

# WELCOME TO THE

MILL POND SCHOOL

## STUDENT-FAMILY HANDBOOK

### 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR

Dear Mill Pond students and families:

Welcome to a new school year at the Mill Pond School! I am so excited for this upcoming year! Based on all the wonderful things I was able to be apart of last year, I am sure this year is going to be even more amazing. With each student I meet, it has becomes more and more apparent how committed this community is to its exceptional educational programs that support and encourage our students to become capable and concerned citizens.

During their time with us, our students will grow in their understanding of the academic disciplines, demonstrate enhanced abilities to approach tasks and new information in a creative manner, use critical-thinking to problem-solve as they are presented with novel situations, collaborate with peers to enrich and demonstrate learning, and communicate clearly in a variety of formats. We are deeply committed to making sure that Mill Pond is a safe and supportive learning environment for each and every student. The "Touchstone" and "Keys to Success", listed below, clearly express our expectations for everyone at Mill Pond, and is the foundation of building a respectful and collaborative environment. The beginning of the school year is the perfect time to think about who we are as learners, friends, and classmates, and to set goals about what we plan to accomplish together!

On behalf of the Mill Pond staff, welcome to the new school year. Together we will make it a year filled with learning, laughter, and memorable experiences!

Sincerely,

Peter Guellnitz

**"LEARNING  
AND  
CARING -  
IT'S WHAT  
WE DO  
HERE!"**



# Mill Pond School and District Information Sheet 2019-20

<p align="center"><b>Mill Pond School</b>  <b>6 Olde Hickory Path</b>  <b>508-836-7780</b></p> <p><b>Absentee Line: 508-836-7780 Please call BEFORE 7:30 a.m.</b></p>	<p><b>School Hours: 7:45 a.m.- 2:02 p.m.</b>                  Students are escorted to homerooms at 7:35 a.m.                  Students should NOT arrive before 7:25 a.m.</p>
<p>Mr. Peter Guellnitz, Principal                  Ms. Maura Kovaleski, Grade 5 &amp; 6 Assistant Principal                  Mr. Jeff Slomski, Grades 4 &amp; 6 Assistant Principal</p>	<p>Mrs. Michele Mongeon, Principal's Administrative Assistant                  Mrs. Cleria Burnell, Front Office Secretary                  Ms. Jenna Hogan, Special Education Secretary</p>
<p>Mrs. Aliza DeVincent Grades 4/5 Special Education Coordinator                  Mrs. Gina Dalan, Grade 6 Special Education Coordinator</p>	<p>Mrs. Karen Hong, Grade 4 Counselor                  Mr. David Cohen, Grade 5 Counselor                  Mrs. Christine Brouillard, Grade 6 Counselor</p>

<p align="center"><b>Westborough School Addresses and Phone Numbers</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>Armstrong Elementary School</td><td>18 Fisher St.</td><td>508-836-7760</td></tr> <tr><td>Fales Elementary School</td><td>50 Eli Whitney St.</td><td>508-836-7770</td></tr> <tr><td>Hastings Elementary School</td><td>111 E. Main St.</td><td>508-836-7750</td></tr> <tr><td>Mill Pond Elementary School</td><td>6 Olde Hickory Path</td><td>508-836-7780</td></tr> <tr><td>Gibbons Middle School</td><td>20 Fisher St.</td><td>508-836-7740</td></tr> <tr><td>Westborough High School</td><td>90 W. Main St.</td><td>508-836-7720</td></tr> </table>	Armstrong Elementary School	18 Fisher St.	508-836-7760	Fales Elementary School	50 Eli Whitney St.	508-836-7770	Hastings Elementary School	111 E. Main St.	508-836-7750	Mill Pond Elementary School	6 Olde Hickory Path	508-836-7780	Gibbons Middle School	20 Fisher St.	508-836-7740	Westborough High School	90 W. Main St.	508-836-7720	<p align="center"><b>Westborough Public Schools Offices</b>  <b>200 Friberg Parkway 508-836-7700</b></p> <table border="0"> <tr><td>Superintendent</td><td>Amber Bock</td></tr> <tr><td>Assistant Superintendent</td><td>Daniel Mayer</td></tr> <tr><td>Director of Business</td><td>Irene Oliver</td></tr> <tr><td>Director of Student Services</td><td>Sherrie Stevens</td></tr> <tr><td>Transportation Coordinator</td><td>Cindy Crowley</td></tr> </table>	Superintendent	Amber Bock	Assistant Superintendent	Daniel Mayer	Director of Business	Irene Oliver	Director of Student Services	Sherrie Stevens	Transportation Coordinator	Cindy Crowley
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<p><b>Community Ed/Extended Day Program:</b>  <b>After-School Child Care Program</b>                  Director: Brian Bacon                  508-836-7765, 7766</p> <p>Westborough Recreation Department:                  508-366-3066</p> <p>Westborough Library:                  508-366-3053</p>		<p><b><u>Lunch Prices:</u></b>                  Lunch: \$3.00                  Milk: \$.60                  Assorted snacks available                  Students may pay in cash or through online account</p> <p>Free and reduced priced lunches available for qualified applicants.</p>
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## Character Development for the 21st Century

“We must remember that intelligence is not enough.  
Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education.”

-Martin Luther King, Jr.



Success in the 21st century requires us to be independent and interdependent, risk-taking and resilient, knowledgeable and adaptable, self-aware and empathetic. In life, this manifests itself in the ability to collaborate with others, respectfully give and take directions, understand and embrace diverse backgrounds, and problem-solve as well as achieve goals. In schools, students must absorb and synthesize enormous amounts of information, creatively apply this information to novel situations, independently and collaboratively accomplish tasks, and effectively communicate. At Mill Pond, we facilitate student academic and social-emotional growth with character development embedded in our curriculum. A focus on empathy and resilience serves these 21st century goals and prepares our students to be successful and contributing citizens with a global perspective.

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In 2008-2009, students and teachers wrote a school Touchstone, which is our gold standard for the way we speak and act. We recite the Touchstone together on Monday mornings to guide us when making decisions about our words and actions every day.

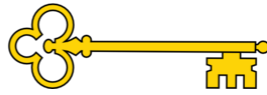
### **The Mill Pond School Touchstone**

At Mill Pond, we share mutual trust and an expectation of honesty.

Here, respect and truthfulness are essential. In our caring community, we are responsible for being kind to others and being actively involved within our society. Together, we harbor self-esteem, practice generosity, and express gratitude. We assist one another. We are responsible stewards of our natural world. We celebrate our special qualities, persevere through challenges, and embrace our differences.

Learning and caring...it's what we do here.

## Keys to Success



Our **Keys to Success** are the framework we use for addressing essential concepts in character development. It spotlights monthly values fundamental to building strong, positive character.

September	Respect	Treating yourself, others, materials and the environment in a considerate, valued manner. This is the application of the Golden Rule.
October	Responsibility	Being accountable for your words and actions, exercising self-control, and having a sense of duty to complete tasks.
November	Empathy	Trying to understand and be sensitive to another's feelings or ideas; trying to see things from another's perspective.
December	Generosity	Giving or sharing in abundance without expecting anything in return.
January	Resilience	Not giving up with whatever one has set out to do; persisting; bouncing back when you experience challenges or setbacks.
February	Integrity	Being honest with oneself and others at all times. Doing the right thing even when no one is watching.
March	Acceptance	Recognizing the uniqueness and value of each individual and embracing differences in our diverse society.
April	Courage	Being brave in trying tasks that are new or difficult, and choosing to do what is right, fair or just.
May	Kindness	Observing and recognizing the needs of others and acting in a way to meet those needs; treating others the way you want to be treated.
June	Gratitude	Being thankful and showing appreciation; being ready to return kindness.

**At Mill Pond School, Character Education is the foundation for everything we do.**

Character development entails the positive attitude we reflect to students from the moment they arrive at school. It is the large-scale, noted school activities that have won "Promising Practices" recognitions, as well as the briefest responses to a student to assert that his thinking matters or that her attempts to learn difficult material are worthy of personal pride. Character education means infusing the consideration of essential values into the language and process of our interactions, the delivery of academic content, and our outlook in encouraging each child to find her or his small, quiet gifts of leadership.

# Welcome!

## Important Information About Our School

### SCHOOL ROUTINES

Welcome to this section of our Student-Family Handbook which will help you become familiar with the details of our routines and policies. These routines and policies provide your student with the optimal environment for learning and by adhering to them you help the school to run more efficiently. A system for handling day-to-day details is needed for a large school such as ours, and our routines have proven to work well. We appreciate your support for these routines as they will allow us to focus our attention on your student's learning, our primary endeavor!

### Parent/Visitor/Volunteer Policy

**Parent Visitor Sign-In and Security:** We welcome parent participation at school and need to provide a structure to monitor adult visitors to the building in order to maintain a safe and secure school. All external doors to the school will be locked after 7:45 a.m. and you will need to ring the bell to gain admittance. All visitors and volunteers must report to the office upon arrival, sign the visitor's log and wear a visitor badge while in the building. This policy is for the safety of all our students and staff. If you wish to speak to a teacher, please send in a note, e-mail or call the office to leave a voice message. We ask that parents not show up at a teacher's door unannounced to talk to him/her. If you must speak with a teacher on an emergency basis, please contact the office and we will be happy to assist you. Classroom instruction may not be interrupted. When ready to leave, you must sign out in the office and return your visitor badge.

### CORI Checks:

M.G.L. c. 71 38R requires all schools in Massachusetts to conduct criminal background checks on current and prospective employees and volunteers, including those who regularly provide school related transportation to students who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. The CORI law requires a school or district to notify all persons for whom a CORI is requested that such information is being or may be obtained. Prospective employees and volunteers are required to complete and sign a CORI Request Form which is available through the school secretary at each of the schools, as well as the administration office at Forbes building. The Request Form is used to document that we have provided you with notice that a CORI is being conducted and to verify your identity through a government issued form of photographic identification (usually a driver's license).

We LOVE and appreciate having family members volunteer at school events and for school field trips. In order to ensure the safety of all of our students, we require that all volunteers undergo a CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) Check. The process is simple: you fill out a short form with your name, current and former addresses, date of birth, place of birth, parents' names, and the last six digits of your social security number. You must come to the office between 8:15 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. and present your driver's license, passport, or state-issued ID card to the Front Office Secretary who will include a copy of your ID with your CORI form. This information is sent to the central office which then submits them for review. Within a few weeks, we are notified that you are clear to volunteer. CORI Checks last for three years, so if you complete one when your child begins at Mill Pond, you will be all set until your child goes to middle school! Additionally, if you complete a CORI Check for one of the Westborough Public Schools, that is good for all of the schools. If you think there is a possibility that you will want to volunteer in any capacity, please do not delay in completing this important process. Thank you for understanding this necessary step in ensuring the safety of our students.

