

# **Atlantic Middle School**



## **Student Handbook**

**2013 - 2014**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome to Middle School .....	page 2
School Spirit	
Subjects Taught	
Grading	
Homework	
Progress Reports/Interim Reports .....	Page 3-4
Promotional Policy	
Release Days	
Guidance	
Breakfast/Lunch Programs	
Field Trips	
Cafeteria	
Attendance Policy	
Attendance Procedures	
Tardiness Procedures	
Medications.....	Page 5
Dismissals	
Appropriate Dress	
No School Announcements	
Telephone Messages for Students	
Safety and Security	
Fire Alarm or Emergency Evacuation .....	Page 6
School Bus or MBTA Bus	
Traffic Restrictions on Hollis Avenue	
Lockers	
Student Behavior and Conduct.....	Page 7
Atlantic's Non-Negotiable Rules.....	Page 8
Five Types of Writing .....	Page 9
Success at Atlantic .....	Page 10
Quincy Public Schools Calendar .....	Page 11

## Welcome to Middle School

You are experiencing a unique and exciting period in your life - the years in which you grow from childhood to young adulthood. Middle School is a place which provides special programs and a special atmosphere to guide your academic and personal growth. It tries to be a bridge between elementary school and high school, and between childhood and adolescence. Its goal is to help you become a self-fulfilled individual, citizen and worker. Its mission is the personalized education of emerging adolescents.

Your teachers and administrators wish you success. We hope this Student Handbook will help you become more familiar with our school, its programs and services and the rules necessary for proper behavior. We especially hope you will develop and demonstrate pride in your school by doing your best.

### School Spirit

School spirit may be divided into three categories:

1. Respect - toward yourself, teachers, fellow students, custodians, cafeteria workers, office staff, bus drivers, and officials of school athletic activities.
2. Pride - in everything our school tries to accomplish and has accomplished.
3. Sportsmanship - the ability to win and lose gracefully. School spirit means loyalty to the school. A loyal student supports the school and does his/her best to stay at the top.

### Subjects Taught

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

### Grading

Computerized report cards are issued three times a year. The letters A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, or F represent the quality of work in most subjects. The letters E (excellent), S (satisfactory), or U (unsatisfactory) may also be used. A teacher comment section provides additional information. The card is also a record of conduct, attendance and tardiness. **All report cards, except the last one which is mailed home, must be signed by a parent or guardian and returned to school.**

### Homework

Homework assignments differ, depending upon a student's ability, potential and need. You are expected to complete assignments carefully in order to reinforce and enrich classroom learning experiences.

What you and your parents can expect:

1. Homework is assigned on a regular basis.
2. Homework is usually discussed in class, collected and graded within reasonable time for each student, normally within a week.
3. A record is kept of homework grades and assignments completed.
4. Students have reasonable notice of long-term assignments. Time must be planned for these assignments.
5. Homework assignments may be found on your teachers' web sites on a regular basis.

## **Progress Reports/Interim Reports**

Progress reports may be issued at any time. These are meant to inform you of how you are doing in a particular class.

Interim Reports will be mailed directly to your home three times a year (halfway through each term). They may indicate either satisfactory or unsatisfactory work (possibility of failing). These reports must be signed by a parent or guardian and returned to school.

## **Promotional Policy**

School administrators and staff are concerned with your academic progress and maturity level. If a student fails two or more subjects for the year or is absent twenty-eight or more days, he or she may not pass to the next grade unless an agreed-upon summer program, approved by the principal, is successfully completed. The principal will notify the parent or guardian as soon as poor classroom performance and/or attendance indicate there is a possibility that the student will not be promoted to the next grade.

## **Release Days**

To encourage the development of our Middle School program, we have staff workshops twice a month on Tuesday afternoons. Students are dismissed from the school after lunch on release days. A schedule of release days will be available at the beginning of the school year.

## **Guidance**

Sometimes, you may need to talk to someone. If you need information, need help in making decisions, or need support, our guidance counselors are available to help you. They can assist you in understanding your personal and school problems. Students are encouraged to meet with their counselors. Your counselor will keep track of your progress, organize standardized testing, keep records, offer advice in the important choices of subjects for ninth grade, and introduce career choices.

## **Breakfast/Lunch Programs**

Under government law, breakfast and lunch are provided either free or at a reduced-price. In order to determine who can receive either free or reduced priced meals, all students are given a form at the beginning of the year for their parents or guardians to complete.

## **Field Trips**

Teachers schedule field trips as part of the curriculum to provide on-site learning experiences. The same rules that apply in the school, the classroom, and on the bus apply during a field trip. Signed parent or guardian permission slips are required for each field trip.

