

6/22/11

**Longmeadow Public Schools**  
**"Eyes on the child - learning"**

**Mission**

Our mission is to ensure that all students  
*Excel* in learning, *Succeed* in life and *Enrich* our community.

**MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL**  
**Center Elementary School**

Dear Center School Families,

Welcome to Center School and welcome to a new year in the Longmeadow School District! We value effective communication between our schools and our families and we strive to be responsive to your needs. Your family handbook has been developed to provide useful information about Center School. The information includes school and district routines as well as our school's safety and discipline policies and procedures. References are included about Longmeadow Public Schools (LPS) policies where appropriate and, in some cases, Massachusetts General Laws. All policies can be accessed via [www.longmeadow.k12.ma.us](http://www.longmeadow.k12.ma.us).

We believe that education is the shared responsibility of the school and the community. Therefore, we ask that families review with their children the sections of the handbook that pertain to School Climate/ Rules. We do our part at school to make sure rules and procedures are followed, and we are mindful of the well being of our entire school community. We thank you for your support in this important area.

We look forward to joining you in working toward the optimal achievement of all our students.

Respectfully yours,

Mrs. Donna L. Hutton  
Principal

## MISSION STATEMENT

**OUR MISSION is to learn together in a safe, respectful community of diverse learners, with high expectations for all.**

## SCHOOL SCHEDULES

### School Hours:

AM Kindergarten	8:45 – 11:30
PM Kindergarten	12:00-2:45
Full Day Kindergarten	8:45-2:45
Grades 1-5	8:45-2:45

### Lunch Times: *grade level lunch times subject to change*

11:30-12:00	Kindergarten & Grade 3
12:00-12:30	Grades 1 and Grades 5
12:30-1:00	Grades 2 and Grades 4

The lunch period is 30 minutes, the last 10-15 minutes is recess.

### Recess Times:

10:15-10:30	Kindergarten & Grade 1
10:30-10:45	Grade 2, 3
10:45-11:00	Grade 4, 5

**Students should not arrive at school before 8:30 AM**, as supervision is not available before that time. If your child walks or rides a bicycle to school, we encourage him/her not to arrive before 8:30. All students enter by homeroom class at 8:40; in inclement weather, north building students go to the cafeteria and south building students go to the Community Room. All students should exit the school building and be safely off school grounds by 3:00 PM. Should a student need to come back to school for a book, coat, instrument, etc., he/she has until 3:30 PM and must be accompanied by an adult. When a half-day of school is denoted on the school calendar, such as Parent/Teacher Conference Days -- dismissal for all students is 11:30 AM, and there will be no PM kindergarten.

### Inclement Weather: Late Openings/Early Dismissals

By law, the school system is required to open a minimum of 180 days per school year, which under the Education Reform Law must include 900 hours for elementary school students. Because the School Committee recognizes that school may need to be closed occasionally because of severe weather, the school calendar contains 185 days. Therefore, five days of school may be cancelled without having to extend the established school year. The date of school

closing in June is adjusted each year to meet state requirements if the five inclement weather days are not used.

It is the practice of the Longmeadow Public Schools to take the least drastic action necessary to adjust to weather conditions. Three options have and will be used: 1) a one-hour delayed opening to allow for snow removal during relatively light storms; 2) a two-hour delayed opening to allow for snow removal and traffic clearance during more severe storms, and 3) school is closed during storms severe enough that safe paths to school cannot generally be maintained.

- No School - Building is closed all day
- One Hour Delay - School starts at 9:45 – Students not allowed on school grounds before 9:30
- Two Hour Delay - School starts at 10:45– Students not allowed on school grounds before 10:30; no AM kindergarten session

**Longmeadow Public Schools Alertnow**

Longmeadow Public Schools uses the *Alertnow* service for school-to-parent communication, which allows for periodic and personalized messages to be sent by email and/or telephone. Outreach messages include, but are not limited to information regarding: medical issues, report cards, schedule changes, picture day, upcoming exams, Open House, and other special events. Time-sensitive calls include, but are not limited to information regarding: school lockdowns, school cancellations, delays due to weather, intruders on campus, and evacuations.

Time of the announcement of cancellations or delays is usually made through *Alertnow* between 6:00 AM and 7:00 AM. A no-school or late opening announcement will also be made over the area radio stations: AM 560, AM 640, AM 1430, AM 1450, AM 1600, FM 93.1, FM 94.7, FM 97.9, FM 99.3, FM 100.9, FM 102.1. TV stations: Channel 12 Longmeadow Cable, Channel 22, Channel 40 and Channel 3, the Longmeadow Public Schools Web site: [www.longmeadow.k12.ma.us/dist/](http://www.longmeadow.k12.ma.us/dist/) and other Web sites: [www.wwlp.com](http://www.wwlp.com) and [www.wggb.com](http://www.wggb.com).

**DO NOT telephone broadcasters, 911, police or fire departments for school closings or delays.**

If a storm begins unexpectedly while school is in session, we ordinarily continue school and dismiss students at the regularly scheduled time. This decision is based on the fact that most parents would prefer to have their children remain in school rather than have them walking home in the midst of a storm. Parents do have the discretion to pick up their student(s) before 2:45. In case of emergency conditions, early dismissal will be announced on the usual radio and television stations. **PLEASE BE SURE THAT YOUR CHILD KNOWS WHERE TO GO IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING.** In such cases, school staff members will stay at school until safe travel is provided for all students.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Regular attendance is essential for an effective school experience and necessary for annual promotion. The responsibility for regular attendance rests with the parents or guardians of the student. School attendance is very important. The more your child attends school, the more opportunity your child has to learn. As a result, we encourage students and parents to strive for perfect attendance and to make as many non-emergency appointments with doctors and dentists after school. Students with perfect attendance receive certificates and are acknowledged at the end-of-year assembly. Families are discouraged from scheduling vacations when school is in session.

### **Absences**

In every case of absence or tardiness by the pupil, the teacher will require an excuse, in person, by phone, or in writing, to be made by the parent or guardian.  
(Refer to LPS Policy JED: Student Absences)

### **Tardiness**

Every pupil who is not present in the schoolroom at the appointed time for opening session of school shall be marked tardy.  
(Refer to LPS Policy JED: Student Absences)

Students are allowed on school grounds starting with the first bell at 8:30 AM. The second bell rings at 8:40, and students are considered late after the 8:45 bell. With the enforcement of safety procedures, students who are tardy should be accompanied through the main door and signed in at the office by a responsible adult. Any student arriving after the commencement of school will be marked tardy. When tardy, the child misses “Morning Meeting,” sharing, and important instructions for the morning’s work. Tardiness causes disruption of classroom instruction and singles out the child for a negative pattern in front of the rest of the class. Please do your part to help your child be punctual for school and to make being on time something that is valued.

Continued tardiness will result in a letter written to the parent by the principal with a copy placed in the student’s cumulative folder.

### **Absent/Tardy Call-In Procedures**

When a child is absent/ tardy from school, the parent/guardian **must** call 565-4292 by 8:45 a.m. The call-in number is available 24 hours a day to leave a message regarding a child’s absence or tardiness. Notes should also be sent to the homeroom teacher regarding absences/tardies.

The safety of students is imperative; therefore, the daily accountability of students is taken very seriously. By mid-morning each day, the secretary or school nurse verifies the absent/tardy messages left on the answering machine with the absentee/tardy list produced by the office. If a student is absent/ tardy and a message from a parent/guardian is not on the answering machine, a secretary or school nurse will call the student’s home to verify the absence/tardy situation. If the parent/guardian does not answer the home phone when the school calls, we will then call the parent/guardian’s cell phone followed by the work number for absent/tardy verification.

### **Scheduling Appointments During the School Day/Early Dismissals Procedures**

Parents are encouraged to schedule medical and other types of appointments during after school hours. Early dismissal of children results in interruptions of classes and loss of learning time. However, in cases where a student needs to be dismissed early and for your student's protection, please observe the following:

1. Provide a written request to the teacher including the date, the time and the reason for the dismissal.
2. A parent/guardian, or other authorized person, must report to the office to dismiss a student. Parents should not go directly to the classroom but report to the office where a staff member will contact the classroom. If a student is waiting in the office to be dismissed, he/she should not leave the school unless he/she is officially signed out.

### **SCHOOL CLIMATE/POLICIES/PROCEDURES/RULES**

#### **Overview/Philosophy**

We believe that every teacher has a right to teach without disruption, and every student has a right to learn without disruption. No student will be allowed to deny others these rights. Working together, the family and the school can ensure the conditions in which our children can learn and grow to be responsible adults. Each person has a responsibility in fostering the physical, moral, and intellectual growth of each child. Parents must be accountable for the care of their children; teachers must be concerned for the standards—intellectual and behavioral—of the students in their classrooms; and students must grow in understanding their responsibility for themselves.