**Please use the CORI form at the end of this Handbook for your convenience. The form must be presented to the Mill Pond office In-Person, along with a proper form of identification that includes a photo (Ex: passport, valid US driver's license).**

**School Hours:** School hours are from 7:45 a.m. to 2:02 p.m. Morning Community Meetings and announcements begin at 7:45, and students will be marked tardy if they arrive after 7:45 a.m. It is important to know that in order for students to have the best start to the day, we strongly recommend that students **arrive no later than 7:40 a.m.** and ideally, they should arrive by 7:35 a.m. Beginning at 7:35 a.m., students line up to enter the building and proceed to their homerooms. Once there, they unpack, get their materials organized for the day, read any Morning Messages from their teachers, and begin work before the announcements start at 7:45. This is an important time of the day for reconnecting with classmates and staff, and for preparing for the learning to come. Please help your child to be prepared for success by making sure he/she arrives by 7:35!

Students being driven to school should not arrive before 7:20 a.m. as there is no adult supervision on the playground before that time.

School buses are unloaded at 7:30 a.m. and staff supervision begins at this time.

At 7:33, students report to their grade-specific meeting locations:

- ❑ Grade 4 students meet on the plaza in front of the school
- ❑ Grade 5 students meet on the playground by the cafeteria.
- ❑ Grade 6 students meet on the upper playground by the gym.

In the event of inclement weather, students will gather at designated areas inside the school.

**Tardiness:** It is expected that students are in their homerooms by time the 7:45 bell rings. Students who arrive to school later than 7:45 am are considered tardy. If a child is tardy to school, a parent should bring the student into the office and sign him/her in, at which time the student will get a pass from the office before going to class. This process ensures that a student's attendance record is changed from absent to tardy. A tardy may be considered "excused" for reasons such as a doctor's appointment and a parent should present a note explaining the tardy. It is important for students to get in the habit of coming to school on time as this promotes good habits of punctuality. Upon accumulating five or more unexcused tardies that result in missing two or more classes, the student's parents will be contacted and a meeting will be convened with the Principal or designee to develop an action plan to address the student's attendance. We appreciate your cooperation in helping our students start each day ready for learning.

**Parent Pick-up Policy and Dismissal Policy:** All Parents who pick-up students must park in the main parking lot. If your student will typically be parent pick-up, you should come to the exterior cafeteria door by 2:06 and sign your student out on the "Everyday Parent Pick-up" Sheet. Please do not arrive between 1:45 and 2:06 and ask for your child to be dismissed early unless you have sent in a note that morning explaining the time of dismissal and the reason an early dismissal is needed. Students are in class until 1:55 and then are busy listening to end-of-the-day instructions from their teachers and getting themselves organized for the evening. This is an important time for students and one in which the office staff is also very busy monitoring the dismissal routine. Thanks for your understanding in helping your child's end-of-the-day routine be as strong as the beginning-of-the-day routine, both essential to learning!

**Early Dismissal/Parent Pick-up:** If a student typically rides a bus and picking up your child at dismissal time is not normally your child's routine, the parent must send a note to the teacher in the morning stating that the student will be a "parent pick up" at the end of the day. The note should indicate that the student will be picked up instead of riding the bus and the note should include the name of the person who will pick up the child. The adult picking up the child should come to the exterior cafeteria door at 2:06 and sign the child out on the "Student Dismissal-Parent Pick-up" sheet.

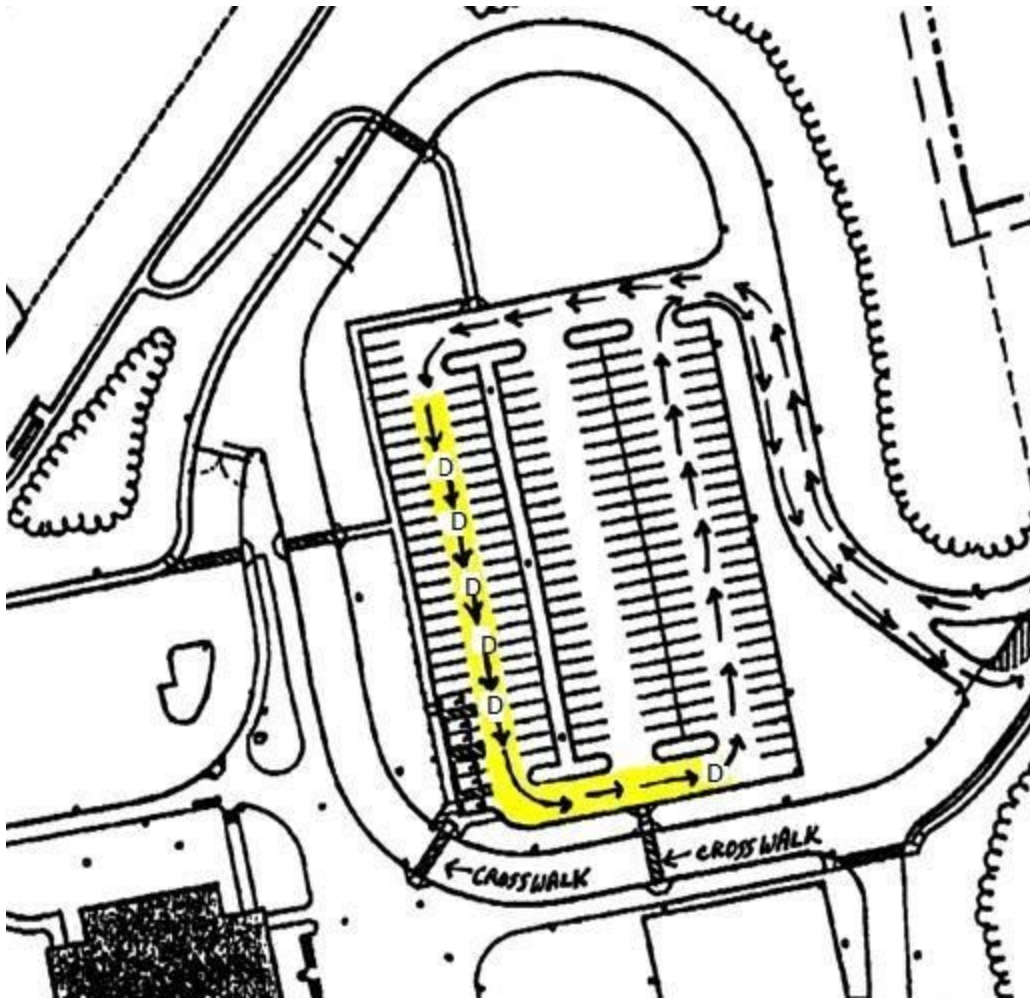
If a student is to be dismissed from school before the end of the day, the parent **must send a note** to the teacher in the morning stating when the student will be dismissed and the reason for the dismissal (doctor's appointment, etc.). The student's parent must come in to the office to sign out the student, recording the time of dismissal and the reason for early dismissal. The student will then be called to the office.

Calling the office to change dismissal plans is strongly discouraged. If a change in dismissal plans is needed due to an emergency, please call before 1:10 pm that day. We will notify the student so that he/she knows they will be parent pick-up and will come to the main lobby at dismissal time.

## Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up/Parking Lot Procedures

**Morning Drop Off** – If you drive your child to school, enter the school property via Olde Hickory Path and follow the path indicated by the arrows on the map below. Students should be let out of cars in the areas marked "D" on the map. Please make sure to **PULL FORWARD in this L-shaped area** as far as possible, so that other cars behind you may also unload their students and so that we can keep the lines of cars moving quickly through the parking lot. The goal is that multiple cars can drop off at any one time. Please don't wait and creep along to drop one car at a time in the corner only. Letting students out all along the marked area moves the line along more quickly. Please **DO NOT** drop your student off in the middle of the parking lot where cars are parking. Staff members and visitors are parking their cars during this time and it is unsafe for children to walk through the parking lot at this time. The designated drop-off areas have safe and easy access to sidewalks and crosswalks and are the only areas that should be used for drop-off. Please be alert to the handicap parking areas and do not use this area unless you have a designated reason to do so. Finally, please remember that there is no adult supervision until 7:20 am. Thank you for helping us to ensure that student drop-off is safe and efficient for everyone!





**Student Pick Up at Dismissal:** If you need to pick up your student at the end of the day, please follow these guidelines:

- Send in a note stating that your student will be a parent pick up and give the name of the person who will pick-up.
- Come into the school and sign the student out.
- Students may not walk into the parking lot without a parent.
- Use the designated crosswalks.

**Important Notes Regarding Dismissal:**

- If the student does not have a note or a parent has not phoned in a change of dismissal plans, the student will follow the normal bus routine.
- For safety's sake and to prevent bus overcrowding, students are not allowed to switch buses or ride a bus that is not assigned to them. Bus changes are only allowed in emergencies or other unavoidable circumstances. Social reason, private lessons, etc., cannot be accommodated. If you need to make alternate bus arrangements, please send your request to the main office and we will see if this request can be accommodated.
- Idling of Motor Vehicles:
  - For the safety and welfare of students and staff, we would remind you that Massachusetts law prohibits the unnecessary idling of motor vehicles on school grounds. M.G.L. c.90, §16B and 504 CMR 27.00 prohibit operators of motor vehicles from allowing any motor vehicle to idle unnecessarily on school grounds.

**Updating Biographical Information, Health Information, and Emergency Contacts:** Student Information must be updated every year and/or whenever it changes. All of this information will be updated online via the Power School Parent Portal. Please be sure that all parent/guardian information is accurate, including home phone number, cell phone numbers, and work numbers. Please also make sure to list the names and contact information for two adults who may be able to pick up your child in the event of an injury or illness if you are not available. Listing their names gives us permission to dismiss your child to their care.

**Very Important: If you change jobs, home/cell/work phone numbers, or email addresses during the school year, you MUST update this information in PowerSchool. Please make sure that this information is always current as this is how we will reach you for both regular communications and in emergencies.**



This includes:

- Each parent's home phone number
- Each parent's cell phone number
- Each parent's work phone number
- The names and contact information of at least two people who are authorized to dismiss your child and pick-up your child
  - Please note, in the event of illness or injury, a child can only be released to a parent or another adult who has been authorized by the parent to do so
  - Listing adults gives us permission to dismiss your child to their care

In order to change the child and/or parents' home address, you must notify the Assistant Superintendent's office and provide documentation of your new address.

**Early Release Days:** There are two types of Early Release Days. On a regular Early Release Day or Half Day, students will be dismissed beginning at 11:02 a.m. These dates are noted on our school website.