## **Cafeteria**

The cafeteria should be an orderly place where you may enjoy breakfast and lunch with your friends. Cleanliness in the cafeteria is the responsibility of all the students.

## **Attendance Policy**

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

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

Family vacations during the school year are **strongly discouraged**. Following an absence, the student is expected to make-up missed work at the discretion of the teacher.

Parent/guardian must call the school before 9:00 A.M., on the day of the absence. If a call isn't received, our attendance aide will call that home to be sure the student is home sick. All absences require a note of explanation from the parent/guardian. Extended absences may require formal documentation. Students are responsible for completing all make-up work due to absences. Make-up work will be provided routinely for absences of 3 days or more.

### **Attendance Procedures:**

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

- The attendance aide shares accumulative absences with the assistant principal/guidance counselor.
- The nurse/counselor follows up on consecutive absences or after a pattern of absences by speaking to the student individually and to the parent/guardian.
- The student is discussed at weekly Student Support Services meetings.
- A letter may be sent to parent/guardian after 4 days of absences per term.
- A parent/guardian meeting may be held.
- A follow-up letter may be sent to parent/guardian after 7 absences per term.
- An attendance hearing may be held with supervisor of attendance.
- The supervisor of attendance may visit the home.
- A referral to outside counseling may be recommended.
- A referral to the "Family Assistance Conference" may be made.

### **In extreme cases:**

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

### **Tardiness Procedures:**

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

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

### **Medications**

Prescription medications will not be given in school except on an emergency basis (such as asthma medication). If it is necessary to receive long-term medication, a Quincy Public School Medication Form must be completed by both your doctor and parent/ guardian. This will be kept on file by the school nurse.

### **Dismissals**

Steps to follow:

1. A parent or guardian must write a note to the Principal stating the date, time and the reason for dismissal. The parent or guardian has the responsibility of picking a student up from the school. **We do not allow students to leave on their own at any time during the school day.**

2. You will not be dismissed from school by a telephone request.

3. Students who become ill during school can only be dismissed by the school nurse or the Principal.

A student is not permitted to leave school grounds during the school day without permission. Failure to follow the correct dismissal procedure will be considered a truancy.

### **Appropriate Dress**

Your appearance and dress must not present a problem in the area of health, safety, or learning in the classroom. Whenever any clothes or accessories are questionable and may disrupt the learning environment, the principal has the authority to resolve the matter. Hats are not allowed.

### **No School Announcements**

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

Parents or guardians are asked not to call the school. On days when school is in session despite inclement weather, parents are asked to use their best judgment about their child's ability to attend school during the poor conditions.

### **Telephone Messages for Students**

The school office is a very busy place. Please do not call in telephone messages to be given to your child **except in the event of an emergency.**

### **Safety and Security**

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

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

## **Fire Alarm or Emergency Evacuation**

To evacuate the building:

1. The evacuation signal will be given by fire horn or loudspeaker.
2. Follow the exit directions posted in the area you are occupying when the signal sounds. Move quickly and quietly to your assigned outside area. Your teacher will take attendance.
3. If you cannot use your assigned exit, leave your area and the building by the nearest clear exit.
4. If the evacuation signal is given when you are not in class, leave the building by the nearest clear exit and go to the outside area assigned to your class.
5. When it is safe to return to the building, you will be directed to do so.
6. Any student who is proven to have set off a false alarm is subject to suspension. With the cooperation of the Quincy Fire Department, additional fines or penalties may be assessed against anyone in violation of this law.

## **School Bus or MBTA Bus**

Riding the bus is part of the school day. It should be noted that all school regulations apply to students while on any bus. The Quincy Public Schools Bus Code must be followed.

## **Traffic Restrictions on Hollis Avenue**

Between the hours of 7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. on school days, part of Hollis Avenue becomes a one-way street. Traffic is not permitted to enter Hollis Avenue at its intersection with Newbury Avenue during these times. Signs are clearly posted.

No cars are permitted to enter the fire lane directly in front of the school between the hours of 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

## **Lockers**

You are expected to go to your locker **only during designated times**. Backpacks must be kept in lockers due to space issues. Students are responsible for safeguarding their possessions.

Lockers are school property and are issued for student use. **The school administration has the right to inspect any locker without notice if there is reasonable cause.**

## Student Behavior and Conduct

Everyone has the right to receive an education in safe and comfortable surroundings that encourage learning. All students are expected to respect each other and adults at all times. Racial and other forms of discrimination either through speech or behavior will not be tolerated and are subject to disciplinary action.

Students should act in a reasonable and appropriate way when on school grounds or in the building. Loud noises, name-calling, pushing, shoving, tripping, swearing and offensive language or gestures will not be tolerated. Disciplinary measures will result from these types of behaviors.