(Refer to LPS Policy JA: Student Policy Goals)

#### **Responsive Classroom**

Classroom teachers in the three elementary schools adhere to the basic tenets and practices of the Responsive Classroom approach. Responsive Classroom emphasizes social, emotional and academic growth through a strong and safe school community. The morning meeting, posting of hopes and dreams, class rule creation, and the use of natural and logical consequences allow teachers to establish and maintain a respectful classroom learning community. Please refer to <http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/> for additional information on Responsive Classroom.

#### **Student Conduct Policy**

Good education must include the proposition that all students learn as early as possible that they shall always be held accountable for their actions. The LPS Policy JFC: Student Conduct outlines behavioral expectations for all Longmeadow Public School students. This policy cannot be successful without the support and cooperation of parents. According to the policy:

Each student will be responsible for providing a positive and healthy environment for others by maintaining order, self-discipline, and having consideration for the rights and property of others. Each student will bear responsibility for his or her own conduct.

Each student will be responsible for neatness and cleanliness of personal attire and hygiene. Any student entering school without proper attention to cleanliness may be sent home to be suitably prepared. Each student will respect other students, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel and visitors as human beings and fellow citizens of the school community.

Each student will respect the personal property of others and refrain from causing intentional damage or unnecessary wear and tear to books, facilities, school materials, school buildings and furnishings, and the personal property of others.

Each student will refrain from fighting, creating disturbances, denying others from the use of school facilities or buildings, using or carrying any weapon on school grounds, intentionally injuring another person or acting in such a manner as to expose others to risk or danger of harm or injury. A student will not use threats or intimidation against any other person.

Each student will respect the health and safety of others and will refrain from using tobacco; or using, possessing, transmitting, or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, narcotic substance, illegal or prohibited drug or substance; or by engaging in gambling, extortion, theft, assault, excessive noise, or any other unlawful activity.

Each student will respect the educational process and learning environment of others by refraining from intentional or habitual tardiness, unexcused absences, or any activities, which diminish the rights of others and the opportunity for other students to receive an education and obtain the maximum benefit from a public education.  
(Refer to LPS Policy JFC: Student Conduct)

### **PROCEDURES: PLAYGROUND, HALLS, LUNCHROOM AND BATHROOM**

School procedures are considered the behavioral expectations for all students. They are modeled, rehearsed and reinforced by all who supervise students at school. They are based on the school's Responsive Classroom focus on respect for others. One overarching statement supersedes each set of procedures: *THINK BEFORE YOU ACT, MAKE GOOD CHOICES.*

### **RESPECT ON THE PLAYGROUND MEANS:**

Center School has adopted the Peaceful Playgrounds program for our playground procedures. The recommendations of the program come from research that has been conducted on playgrounds, and is based in 5 principles: Conflict Resolution, Rules, Equipment, Expectations and Design. Equipment is provided and our playground has been redesigned with games that enhance both motor and cognitive development, as well as give children an opportunity to play either competitive or cooperative games. Consistent expectations for student behavior are provided and students are encouraged to solve conflict using 1 of 3 options:  
Walk; Talk; Rock, Paper, Scissors game.

The following are 5 simple rules we have adopted for the playground at Center School:

1. Be Kind.
2. Play safely.
3. Use equipment properly.
4. "You can't say you can't play."
5. Use Walk, Talk, or Rock-Paper-Scissors.
  - Walk: walk away from the problem.
  - Talk: talk out your problem away from the game.
  - Rock-Paper-Scissors - use this game to settle disagreements.

Other rules:

Walk to and from the playground with your group in a respectful line, and line up immediately when the bell rings at the end of recess.

1. Wait your turn to use the equipment or to join a game.
2. Stay in your "SELF SPACE" at all times.  
(The area you're in when you can't reach or touch anyone else, sometimes referred to as placing a pretend hula-hoop around your body and not letting anyone else in.)
3. Always go down the slide feet first, and do not climb up the slide.
4. Walk in the playscape area at all times.
5. Put trash in barrel.
6. Play in approved areas only, not out of sight of adults on duty, and respect classes at work.
8. Stop, Look and Listen when emergency signals are given: three sharp, repeated blasts of the whistle, followed by the universal raised open hand for quiet.

### **RESPECT IN THE HALLWAYS MEANS ...**

1. Walk to and from your destination.
2. Be considerate of others at work. Do not be noisy.
3. Maintain single file; keep to the right.
4. No holding places or cutting in line.
5. Stay in your space; do not reach out or jump to hit walls, ceilings, doorframes, exit signs or lockers.
6. Admire projects and displays with your eyes only.
7. Do not open or eat food.

### **RESPECT IN THE LUNCHROOM MEANS ...**

1. Follow instructions of adult supervisors at all times.
2. Obey raised full hand sign or lights off for quiet.
3. Students may not return to their classrooms or lockers during lunch time without an adult.
4. Observe appropriate table manners.
5. Do not throw anything.

6. Stay seated while you are eating.
7. Do not take anyone else's lunch; no selling or trading food items.
8. Use an indoor voice.
9. Take care of your space; clean up your table area and floor under your eating area.
10. When finished eating, place trash in barrel, and/or return trays.
11. Wait for your table to be dismissed, and walk to the door.
12. Walk to recess with your group, following the adult supervisor.

**RESPECT IN THE BATHROOM MEANS ...**

1. Keep lights on at all times.
2. Do not take food or drinks into the bathroom.
3. Use inside voices.
4. Do not socialize.
5. Do not climb.
6. Use of the facilities:
  - Take careful aim.
  - Keep toilet paper roller in place.
  - Flush after use.
  - Wash your hands using soap.
  - Put paper products in proper places.
7. Do not deface any surface.
8. Respect the privacy of others.

**STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

Longmeadow Public Schools provides students with access to the district's electronic network. This network includes Internet access, computer services, videoconferencing, computer equipment and related equipment for educational purposes. The purpose of this network is to assist in preparing students for success in life and work in the 21st century by providing them with electronic access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with people throughout the world. This document contains the rules and procedures for students' acceptable use of the Longmeadow Public Schools electronic network. The full text of the Acceptable Use Policy may be found at:

<http://sites.longmeadow.k12.ma.us/www/district-info/docs-forms>

**STUDENT SUSPENSION POLICY**

The Longmeadow Public Schools Policy JGC: Student Discipline, Suspension and Expulsion outlines the procedures that will be taken in the event of a short-term suspension, long-term suspension and/or expulsion. (Refer to LPS Policy JGC: Student Discipline, Suspension and Expulsion)

**BUS CONDUCT**

**Prior to Boarding:**

- Be on time at the designated bus stop.
- Stay off the road at all times while waiting for the bus. Bus riders are to conduct

themselves in a safe and respectful manner while waiting.

- Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before attempting to board.
- Riders are not to move toward the bus until the bus has come to a complete stop.
- Riders are not to crowd and push while boarding the bus.

### **While on the Bus:**

- Keep hands and head inside the bus.
- Opening and closing the windows is not permitted, except by the driver.
- Assist in keeping the bus safe and sanitary. Do not throw things about the bus.
- There should be no shouting or unnecessary confusion.
- Treat the bus equipment with care. The offender will pay for damage to the bus equipment.
- Riders are never to tamper with the bus or any of its equipment.
- Do not leave books, packages, lunches or other articles on the bus unless advised to do so by an adult.
- Keep books, packages, coats and all other objects out of the aisle.
- Help look after the safety and comfort of younger or smaller students.
- Do not leave or change seats while the bus is in motion.
- Do not throw anything out the bus window.
- Horseplay is never permitted on the bus.
- In the event of a road emergency, students are to remain on the bus unless requested to leave by the bus driver.
- If the driver or another adult in authority directs a student to a particular seat, s/he is not to choose another seat.
- Students who refuse to obey the directions of the driver and/or these regulations forfeit their right to ride on the bus.

### **Interfacing with the Bus Driver**

State law now mandates a fine or imprisonment or both for throwing an object while on a bus or at a bus stop, or for assaulting or interfering with the bus operator while s/he is performing his/her duty. Violation of these results can result in detention and/or loss of the bus riding privilege and/or suspension from school. The specific disciplinary measure employed will depend on the nature, frequency, and gravity of the violation(s).

(Refer to LPS Policies EEACC, EEACC-R: Student Conduct on Buses)

### **Dress Code**

Take pride in your appearance. The way you dress can affect your attitude, performance and behavior, as well as that of others. We expect you to be neat, clean and respectful in your appearance. The wearing of hats is not permitted in school except for religious reasons. Gum chewing is not allowed.

Stated simply, school dress should be clothing that is comfortable, safe, and clean and not distracting to others nor disrupt the educational process.