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance and on-time arrival to school are critical to your child's education. One of the most important things parents can do for their children is to **get them to school every day and make sure that they arrive on time**. All students should **arrive by 7:35 a.m.** so they can enter the school with their class, or at the latest, by 7:40 a.m. This gives them the time they need to get organized and settle in for the start of the school day at 7:45. Students who arrive after 7:45 are marked tardy and an adult must sign him/her into the office upon arrival.

**Attendance:** Students are required to have regular attendance except for personal illness, major religious holidays, bereavement, legal matters, excusable emergencies, or other reasonable excuses. **Vacations, family trips, etc. are not considered excused absences and are strongly discouraged as they have a negative impact on student learning.** Massachusetts General Law chapter 76, Section 2 states: "A parent can be fined if a student fails to attend school for seven days (or fourteen half days) within a six-month period." Students with a pattern of excessive absences and/or tardiness will be referred to the Assistant Principal, Principal, and/or Attendance Officer for appropriate action.

**Reporting an Absence:** A parent must call the school, 508-836-7780 by 7:30 am on the morning of your student's absence to report that your child will not be in school. An answering machine is available to accept recorded messages if you call prior to the start of the school day. You will be prompted to press "2" to report the absence. State the student's name, grade, teacher, and brief reason for the absence. These messages will be matched up with the daily attendance reports done by the teachers. Any student's absence not reported at this time will be investigated and a parent will be called to verify that the child is safe. As the school year progresses, administrators may contact parents regarding an excessive number of absences. After every absence a note is required when a student returns, even when absences have been reported by phone. The note should include the child's name, the date(s) of the absence, the reason for the absence, and a parent's signature. If the school does not receive such written confirmation within three (3) school days of the student's absence, the parents will be contacted .

**Extended Absences:** If your child is absent for 3 or more days due to illness or injury, you may receive homework for them by calling the school in the morning. Homework may be picked up in the afternoon in the office.

**Extended absences from school for family trips, vacations, etc. are strongly discouraged, as this can be very disruptive to your child's education.** These missed days are considered **unexcused absences**, even if you notify the school in advance. If an extended time away from school is unavoidable, please send a note to the teacher AND the main office with your child's name, homeroom teacher, dates of absence and reason for absence. According to school district policy, we do NOT provide schoolwork in advance for students who miss school for family trips and vacations. Upon your child's return, the teacher will grant a reasonable amount of time for him/her to make up important assignments. While these assignments will correspond to the missed curriculum, they cannot duplicate the value of in-class instruction and hands-on activities.

**Truancy:** Truancy is an absence for which no satisfactory explanation has been given. This would include a child who "refuses" to attend school despite the parent's direction to do so. Such cases will be referred to the Principal, Assistant Principal, and/or the Attendance Officer.

**Early Dismissal Due to Unforeseen Conditions:** At the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools, the school may be released early in such cases as snow emergencies and/or extended lack of electricity, heat, or water. In the situation where all students are sent home early, the superintendent or school principal will notify parents via the Connect-Ed. emergency call system. This is another reason why it is so critically important that you keep the office updated if your home, cell, or work number changes.

**School Cancellations:** The Superintendent will make the decision about closing school for inclement weather by 6:00 am via the Connect-Ed. system. The announcement can also be heard on local radio and Boston television stations as well as the local Westborough cable channel. If conditions warrant, there may be a one or two-hour delay instead of closing schools.

## School Bus Transportation

**Bus routes** are published in the late summer on the district web site and in the local newspapers. All requests for bus stop concerns, changes or additions should be emailed to the **Transportation Coordinator Cindy Crowley at [crowleyc@westboroughk12.org](mailto:crowleyc@westboroughk12.org)**. Every effort will be made to address these requests. Only under the direction of Westborough Public Schools Administration will bus routes be revised.

Due to large number of students who ride the bus, changes to the daily bus assignments are not allowed for safety and accountability reasons. A child **may NOT take another bus** to visit friends, attend parties, or to take private lessons. **Any request for an emergency reason or permanent change must be made through the Assistant Principal's office.**

**Student Conduct on the School Bus:** The right of student transportation to and from school is a qualified right dependent upon the student's good behavior. To promote a safe and pleasant bus riding experience for all, the following bus rules have been established. **To ensure the safety of all students, all bus riders are expected to follow these bus safety rules at all times:**

The standards for behavior outlined in the Mill Pond School Code of Conduct and Responsibility Rubric also apply to the time students spend traveling to and from school on the bus. This includes prohibited use of electronics such as cell phones and iPads until students leave the bus. This ensures that no inappropriate actions occur while students are not under adult supervision. Students are expected to:

- Be respectful to the bus driver and other students at all times
- Sit in their seats at all times during the bus ride
- Demonstrate patience
- Refrain from throwing objects around or out the windows of the bus
- Keep all electronics safely secured in their backpacks

**The bus driver is in charge of students while they ride the bus.** If inappropriate behaviors are extreme or persistent, a Bus Incident Report will be sent to the Principal or Assistant Principal. The Principal or Assistant Principal will discuss the problem with the student and parents will be notified of the incident. To report concerns about student behavior on the bus, please contact the Assistant Principal for your child's grade level.

Consequences for inappropriate behavior\* on the bus will be determined by the Principal or Assistant Principal. Consequences can include; writing a letter of apology, an assigned seat on the bus, loss of recess or other school privilege, written report to parents, suspension from the bus, or suspension from school. If a student receives three reports, he or she will not be allowed to ride the bus for a period of time. If a child is suspended from the bus for disciplinary reasons, it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to transport the child to/from school.

\*Inappropriate behavior can include any of the following:

- Behaviors described in our Responsibility Rubric
- Damaging the bus
- Damaging other students' property
- Fighting
- Abusive language to the driver or other students
- Bullying/Harassment
- Rude, discourteous or annoying behavior to the driver or other students
- Violation of safety procedures
- Excessive mischief
- Littering on the bus
- Distracting the driver by any means
- Misbehavior at the bus stop
- Throwing of any article either in the bus, throwing any article out of the bus, or throwing anything at the bus
- Making obscene gestures to persons inside or outside the bus
- Not properly lining up to board the bus
- Acting in a manner where the action results in injury to another person
- Use of electronics (cell phones, iPads, etc.)

## Other Information About Our School

**Telephone Use:** Students are permitted to use the school phone only for emergencies. Use of the telephone is not permitted to arrange after-school visiting plans with other students, unless authorized by an adult. Students are not allowed to use the telephone to

call home for forgotten homework, musical instruments, lunch, or miscellaneous items unless authorized by a staff member. Students should never call home from a personal cell phone unless authorized to do so by a staff member.

**Lost and Found:** There is a “Lost and Found” area located in the front lobby near the cafeteria. If things are lost, students should check the Lost and Found tables. Periodically, all unclaimed Lost and Found items are donated to local charities. We highly recommend that student names be written on the inside labels of clothing. We also advise that students should not bring items that are valuable or irreplaceable. It is the responsibility of the student to keep track of his/her possessions.

**Kids’ Fund:** A Kid’s Fund has been established at Mill Pond with the help of the Mill Pond Parent Group and private donations. This fund provides financial assistance to families in need who may need help for field trips, school supplies, and other educational items needed in school. All Kids’ Fund transactions are kept totally confidential. Parents should contact the Principal, grade level counselor, or school nurse for further information.

**Field Trips:** Field trips are planned during the school year. Before any planned field trip, an announcement of the trip and a permission slip is sent home. The signed permission slip must be returned to the teacher along with a fee to cover transportation and admission before a student may participate. Chaperones are often needed to help with these outings the teacher will let parents know if any are needed. CORI Checks are required for all volunteer chaperones and must be completed two weeks in advance of the field trip. Please contact the main office to make arrangements to complete the form and show your ID to office staff who will facilitate the CORI check for you.

**Snack Time:** Classroom teachers will provide a time for students to have a snack each day. Students are responsible for bringing their own snack. Healthy snacks, such as fruit, crackers and cheese, or vegetable sticks are encouraged. Students are discouraged from sharing snacks due to possible allergic reactions. **All classrooms are peanut and tree nut restricted, so please do not send any snacks containing those ingredients.** Student may bring water bottles with them to school.

**Lunch Periods:** Lunch periods are approximately 22 minutes long and recess is approximately 22 minutes as well. If your child is not buying and eating the school-made lunch, you are encouraged to pack a nutritious lunch for your student.

**Lunch Program:** Hot lunches are available for students to purchase daily in the cafeteria. A monthly lunch menu is published on our website. Breakfast is not served. The cost of lunch is \$3.00 per day. The price includes an 8 oz. carton of milk (2% white milk, skim, or chocolate) and fruit and/or vegetable. Each day, students may choose from the featured menu selection or an assortment of fresh deli salads, sandwiches, hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hot dogs, chicken patties, pizza or bagels. Students who bring their own lunch may purchase an 8 oz. carton of milk for \$.60 per day. Please click on the “Lunch Menu” link under the Quick Links menu on our school website. From there, you can access the menus, learn about nutrition information, and pre-pay into your child’s lunch account.

**Due to potential life-threatening allergies our cafeteria no longer uses any ingredients that contain tree nuts or peanuts. Students may still bring these foods for their own lunch. The school will maintain a nut/peanut free table in the cafeteria. Parents who require their students to sit at the peanut-free table should inform the school nurse and their student’s teacher in writing. Please impress on your student the importance of not sharing food or utensils with other students.**

Parent may deposit money into their child’s lunch account at any point during the school year. Lunch, milk, and snack money goes into one account. Parents are able to monitor the purchases as well as the balance on the lunch account. If you would like restrictions placed on your child’s account, contact the school. Payment to an account can also be made by a check (*made out to Westborough School Lunch*) or cash sent in with your student. Students can also make cash lunch purchases on a daily basis.

All students have an account and will be required to enter their PIN regardless of whether they use cash or a pre-paid account. If a student, for whatever reason, does not have a lunch or lunch money, or has depleted their pre-paid lunch account, they are allowed to charge the cost of their meal to their account, even if it means going into the negative. A notice will be sent home if the student’s account shows a negative balance. Again, parents may use the website to monitor their student’s lunch account at any time.

Reduced rates (\$.40) and free lunches are available for those students who qualify under federal guidelines. Application forms for this are available on the school website under the “Lunch Menu” link and can be completed online. Hard copies are also available in the main office. If your family’s financial circumstances change during the school year, you may apply at any time for free or reduced price lunch. The main office handles eligibility for free and reduced priced lunch confidentially.