In addition, the following conduct violates school rules before, after and during the school day, and is subject to disciplinary action:

1. Bullying (View QPS anti-bullying policy on line at [www.quincypublicschools.com](http://www.quincypublicschools.com) Link to District, Departments, Student Support, Anti-Bullying Policy)
2. Fighting
3. Truancy/Leaving school grounds without permission
4. Failure to report to a teacher after school
5. Physical rough-housing or horseplay
6. Forgery/Cheating/Plagiarizing
7. Trespassing in the school before or after school hours
8. Possessing explosives or fireworks
9. Carrying real or toy weapons, firearms, knives, and/or any materials capable of inflicting bodily harm
10. Selling, using and/or possessing smoking paraphernalia, alcoholic beverages or illegal or non-prescription drugs on school property or at school-sponsored events
11. The use of cell phones and other electronic devices is not permitted in school. All such devices must be turned off and remain in students' lockers during the school day.
12. Causing destruction and damage to school property or the property of another person. Writing, drawing or placing graffiti on school property or the property of another person is forbidden.
13. Gambling
14. Harassment- the unwanted physical or verbal attention toward a student or employee of Quincy Public Schools, or any harassment based on sex, race, national origin, religion or disability.

*(The Massachusetts Education Act of 1993 gives principals the authority to expel a student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school related events in possession of a dangerous weapon or controlled substance, or a student who assaults school personnel on school premises or at school sponsored or school related events. Rules and regulations concerning conduct are fully addressed in the Quincy Public Schools' pamphlet entitled: Students' Rights and Responsibilities.)*



## **Atlantic's Non-Negotiable Rules**

1. Be respectful to:
  - All your peers
  - All adults
  - At all times
2. Come to school every day.
3. Be punctual for the start of school and every class.
4. Be prepared for all classes: homework, books, pencils and pens.
5. Be Polite!
  - Use thank you and please
  - Do not wear hats, head coverings or jackets during school hours.
6. During school hours stay healthy:
  - No gum, candy, caffeine or tobacco products.
  - **Walk** to your classes, and do not poke, push, shove, punch, slap, jump or run. We don't want accidents.
  - Eliminate rough housing or fighting – these are not allowed to and from school or during school. **Remember, the school is responsible for you from the time you leave your home in the morning until you return home in the afternoon. All school rules and policies apply inside and outside the building during this time.**
  - Do not use dangerous/harmful substances. These cannot be brought to school. This includes whiteout, toxic magic markers and mouth spray.
  - Do not bring your cologne/perfume to school. Many students have allergic reactions and due to the misuse of these, they could become ill.
  - Do not bring any sort of weapon – not even a toy.
7. Get involved in school wide activities and exemplify Atlantic Pride.
8. Students' Bill of Rights
  - All students have the right to learn in a safe environment.
  - All students have the right to learn without distraction.
  - All students have the right to learn in a cared-for environment.

## Five Types of Writing

### **Type One: Capture Ideas**

Writing that has no correct - or, if there is a correct answer, it's okay to guess. One draft

### **Type Two: Respond Correctly**

Writing that makes a point - has correct answer or content. One draft

### **Type Three: Edit for Focus Correction Areas**

Writing that is read out loud and reviewed by the author who then asks three critical questions:

Does it complete the assignment?

Is it easy to read?

Does it fulfill the focus correction areas?

One draft

### **Type Four: Peer Edit for Focus Correction Areas**

Writing that is Type Three writing and has been read out loud and critiqued by another. Two drafts

### **Type Five: Publish**

Writing that is publishable that can go outside the classroom without explanation or qualification. Multiple drafts

### **For All Types**

For all types, skip lines. For types One and Two, label the type on top left-hand side of papers. For type Three and Four, list focuses correction areas on top left-hand side.