- When standing with arms straight at one's sides, skirts cannot be shorter than the tips of the fingers.
- Shorts cannot be shorter than the tips of the thumbs.
- Undergarments and midriffs shall be covered. Strapless tops, halter tops, tube tops, tank tops, revealing low cut tops, and spaghetti straps are distracting and not appropriate for school. Shirts/Tops must have straps or shoulder covering of over 2 inches in width.
- We strongly encourage footwear that is safe when students use the outdoor equipment. Crocs, flip flops, heels, and sandals pose safety hazards on the playscape.
- The students are expected to dress appropriately for cold weather days. We will have outdoor recess unless the temperatures and/or the wind chill factor are such that it is determined to be unsafe or unwise to do so. Generally, 20 degrees or colder is considered to be the threshold. Students must have coats, hats, gloves, boots [during snowy conditions], and long pants to play outside in cold weather. *If it is determined that a student is not dressed appropriately and/or safely for the weather, we will provide indoor recess for the student[s].*

If a student is dressed in such a way as to not meet the above expectations, is distracting to others or considered unsafe in any way, we will contact parents to address the concern.

## **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed an *Act Relative to Bullying in Schools*. This new law prohibits bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to address bullying incidents. Parts of the law (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O) that are important for students and parents or guardians to know are described below.

These requirements will be included in the schools and district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("the Plan"), which must be finalized no later than December 31, 2010. The Plan will include the requirements of the new law, and also information about the policies and procedures that the school or school district will follow to prevent bullying and retaliation, or to respond to it when it occurs. This Plan was developed with input from School Councils, a public forum and the Administrative Team.

### Definitions

*Aggressor* is a student who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

*Bullying* is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a

hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying includes cyberbullying.

*Cyberbullying* is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings.

*Hostile environment* is 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 the student's education.

*Target* is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation is directed.

*Retaliation* is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

### Prohibition against Bullying

Bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds,
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds,
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place 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,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by a school district or school (for example, on a school computer or over the Internet using a school computer),
- at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic devices, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited.

### Reporting Bullying

Anyone, including a parent or guardian, student, or school staff member, can report bullying or retaliation. Reports can be made in writing or orally to the principal or another staff member, or reports may be made anonymously.

<b>Name</b>	<b>School/Title</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Marie Pratt	Principal/Blueberry Hill	565-4280	<a href="mailto:mpratt@longmeadow.k12.ma.us">mpratt@longmeadow.k12.ma.us</a>
Donna Hutton	Principal/Center School	565-4290	<a href="mailto:dhutton@longmeadow.k12.ma.us">dhutton@longmeadow.k12.ma.us</a>
Neil Giles	Principal/Wolf Swamp	565-4270	<a href="mailto:ngiles@longmeadow.k12.ma.us">ngiles@longmeadow.k12.ma.us</a>
Susan Newton	Interim Principal/Glenbrook	565-4250	<a href="mailto:snewton@longmeadow.k12.ma.us">snewton@longmeadow.k12.ma.us</a>
Chris Collins	Principal/Williams	565-4260	<a href="mailto:ccollins@longmeadow.k12.ma.us">ccollins@longmeadow.k12.ma.us</a>
Larry Berte	Principal/LHS	565-4220	<a href="mailto:lberte@longmeadow.k12.ma.us">lberte@longmeadow.k12.ma.us</a>
Tom Landers	Asst. Principal/LHS	565-4220	<a href="mailto:tlanders@longmeadow.k12.ma.us">tlanders@longmeadow.k12.ma.us</a>
Paul Dunkerley	Asst. Principal/LHS	565-4220	<a href="mailto:pdunkerley@longmeadow.k12.ma.us">pdunkerley@longmeadow.k12.ma.us</a>

Reports made anonymously will be investigated; however, the investigation may be limited due to lack of information and therefore there is no guarantee of resolution.

School staff members must report immediately to the principal or his/her designee if they witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation. Staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessionals.

When the school principal or his/her designee receives a report, he or she shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the school principal or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he or she shall (i) notify the parents or guardians of the target, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; (ii) notify the parents or guardians of the aggressor; (iii) take appropriate disciplinary action; and (iv) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

#### Professional Development for School and District Staff

Schools and districts must provide ongoing professional development to increase the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying.

The content of such professional development is to include, but not be limited to: (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying; (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and (vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

The schools and district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is available on the district website, as well as each school's website. Paper copies of the district plan are available in the front office of each school.

### **Use of Electronic Devices at School**

Because of the interruption to classroom learning, the use of cell phones, MP3 players, iPods and other electronic devices will not be permitted in school. Electronic devices may be used outside of the building before and after school. Devices should be kept in backpacks or lockers during the school day. If a student is found with any electronic device “on,” whether it be text messaging, ringing and/or buzzing, it will be taken to the office. The first time this occurs, a student may pick up the device at the end of the day. After that, parents will need to retrieve the device from the office.

### **Telephone Use**

If need be, and with teacher permission, there are phones located in each classroom, the school office and the health room, for students to use throughout the school day. These phones are not to be used for making after school play dates.

## **SCHOOL COUNCIL**

### **Role and Responsibilities**

The Education Reform Act of 1993 requires that each school establish a School Council to promote shared decision making within the school community. The council is comprised of the principal, parents, teachers and community members. Its members assist the principal in the identification of educational needs of the students attending the school, in the review of the budget and the formulation of a school improvement plan. The make-up of the council encourages diverse perspectives in the formulation of the consensus plan.

## **STUDENT SAFETY AND SECURITY**

### **Arrival/Dismissal Routines**

Teachers are “on duty” starting at 8:30 AM at morning arrival and until 3:00 PM at dismissal. Parents are asked to observe these duty times for arrival and dismissal and accompany children on school grounds before and after the designated duty times.

Students may enter the building after 8:40 AM from the playground.

School dismissal is at 2:45 pm. A student not picked up at 2:45 must report promptly to the school office. The office staff will refer to the emergency information for transportation arrangements. All student emergency information must have at least three contact people listed.

We request that families take the time to review and confirm any changes to transportation routines. Strong and clear communication helps the school and families avoid distressful situations in locating students at dismissal.

Only persons authorized by a parent/guardian will be allowed to transport the student from school. In cases where divorce settlements limit another parent’s access to a child, it is the custodial parent’s responsibility to submit to the principal a copy of the court document. In situations that result in a late arrival at the close of school (traffic jam, flat tire, etc), parents are asked to call 565-4290 to speak to someone in the school office.

If a student misses his/her bus, the student must report promptly to the school office. The office staff will refer to the emergency card to arrange alternative transportation.

Playscape use is not allowed before school; play on the playground after school is limited to children whose parents are present.

### **Drop-off/Pick-up Procedures**

*Carpooling is strongly encouraged! Be sure to let your children know who is picking them up and at what location.*

Drop-off begins at 8:30 a.m. Children file into their classrooms from the rear of the building at 8:40 am. School begins promptly at 8:45 a.m. Pick-up is at 2:45 p.m. **THE DROP-OFF/PICK-UP AREA IS IN FRONT OF THE SOUTH BUILDING (C), known as the Main Building.**

During school hours, the street directly in front of Center School (Longmeadow Street) is a ONE-WAY street from Longfellow Drive north to Williams Street; it is a two-way street from Longfellow Drive south. There is no parking in front of school buildings from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. or 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.

### **CARLINE PROCEDURE**

Our carline is an integral procedure at Center School. Traffic congestion is no surprise with close to 400 children arriving or leaving the school at one time. **Please** work with us by remaining patient while picking up or dropping off your child. Time is critical for everyone, but for the safety of our entire community, all procedures must be followed. The essential goal of the carline procedure is to ensure the safety of our students, teachers, staff, and families. The procedure is one that has been reviewed by the Safety Officer from the Longmeadow Police Department, and works well for us *only* if our community cooperates. When a driver in the carline chooses to disregard any component of our procedure, the choice compromises the safety of our children.

Please review and adhere to the following:

- Proceed in a single line only and be ready to move forward at all times.
- Do not park and leave your car in line.
- Pull forward as far as possible within the drop-off area in front of the Main Building, pick up or discharge children from the passenger side only.
- Never pass a vehicle that has stopped within the drop-off area to discharge or pick up students even if there is an empty space in front of it.
- It is not acceptable to create a carline pick up or drop off at any undesignated area: in front of the gym, areas along the carline route, on Longfellow Drive [*see below*]. Students should not enter or exit a car except directly in front of the school where 5<sup>th</sup> grade safeties and staff are positioned.
- Longfellow Street: carline drop off and pick up is not permitted on Longfellow. The street is narrow, the traffic can be heavy, and parents should not pick up or drop off *anywhere* along the street. U-turns are unwise and dangerous.
- **NEVER** allow your child to cross the street where there is no crosswalk, even if you are waiting on the other side.