**Cafeteria Guidelines:** In order to create a clean, pleasant cafeteria environment for students and staff, the following cafeteria rules have been established. Please take a moment to review these lunchroom guidelines with your student.

The standards for behavior outlined in the Mill Pond School Code of Conduct and the Responsibility Rubric apply to the time students spend in the cafeteria eating lunch.

- Students must remain seated at their assigned tables until their table is dismissed except when they are purchasing food or disposing of trash. Wandering from table to table to swap food or socialize is not allowed.
- Students may not purchase snacks as their main lunch.
- Students are responsible for cleaning up and throwing away their trash at the end of lunch and for leaving their table in good order for the next lunch group.
- If there are spills, students should let the custodians or Noon Aides know immediately.
- Students may not take food out of the cafeteria unless they are instructed to do so by a person in authority.
- If students need to leave the cafeteria during lunch, they must get permission from a Noon Aide and check back when they return.

**Birthdays:** Please know that children will not be able to distribute birthday invitations in the classroom. The school cannot provide addresses for such. Please refer to your School Directory once published.

**Dress Code:** School administrators or teachers may require students to change if they feel clothing is inappropriate or distracting to the educational process. With a few exceptions, the dress code is in effect for both the school and ALL events that occur at the school or are associated with the school, such as field trips.

- Hats and bandanas may not be worn in school (Exceptions will be allowed in the cases of medical or religious situations.)
- Flip-flops are a safety hazard and should not be worn. Sandals must have a strap behind the heel to ensure they stay on at recess and on the stairways.
- Students should wear tops that are not see-through and that cover the front, back and midriff.
- Undergarment straps should not be visible. (The 2 finger rule is a guideline for strap width.)
- No clothing that promotes alcohol, tobacco products or illegal drugs may be worn.

**Playground Guidelines:** To ensure that recess is a safe and respectful experience for all, the following playground guidelines have been established.

- The standards for behavior outlined in the Mill Pond School Code of Conduct and the Responsibility Rubric apply to the playground areas outside the school.
- Snowball fights are not allowed. No student should intentionally throw or kick snow or ice at another student.
- In case of snowy conditions, students must wear appropriate snow clothes if they are to play in the snow.

**Open House:** There will be Open House evenings at Mill Pond for parents to meet the teachers, tour the classrooms, and hear first-hand about the expectations, curriculum goals, and activities for the year. *This is not a time for parent/teacher conferences.* The dates and times of Open House will be announced via the MPS website calendar, the Weekly News and Notes section of the MPS website, and in the principal's weekly email to families.

### **Outdoor Classroom Activities:**

The Mill Pond School is located in the midst of a beautiful natural environment which includes a system of well-developed nature trails and the Mill Pond itself. As such, our students and teachers are able to participate in many outdoor classroom activities which connect to the regular academic curriculum. A committee of staff members representing each grade level has developed a list of very important Outdoor Safety Guidelines to ensure that the outdoor learning experiences for each of our students are positive and absolutely safe. This committee has also developed a Mill Pond School Code of Outdoor Ethics. This code serves as an outgrowth of our Character Education Program and connects directly to our Code of Conduct and Responsibility Rubric. All staff members, students, and family members should be aware of these documents.

### **Code of Outdoor Ethics**

- Behave in the outdoors as you would in the classroom. Follow the *Mill Pond Code of Conduct and Responsibility Rubric* wherever you go.
- Put safety first. Listen to adult leaders and follow the Mill Pond School Outdoor Safety Guidelines.
- Respect the natural environment. Whenever possible, leave nature undisturbed.
- Collect only living things that are plentiful, can be kept alive, and can be learned from. Whenever possible, return living things to their original location.
- Always be within sight of an adult. Be sure to stay between the designated "lead" and the "sweep."
- Use the "buddy system." Stay within sight of your buddy at all times.
- Respect the rights of other community members you encounter in the outdoors.
- Pick up after yourself and others. Carry off the trail anything you carry in.
- Be a responsible steward of our natural world!***

## Mill Pond Parent Group (MPPG)

The Mill Pond Parent group, also known as MPPG, is a volunteer group of parents and guardians who support the school in a multitude of ways. They organize the Student Directory, plan and run major events such as the Book Fair, Ice Cream Social, and Family BINGO Night, and conduct fundraising activities that support enrichment programming at Mill Pond. MPPG also coordinates school volunteers such as Classroom Representatives and Activity Period Parents. Getting involved with MPPG is easy! You can donate a small amount of your time or larger amounts; you decide! Becoming a part of the MPPG community is a fun way to stay connected to events at school, help the school provide a variety of activities for our students, and to get to know other parents/guardians. Be on the lookout for information that will come home in the First Day packets. Also note: there will soon be information posted on our website with an updated link to a new MPPG webpage.

The MPPG holds monthly meetings to which all parents/guardians are invited to attend. They are typically scheduled for the 2nd Thursday of the month from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. and will be noted on our school's public calendar. Additional information about MPPG activities and meetings will be shared in the Principal's Weekly Memo that is sent electronically to all families. Please consider joining us at any meeting.

## Reporting Student Progress

**Parent Teacher Conferences:** There will be one designated evening as well as two designated afternoons for parent teacher conferences in the Fall. Conferences are scheduled at the discretion of the teacher or parent. At any time during the school year, additional conferences may be requested, although a telephone call or a written note or email to the teacher may also be helpful in addressing certain concerns. **You are always urged to please contact the teacher directly first regarding questions or concerns you may have about your student's academic or social progress at school.**

In the event a parent contacts a staff member by phone, email, or note, the district standard states that the staff member should respond within 48 hours (2 school days) of receiving the message.

**Standards-Based Report Cards:** Report cards are issued to all students on a regular basis to keep parents informed about their child's progress in school. Students receive academic marks which reflect a student's progress relative to grade level standards in each subject area. Report cards are issued at the end of each trimester and the grades noted are based on what the expectation is for student progress at that time of year. A grade of "3" on a standard means that a student is consistently and independently performing at grade level on that standard. A grade of "2" means that a student is approaching the grade level standard and may either need teacher prompting to do the grade level work, or does not grasp the material fully yet. A grade of "4" means that a student consistently and independently demonstrates understanding beyond what is taught and grade level expectations. Parents can view their student's Report Card through PowerSchool and paper copies are not sent home. Report cards dates will be posted on the calendar on the MPS website and will be shared in the principal's weekly email to families. Please note: Special Education Progress Reports coincide with trimester report cards. The approximate dates for report cards follow:

Trimester 1: early December  
Trimester 2: late March  
Trimester 3: the last day of school

## WHEN YOU HAVE A CONCERN ABOUT YOUR CHILD

Over the course of your child's career, you may have a time when you are concerned about your child's academic, behavioral, social, or emotional progress. If you have any questions or concerns, we encourage you to collaborate with us to resolve any issues.

**The first step is always to talk directly with your child's teacher.** In terms of school performance, they know your child best and usually have first-hand knowledge about any problems or incidents that may have taken place. Most issues can be resolved at this level through the sharing of accurate information and observations. You may contact your child's teacher via email or phone and either of these methods are typically the quickest and easiest ways to address a concern. Please communicate what your concerns are and the best way in which a teacher can reach you. Please know that calls that come in during the day will go to the teacher's voicemail, and he/she will contact you within two school days. If you wish to meet with the teacher, please request a meeting and the teacher or Team Leader will contact you to schedule this.

If you still have concerns after a discussion/meeting with the teacher, ask for suggestions on where to go next. This may include a discussion/meeting with a school counselor, with an administrator, or other appropriate suggestions.

Please do not hesitate to call us. Although you often look to friends and neighbors for guidance, we urge you to contact us directly when you have questions about your child's education. The professionals are here to help you and your child have a successful year.

# Health Services and Emergency Notification

**Overview:** School health services are a specialized department contributing to the process of education. The goal of these services is to identify health problems and to facilitate any intervention programs needed to maximize student health. In cases of chronic health problems, the nurse contacts the parent and /or student to assess the student's current health status, especially in regards to current medications, therapies or special school needs.

**Food Allergies:** Food allergy occurs when the immune system mistakenly attacks a food protein. Ingestion of the offending food may trigger the sudden release of chemicals, including histamine, resulting in symptoms of allergic reaction. The symptoms may be mild (rashes, hives, itching, swelling, etc.) or severe (trouble breathing, wheezing, loss of consciousness, etc.). A food allergy can be potentially fatal. A major health issue such as this one needs to be taken very seriously. For the safety and well-being of our students, the following general precautions will be observed:

- ALL CLASSROOMS ARE PEANUT AND TREE NUT RESTRICTED. Snacks may NOT contain these items.**
- Thorough and proper hand washing is essential. Parents of food allergic students should instruct their student to always wash with soap and water prior to eating. Likewise, parents and teachers of all students should have their students wash their hands and faces after eating a food product containing the allergen, such as, peanut, tree nut, milk, etc., as well as change their clothing if they have spilled food.
- Strict avoidance of the offending food is the only way to prevent a reaction. No sharing or trading of food or eating utensils will be allowed.
- If your food allergic student will be purchasing a school lunch, please consult with the food services director in advance regarding the ingredients.
- A peanut/tree nut restricted table will be provided in the cafeteria for students with these allergies. If you would like your student to sit at this table, please inform the grade level Assistant Principal, the school nurse, and your student's teacher in writing.
- Common areas of the school that are used by all students, such as the library, the computer lab, the gymnasium and the fine arts room have been designated food and drink-free areas. No foods or drinks are allowed in these areas.
- No food or drinks are allowed on the bus. Parents are encouraged to notify their student's bus driver on the first day of school as to the student's allergy.
- Edible birthday treats are not allowed.
- On occasion, classroom celebrations may include food. The teacher will send notification home at such times. All food must arrive with an affixed food ingredient label.
- Parents of students with food allergies are encouraged to contact the school nurse and the classroom teacher prior to the start of school.
- Further classroom accommodations will be determined on an individual basis according to the student's needs.

## **Mandated Screening Programs:**

- Hearing: grades K-3
- Vision: grades 1-5
- Height and weight: grades 1 and 4
- Physical Exams: on admission to school and grades 2, 5, 8, and 11.
- If you elect to have any mandated screening or physical exam done by your doctor, please provide the nurse with the findings promptly.

**Injuries:** In the event of injury the student will be kept at school if at all possible until the parent or other adult designated as an Emergency Contact can pick him/her up. In the event of a 911 emergency, an ambulance will be called and the student will be transported to the hospital. (A school representative will go along with the student.) If a student is recovering from an injury and unable to participate in recess or Phys. Ed. classes, a note from the student's healthcare provider excusing the student from these activities is required.