## **Success at Atlantic**

*It is as simple as ABC:*

**A**lways bring your agenda book to class.

**B**e prepared for class. Bring all necessary materials to class.

**C**reate a homework survival kit.

**D**iscuss problems with your teacher, parents, or guidance counselor.

**E**xercise and eat a balanced diet. A healthy body is just as important as a healthy mind.

**F**ollow all of Atlantic's non-negotiable rules.

**G**et to school on time. You should also report to class on time.

**H**elp your classmates if they are having trouble.

**I**nvolve your parents. Let them know what is going on in your classes.

**J**oin in on the many school activities offered at Atlantic. Get involved!

**K**eep an accurate agenda book. Check it daily and have a parent sign it.

**L**isten to the morning announcements and to all instructions given by your teachers.

**M**anage your time wisely!

**N**ever settle for less than your best. You are #1.

**O**rganize your locker, backpack, folders, and desk.

**P**repare all written assignments neatly.

**Q**uestions will always be answered, so don't be afraid to ask your teachers for help.

**R**espect your school, teachers and peers.

**S**tudy for all tests. Ask your parents to quiz you on important material.

**T**elephone your friends when you are absent to get your homework.

**U**tilize computers and a variety of reference materials.

**V**iolent actions should be reported to your teacher or to the office.

**W**elcome new students by being friendly and helpful.

**eX**plore all your options. Atlantic will provide you with many new adventures.

**Y**ou never get a second chance to make a good first impression....

**Z**ero in on making school your top priority. A successful future is waiting for you.

**The Key To Success ... Begins With YOU!!!**

*Thank you to Mrs. McGuire and her reading students for this great ABC's of Success.*



# QUINCY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## QUINCY, MASSACHUSETTS

### 2013-2014 SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

#### September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

  = No School/  
Holiday or Vacation

**Aug. 26:** Elementary and Middle School Offices Re-Open  
**Sept. 3:** First day for Professional Staff  
**Sept. 4:** First day of school, Grades 1-9  
**Sept. 5:** First day of school, Gr. 10-12  
**Sept. 6:** Kindergarten & Pre-Kindergarten Orientation  
**Sept. 9:** First day of school, Kindergarten & Pre-Kindergarten

**Sept. 10, 17, 24:** Elementary School Early Release Days  
**Sept. 10, 24:** Middle School Early Release Days

#### February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

**Feb. 4, 11, 25:** Elementary School Early Release Days  
**Feb. 11, 25:** Middle School Early Release Days  
**Feb. 11:** High School Early Release Day  
**Feb. 17-Feb. 21:** February Recess ~ No School

#### October

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

**Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29:** Elementary School Early Release Days  
**Oct. 8, 22:** Middle School Early Release Days  
**Oct. 8:** High School Early Release Day  
**Oct. 14:** Columbus Day ~ No School

#### March

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**Mar. 4, 11, 25:** Elementary School Early Release Days  
**Mar. 11, 25:** Middle School Early Release Days  
**Mar. 11:** High School Early Release Day  
**Mar. 18:** Full Day of School for Elementary ~ MCAS Long Composition

#### November

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

**Nov. 11:** Veteran's Day ~ No School  
**Nov. 5, 12, 19, 26:** Elementary School Early Release Days  
**Nov. 12, 26:** Middle School Early Release Days  
**Nov. 12:** High School Early Release Day  
**Nov. 27:** Early Release Day ~ All Schools NO LUNCH SERVED  
**Nov. 28 & 29:** Thanksgiving Recess ~ No School

#### April

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

**Apr. 1, 8, 15, 29:** Elementary School Early Release Days  
**Apr. 8, 29:** Middle School Early Release Days  
**Apr. 8:** High School Early Release Day  
**Apr. 18:** Good Friday ~ No School  
**Apr. 21-Apr. 25:** April Recess ~ No School

#### December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

**Dec. 3, 10, 17:** Elementary School Early Release Days  
**Dec. 10, 17:** Middle School Early Release Days  
**Dec. 10:** High School Early Release Day  
**Dec. 23-Dec. 31:** December Recess ~ No School

#### May

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**May 6, 13, 20, 27:** Elementary School Early Release Days  
**May 13, 27:** Middle School Early Release Days  
**May 6:** High School Early Release Day  
**May 26:** Memorial Day ~ No School  
**May 27:** Last Day of School for High School Seniors

#### January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**Jan. 1:** New Year's Day ~ No School  
**Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28:** Elementary School Early Release Days  
**Jan. 14, 28:** Middle School Early Release Days  
**Jan. 14:** High School Early Release Day  
**Jan. 20:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Observed ~ No School

#### June

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

**June 2:** QHS Graduation (Rain Date June 4)  
**June 3:** NQHS Graduation (Rain Date June 5)  
**June 3, 10, 17:** Elementary School Early Release Days  
**June 10, 17:** Middle School Early Release Days

Elementary School Offices Close 6 days after last day of school  
 Middle School Offices Close 11 days after last day of school  
 High School Offices Open all summer for registration

**June 17:** Last Day of School: May be adjusted for school cancellations (Early Release Day for Elementary & Middle Schools)  
**June 18:** Last Day for Professional Staff (May be adjusted for cancellations)  
**June 24:** Last Day of School (in case of 5 days school cancellations)  
**June 25:** Last Day for Professional Staff (5 days school cancellations)

Approved by the Quincy School Committee 1/23/2013

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