- Drive your vehicle all the way to the furthestmost point in the carline before stopping.
- Children enter and exit from the passenger side of the vehicle.
- Be courteous entering the carline from side streets; do not cut drivers off when entering the line.
- Do not park in the designated carline area during drop off and pick up times.
- Please be considerate of our neighbors at all times and when making parking choices.
- Refrain from cell phone use in the carline.
- Please visit: [www.walktoschool.org](http://www.walktoschool.org) to learn the advantages of walking or biking to school daily.

### **Visitor Sign-in/Sign-out**

For the safety of our students, all visitors are required to sign in at the school office upon entering the building and to wear a sticker while visiting the building. When leaving the building, please sign out.

### **Bus Transportation**

Students in grades kindergarten through six who live two miles or more from their school will be transported free. If in doubt, you may call the LPS Business Office 565-4200, ext. 20) to find out if you live two or miles from your district school.

Students in kindergarten through grade six who live less than 2 miles from their school are also eligible to purchase a bus pass for whatever the current year fee may be, and if their residence is on or near the standard route stops.

(Refer to LPS Policy EEA: Student Transportation Services)

### **Changes in Student BUS Transportation at Dismissal**

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the bus company and the school of any changes in their child's dismissal routine. It is imperative that the bus company have accountability for their students to Greenwood and JCC Centers.

### **Bicycle and Scooter Use at School**

- Students are encouraged to ride bicycles and/or scooters to and from school.
- The wearing of a helmet is required by law.
- Bike racks are provided for the safe storage of bikes and scooters.
- Students should use locks for bikes while standing at the racks.
- Park your bike in a spoke of the stand NOT in the walkway.
- Bikes/scooters **must** be walked on and off the school property.
- "HEELIES" (sneakers with wheels) are not permitted at school.

### **Photos and Videotaping**

On occasion, the activities and/or accomplishments of students may be photographed or videotaped for public viewing. Please send a note to school if you deny permission to do so.

## **HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

Schools communicate with parents on a regular basis about school rules, student programs, homework assignments, school activities and parent information meetings. A number of communication channels have been created to keep parents informed. These include: Alertnow messaging system, Parent-teacher conferences, teacher websites/newsletters, report cards, monthly PTO newsletter and weekly PTO email, periodic Longmeadow Parks and Recreation bulletins, Longmeadow District Web site, Center School website, and Thursday packets.

### **Newsletters: Center Stage**

The **Center Stage** is the monthly newsletter posted on the school website by the PTO. It provides in-depth coverage of school issues, principal's column, listing of upcoming meetings, special events, and classroom happenings.

### **Web sites**

The Longmeadow Public Schools ([www.longmeadow.k12.ma.us/dist/](http://www.longmeadow.k12.ma.us/dist/)), the Center School website ([www.longmeadow.k12.us/center](http://www.longmeadow.k12.us/center)), and the town ([www.longmeadow.org](http://www.longmeadow.org)) web sites hold a wealth of information.

### **Parent Involvement**

Families play an important role in their children's success in school. Effective schools are a result of families and educators working together. At Center School we believe parents are an important part of the school community. We strive to promote a strong parent-school partnership by providing parents with information about school programs and activities and encouraging family participation in their child's education both at home and at school.

Parents are invited and encouraged to volunteer in the school, to serve on committees, to complete surveys, to attend field trips, to attend school events and to participate in the homework process.

### **Parent Volunteers**

Throughout this handbook, you will read about the many opportunities to volunteer in the school. The PTO, in the fall, will send a form home to cover the various volunteer positions that are needed throughout the school. Please feel free to contact any PTO member to let them know how you'd like to volunteer.

### **CORI Forms (Criminal Offender Record Information)**

All parent(s), guardian(s), aunt(s), uncle(s), grandparent(s), etc. who volunteer in school, take field trips, participate in field day or in any other activities involving students, **MUST** fill out a CORI form. The CORI form must be filled out and submitted to Center School approximately 4 weeks before an event. These forms can be obtained and filled out at Center School. The CORI form will also require a copy of your driver's license, which can be photocopied at Center School. CORI forms need to be updated every three years. If you have any questions regarding the CORI form procedure, please call 565-4290.

### **Parents' Night/Open House**

In the early fall, parents are invited to the school to meet the Principal, their child's teacher, special subject teachers, the Resource Team, the School Council, and the PTO executive board. The classroom, school-wide, and PTO goals for the year will be discussed.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences are held in October and in March. Parents will receive written communication regarding the scheduling of their particular days/times for conferences.

The October Elementary Parent/Teacher Conferences have 3 purposes:

- To share information about the beginning of school (e.g., transition to new grade, how it is going at home and at school).
- To share data about student progress.
- To set goals for student improvement.

The second trimester ends in mid-March, and those report cards will be sent home and form the basis for the second parent/teacher conference. At that time, new student learning goals could be set, to be addressed by the end of the school year.

### **Report Cards**

The elementary schools report student progress through the use of Standards-based Report Cards, that specify which standards and indicators have been targeted as essential and when they will be taught and assessed. In Longmeadow, teachers from each grade level, K-5, have identified key grade-level skills that students need to know and be able to do by the end of the school year.

### **Promotion and Retention Policy & Procedures**

In general, children shall be placed at the grade level to which they are best adjusted academically, socially and emotionally. The education program shall provide for the continuous progress of children from grade to grade, with children spending one year in each grade. When it appears likely a student, in the judgment of school staff, may not meet the educational goals of his/her grade, retention may be considered. Such recommendations should be preceded by a conference between the classroom teacher and parents in which the pros and cons of retention is discussed. Parents and teachers must be in agreement about the recommendation for it to be supported by the building principal. This practice is rarely considered beyond grade 2. Specific retention procedures are delineated in LPS Policy IKE: Promotion and Retention of Students.

### **Student Records**

Student records are maintained for each child at the school he/she is attending. Educational, health and attendance records are the types of materials that are kept in the student cumulative folder. Parents and legal guardians have the right to examine or receive a copy of all permanent

records. A written request is required by the parent/guardian to inspect, review or receive a copy of such records. Additional copies must be purchased. Such requests will become part of the record folder. Student records are not available for public inspection.

The LPS Policy JO outlines the rights of parents with no physical custody. It also contains parental rights in amending the child's record, transfer of records to another school and details of FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) in relation to a child's work. (Refer to LPS Policy JO: Access to Student Records)

### **Parental Complaints/Chain of Command**

In cases where parents wish to express a complaint about an issue or staff member, they shall first discuss the matter with the staff member concerned. If they are not satisfied and sufficient time has elapsed for changes to be made, they will further discuss the matter with the following persons, if necessary, in this order: first, the principal of the building; second, the superintendent of schools. If, finally, the superintendent has been unable to satisfy the parents, she shall report the case to the school committee for consideration and action.

[Refer to LPS Policy JFH-1: Student Complaints and Grievances (Parents)]

### **Impromptu Meetings with Teachers**

Parents are requested to avoid approaching teachers for impromptu meetings at drop-off before school or pick-up after school. Please do not ask them, "Have you got a minute?" and then attempt to have a discussion about your child. Teachers have many responsibilities at those times. They are professionals and want to be able to respond to your concerns with thoughtful responses. Write them a note, an email, or leave a phone message that you'd like to meet with them.

### **Student Placement Procedures**

After April vacation, class placement activities for the next school year will commence and continue throughout the month of June. The placement teams strive to meet the learning needs of all students through classroom placements.

### **FAQs Student Placement:**

#### **What is considered when forming classes?**

Consideration of the following:

- Ratio of girls to boys;
- A balance of achievement levels;
- Behavior factors regarding students;
- Compatibility of students with each other;
- Recommendations of past and present teachers, support staff, principal.
- Social and emotional needs of students;
- Work habits of and energy level of students;
- Learning styles of students.

**Who will form the class lists for next year?**

The person who knows your child best is usually her classroom teacher. She is the key member of the team along with other grade level teachers. Teachers consult with Resource Team members including: School Principal; School Adjustment Counselor; Reading Specialist; Math Specialist; Special Education teachers; Speech and Language Therapists. Special subject area teachers are also asked for feedback.

**When will I know my child's classroom assignment for next year?**

The assignment **will not** be named on the report card in June. Assignments will be posted on the library windows in August. You will receive information regarding the specific date of the posting.

**What if I prefer that my child have a specific teacher?**

We respectfully ask that you trust the school team to determine the best placement for your child. We will not honor requests for specific teachers. We also request that you not place your child's current teacher in an awkward or unprofessional position by asking her to comment on teachers in the next grade. We also gently suggest that you not form opinions based on what you have heard. Each classroom is as unique as each child, and an experience that parents may have had with their child in a class may be totally different from what your child may have in the very same classroom.