**Illnesses:** If a student becomes ill while in school, the nurse or person acting on her behalf will notify the parent or person listed as an emergency contact. Students who feel ill are not to directly contact their parents for dismissal without first seeing the nurse. Please do not send an ill student to school. Sometimes knowing when to keep your student at home is a difficult decision for parents. Do not hesitate to contact the nurse's office for advice. When students are sent to school when they are sick, learning can be a challenge. Additionally, illnesses can spread quickly in a classroom causing many other students to miss school. Keeping your ill student at home is an important way to limit the spread of germs at school and we thank you for this consideration.

Here are some helpful guidelines when making the decision about sending your child to school:

- Children must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. (Fever is defined as 100 degree F or higher.)
- Children with a positive strep culture must be treated with prescribed antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.



- Children awaiting results from a throat culture must remain at home until a negative result is known.
- Children that have been vomiting or have had diarrhea must remain home until the vomiting or diarrhea has stopped for 24 hours.
- Children recovering from an illness who are still too ill to participate in typical school activities such as gym or recess must remain home until able to resume all school activities, including outdoor play.

**Head Lice:** Parents should check their students routinely for head lice. If you discover that your student has head lice, please notify the school nurse immediately so that the appropriate measures can be taken to limit the spread. Students may return to school after being treated but must be examined by the school nurse before returning to the classroom. As a courtesy, parents should notify close contacts of the student. With questions or concerns, please call the school nurse. In depth information on Head Lice and its treatment and prevention can be found at:

[www.edc.gov/parasites/lice/head](http://www.edc.gov/parasites/lice/head)

[www.identify.us.com/head-lice/](http://www.identify.us.com/head-lice/)

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

### **School Health Services Medication Policy Overview**

The Westborough School Committee approves the following policies governing administration of medications in the schools under its jurisdiction. These apply to all programs operated by the Westborough Public Schools and all staff shall comply with these policies.

1. A **written licensed prescriber's order** for the medication, (this applies to both prescription and over the counter medications) and a **signed parental request form** must be brought to the school.
2. The medication must be brought to the school by an adult, **not** the student, and must be picked up by an adult at the end of the school year.
3. Prescription medication must be in the pharmacy labeled bottle. The label must include the student's name, dosage and frequency of administration of the medicine, and the licensed prescriber's name. Over the counter medication must be in the purchased container.
4. **Any changes to a medication order must come from the licensed prescriber.** This includes changes in dosage, timing, and route of administration or discontinuation of a medication.

**If this policy is not followed, the nurse will be unable to administer the medication and the parent/guardian will have to come to the school and personally administer the medication. Please see the Policy Section of this Handbook for more details.**

## **Educational Services**

### **Parent Conferences**

It is not necessary to wait for a teacher request for a conference, since conferences can be arranged by either teacher or parent request. If you would like to schedule a conference, please contact the teacher directly. Phone conferences may also be arranged through the homeroom teacher. One evening in October is available for conferences to accommodate working parents who absolutely cannot make arrangements to come during the regularly scheduled conference days. Therefore, we can only see a limited number of parents on that evening.

### **EIT (Early Intervention Team):**

If a teacher suspects that a student may be at risk academically, socially, emotionally they can contact the School Counselor to initiate the EIT process. Parents are notified about this process by the classroom teacher and/or school counselor. The EIT is a group of school professionals who gather to identify areas of strength and difficulty for an individual student. They work to design interventions that are intended to break down barriers to learning and accommodate student learning style and/or needs within the classroom. These intervention strategies are monitored, reviewed, and adjusted as needed throughout the school year.

**Math Plus (formerly Title 1)** The Mill Pond Math Plus Instructors provide small group and inclusion support with appropriately paced math instruction for students in general education who have been identified as needing this service. These students have access to the regular curriculum, along with these additional supports.

### **Perennial Math**

For those students who are ready to tackle a highly challenging math program, Mill Pond sponsors Perennial Math at grades 4, 5, and 6. Students are identified for this program based on a number of criteria: Beginning-of-Year assessments, standardized test scores,

report card grades, teacher recommendation, and independent work habits. These students receive weekly problems online and come together once a month for competitions. The goals of this program are to:

- To stimulate enthusiasm and love for mathematics
- To introduce important mathematical concepts
- To teach major strategies for problem solving
- To develop mathematical flexibility in solving problems
- To strengthen mathematical intuition
- To foster mathematical creativity and ingenuity
- To provide for the satisfaction, joy, and thrill of meeting challenges.

Although not everyone may participate in the formal Perennial Math program, any student who wants to challenge him/herself and grow his/her math skills may access the Perennial Math curriculum. Perennial Math materials are posted on the district's math website and ALL students may access this curriculum. We encourage your children to try these challenging problems.

**Reading Specialist** The Mill Pond Reading Specialists provide small group reading instruction and some inclusion support for students in general education who have been identified as needing this service. They work closely with classroom teachers and in concert with the goals and content of a balanced literacy approach to reading/writing instruction being presented in the class.

**English Language Learners (ELL)** The two-fold objective of the English Language Learners program is English acquisition, followed by successful performance in the academic subjects. Individual differences, including culture, native language, and learning styles are emphasized. Strategies that enhance second language acquisition are used for the instruction in the four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Frequent assessments of the students' strengths and weaknesses are necessary for effective instruction. Limited English proficient students' success requires close communication with the parents, principal, teachers, and guidance counselor.

### **School Counselors**

The Westborough Public Schools K-12 Counseling and Guidance Program assists all students with academic, career, and personal/social development in accordance with national and state standards. Our sequential school counseling program guides students to become self-aware, resilient, self-sufficient citizens who contribute to society in a positive, productive, and responsible manner. At Mill Pond, the School Counselors are responsible for promoting the social/emotional growth and development of children, as well as for conducting both individual and small group counseling sessions when needed. Consultation with classroom teachers concerning adjustment and social/emotional/behavioral issues is part of the counseling program. The School Counselor is also available for parent consultation on a variety of issues and concerns and parents may call the counselor during school hours to leave a confidential message. Many events in a child's life can impact their ability to be successful in school and home/school communication can be invaluable at times of stress, death of a loved one or even a cherished pet, sleeping/eating issues, friendship issues, family difficulties/illness, or general worries. Counselors will also collaborate with outside agencies and health care providers when needed. Mill Pond Counselors follow their students through their three years at Mill Pond, allowing them to get to know their students and families well.

### **Section 504 Services:**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability in any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. Students eligible for 504 assistance are those who (1) have a physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities; (2) have a record of such impairments; or (3) are regarded as having such an impairment. Students whose disabilities do not significantly impact academic performance, but do affect a major life function such as speech, mobility, or attention may qualify for support/accommodation through a Section 504 plan. The School Counselor oversees the implementation of Section 504 in the schools, and should be contacted if you have any questions.

**Special Education Coordinators** The Special Education Coordinators are responsible for supervision of the referral and evaluation procedures, and for facilitating the development of Individualized Education Plans for students with documented disabilities who require specialized instruction in order to make appropriate progress. The Coordinator acts as Team Chair, and is the person who will also coordinate transition planning meetings for students changing schools or returning from outside placements. In addition, the Special Education Coordinator provides ongoing support and in-service training for staff with the goal of providing inclusive education opportunities for children with special needs.

**School Psychologist** The School Psychologist engages in assessment activities with individual children to gain a picture of their intellectual, academic, and emotional functioning. Through observations and teacher reports the school psychologist develops an understanding of a child's functioning within his/her class setting. An understanding of how each student in the class learns is essential for teachers as they modify instruction to accommodate individual differences. The School Psychologist is part of a team that would

evaluate whether a student qualifies for special education services. Should a student qualify for an IEP, the psychologist is part of a multidisciplinary team of teachers, parents, administrators, and other specialists who consider all possible accommodations that will enable students with special needs to participate in the least restrictive environment. The School Psychologist continues to be involved in monitoring the efficiency of chosen solutions and continuous modification of interventions as necessary so that each child can have a successful educational experience.

## The Mill Pond Curriculum

### **Curriculum Summary**

The Westborough Public Schools use an on-going curriculum review process. Review committees are continually re-examining Westborough's curriculum to ensure that it addresses the unique needs of the Westborough community while meeting state and national standards of achievement.

The following are brief summaries of topics covered in each curriculum area. The curriculum at each grade level is aligned with the most recent Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks and the Common CORE and should be viewed as part of the Westborough Public Schools K-12 continuum. Any overlap in topics is purposeful and reflects a commitment to building on prior knowledge, reinforcing important skills and concepts and exploring subjects with greater depth and sophistication.

More information about the Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks and the Common Core standards at each grade level can be obtained at the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Website at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html>

### **Literacy Curriculum Coordinator: Grades 4-6**

Mill Pond's Literacy Coordinator collaborates with the PK-3 Literacy Coordinator to provide assistance in the development, implementation and coordination of the district's PK-6 literacy curriculum and to provide appropriate training and modeling for teachers in the implementation of a balanced literacy approach to instruction.

### **Math Curriculum Coordinator: Grades PK-6**

The PK-6 Math Coordinator provides assistance in the development, implementation and coordination of the district's K-6 mathematics curriculum. Additionally, the Coordinator provides appropriate training, modeling, and curriculum support for teachers in the implementation of an approach to instruction that effectively meets the new math standards.

### **Science Curriculum Coordinator: Grades PK-6**

The PK-6 Science Coordinator provides assistance in the development, implementation and coordination of the district's K-6 science curriculum. Additionally, the Coordinator provides appropriate training, modeling, and curriculum support for teachers in the implementation of an approach to instruction that effectively meets the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

### **Grouping**

The Westborough School System is committed to three values in the grouping of students:

- Respect for diversity
- Importance of self-esteem
- Equal opportunity to learn

To promote these values while fostering high student achievement, heterogeneous grouping prevails in all subject areas and grade levels at Mill Pond. In short, students of all abilities learn together in classrooms. Staff development provides teachers with strategies for differentiating the curriculum, instruction, and assessment to ensure the success of all students. Major emphasis is placed on individual learning styles, cooperative learning, and integrated units of study.

### **Collaborative Learning**

Collaborative Learning is a teaching strategy often used to enhance a specific classroom topic. In Collaborative Learning, students are placed in small groups where the group learning assumes central importance and students are responsible not only for their own learning but also for the learning of others. The strategy allows students to increase academic achievement while learning pro-social behaviors. Collaborative groups vary in size, duration, and composition depending upon the goals of the lesson. Students at all ability levels benefit from Cooperative Learning, as it offers opportunities for students to utilize different strengths, gain support with areas of challenge, discover new approaches through discussions with peers, and deepen understanding of the material through collaborative work. Collaborative Learning fosters critical thinking, develops all students' abilities to effectively communicate their learning, and broadens opportunities for creative problem-solving.

