a proper and orderly manner at all times. These explorations are considered a part of the regular school day and not a recreational experience. Standards of behavior are the same as for all school activities. Any student, who by his/her prior behavioral record, indicates that he/she could be a danger to him/herself or others, may be excluded from a field trip(s). However, in some specific cases, the student may need to be accompanied by a parent or guardian as a prerequisite for their participation.

Backpacks

Backpacks and bookbags should not be brought to class but rather left in lockers for storage because they are a safety hazard.

Gum and Candy

Gum and candy is forbidden in school. We ask that you eat a healthy lunch. Milk and juice should be the beverages during lunch. Soda is discouraged. The cafeteria food and beverages are not allowed outside the cafeteria unless under the direct supervision of a staff member.

Electronic Devices

Toys, games, and other belongings that interfere with the learning process are not permitted in school. Cell phones are permitted in the building if they are turned off during school hours and kept in a locker. Students are not allowed to text or make calls using a personal cell phone during the school day.

Appropriate Dress

Whenever any clothes or accessories are questionable and may disrupt the learning environment, the principal has the authority to resolve the matter. Hats are not allowed.

Student Expectations

We are looking forward to another successful PBIS school year here at Central Middle School.

PBIS or Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an approach to teaching and supporting positive behaviors and meeting the needs of our students. This school-wide approach to discipline focuses on building a safe and positive environment in which all students can learn.

The foundation of PBIS at Central Middle School are our core values:

- **Respect** – Respect yourself, your peers, school staff and school property.
- **Attitude** – Be positive about your ability to succeed and encourage those around you.
- **Motivation** – Be prepared and give your best effort.
- **Safety** – Be aware of your surroundings, listen to and follow directions, and be respectful of personal space.

School-wide Expectations Matrix (next page)

The matrix is a detailed description of expected behavior in each setting of the school. For example, in the cafeteria it is respectful to say “please” and “thank you” and to clean your space. Expectations are posted in classrooms and around the school.

Students will be taught specific lessons on the expectations. Teachers will help students learn what the expectations “look” and “sound” like in every setting during the school day. These lessons will be re-taught and reinforced throughout the school year.

Acknowledging and reinforcing positive behavior is one of the best ways to encourage appropriate behavior. At Central Middle School, students will earn recognition when meeting behavior expectations. When grade-level and classroom goals are met, students will enjoy participating in rewards and celebrations.

Even with clear expectations and positive reinforcement, sometimes students do make mistakes. Major infractions are issues that result in office time. Parents/guardians will always be notified by the principal, assistant principal or teacher about major infractions. Minor infractions are behaviors that are disruptive to the learning environment, but are handled by the supervising staff member. When a student repeatedly receives minors or majors, parents/guardians, teachers, support staff, assistant principal and principal will meet to build an effective behavior intervention plan for that child.

The following infractions are strictly forbidden: possession of weapons; drugs and alcohol; firecrackers, tobacco products, matches, or other incendiary objects; setting off a false fire alarm; fighting; obscene language or gestures; sexual harassment; hazing; verbal or physical intimidation, bullying and/or racial slurs; extortion. Our goal is to provide a safe and healthy learning environment, where students feel secure.