**Very Important question: Do parents have input in the process?**

**YES.** Your input began this year with your relationship with your child's teacher. You provide insights and expertise about your child at conferences and through ongoing communications with your child's teacher. You are invited to provide additional input by completing the **Class Placement Parent Input Form**. This form will be sent home in the Thursday envelopes in April.

*The classroom placement meetings are time consuming and thoughtful meetings. Center School teachers and support staff strive to build learning environments that will support the diverse needs of our students. A "balanced" group of learners helps us achieve our goal of optimal growth and development for each child both socially and academically.*

**The School Principal has final approval over the class lists.**

**School/Classroom Visitations**

The school welcomes parental visits to their child's classroom throughout the school year. Please report to the office when entering the building. The one request is that you make an appointment for a class visit through the teacher and/or school office. This will enable us to control the number and length of visits so as not to interfere with the educational process of our students. All visits shall be of reasonable length and at such a time as to be non-disruptive to the instruction of students, as determined by the teacher and the principal. Individual groups, including parents, guardians, or relatives, shall not be permitted to observe classes for the purpose of formally assessing or evaluating academic programs or staff. School visits should not interrupt the teaching/learning process and are not desirable times for conferences or extended talks with teachers.

(Refer to LPS Policy KK: Visitors to the Classroom/Visits to Classrooms)

## Homework

Learning is a continuous process that extends beyond the school day. Homework is an important extension of skills, activities, and work habits learned and/or acquired in school. Assignments are intended to reinforce instruction, not to introduce new topics or skills. Longmeadow teachers encourage students to become independent learners; therefore, it is expected that each student will do his/her own work and learn to budget his/her time in order to meet assignment deadlines. It is understood that occasional parent assistance may be needed. More importantly, parents are asked to provide the materials, space, and time for the successful completion of assignments. A brief check of homework upon its completion is an appropriate and effective way for parents to ensure that quality work is completed. This check also provides parents with the opportunity to gain a better understanding of what is being taught in the classroom

In the elementary grades, homework is typically assigned Monday through Thursday evenings and ranges from fifteen minutes in the primary grades to an hour or more in the upper grades. Time devoted to such assignments varies with each child's skills and abilities, but families should not labor or get into contentious situations once a reasonable effort has been made by the student to do the work. A note to the teachers or a notation in the Agenda booklet will suffice.

Assignments may include: independent reading, creative and expository writing, reinforcement of language, spelling and math skills. Daily recreational reading is a great habit to foster. Long-range assignments may include: book reports, science and social studies projects or independent research. Parents should contact their child's teacher in the event that the child is taking too long or too short a time in completing daily assignments, or if the child is struggling with the work.

Nightly homework expectations, Monday through Thursday:

Kindergarten	up to 15 minutes
Grade 1	up to 30 minutes
Grade 2	up to 30 minutes
Grade 3	up to 45 minutes
Grade 4	up to 1 hour
Grade 5	up to 1.5 hours

Although homework assignments may vary, these guidelines will help you understand a general philosophy for elementary children.

**Teachers are mindful that students need vacation time to rejuvenate and enjoy family time. Teachers will avoid assigning long term projects immediately before vacation that are due on the day students return from vacation. Tests and quizzes will also be avoided on Mondays following vacation and/ or weekend as well.**

Homework is available from teachers if students are absent for three consecutive days. We suggest your child choose a “homework buddy” who can get daily assignments for 1 or 2 day absences. Family vacations are unexcused absences. While teachers will allow students to make up work and tests, they are not required to provide work in advance for a vacation-related absence. In addition, teachers are not required to tutor students when they return. It is the student’s responsibility to determine and complete the assigned work upon his/her return to school. The school calendar for the upcoming year is provided the spring of the preceding year for such family planning.

A homework agenda booklet is provided for students in grades 3 to 5, courtesy of the PTO.

### **Thursday Student Packets**

The PTO organizes, copies, and distributes the Thursday packets. Information regarding school events, fundraisers, etc. will sometimes be distributed in the Thursday packets. The Thursday packet goes home with the youngest child of each family. The goal of the Longmeadow Public Schools is to “go green”; therefore most information will be posted on the school and/or district website or sent via **Alertnow** messaging system.

### **Flyer(s) Distribution Approval Process**

Anyone wishing to send home a flyer about additional programs for LPS students must receive permission by the Superintendent’s Office to do so. Flyers are reviewed on an individual basis.

### **Phone Calls during the School Day**

Teachers and staff members will not be interrupted by phone calls from the office during instructional time except in the event of a family emergency. Center School does not have voicemail so it is important to consider this reality when communication through phone messages.

However, if a parent/guardian needs to relay a message to their child (especially after 12:00 noon) regarding a change of dismissal plans, call the office. The office will relay the message to the teacher. Please use discretion when requesting the teacher’s time and attention during the school day. Students are not allowed to use personal cell phones during the school day and parent-student phone communication is available through the office in necessary cases.

## **KINDERGARTEN**

### **Goals**

The purpose of kindergarten is to help bridge the gap between home and school through a relaxed and happy environment in which the child can become aware of the world about him/her and to realize success in his/her beginning academic life. Opportunities are provided to help develop certain behaviors such as sharing, helping others, working constructively, listening and following directions, respecting the rights of others, demonstrating self-control and accepting constructive criticism. The school strives to help the child become aware of the world about him/her, to achieve his/her highest potential along a readiness continuum, and to experiment with ideas and self-expression in academic areas.

**Entrance Age**

Kindergarten Children reaching the age of five by August 31 of any year will be eligible for kindergarten in that school year. Children reaching the age of five after August 31 will not enter kindergarten until the following school year.

**First Grade**

Children reaching the age of six by August 31 of any year will be eligible for first grade in that school year. Children reaching the age of six after August 31 will not enter first grade until the following school year.

**Second Grade and Above**

Except in extraordinary circumstances, pupils in second grade and above shall not be assigned to a higher grade until they have spent a full year in their present grade in Longmeadow or other school systems.

**Exceptions**

Subject to approval by the Superintendent, students may be accepted into kindergarten or first grade regardless of age only under the following circumstances:

1. A child's parents may request an exception from the Superintendent to allow their child to attend first grade regardless of age if the student has successfully completed kindergarten in a public or independent accredited (not daycare) program.
2. A child's parents may request an exception from the Superintendent to allow their child to attend kindergarten or first grade regardless of age if the family has moved to Longmeadow from another community on or after December 1 and has successfully attended kindergarten or first grade in a public school system or independent accredited (not daycare) program since the beginning of the year.

**Health Requirements**

Massachusetts's law requires proof that each child be immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, measles, polio, mumps, rubella, hepatitis, and chicken pox. (Please note that if your child contracted chicken pox, verification from your doctor would be needed. Upon entering kindergarten or within 30 days of the start of the school year, the parent or guardian of each child shall present certification that the child within the previous 12 months has passed a vision & hearing screening. In addition, the child must be screened for lead poisoning. The school health office needs a copy of a recent physical before the first day of kindergarten.

**Orientation**

Kindergarten orientation is usually held one day during the first week of May. Prospective kindergarten student names are taken from the town census. Letters are mailed out to prospective kindergarten parent(s)/guardian(s) during February regarding the full-day and half-day kindergarten programs. Parent(s)/guardian(s) who attend the orientation bring their prospective kindergarten child the day of the orientation. The child will be escorted to a supervised setting for a period of time, and will play and have a snack. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will assemble in the Community Room where they will hear a presentation regarding kindergarten. After the presentation, the principal, teachers, and school nurse will be on hand to answer any questions regarding the kindergarten day and program.

### **Screening**

All kindergarten students meet a kindergarten teacher and are screened to ascertain whether they may have a special need and require special service. This is scheduled during the first three days school is open. Parents are contacted about their child's appointment during the summer preceding matriculation to kindergarten. Parents will receive a written response about the results of the screening.

### **Mid-Year Switch**

Children will change sessions at the half-year (usually the last Monday in January). Students who started the school year in the morning session will switch to the afternoon program, and students who started the school year in the afternoon session will switch to the morning session. A notice will be sent home to parents notifying them of the exact date of the session change.

### **Academic Support and Special Education Services**

To help children have a successful and happy school experience, a variety of services are available through the Pupil Services Department. Specialists in child development and learning, speech, psychology, counseling and health are available. If you feel your child might benefit from a special service, do not hesitate to make your concerns known.

### **Reading and Mathematics Intervention**

For children requiring intervention support in reading and/or math, resource teachers are available to address identified learning needs. Children receive small-group instruction, inside and outside of the classroom, targeted to their areas of need.