### **Differentiated Instruction and Flexible Grouping**

In order to maximize student achievement, students are exposed to multiple texts and supplementary materials, group investigations, and assignments with varying levels of complexity. All students are given access to the same core content while different strategies and activities are used to assist students in understanding what is being taught. Instruction is modified to meet students' varying readiness levels, and student grouping is flexible based upon learning preferences and student interest.

## **Homework Expectations**

Homework is an integral component of the curriculum at every grade level and is a valuable tool in helping students to make the most of their school experience. Homework helps reinforce what has been learned in class, prepares students for upcoming lessons, and helps students develop positive study habits. The times below are general guidelines for time spent on homework at each grade level:

*Grade 4:* Overall 30-40 minutes, not longer than 50 minutes (includes nightly reading)

*Grade 5:* Overall 40-50 minutes, not longer than 60 minutes (includes nightly reading)

*Grade 6:* Overall 45-70 minutes, not longer than 90 minutes (includes nightly reading)

**\*Additionally**, students at all grade levels are encouraged to read at least 15-30 minutes nightly.

Time spent on homework not only varies from grade to grade, but from student to student. Individuals in the same class may spend a different amount of time to complete the same assignments. Homework is meant to provide a preview of upcoming lessons or a review of recently taught material, and students should be able to complete their homework with minimal parental support. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers if their child regularly reaches the time limits outlined above or if they need significant support in order to complete their homework.

Any student who misses a class, including students who are absent or who miss a class each week in order to take their instrumental lesson during the school day, is responsible for getting homework assignments and making up class work. When there are extended unexcused absences (i.e. vacations, trips out of the country), teachers will use their best judgment in determining which assignments need to be made up. Teachers are not required to provide work in advance for prolonged absences.

Time management is an important skill and it is expected that students work on long term assignments regularly over an extended period of time. Each child is expected to keep track of long and short-term assignments in his/her school-provided agenda book. There may be occasions when students will be asked to complete assignments or long term projects over weekends.

Parents should be involved in monitoring their child's homework. A critical first step is helping your child to create a distraction-free work area that will best support focus on his/her homework. Showing support, checking assignments, offering encouragement, and assisting students to manage their time are all important steps in ensuring students' academic success. The ultimate goal is for students to do high quality work independently. The most important role you can play is to help your child learn how to develop his/her own independent study skills, time management skills, self-assessment skills, self-help strategies, and self-advocacy skills. Encourage effort, encourage flexibility, encourage perseverance, and encourage resiliency. These are the skills of the highly successful student and apply to all areas of life.

## **English Language Arts (ELA) Curriculum**

The goal of Mill Pond's English Language Arts and Literacy curriculum is to guide students toward developing the skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening that define a literate person in the 21st century. Throughout the day, our students read and respond to high-quality literary and informational texts. This close, attentive reading, writing, and response is at the heart of understanding.

Effective strategy instruction takes place in all classrooms where students' thinking about texts is valued. We believe our students need to actively question, connect, infer, synthesize, and discuss text throughout the curriculum and across the content areas. Our instructional strategies incorporate a clear learning objective which includes providing background knowledge, teaching, modeling and demonstrating, guided practice, checking for understanding through assessment, and independent practice. Wide, abundant reading is one of the most important things we do in school. As part of the curriculum, our readers and writers will experience a wide variety of genres and develop ways of thinking within, beyond, and about their reading. It is the goal for all learners in grades four through six to receive instruction that meets the needs of individual students. Differentiated instruction will occur during whole group, small group, and individual instruction throughout their Mill Pond years.

Our English Language Arts and Literacy program incorporates the following principles and practices:

- Reading to, with and by students through read aloud, modeled writing, shared, guided, and independent reading and writing experiences
- Sharing a balance of high quality literature and informational texts
- Supporting readers with increasingly complex text

- Teaching for understanding and engagement
- Fostering passion and curiosity
- Creating an environment that values collaborative learning and thinking
- Supporting students as they read literature and informational text they can and want to read
- Building instruction around authentic, relevant and significant topics
- Providing explicit instruction with the Gradual Release of Responsibility framework
- Differentiating instruction and text
- Writing opinion pieces, informative/explanatory texts, and narratives (both real and imagined experiences)

Balanced Literacy draws on current research and practice to provide learners the balance of skills, strategies, materials, and social and emotional support needed to help them become critical thinkers, independent problem-solvers, self-monitors and goal setters.

Mill Pond follows the Massachusetts Frameworks and Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy. Students in grades four through six will work steadily toward meeting grade-specific expectations. You will see more emphasis on:

- Reading informational text
- Writing about informational text
- The analysis of point of view
- The evaluation of arguments and claims
- The comparison of themes and topics
- Using technology for collaboration and publishing
- Writing short research papers
- Frequent writing

### **Reading Comprehension**

Reading comprehension incorporates the use of various strategies to make meaning from text. These strategies include: previewing, predicting, inferring, and connecting reading to prior knowledge, life experiences and other sources. Good readers must also analyze, interpret text, and draw conclusions by identifying and utilizing main ideas, details and literary elements (setting, characters, problem, solution, etc.). Strong readers can summarize what they have read and they can synthesize information from a variety of texts to create new understandings. The ability to make meaning from new vocabulary and read fluently often helps students to comprehend what they read.

### **Reading Habits**

Students demonstrate good reading habits when they regularly self-select age and ability appropriate reading materials from a variety of texts and genres. When reading both self-selected and assigned reading materials, good readers set and monitor their purpose for reading. After reading, students are often asked to participate in small literature groups or whole class discussions. Individually, students may respond to the literature by writing in a variety of ways. In these discussions groups and written responses, students communicate their understanding of the text and their experience reading it. Ultimately, our goal is to have students develop a genuine love of reading.

### **Writing Process**

Students will be asked on a daily basis to engage in a variety of writing tasks. Some of the writing tasks may include: personal narratives, poetry, creative writing, non-fiction reports, persuasive arguments, journals, etc. Depending upon the audience and purpose of the writing, students will often engage in many of the steps of the writing process. The steps of the writing process are pre-writing, drafting, conferencing, revising, editing, , and publishing. In all of their writing, students will be asked to organize their ideas by developing their topics and supporting it with details in well- written, sequential paragraphs to convey information.

### **Language Use**

The proper usage of Standard English Conventions and the use of rich language and vocabulary help the reader better understand and enjoy an author's writing. Students will be asked to use the Standard English Conventions such as punctuation, capitalization, and complete sentences with correct grammar. In their daily work, students are expected to correctly spell frequently used, grade level words, as well as use available resources to spell more challenging words. Students are encouraged to choose rich language and vocabulary that clarifies their writing and creates a distinctive tone or voice.

## **Math Curriculum**

Please see the district's Curriculum web site for in-depth information about math instruction in Westborough:

<https://sites.google.com/a/westboroughk12.org/k-through-6-math-curriculum/home> An overview from the district's website explains:

Massachusetts has recently adopted a set of common, internationally-benchmarked academic standards in mathematics. The following section will explain some of the changes in Westborough's math curriculum, the rationale behind these changes, and how these changes will impact your child.

The Common Core State Standards in mathematics articulate a progression of learning that deepens a student’s ability to understand and use mathematics. Core conceptual understandings and procedures starting in the early grades are emphasized, thus enabling teachers to take the time needed to teach core concepts and procedures well – and to give students the opportunity to really master them. As such, these new Standards address the problem of a previous math curriculum that was “a mile wide and an inch deep.” For more information, the full standards are available at [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org).

Our goal in today’s math classrooms is to make sure there is an appropriate balance between memorizing facts and procedures on the one hand and ensuring that students deeply understand the math skills and concepts on the other hand. We want our students to be able to do mathematics, but we also want them to understand the math they are doing. We recognize that as math tasks increase in complexity, an understanding of facts, formulas, and algorithms will help them experience continued success. We have not changed our view of the importance of basic math facts. We know that they are a foundational skill without which our students will view even simple math tasks as daunting. We have simply expanded our expectations to include understanding as an important component of our teaching of basic math facts.

### **Basic Skills**

Our goal is to provide our students with a very rich and comprehensive math experience. The foundation for success in the math curriculum is a solid understanding of the basic skills. Automatic recall of number facts for all operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division) is expected as they play a key role in solving more complex mathematical problems. Students are taught many strategies to solve mathematical problems. Students are expected to choose the appropriate algorithms that suit the problem and their learning style. Once students apply these algorithms to solve problems, students should use their number sense to check if their answer makes sense. Students are expected to use a variety of mathematical tools, such as calculators, rulers, compasses, and protractors correctly to assist them in solving mathematical problems.

### **Concepts**

Students need to understand mathematics to use it effectively. Students must demonstrate understanding of mathematical concepts explored each trimester. To achieve this understanding, students engage in activities where they connect new ideas and concepts to ones previously learned. This knowledge is further developed through ongoing applications and written work. Students need to demonstrate their understanding through application, oral and written communication, and the use of self-checking strategies.

### **Problem Solving, Reasoning, and Communication**

Students will be exposed to a variety of problem solving strategies. They will be asked to select a technique that efficiently and accurately assists them in arriving at a logical solution that meets grade level standards. Students must be able to articulate the process that they employed to arrive at a solution. To this end, the use of appropriate math vocabulary will be encouraged and supported.

## **Social Studies Curriculum**

The Mill Pond Social Studies program incorporates the four disciplines of Social Studies, and they are as follows:

- History and Culture
- Geography
- Economics
- Civics and Government

Students develop critical thinking skills by reading and interpreting maps, graphs and data, making comparisons, and engaging in research and questioning. Students in each grade level are encouraged to explore the connections between the four disciplines of Social Studies thus embracing a global perspective.

### **Concepts**

Concepts explored in Grade 4 include a regional study of the United States and its regions, focusing on natural resources, geography, climate, history, economy, culture, civics and government. Concepts explored in Grade 5 include a chronological study of United States history from pre-colonial times until The Revolution, focusing on exploration, settlement and the colonial experience, the road to revolution and independence, and the establishment of a new republic and government of the people. Concepts explored in Grade 6 include an integrated study of world culture and geography, focusing on culture, geography, economics, civics, and government of regions outside the United States.

### **Communication**

Discussions, projects, written work and research reports are some of the ways students apply and demonstrate their understanding. Students take an active part in their learning through comparing and contrasting their own lives and experiences to those of others.