The reading intervention program focuses on developing proficient reading strategies and skills through the use of classroom materials as well as leveled books. The overall goal of intervention is to develop proficient readers and to foster comfort with and enjoyment of reading.

The mathematics intervention program focuses on developing proficient math strategies and skills through the use of classroom materials as well as intervention resources. The overall goal of intervention is to develop proficient math skills and proficient problem solving strategies as well as foster a comfort with and enjoyment of math.

### **Child Study Team**

The Child Study Team consists of a group of general and special education teachers, specialists and administrators. The team meets on a monthly basis to discuss student referrals. The team reviews students' academic, social and/or emotional concerns; and, suggests strategies to address the identified needs, additional assessments or another level remedial support.

### **504**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects the rights of individuals with disabilities within the work and school setting. Section 504 requires regular education teachers to provide reasonable accommodations and insures equal access to educational programs for students with

disabilities. If you feel your child is eligible for a 504 plan, or you would like to make a 504 evaluation referral, please contact the 504 building coordinator, Mrs. Hutton.

### **Special Education**

All students are entitled to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). In Massachusetts, students eligible for special education must demonstrate the presence of a disability that prevents the student from making effective progress in the general curriculum, and requires specially designed instruction or related services in order to progress. An initial evaluation to determine eligibility based on the above factors will be completed in order to determine any special needs. If you feel your child may be eligible for special education, please contact the special education teacher at your school.

### **Sheltered English Immersion (SEI)/ELL**

In 2002, the Massachusetts Legislature made Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) the program model for English language learners. SEI has two components. The first component is English language development instruction, which is taught by teachers specifically trained to teach English as a Second Language (ESL). As students improve their English speaking and reading skills, they move from ESL to Sheltered English Immersion.

Sheltered English Immersion is content instruction taught by general educators who possess the knowledge and skills required to effectively teach English language learners. General educators participate in multiple training sessions to become teachers of students in the SEI program.

### **Department of Child and Family Services**

School staff are mandated reporters and are required by law to file a report (51-A) with the Department of Social Services of any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect. (Refer to LPS Policy JHG: Child Abuse and Neglect Policy)

### **EXTENDED DAY CARE: JCC, Greenwood, Longmeadow Montessori**

The Longmeadow Parks and Recreation Department offers an Early Risers Program that is housed at the Center School. For further information regarding this program, call 565-4163.

Organizations offering after school day care include: the Jewish Community Center @ 739-4715, the Greenwood Extended Day Program @ 565-4163 and the Longmeadow Montessori @ 567-1820. The after school programs do offer transportation to and from Center School.

### **SPECIAL ACTIVITIES/PROGRAMS**

#### **Senior Readers**

Senior Readers is a program sponsored by Storrs Library. A senior reader comes into Kindergarten through Grade 2 classrooms twice a month to read to the students. For further details, call the Storrs Library @ 565-4181.

#### **Field Day**

Field Day is a fun filled day of games and events held in June. Students are assigned to different color teams by the school's physical education staff and every child wears a tee shirt in his/her team color. Students will be on the same color team each year. Parents are welcome to attend

Field Day to cheer on the children, to join them for lunch, and/or to volunteer as a “team captain.” Look for notices during the month of April regarding Field Day info: purchase of tee shirts, how to volunteer as a “team captain,” field day times, lunch schedule, etc.

### **Field Trips**

Teachers throughout the school year organize field trips to various local sites. Teachers organize their field trips in order to enhance the further study of a particular unit. Information regarding the field trip would be sent home from the teacher. Parents who volunteer for field trips are required to complete a CORI application and receive a favorable rating.

### **Instrumental Music/Choral Assemblies**

Our instrumental music teacher organizes two to three concerts each year. 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are usually involved in these concerts. Watch for notices from Ms. Drysdale in the *Center Stage* and Thursday packets.

### **Student Community Service**

Students in the Longmeadow Public Schools learn about and are encouraged to contribute to their school community at an early age. For example, as early as kindergarten, older students serve as school and classroom helpers. Students in grades 4 and 5 have more formal opportunities to contribute to their school.

### **Safety Patrol**

Fifth graders serve as student safety patrols i.e., safeties helping to safely cross students at the nearby streets and/or opening car doors at the live-line at arrival or dismissal

### **PTO (PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION)**

The Center School Parent Teacher Organization is dedicated to enhancing the quality of the student, staff and family experience at the school. Each family is invited to join in the support of the Center School by becoming an active member of the PTO. Support may be expressed by volunteering in the many PTO events or programs and by paying into the Enrichment Fund. Throughout this handbook, you will read a few of the many opportunities to volunteer in the school. Please do not let work, small children or other commitments prevent you from supporting PTO activities that can be done at home. If you are undecided or require more information with regards to volunteering, do not hesitate to call one of the PTO Executive Board members listed in the Center School Phone Directory.

### **Assemblies**

These special programs take place during school hours and are generally geared to a specific subject. The subject of the programs varies from performing arts to science or theme subjects. Notices are sent home so that parents and, if appropriate, siblings may attend.

### **Monthly Meetings**

PTO meetings are usually held each month. Dates and times vary. Look for PTO meeting reminder notice in your child's Thursday packet, through PTO emails, and on the Center School website.

### **School Directory**

The Center School Directory is distributed to each family as early as possible in the fall. This handy directory provides the following information:

- Listing by family street address/phone number/email address
- Student Name/Homeroom Teacher
- School Staff
- School Calendar
- School Map
- Town of Longmeadow Numbers & Web site
- Inclement Weather/Absentee Phone Number

Should you choose not to participate in this directory, please inform the office staff in the fall. Please update your information with the office staff as well.

### **School Memory Book**

The School Memory Book is distributed near the end of the school year. Inside the soft covered book is an individual picture of all fifth grade students, classroom pictures of grades kindergarten through fourth, staff pictures and pictures highlighting memorable events throughout the year. Forms will be sent home during the spring for the purchase of the yearbook.

### **Birthday Book Program**

Celebrate your child's birthday or show appreciation to a staff member by donating books to the school library in your child's or staff member's name. Details regarding this program will be distributed in the Thursday packet.

### **Fundraisers & Donations**

PTO fundraisers take place throughout the school year. They often include: bake sales, book fairs, school pictures, school carnival, road race, etc. For more information, contact a member of the PTO Ways and Means Committee located in the School Directory. Previously listed are just a few of the many events/fundraisers that the PTO sponsors throughout the year. Whatever the event/fundraiser, parents will be notified. The PTO annual budget lists explanations of how funds are intended for school use.

### **Community Service Projects**

#### **Holiday Baskets**

Holiday Baskets is an annual community event at the Center School sponsored by the PTO. Working closely with local social service agencies, which identify children in need, each classroom is given a basket to be filled with gift items. The items are collected and wrapped by PTO volunteers. It is an inspirational time of sharing for all involved in this project.

### **Open Pantry and Food Drive**

Non-perishable food items donated by staff and students are collected and are delivered to various Springfield food pantries. Watch for notices for annual events.

### **Clothing Drive**

During the preceding winter months, hats, coats, boots, mittens, scarves, etc. are collected and distributed to local shelters in the Springfield area.

### **Fall Carnival**

This is the first opportunity in the new school year for the Center School families and friends to come together. In early fall, families are invited to gather on the Green for games and family fun. For our new kindergarten families and for those who have just joined the school, this is a great opportunity to catch the Center spirit and to make new friends. Our 5<sup>th</sup> grade students develop the games for this fun event.

### **Gift Policy/PTO Gift Fund**

Excerpt from – Summary of the Conflict of Interest Law for Municipal Employees –Detail Also Posted on Longmeadow District Website.

(b) Gifts and gratuities. Asking for or accepting a gift because of your official position, or because of something you can do or have done in your official position, is prohibited. (See Sections 3, 23(b) (2), and 26)

Municipal employees may not accept gifts and gratuities valued at \$50 or more given to influence their official actions or because of their official position. Accepting a gift intended to reward past official action or to bring about future official action is illegal, as is giving such gifts. Accepting a gift given to you because of the municipal position you hold is also illegal. Meals, entertainment event tickets, golf, gift baskets, and payment of travel expenses can all be illegal gifts if given in connection with official action or position, as can anything worth \$50 or more. A number of smaller gifts together worth \$50 or more may also violate these sections.

### **HEALTH INFORMATION**

A full time nurse is on staff to assist with medical problems. Listed below are statements about several health-related topics the nurse oversees.

### **Emergency Information**

At the beginning of the school year, parent(s)/guardian(s) are requested to update their emergency information sheet for each of their children. The exception being pre-school and kindergarten students who received their emergency information sheet in the spring prior to entering school. It is important that these emergency information sheets be updated at all times. Please list all phone numbers, cell numbers, pagers, etc. where a parent/guardian can be reached during the day. For emergency contact people listed on your student(s) sheet, please make sure these people know they are listed on your student(s) emergency information sheet. In case of an emergency, the emergency contact people need to be available to pick up your child at school. Please make sure that your child knows the emergency contact people. Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying the school office and/or the health office of any changes to the

emergency information sheet. Emergency information sheets are retained in the Health Office and used on a regular basis by the nurse.

## **Physicals**

Physical exams are required for new students, and for all students entering preschool, kindergarten and grade 4. The exam is given by the student's own physician. Forms are given to preschool, kindergarten, and grade 4 in the spring prior to entering that grade.

## **Specific Requirements**

M.G.L. c.71, s.57 and related amendments and regulations (105 CMR 200.000–200.920) require physical examinations of schoolchildren within 6 months before entry into school or during the first year after entry, and at intervals of either 3 or 4 years thereafter, such as during kindergarten, 4th grade, 7th grade, and 10th grade. It is the responsibility of the school committee or the local board of health to designate these intervals. The regulations require physical examinations for:

- (1) children referred because of frequent absences due to unexplained illness;
- (2) children referred because of known physical defects that require repeated appraisal;
- (3) children referred from a teacher-nurse conference because the child is not making expected progress in school or because of signs of illness noted by the teacher or nurse;
- (4) children under 16 and over 14 years of age requesting employment certificates; and
- (5) children planning to participate in competitive athletics annually, previous to such participation.

## **Immunizations**

Every newly enrolled student, preschool, and kindergarten student must provide us with evidence that he/she has been fully immunized (including DPT, Polio, MMR, Hib, Hepatitis B, Varivax or Chicken Pox disease). Exceptions are made only if a parent states in writing that immunizations conflict with their religious beliefs, or if the student's physician submits documentation that due to medical reasons the immunizations are contraindicated.

## **Lead Test**

Kindergarten students also must have a lead test done by Massachusetts's law.

According to Massachusetts mandate MGLc71s57:

“Upon entering kindergarten or within 30 days of the start of the school year, the parent/guardian of each child shall present to school health personnel certification that the child within the previous 12 months has passed a vision screening conducted by personnel approved by the Dept. of Public Health and trained in vision screening techniques to be developed by the Dept. of Health in consultation with the Dept. of Education. For children who fail to pass the vision screening and for children diagnosed with neurodevelopment delay, proof of a comprehensive

eye examination performed by a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist chosen by the child's parent/guardian indicating any pertinent diagnosis, treatment, prognosis, recommendation and evidence of follow-up treatment, if necessary, shall be provided.”

### **Medications**

If your child needs to take oral medications during school hours, the school nurse or the principal designee will administer it in the absence of the school nurse. Prescription and over the counter medications must be brought to school in its original container, bearing the pharmacy label. All medications must be brought to school by the parent/guardian or by an adult designated by the parent/guardian. Prescription and over the counter medications (including Tylenol, Motrin, Advil, cold & cough medicines, cough drops, etc.) will not be administered at school without written authorization from both a physician and a parent. Blank authorization forms are available from the nurse. Medications will be kept in a locked cabinet in the nurse's office. Allergy injections will not be administered in school. The Department of Public Health, Chapter 71, and Section 54b of the Massachusetts General Laws mandate the regulations for psychotropic drug administration. The physician at the start of each school year must renew medication orders.

### **Vision and Hearing Screening**

Each year the following assessments will be made at school:

- Weight and height measurement
- Vision and hearing screenings

By law, grade 5 students must be screened for Scoliosis. Parents/guardian will be notified if the different screenings indicate further examination is needed.

### **BMI**

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is requiring school districts to take students' BMI (Body Mass Index) in grades 1, 4, 7 and 10, and report the findings to the state.

### **Injuries/Sickness at School**

If your child is injured at school, first aid will be administered. If a serious injury occurs, the student will be transported to a Springfield hospital, probably by ambulance. The cost of the ambulance transportation is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. Every effort will be made to contact a parent/guardian immediately.

If a student is sick during the school day, the teacher will refer him/her to the health office. Once the student is in the health office, the nurse will then take his/her temperature, etc. to determine whether or not the child needs to go home. The school nurse will then contact the parent/guardian or emergency contact person listed on the emergency information sheet for a possible early dismissal due to illness. If your child is sick with a fever, your child should be fever free for 24 hours, before returning to school.

### **Too Sick for School**

Our school physician recommends the following guidelines as to when you should keep your child home from school:

Fever: If your child has a fever of 100.4 degrees or greater, he/she should be kept home until fever free (without medication) for 24 hours. Liquids should be encouraged as tolerated.

Diarrhea or vomiting: If your child has repeated episodes of either, he/she should be kept out of school until the illness passes (24 hours after the last episode).

Sore throat: Severe sore throat could be strep, even if fever is not present. Other symptoms of strep can be headache and stomachache. If a throat culture is positive, your child may return to school 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins.

If you have any questions regarding your child's illness or return to school, please feel free to contact the nurse.

### **Communicable Diseases**

Large numbers of young people and adults are brought together in school, creating ideal circumstances for transmission of a variety of diseases. Exclusion is necessary when the student's illness requires a greater degree of observation or care than school staff can safely provide, poses a threat to the health or safety of others, or precludes any benefit of attending school because of inability to focus and learn. Responsibility for the care of the individual student rests with the family and his or her source of medical care.

(Refer to LPS Policy JHCC-E: Communicable Diseases)

### **Head Lice**

Head lice are not indicative of poor hygiene. Head lice are not influenced by hair length or the frequency of shampooing or brushing. Head lice are not a health hazard because they are not responsible for the spread of any disease. Transmission occurs by direct contact with the hair of infested people and less commonly by contact with personal items such as combs, hairbrushes, and hats. Often, normal activities are disrupted by excessive reaction to these pests.

A flyer regarding head lice is available at the school's health office or you can locate it at [www.longmeadow.k12.ma.us/dist/](http://www.longmeadow.k12.ma.us/dist/).

#### **Procedure:**

1. Your child should receive a prescription shampoo (Kwell or Nix) from your family doctor.
2. If you should find on reinspection that nits remain in the hair, a mixture of 1 pint of water with 3 tablespoons of vinegar may be prepared. Over a sink, rinse your child's hair with the solution. Wait 5 minutes and reexamine the hair. The solution should dissolve any remaining nits. If some nits remain, repeat the procedure. Once all nits are dissolved, shampoo your child's hair using a normal non-medicated shampoo.
3. All clothing (hats, jackets, sweaters, shirts, etc.) bedding, and towels used by your child must be washed in hot water and strong detergent and dried in a hot dryer.
4. Any item of clothing or bedding that cannot be washed may be dry cleaned.
5. Stuffed animals and items not washed or dry cleaned can be sealed in a plastic bag for one month.
6. All carpeting, upholstery and mattresses should be thoroughly vacuumed.
7. Combs, brushes, barrettes, etc. should be washed in hot water with medicated shampoo and allowed to soak for ten minutes.
8. Parents should report all cases of infestation to the school nurse so proper follow-up procedures can be carried out.

- If one case of lice is confirmed by school nurse, the families of students in the class will receive notification.

- If more than one case is confirmed by school nurse, the class will be screened and families notified.
  - When a child returns to school after a confirmed case of lice, the school nurse will examine the child for nits before the child returns to the classroom. Longmeadow Public Schools adhere to a “no nits” procedure.
9. All family members should be inspected and treated accordingly.

### **Out-of-State/Country Student Visitors**

The regulation from the Dept. of Public Health, regarding students visiting schools in Massachusetts is as follows: Any student visiting from another state or country must show the school nurse proof of immunizations signed by a physician. The visiting student has to follow the same immunization requirements as Massachusetts’s students. If the visiting student does not have the required immunizations, the student will not be allowed to stay.

### **Chartwells Lunch Program**

Chartwells School Dining Services continues to provide Longmeadow Public Schools with an appealing and nutritionally sound child nutrition program that is safe and affordable to parents, students, faculty and staff.

Over the past two years some of our accomplishments include: adding more Balanced Choice meals and ;”Better for you” snacks; adding more fresh fruit and vegetable options to our menus at all grade levels.

Nourishing students is not only our business; it is our commitment to the communities which we serve.

### **Cost/ Menu**

Lunch may be purchased for \$2.25 or brought from home. Additional ala carte items are available for purchase.

In an effort to support Longmeadow Public Schools “Green Initiative” the monthly lunch menu is available for downloading on [www.longmeadow.org](http://www.longmeadow.org) or [www.longmeadow.k12.ma.us](http://www.longmeadow.k12.ma.us)

### **Prepaid Lunch**

Our goal is to have lunch be as relaxing and nutritious as possible. To achieve that, we strongly encourage you to place money in your child’s lunch account and encourage them to remember their school lunch pin number. This has proven to speed up lunch lines and allow maximum time available for your child to eat and have time with friends.