### **4th Grade**

The primary focus of grade 4 social studies is a study of the geographic regions of the United States. Students are encouraged to explore the connections between the geography and climate of each region and the behavior of its human population by focusing on the region’s natural resources, economy, history, culture and government. Students continue to develop critical thinking skills by reading and interpreting maps, graphs and data, making comparisons, engaging in research and questioning. This curriculum also includes a short study of immigration and its impact on the U.S. regions.



## 5th Grade

The fifth grade Social Studies program is a study of United States history from pre-colonial times through the The Revolution and Independence. Elements of other social sciences such as economics and sociology are also blended in where applicable. When it is appropriate we connect language arts and reading programs to our topics in Social Studies.

The fifth grade social studies program follows a chronological structure and includes the following units:

- Map Skills
- Explorers, Encounters and Exchange
- Settlement and the Colonial Experience
- Road to Revolution and Independence
- The New Republic, Government of the People

## 6th Grade

The sixth grade Social Studies program consists of integrated study of world culture and geography. Students will explore regions and people of the world beyond the border of the United States looking for similarities and differences.

Major topics include:

- Map Skills
- World Geography
- Definition of “Culture”
- Economics
- Civics
- Government

## Science Curriculum

At Mill Pond, we strive to provide opportunities for students to explore the world around them by participating in the activities, critical thinking, and talk of scientists. Engaging in such science practices supports students in developing deep understandings of important science content and accurate views about how scientists develop and revise scientific knowledge.

### Science Practices

The new Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Curriculum Frameworks prioritize engaging students in the practices of science to learn and demonstrate their knowledge of science content. These practices include designing and conducting investigations, analyzing data, constructing models, and arguing from evidence. At all grade levels, teachers support students to become more proficient at these practices and improve their ability to work collaboratively with their peers, communicate effectively, and receive and provide critique to improve their work.

### Science Concepts

Science units are designed to build upon students’ prior knowledge, experiences, and curiosity about the world around them. At every grade level, students have opportunities to explore topics in Earth, physical, and life science related to a unifying theme.

## 4th Grade

The focus in grade 4 is on the transfer of matter and energy. Students explore how energy and matter cycles through organisms, different types of energy and how to transform it from one form to another, and the forces that shape landscapes over time. The specific topics of study are:

- Earth Science: Soil, rocks and landforms
- Physical Science: Magnets and electrical energy, energy transformations
- Life Science: Organisms’ structures and functions, interactions between organisms and their environment

## 5th Grade

The focus in grade 5 is on connections and relationships in systems. Students explore living systems and how energy is cycled through ecosystems. They also investigate matter and different types of interactions between matter, and the ways the Earth’s surface is impacted by various forces.

- Earth Science: Soil, rocks, and landforms
- Physical Science: Mixtures and solutions; Forces, motion, and simple machines
- Life Science: Living systems

## 6th Grade

The focus in grade 6 is on structure and function in the natural world. Students build on their elementary science experiences to broaden their perspectives about how scientists construct and revise knowledge as they explore topics such as cells and anatomy, Earth’s features and evolutionary history, and the properties of materials and waves.

- Earth Science: Fossils and continental drift; Earth-sun- moon system
- Physical Science: Waves

- Life Science: History of life; Cells and body systems

## **Art**

Art is a very important part of every child's life. It is a very rewarding experience through which a child learns to observe, express, and appreciate the inner artistic qualities of themselves and others around them. Art is a basic and universal form of communication, providing an outlet for creativity and the imaginative process to work together. In the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade Art Curriculum, the students will be introduced to an understanding of the elements and principles of design and how to apply them in performance and production. Our goal is to introduce students to a variety of art mediums and in return students learn to appreciate art in their own lives or work as well as in other cultures and develop a strong sense of pride in their completion of each lesson.

## **Music**

Music is a part of everyone's life. Through it we learn to observe, to express, to create, and to appreciate the music within ourselves and others. Classroom music instruction is provided once per week where students will be engaged in: singing, performing rhythmic patterns, playing musical instruments, creative movement, composition, creating musical form, improvising, and listening.

## **Physical Education**

Students at Mill Pond take Physical Education twice per week. One of the goals of the physical education curriculum is to enable students to develop strong, life-long health habits that they can incorporate into their daily lives.

### **Fitness Skill Development**

Our goal is to teach our students a variety of ways to improve their physical fitness. Physical fitness will be taught as an important part of a person's overall wellness. Students will learn the health benefits to lifelong physical activity.

### **Motor Skill Development**

Manipulative skills such as throwing, catching, and striking will be practiced. Locomotor skills such as running, skipping, and hopping, and non-locomotor skills such as twisting, bending, and extending will be incorporated into physical challenges, games, and sports throughout the school year.

## **Library/Media/Technology**

All students in grades 4-6 attend modules of classes that alternate between library and technology. In a 21st century learning environment, library and technology skills are intertwined, as students are guided in the process of locating and evaluating information, understanding and synthesizing what they find, and effectively communicating what they have learned. At Mill Pond it is our goal to foster a love of reading while we help students gain the skills to be savvy consumers of information.

### **Library**

With primary emphasis on the learner, the Ella Washington Griffin Library Media Center is committed to the provision of open and free access to materials and resources that directly support the Westborough Public Schools Curriculum, the State of Massachusetts Frameworks, and the information needs of its students, faculty, and community. This facility operates as the school's "center" as it attempts to respond to group and individual needs in a way that effectively promotes the teaching and learning process of students in grades 4-6. Information is presented in a variety of formats and at varying academic levels. Our students visit the library regularly and learn how to access, locate, and evaluate information from a wide variety of sources. Our program strives to prepare students to be skilled and informed users of the most up-to-date informational resources, and seeks to develop and implement programming that fosters a lifelong appreciation for literature and the pleasure of reading. Within a supportive and enriching learning environment, it empowers its students to become critical thinkers and "informationally" literate young adults.

### **Technology**

Students in grades 4-6 at Mill Pond have a computer skills/technology program with classes that alternate with Library Skills. Keyboarding is introduced in fourth grade. Word processing skills, including document formatting, are introduced and expanded upon in fifth and sixth grades. The goals of the technology program are to teach students basic computer skills; access, analyze and use information from a variety of sources; create and present multi-media projects in curricular areas; and exhibit ethical behavior in the use of computers and other technology. Technology literacy and digital citizenship form the core of our technology curriculum. There are also computers available in classrooms to support student learning.

### **1:1 Technology at Mill Pond**

Beginning in 2016-2017, each Mill Pond student in grades 4- 6 has had access to a dedicated iPad to facilitate his/her learning throughout all of his/her classes. It is important to note that this technology does not replace excellent instruction, rather, it is a tool that can be used to enhance and transform instruction and learning. A 1:1 learning environment presents an exciting opportunity for students to experience learning in deeper and more diverse ways, and for students to demonstrate their understanding in a multitude of

ways. Technology enhances our teachers’ ability to facilitate learning in which students practice the 21st century skills of creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and communication.

**Elective Musical Ensemble Courses:**

Students may elect to perform in Orchestra, Chorus, and Band. Students who elect to participate in an ensemble group are expected to make a yearlong commitment. Each ensemble group will perform at least two concerts a year. Concert dress is black pants/skirt and a white shirt/blouse and is REQUIRED. Please contact the office if you need assistance in obtaining this clothing.

**Orchestra**

Students may continue studying their string instrument in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. Beginner string students are also welcome. Lessons are scheduled once a week. Students in 4th, 5th and 6th grade take their lessons in larger groups during Academic Activity Period and do not miss core content classes for their instrument lessons. The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5th grade Mill Pond Orchestras meets once a week, again during Academic Activity Period. 6th grade orchestra meets twice per week during Academic Activity Period.

**Band**

Students may elect to join Band in Fifth Grade when instruction in Band instruments begins. Lessons are scheduled once a week and students in grade 5 will miss alternating core content classes (ELA, math, science, social studies) each week in order to attend their small group instrument lessons. The Fifth Grade Band rehearses once per week during Academic Activity Period. The Sixth Grade Band rehearses twice per week during Academic Activity Period.

**Chorus**

Students in 4th, 5th, and/or 6th grades may elect to join Chorus. The Fourth and Fifth Grade Choruses rehearse once per week, and the Sixth Grade Chorus rehearses twice per week. All Chorus rehearsals occur during Academic Activity Period.

## Standards Based Report Card Information

The standards-based report card presents parents with a document that looks substantially different from the more traditional report card formats of past generations. Our report card identifies what students should know and be able to do in each content area at each grade level. It will provide parents with more accurate information on progress toward the grade level academic standards.

The report card will:

- Report where students are currently performing relative to academic standards.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses in student learning and understanding.
- Clarify expectations for students, parents, and teachers.
- Provide a common language for discussing student learning.
- Help to improve student performance over time.

**Trimester Report Card**– In standards-based classrooms the focus is on student performance, not solely test and quiz grades. Students will be asked to apply their learning and understanding in non-traditional ways such as informal demonstrations, presentations, performance assessments, and portfolio usage. Consistent student effort over time should enable students to meet the grade level standards. The standards will remain constant while the time it takes the student to meet the standards may vary from child to child. The trimester schedule allows students more time to show evidence of their understanding and level of achievement. This standards-based report will be issued three times per year, about every 60 academic days.

**Mid-Trimester Progress Report**– This interim report will be completed by teachers halfway through the trimester. Teachers will report the academic progress of the student as “satisfactory” or “needs improvement.” A checklist will be used to report on learner qualities in the classroom. All students will receive a 1st trimester progress report. Only students experiencing significant academic difficulties or changes from previous reports will receive a 2nd or 3rd trimester progress report. In some instances, parents or teachers may request a conference to discuss the contents of the report.

Warning Notice – At any time during the trimester, teachers may issue a warning notice when individual students are failing to demonstrate a minimum level of achievement.

Traditional Report Cards (Norm Referenced)	Standards Based Progress Report Card (Criterion Referenced)
Students are graded based on relative performance within a specific group.	Students are graded individually based on progress toward grade level standards.

Subjects are listed by name.	Major subjects are defined by curriculum or content standards. Thus, families and students have a clearer picture of how a student is performing in a variety of sub-topics (standards) in each content area. For example, instead of an overall grade in “math,” students receive feedback on how they are doing with multiplication, division, adding/subtracting fractions, etc.
Letter grades A-F reflect an individual teacher’s expectations of student effort and achievement.	Numerical levels indicate mastery of grade level standards. Achievement and effort are reported separately. Standards are applied consistently from teacher to teacher.
Curriculum and instruction are teacher centered, textbook driven, and not necessarily aligned to the state standards.	Curriculum and instruction are aligned with state and district standards.