We are partnering with MyNutrikids.com to provide our online payment capability. They will provide you with an opportunity to review your child’s lunch purchases check account balances and place money in the account at your convenience. You will need the STUDENT ID number to use this service.

Students will also have the opportunity to pre-pay for the meals they purchase from our cafeterias. Deposits can be made daily at each school when school is in session. Deposits can also be made to your child's lunch account by sending a check to: Longmeadow School Lunch. Please be sure to include your child's full name, grade and school.

### **Free & Reduced Lunch Program**

To insure that every student, regardless of his/her family's financial status, may be served a nutritious meal in the middle of the school day; The LPS participates in the National School Lunch Program.

Parents will be informed at the beginning of the school year, of the eligibility requirements for participation by their child.

Please note: Should a family's financial status change anytime throughout the school year that would qualify a student(s) to receive a free/reduced lunch, a form may be obtained from the school office.

### **CURRICULUM**

The LPS have a unified elementary curriculum that is standards-based and aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for each subject area ([www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html)).

Subject area and grade-level curriculum learning expectations, as well as Parent Guides to the elementary report cards for each grade level, are available on the district Web site: [www.longmeadow.k12.ma.us/dist/](http://www.longmeadow.k12.ma.us/dist/). Check the Web site throughout the year for curriculum and assessment updates.

At the Back to School Night/Open House in the fall, teachers share specific information about resources that support the LPS curricula and implementation plans.

### **SPECIAL SUBJECTS**

The elementary schools offer special subjects taught by subject area specialists in music, art, physical education and library/media. The curriculum is listed on the Longmeadow Web site. Each program is unique and has certain grade level expectations and routines that require special attention. Please note the description below and with specific programmatic requests.

#### **General Music**

Third, fourth and fifth grade students use a wind instrument called the soprano recorder as an integral part of the Orff-Schulwerk Music Training. Third grade students may purchase their own soprano recorder at school for approximately \$6.00 or bring one from home. The soprano recorder will continue to be used in fourth grade. When the student's skill is developed, sometime in fourth or fifth grade, they may purchase an alto recorder from school for

approximately \$17.00 or bring one from home. The alto recorder will continue to be used through the fifth grade.

### **Art**

During the six years your child will attend Center School, Art will be a part of his/her weekly schedule. Your child will be exposed to and required to experiment with many different art media, stylistic approaches and art techniques. On the days your child has art scheduled, please be sure to dress him/her appropriately. The Art room does have smocks, but your child should feel comfortable to get involved in what often times are messy materials.

### **Physical Education**

Tie or Velcro sneakers are required for PE. No slip-on or hard soled shoes are allowed. We suggest that girls wear pants (winter) or shorts (summer) on PE days. Should your child not be able to attend PE for any reason, a note or voicemail should be left with the PE teacher and/or Health Office.

### **Library/Media**

The library at Center School is open from 8:30-3:15 four days a week. The library has an extensive collection of books for all levels K-5 and subscriptions to five popular children magazines: *Ranger Rick*, *Kids Discover*, *ZooBooks*, *National Geographic for Kids and Sports Illustrated for Kids*.

Every class has a scheduled library time each week for instruction and for book selection. Books and magazines may be checked out for one week. There is a limit of one item per child.

Beginning in kindergarten, children are introduced to literature by quality authors and illustrators. They learn about how the library is organized, and explore the differences between fiction and non-fiction. By third grade, they move to a more academic approach, which includes research skills and hands-on projects with other library skills. They also begin to use the computer lab as part of the library curriculum.

In keeping with the school's Responsive Classroom approach, our library guidelines are as follows:

- Accepting responsibility for inappropriate behavior
- Interacting appropriately with classmates
- Following oral and written directions
- Caring for library materials and property
- Following the computer AUP (Acceptable use Policy)

### **Instrumental Music**

In June, the process of selecting an instrument begins for students in 4th and 5th grade for the next school year. The instrumental music teacher will conduct demonstrations of various musical instruments during your child's general music class.

The string instrument choices for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders are as follows: violin, viola, cello, and bass (if the child is tall enough). Students, who are interested in string instruments, will be measured for the appropriate sized instrument. They range from quarter to full size.

The band instrument choices for 5<sup>th</sup> graders are as follows: flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, horn, baritone horn, trombone, and a percussion kit that contains a snare drum and a bell set.

Three music dealers serve the Center School: Gerry's Music (South Hadley), Performance Music (Westfield), and Music & Arts Center (Greenfield). Each company has different rates and plans, but they all provide similar services. Most music dealers will repair, free of charge, any instruments rented from them.

### **Chorus**

Chorus is offered to all fifth grade students on a voluntary basis. Forms for choral sign up will be sent home from the music teacher. Chorus is offered one day a week at a time to be determined by the music teacher.

## **SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAMS**

### **LHS Enrichment Program**

The LPS offers a wide range of summer enrichment classes at Longmeadow High School. A full listing of the course offerings may be accessed via [www.longmeadowBiz.com/summerschool](http://www.longmeadowBiz.com/summerschool). A course brochure is distributed to all students in the spring. Courses are offered in mathematics, science, art, history, music, theater, language arts, computers, technology, and more. They are held in July, and most courses cost from \$90 - \$200.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **School Registration**

Student registration packets are available by contacting the Superintendent's Office. All registration materials for new or re-registering students must be returned, in person, to the Superintendent' Office.

A completed registration packet consists of:

- Student Registration Form
- School Admissions Policy
- Establish Residency Guide and backup documentation
- Massachusetts Health Form
- A copy of the student's birth certificate
- Kindergarten Questionnaire (entering grade K only)
- Home Language Survey
- Release of Information Form (entering LPS in grades 1-12, & K (if entering LPS mid-year))

Students may not begin school until all documentation has been received, the school nurse has had an opportunity to review and approve the health form, and the student has developed a schedule of classes with the Principal or Guidance Counselor at the school.

### **School Insurance**

A reasonably priced accident insurance policy is available for all children. School insurance forms are sent home the first week of school. Should you choose to participate in the school insurance program, you will need to fill out the forms and send them back to school with your child. If you need additional information regarding the insurance offered by the school, please call the superintendent's office at 565-4200.

### **Safety Drills: Fire, Bus Evacuation, Lockdown,**

Several times during the school year, students will participate in fire drills and bus evacuation procedures. When the alarm bell rings, students are required to be silent and cooperate with instructions from the teacher regarding the evacuation of the building. A lockdown drill may be conducted and teachers present information about the procedure in a developmentally appropriate manner.

### **Facility Use by the Public**

To rent rooms at the school for non-school functions, groups need apply to the district's business office. In some cases, there will be a simple rental fee. If cleaning or set up of the rented space is required, an additional custodial fee will be charged. The LPS has a published fee structure for rental and custodial charges.

### **Ceremonies and Observances**

Parents have the right to determine when their children shall be absent because of religious observances. The student shall not be penalized or denied make-up opportunities or in any way be pressured to choose between school attendance and religious observances.

According to LPS Policy, "no religious celebrations may be held in the public schools." "Religious celebration" is defined as: a formal observance, including worship or religious services of any kind, whether or not conducted by a clergyman; the display of religious objects or symbols; the presentation of religious music or art displays, except to the extent that such music or art is presented for artistic rather than religious content. School personnel must be especially sensitive about programs presented during religious holiday seasons and they are encouraged to consult with their building administrator whenever in their judgment material and/or programs are of a sensitive nature.

The public schools of Longmeadow recognize and respect the fact that an individual's beliefs do not include religious observances. A "Balancing off" religious observance is inappropriate. (Refer to LPS Policy IND-R: Instruction)

### **Lost and Found**

For easy identification of lost items, please put your child's name inside all articles of outer clothing, lunch boxes, backpacks, boots, instruments, etc. The school has two large plastic bins

located adjacent to the cafeteria. Parent(s), guardian(s), and students can check these bins at anytime. Jewelry, eyeglasses, electronic devices, instruments, etc., are usually maintained in the school's office. All unclaimed items will be donated on a monthly basis to a charity of the school's choice.

### **Handicapped Accessibility**

Center School is handicapped accessible. This includes bathrooms in each of the buildings, as well as instructional spaces. An elevator is available for students who need that level of assistance.

### **School Committee Meetings**

Meetings are generally held on the second and fourth Mondays of each month. Meetings are also listed, along with other town meetings, on the Longmeadow Web site. Most meetings are broadcasted on Channel 8 cable.

### **Town Meetings**

Town meetings are held at least twice a year: once in the fall and once in the spring. Dates are posted on the Longmeadow school and town Web sites.