### Report Card System Elements

Reporting student progress in a standards-based system is complex. The four elements below have been developed to support students, parents, and teachers:

Note: Grade level standards are based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

#### Performance Scale- Grading Guidelines

- 4 =Advanced** – Student work **consistently** demonstrates **advanced** and **independent** understanding of grade level standards.  
**3+=Proficient Plus** - Student work sometimes demonstrates advanced understanding, or advanced understanding is demonstrated with support. The student performs above the grade level standards, but not all of the time and/or not independently.  
**3 =Proficient**– Student work **consistently** demonstrates **proficient** (on-target for the grade) understanding of grade level standards.  
**2+=Approaching Plus**- Student work is close to demonstrating grade level standards, but may not be consistent or independent.  
**2 =Approaching** – Student work demonstrates progress towards understanding of grade level standards.  
**1 = Beginning** – Student work does not yet meet grade level standards.

\* Student progress is being measured against modified curriculum benchmark

EXT Extended Absence: Student missed instruction and assessment due to extended absence

ME Medical: Student missed instruction and/or assessment due to medical reasons

NA Not Assessed: The curriculum standard was not addressed that trimester

### Learner Qualities

Learner qualities are those behaviors which enhance student ability to learn and understand. By emphasizing these personal conduct qualities, we are helping the student to take responsibility for their own learning. Learner qualities are “life skills.” These are the same qualities that are essential to becoming a successful citizen in the workplace and everyday life. By learning these behaviors correctly now, students will be prepared for a successful future throughout their schooling and well beyond.

The following are the learner qualities for Mill Pond School:

The Independent Learner:

- Is self-directed
- Organizes time and materials
- Participates in class activities
- Follows directions
- Meets homework requirements
- Produces work that is neat and organized
- Demonstrates positive attitude
- Works cooperatively in small/large groups

The following descriptors are used to help define each of the Learner Qualities listed on the report card:

C = Consistently: Student independently demonstrates grade-level expectations almost all of the time and with few reminders.

U= Usually: Student usually demonstrates grade-level standards but can be inconsistent or may need a few more reminders than would be expected.

S= Sometimes: Student sometimes demonstrates grade-level standards but often needs prompts or supports.

R= Rarely: Student rarely demonstrates grade-level standards, even with prompts or supports.

The learner quality descriptors also apply to the Effort and Behavioral categories that are in each academic area.

### Sample Report Card:

	Trimester	1	2	3
<b>WRITING</b>				
<b>Writes opinion pieces, supporting a point of view with reasons and information</b>		NA	3	
<b>Writes informative pieces to examine a topic and convey ideas</b>		2	3+	
<b>Writes narratives using effective techniques, details, and sequence</b>		2	3	
<b>Draws evidence from texts to support thinking</b>		3	3	
<b>Develops and strengthens writing using the writing process</b>		3	3	
<b>PUTS FORTH BEST EFFORT</b>		U	C	
<b>MEETS BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS</b>		C	C	

## Mill Pond School Code of Conduct

As members of the Mill Pond community, all students have a responsibility to act in a safe and respectful manner. While students make mistakes just as adults do, appropriate student conduct is essential in order for students to have a meaningful and productive school experience. Mill Pond School maintains high but not unreasonable standards of conduct and behavior for all of its students. Our expectations are that each student will follow the rules that apply to their classroom as well as to the greater school community. This includes such areas as the hallways, the playground, the cafeteria, and the buses. When students make choices that get in the way of learning, are unkind to others, or are unsafe to others, the expectation is that students will learn from those mistakes to make wiser, more considerate choices in the future.

It is, therefore, imperative that all concerned individuals be aware of the rules, expectations, and resulting consequences. Mill Pond’s Responsibility Rubric is a way to clearly communicate these expectations and the logical consequences that result when students do not meet those expectations. It separates smaller violations of the Code of Conduct (orange level) from larger violations (red level). It also lays out the progressive consequences that would be applied to repeated problem behaviors. Of course, no one document can capture all of the variables of student behavior and the range of appropriate responses. The Mill Pond School reserves the right to modify our response to inappropriate behavior based on a multitude of variables such as the egregious nature of the behavior, the needs of the students involved, the context of the behavior, etc. Please review the Responsibility Rubric below with your Mill Pond student(s).

It’s important to note that bullying is defined as repeated instances of one student targeting another in order to cause emotional or physical harm to that student. Parents should immediately contact the Grade Level Assistant Principal or Principal to report any possible bullying. There is also a Bullying Reporting Form on the Mill Pond website that any parent or student can fill out and submit to the school.

### Other Important School Rules:

- No MP3 players, iPods, cell phones, or hand-held computer games (on school property and on the bus).
- Cell phones** are absolutely **NOT** to be used during the regular school day and/or on the bus. They are to remain off and in the student’s backpack.

- iPads may only be used during the school day with the teacher's permission. They are to remain off and in the student's backpack while on the bus or in bus lines.
- Chewing gum is not permitted at anytime, anywhere, on school property or on the bus.
- The consumption of food and/or beverages is permitted only in the cafeteria and classrooms at appropriate/ designated times.

## Responsibility Rubric

Mill Pond School

When students don't demonstrate the Learning and Caring that is expected at Mill Pond, our goal is for students to learn how those choices may impact them, make up for those choices when possible, and identify how to use the keys to success to make better choices in the future. This Responsibility Rubric shows what the consequences could be should you make a mistake similar to the ones listed below. For incidents that cause serious threat to another student or our school, consequences can be more significant. Making mistakes does not mean you are a bad person; it just means you made a bad choice. As long as you continue to learn from your mistakes, you will demonstrate responsibility towards Learning and Caring!

Learning words from the MILL POND CHSTONE	ORANGE LEVEL - Incident reported to the office				
	Behavior	1st Incident	2nd Incident	3rd Incident	4th Incident
<b>Unproductive to Self or Others</b>					
Respect and honesty are essential" Mutual trust and respect of honesty"	<b>For example:</b> Disruptive behavior, work refusal, not following teacher directions, hands on another student's property  Misuse of technology  Inappropriate items in school	Staff member warning and/or consequence, call home by staff member	Loss of a privilege, student/administrator conference, call home by Asst Principal or Principal	Loss of multiple privileges, call home by Asst Principal or Principal	Loss of multiple privileges, or school detention, parent conference
<b>Unkind to Others</b>					
Our caring community, we are responsible for being kind to others" Embrace our differences"	<b>For example:</b> Teasing, starting/spreading rumors, false accusations, excluding others  Unkind gestures, inappropriate language, swearing	Staff member warning and/or consequence, call home by staff member	Loss of a privilege, student/administrator conference, call home by Asst Principal or Principal	Loss of multiple privileges, call home by Asst Principal or Principal	Loss of multiple privileges, or school detention, parent conference
<b>Unsafe to Self or Others</b>					
Respect and honesty are essential" Our caring community, we are responsible for being kind to others"	<b>For example:</b> Hands on another student (poking, shoving, pinching, chasing)  Reckless behavior (running in the halls, horseplay)	Loss of a privilege, student/administrator conference, call home by Asst Principal or Principal	Loss of a privilege, student/administrator conference, call home by Asst Principal or Principal	Loss of multiple privileges, call home by Asst Principal or Principal	Loss of multiple privileges, or school detention, parent conference

**TEACHER CONSEQUENCES:** Teacher consequences may include lost privileges in the classroom or time spent aside from the group.

**STUDENT PRIVILEGES:** These will be connected to misbehavior as much as possible. These may include lunch or recess in the office, or an assigned seat on the bus.

**STUDENT AMENDS:** Part of the solution for unkind behaviors may include a verbal or written apology or paying a student back for a damaged or stolen item.



Guiding words from the MILL POND BUCKSTONE	RED LEVEL - Student immediately brought to the office			
	Behavior	1st Incident	2nd Incident	3rd Incident
<b>Unproductive to Self or Others</b>				
<p>"Integrity and truthfulness are essential"</p> <p>"We are mutual trust and have an expectation of honesty"</p>	<p><b>For example:</b> Stealing, cheating, lying, vandalism</p> <p>Forgery, plagiarism</p> <p>Out of class without permission</p>	Loss of multiple privileges, call home by Asst Principal or Principal	Loss of multiple privileges, one after school detention, parent conference	Loss of multiple privileges or more after school detention, parent conference
<b>Unkind to Others</b>				
<p>"We are caring community, responsible for each other and kind to others"</p> <p>"We embrace our differences"</p>	<p><b>For example:</b> Encouraging aggression, ganging up on others</p> <p>Threatening and/or extremely unkind words or gestures, verbal retaliation.</p> <p>Hands on teacher property</p>	Loss of multiple privileges, call home by Asst Principal or Principal	Loss of multiple privileges, one after school detention, parent conference	Loss of multiple privileges or more after school detention, parent conference
<b>Unsafe to Self or Others</b>				
<p>"We are responsible for each other and kind to others"</p> <p>"Integrity and truthfulness are essential"</p>	<p><b>For example:</b> Hitting, punching, kicking, tripping, biting or spitting</p> <p>Physical retaliation</p>	Loss of multiple privileges, call home by Asst Principal or Principal	Loss of multiple privileges, one after school detention, parent conference	Loss of multiple privileges or more after school detention, parent conference

**ADDITIONAL INCIDENTS:** Consequences will increase if the number of incidents exceeds what is shown in this rubric.

**ADDITIONAL CONSEQUENCE:** A student who intentionally avoids a consequence will have a consequence added to the original one.

Three behavioral incidents on the bus will result in a student losing the privilege to ride the bus for a time.

**ADDITIONAL DEFINITION:** Bullying is defined as repeated incidents where one student is targeting the same student. Many of the incidents listed above can qualify as an incident of bullying. If a student, parent, or staff member suspects a pattern of bullying, they should immediately notify an adult at school.

**ADDITIONAL DEFINITION:** Harassment: Behavior that targets another student for any characteristic such as gender, disability, race, ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation is especially serious. Even a single such incident will result in serious consequences.

**ADDITIONAL DEFINITION:** **NOTIFICATION OF PARENTS:** The list of example behaviors and consequences is provided as a general guideline and is not all inclusive. School personnel have discretion to apply this rubric to behaviors that are not specifically listed above. School personnel also have the authority to impose more significant consequences including, but not limited to, out of school suspension for any individual offenses deemed egregious or which presents a risk to the safety or welfare of building staff and/or students. The School also reserves its right to notify law enforcement authorities of incidents of bullying, harassment or other conduct which undermines a safe and sound school environment or would constitute a violation of state or federal laws and regulations.

Revised June, 2016

# MILL POND SCHOOL and WESTBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT POLICIES

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- C.O.R.I Information

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- Care of School Property by Students
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**SECTION K: COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

- School Community Relations
- Community Use of Facilities

**SECTION L: EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS**