

# Lyman Moore Middle School Teacher Handbook 2015-2016

## **House Teams**

(Interdisciplinary Teams)

The interdisciplinary team, as its name suggests, is a combination of teachers from different content areas (math, science, social studies, English and related arts) who plan and conduct instruction for a particular group of students. The aim of interdisciplinary teaming is to promote communication, coordination, and cooperation among content matter specialists. Students will benefit from instruction planned by specialists, and yet escape the fragmentation, which characterizes many, departmentalized plans.

### **Activities of the House Team**

With regard to students:

- ◆ Plan strategies to address behavior and academic success.
- ◆ Evaluate academic and behavioral progress and make adjustments, as needed.
- ◆ Meet with parents to discuss an individual child
- ◆ Discuss/decide on schedule and grouping changes to accommodate the needs of all students and the curriculum.
- ◆ Refer to the school administration and/or appropriate specialist when needed: principal or assistant principal, school counselors, speech teacher, educational specialist staff, teaching strategist, learning strategist and related arts teachers.

With regard to subject area coordination:

- ◆ Plan and implement curriculum that meets the needs of students.
- ◆ Coordinate materials and programs to meet the needs and abilities of House students.
- ◆ Coordinate homework assignments, student expectations, projects, procedures, and general rules and policies of teams.
- ◆ Exchange materials and information, share materials, information and ideas.

With regard to parents:

- ◆ Communicate curriculum focus, project guidelines, discipline plans, recognition etc. to parents early in the school year.

Related Arts teachers and educational specialists are requested to join the team for discussion, planning and evaluative purposes.

### **Student Handbook/Planner**

*All staff members and students are to be familiar with the student handbook. Staff is responsible for following rules, procedures, and policies. Students are expected to use the planner. It serves as an organizer, as well as a communication vehicle for home and school. Teachers may want to do periodic checks to be sure that students are using their planners effectively. Review the handbook with your students.*

## **Academic Progress Reporting**

### **Grades**

Grades should be fair and consistent, an honest appraisal of the work done by each student in relation to his/her own ability. Teachers should clearly communicate their grading procedures to students/parents. Teachers should be able to give objective evidence to explain how they arrived at a specific grade. Parents should be notified before progress report/report card and a plan should be determined for struggling students.

### **Grading Procedure**

1. Before a set date each trimester, teachers will record numerical grades on the Infinite Campus computer system (technology teacher will provide instructions for teachers as needed).
2. Report cards will be issued to homeroom teachers on the day cards are to be handed out.

Incomplete grades should only be assigned when a student has been absent just prior to the close of grades and has not had an opportunity to make up missed work. Teachers must submit a grade within two weeks of the close of grades.

### **Progress Reports**

*Outlines of grading procedures and classroom rules and expectations need to be provided to students and their parents. Parents must be notified when students fail to meet expectations. **Progress Report or Report Card time should not be the first notification that parents receive when problems exist.***

A formal progress report will be completed using Infinite Campus on each student midway through each trimester. **However, teachers should communicate with parents on a regular basis regarding concerns with a student's performance. If a student is in danger of receiving a failing grade, the teacher must communicate this directly to the parent/guardian.** Please document your contact with the parent and send this information to guidance to be kept as a record. **You should consult with support staff members (counselor, social worker, learning strategist, administration) and the student's parents to develop a plan for student success.** Notification of parents as early as possible is recommended and appreciated.

### **Middle School Homework Policy**

The Portland Public School Committee recognizes the value of meaningful homework in fostering academic achievement, good study habits, and positive school-community relations.

The Portland School Department defines homework broadly as those activities which, provide the opportunity for practice or extension of material which has been previously taught in school, and are helpful in informing parents as to what areas of the curriculum are currently under study.

The assignment of homework to students at each grade level shall be guided by the uniform administrative policy specifying frequency and amount at each grade level.

On recommendation of the teacher or parent, the school principal may grant exceptions to this policy for individual students as needed. Homework assignments in the middle schools will be planned within the Houses in order to define the total amount of homework per night. In general, average time allocated per grade will be:

- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade, 1 hour, 4 times per week.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade, 1 hour and 15 minutes, 4 times per week.
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, 1 ½ hours, 4 times per week.

Long-term assignments, such as book reports, notebooks, research papers, special course projects, and electives may at times add to these limits. These projects should also be planned by and with the House. It is imperative that House teachers communicate with each other and with related arts teachers to determine the total amount of homework

being assigned. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for reinforcement and evaluation, not to over burden students. Our aim to develop responsible work habits must be tempered by a sense of reasonableness.

### **School and Student Management Issues**

#### **Accident-Injuries**

Teachers are to immediately report any injury occurring to a student to the office and nurse. Do not move the injured person without authorization from administration if there is any possibility of a serious injury. **A student accident report must be filled out completely (at the time of the accident) and sent immediately to the office.** The student accident report is then filed at Portland Public School Central Office. The office staff has updated forms and will assist you with this process.

#### **Activity Sponsors and Coaches**

Any group holding an after-school activity must be under supervision of a faculty advisor. For example: If a group sponsors a dance, at least one faculty member (advisor) must be present while decorations are being prepared or installed, and while decorations are being disassembled after the dance. **Activity sponsors and coaches are responsible for students after the activity until they have left school property.** (This includes athletic practices and games.)

Attendance should be taken at the beginning of each session. Absent students should be noted reported to the co-curricular director and/or main office.

#### **Book Distribution**

- ♦ **All books must be stamped and include a room number and a book number before issuing.** A book inventory is to be completed before any books are issued. All books should be listed. This includes dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc. Students are required to cover all textbooks. Teachers and students must initial the form when books are issued and returned. Please do a mid-year check to insure that all students have the correct books. The student will pay for lost textbooks.

***Several textbooks purchased during the last couple of years seem to be missing. With the cost of texts rising (\$60 and more), we need to inventory texts. Please complete the forms for inventory and also for issuing of texts. Money collected for lost books will go directly to the replacement of that subject. Teachers need to maintain accurate and up to date records of textbooks issued to students.***

*Texts will not be replaced which have been lost without record of the book being lost.*

### **Coverage of Classes:**

It is difficult to provide coverage for classes. Please avoid scheduling appointments during the school day. In cases of emergency, we will do our best to help seek coverage. **When a staff member is going to be out for more than one class period, it will be necessary for that person to submit a request for a half day absence.** Exceptions need to be approved by the Principal or Assistant Principal. Please sign out in the office and sign in upon your return.

### **Dances**

Planning Procedures - In order to have a well-organized and successful dance, certain procedures must be followed. A dance planning procedure form is available in the office and must be completed before the dance will be approved by administration.

**Homeroom teachers must fill out the sign up form with the student's full name and phone number. Please do not have the students write their own names/numbers.**

**Dance Rules- Dance rules will be reviewed and revised throughout the school year and distributed to Homeroom teachers. See Student Handbooks for further information.**

Dance Sponsors are responsible for announcements and lining up and assigning chaperones with duties. Dance sponsors must be present for the entire dance and stay until the last student has left the property.

### **Duties of Chaperones**

1. To monitor student behavior.
2. To check on students use or possession of harmful substances or other unauthorized items and take appropriate action.
3. To see that students do not leave the building during a dance without the specific permission of the advisor or administrator.
4. To prevent admission to any unauthorized persons.
5. To call parents of students whose names are listed but don't show up to the dance.

### **Desks and Tables**

Please watch carefully for any marking of desks and tables. Teachers in charge of classes and those in charge of the library are responsible for the proper care of school furniture.

### **Dismissals**

1. All dismissals from school will be made through the office only. All requests for dismissal must be brought to the office in the morning. ***Only those listed on the student's emergency form are allowed to dismiss any student.***
2. Daily dismissals will be noted on the attendance at the time of dismissal.
3. If a student needs to be dismissed for sickness, she/he must report to the nurse's office with a pass. The student must see the nurse and the nurse will call home if warranted. Please do not have a sick student call home if they have not seen the nurse.

### **Emergency Drill Regulations**

Emergency drills. Some drills will be announced in advance and others will be unannounced. It is extremely important that each individual in the building understands the need for strict adherence to the rules for an emergency drill. Each staff member, regardless of what she/he is doing at the time, is expected to participate in all emergency drills. You are responsible for following and posting the emergency drill plan for your classroom.

1. The emergency signal is a continuous ringing of the bell throughout the building accompanied by a siren sound.
2. All students and teachers should learn the location of the nearest exit for all rooms used.
3. Students should move rapidly, with no running or talking.
4. The first students to arrive at the outside doors should hold them open until all school personnel have passed through.
5. Move away from the building a safe distance and wait for the all clear signal before returning to the building. (All clear is when a long bell is rung and then stops ringing.)
6. **Bring class lists and take attendance outside. We need to make sure every student is accounted for.**

### **Faculty Meetings**

Faculty meetings will be scheduled for the **first Wednesday of each month**. By contract, teachers are required to attend faculty meetings unless previous arrangements have been made with the principal. ***Please avoid scheduling other commitments during these times.*** Faculty meetings will begin at 1:40 in the library.

### **Field Trip Policy**

In general, our field trips serve to enhance our student's understanding, skills and attitudes in relation to their established learning programs. The Portland School Committee has developed the following policy for field trips and excursions.

"The School Committee approves the continuance of such trips under regulations established by the Superintendent and reported to the School Committee. **The principal will approve all field trips, including walking field trips, in advance, and in addition, the Superintendent will approve out-of-state or overnight field trips in advance.** Field trips shall be coordinated with the goals and objectives of the curriculum and there shall be appropriate preparation and follow up activities."

Teachers should obtain a copy of our field trip preliminary planning and follow up procedure forms **from the office.** (Form is also included in your packet). Teachers must follow these procedures and the current guidelines established by the Leaders Council.

### **Fund Raising**

The principal must approve all fund raising projects before any orders are placed. There are forms in the office to be filled out.

### **Guest Speakers**

All guest speakers are to be cleared through the principal or assistant principal.

### **Hall Passes**

Every classroom needs to maintain sign out logs in a prominent place. Students are required to sign out and back in. Name (first and last), destination, and time must be legible. **Students will carry a hall pass indicating the room they are from and the destination.** Passes do not need to be signed by a teacher. If anyone has an issue with a student, he/she should contact the sending teacher immediately. A pass from the teacher should always be given to student going to the Library.

### **Inappropriate Language**

*As a staff we agreed to address any inappropriate language by students. It should go without saying that all staff members should model appropriate tones and language.*

### **In-School Suspension**

In addition to the traditional school suspension process, we have an In-School Suspension program. A student who has violated a school rule will meet with the principal or assistant principal. If, during the course of the meeting, the administrator feels the student qualifies, the student may be assigned to the In-School program. Parents will be notified when a student is to participate in the ISS program.

During the time assigned to ISS, the student will remain in a room with the ISS teacher and will work on academic assignments given by the student's classroom teachers. **The student assigned to ISS is ineligible for participation in all athletic and extracurricular activities.** In essence, the ISS program isolates the offender yet provides a time and place for the student to proceed with his/her regular academic program. **House teachers must provide the monitor with student work for the day.**

### **Late Bus Passes:**

It is the responsibility of the teacher keeping a student after school to provide a late bus pass. **NO** passes should be given to students for non-sponsored school activities. **Students must be under the direct supervision of a teacher/coach for the entire time up until 3:25pm in order to receive a late bus pass. The office will NOT give out late bus passes.**

**Please keep all students in classrooms until the arrival of the late bus has been announced.**

### **Master Calendar**

Any special event must be cleared through the office and the date put on the master calendar in the main office once approved. Before scheduling events, check the master calendar in the office. (This includes dances, testing, special programs, field trips, etc.) Activities should be planned and forms submitted at least one month in advance. ***The use of the Cafeteria or other shared spaces will also need to be listed on the master calendar.***

### **Monies**

The Administrative Secretary will deposit all monies collected. **All deposits must be counted before it is turned into the office.** All bills must be paid by check from the school activity checking account.

**Please complete and sign the appropriate Deposit or Check Request Form before turning money in for deposit.**

### Newsletter

Regularly during the school year we distribute a newsletter to parents. Teachers will submit information. Newsletter items and Student of the Month information must be in the main office on or before the article due dates.

Each house will send home/email to parents the WIPs (Week in Progress) with weekly house notes and school happenings to keep parents informed on a regular basis.

### Office Detention

Students may be assigned to office after-school detention by the administration for unusual classroom situations, school-rule infractions, etc. **Staff members are requested to be responsible for holding detention for minor infractions.**

Discipline problems, which cannot be resolved, should be referred to the administration, **but only as a last resort**. Complete the current PBIS Discipline Referral Sheet and give to the assistant principal. **Contact the parent on the day of the referral and make a note of the communication on the referral sheet.** Administration is available to support you in developing appropriate practices to address student behavioral concerns. Please feel free to seek assistance.

**The responsibility for discipline within the building rests with the entire staff.**

### Parents and Visitors

**All Parents, Visitors, and Central Office Personnel must sign in and obtain a visitor badge/sticker at the main office before entering any classroom. No student visitors are allowed during school hours.**

### Personal Days

Per contract, “recognizing that sensitive personal or family matters” teachers may apply for personal days, which shall not be used for “vacation-like activities”. They are for matters that “cannot be handled outside of work time”. Personal days may not be taken the day before or after a holiday with the exception of approved discretionary days. Requests cannot be made more than 30 days in advance and must be done at least 7 days in advance. Please see your contract for more details.

### Phone Calls (Students)

Students are to ask permission to use the classroom phone and be supervised by an adult. If

**there is an emergency, the student should either use the classroom phone (assisted by the teacher) or be sent to the Counselors’ Office.**

### Phone Calls (Teachers)

All long distance phone calls (in or out of state) should be school related and must be recorded in the office. To make any long distance calls, please ask for assistance in the office. Directory Assistance calls are **not** permitted. No phone call will be transferred to the classroom, unless it is a family emergency. If you are expecting a call, please notify the front office.

**Personal cell phone use should be done during non-instructional time.**

### Planning Period

Teachers are expected to use planning time for conferences (faculty, parent, and student), academic planning, checking schoolwork, curriculum development and/or fulfilling administrative responsibilities.

*Teachers are permitted to leave the building during any scheduled duty-free lunch period provided they sign out first. Teachers shall have similar rights under the same conditions with respect to planning periods, but only in the event of emergency, personal business or necessary school related business. When teachers wish to leave the school premises during the school day, they must fill in the sign-out book in the office indicating the date, time of departure, time of return, destination and signature. If a staff member needs to leave for the remainder of the day, that person must receive approval from the principal.*

### Protection of Personal Property

At no time should money, keys, or other valuables be left in the teacher’s unlocked room or desk. The office staff will lock all valuables in the office safe. Teachers should not encourage students to bring valuable equipment from home. There is no liability insurance.

### Purchase Orders

All purchases and purchase orders need to have **prior approval by the principal**. No teacher will be reimbursed for any supplies or books, which are purchased without prior approval. Please see the Administrative Secretary with any questions. *You can only use the tax-exempt number when purchasing with a school check. Tax cannot be reimbursed.*

### **Student Activity Awards**

At the end of the school year students will be presented awards based on an accumulation of points for academic success, effort, and participation.

Activity advisors, coaches, and supervisors are responsible for providing rosters of the participating students to the office upon completion of the activity. If you have any questions, please see Phil Darasz.

### **Student Attendance**

Attendance is taken during Homeroom, as well as for each class during the day by teacher (not student).

***The teacher should read the names of those students marked absent to double check for accuracy.***

***Attendance records are legal documents. It is imperative that homeroom teachers keep accurate attendance.*** Homeroom absences are reported on Infinite Campus during homeroom. A list of absentees is emailed daily for staff reference.

**Teachers are to take attendance each period and immediately report any errors on the absence list to the office.** When a student leaves school early or comes to school late, he/she must report to the office.

If a parent has not called to report the absence, a student must present a note from a parent/guardian to the office secretary. All notes are to be sent to the main office daily to be kept on file for future references. If a student does not bring a note from home following an absence, the absence is considered unexcused. You should notify the office if you know the student will be away on vacation.

All teachers are responsible for checking, each period, their individual class attendance against the daily attendance bulletin issued by the office.

(Criteria for excused/unexcused absences/tardies can be found in the student handbook.)

### **Student Discipline**

We have worked as a school community to examine our discipline practices and policies to ensure that we provide the best programs possible to our students. Our goal is to support the development of Houses, as they identify strategies and practices to address fundamental discipline concerns. Some of the options we employ include conferencing with students, meeting with parents, regular phone calls to parents, parents visiting classrooms and student contracting. PBIS is the process staff has agreed to follow. It is important that we are committed and follow the process for consistency.

***Classroom teachers are expected to handle the vast majority of discipline situations. Major disruptions may warrant removal from class. Teams may use other classrooms to accommodate this. If a student needs to be sent out of class, a form needs to be sent. Students should not be sent to the hallway to sit unsupervised. Classroom teachers must contact parents when students are removed. Discipline within the classroom is the responsibility of the classroom teachers and should be handled by them as much as possible.*** Parents should always be contacted by the teacher if there are discipline issues.

All staff should feel free to address any behavioral issues with any student at any time. When appropriate, House teachers should be notified of the situation.

**Parents should receive written notification of the discipline practices for your House at or before Open House.** In general, parent contact in resolving behavior issues is critical especially if you believe that the misbehavior may be detracting from the student's learning. ***Consistent positive expectations*** (PBIS) of students in the classroom, coupled with a purposeful well-planned learning environment, eliminates most disciplinary issue. Teachers may choose to keep students after school to resolve conflicts or behavior concerns. As professionals, teachers are responsible for communicating with students and parents regarding discipline issues. **Teacher make-up or detention takes priority over all extra curricular activities.**

### **Student Discipline (Aggressive Behavior)**

**If a student or students are physically aggressive, the teacher in charge should indicate to the student(s) that the teacher is contacting the office and that the student(s) needs to cease their aggressive behavior. The teacher in charge should either call or send for help. Initial assistance should come from another staff member in close proximity, if possible. The office should be notified as soon as possible.**

***Office Response:*** The secretary receiving the call will alert an administrator or designee to respond to the location. Administrators in the building will be accessible by cell phone. The secretary should relay as much pertinent information as necessary for appropriate response.

### Student Make-Up

A teacher from each house must be available each afternoon after school, with the exception of Wednesday, for student make-up time. Please submit to the office your schedule at the start of each trimester. Office personnel should be made aware of any changes to the schedule.

### Substitute Teacher - How to plan for

Substitute teachers are usually employed for faculty members who are to be absent one half day or more.

Notice should be given to the Administrative Secretary as soon as possible, but no later than 5:30 a.m. on the day of the absence. *Please inform her of the reason for your absence, the date(s) and where substitute information is kept or how it will be delivered. Teachers need to submit a set of emergency substitute plans that cover a minimum of three days and are curriculum based. These will be kept in the classroom.*

The following preparations for a substitute are expected:

1. Furnish a written plan that you wish to have followed.
2. Name the textbooks in use, giving the author, pages, etc.
3. Be sure to leave a current seating chart in the center desk drawer. **This is a must.** It would be very helpful to have a fixed seating arrangement to start and end each period. On this, indicate at least two students who will be helpful with class details.
4. Designate a neighboring teacher who might assist the substitute if necessary.
5. If any of your classes might present special problems, please feel free to inform the office.
6. **Clearly identify any additional duties** or responsibilities you have each day. An example might be cafeteria or **hall**/bus duty.
7. If you are going to be absent for an extended period, try to get in touch with your substitute by letter or telephone.
8. Please make arrangements with staff for students who may have difficulty with a sub.

**Your plan book or lesson plans, seating charts, passes, and attendance slips must be available for the substitute.**

**Remember:** By laying groundwork of cooperation, courtesy and good citizenship with your students and by leaving the best possible help for the substitute, you will make the day easier for everyone. Teachers

should report any problems relating to a particular substitute to the administration.

### Supervising Students

Teachers are responsible for student conduct in the halls and are to station themselves in the doorways of their rooms during the passing of classes. Teachers should assist with corridor traffic immediately before and after school as well. Students should never be left alone in a classroom.

### Supplies

All supplies must be ordered through the House leader. WB Mason order forms, and many catalogues are available in the office. Please allow two-three weeks from the time of order to receipt of goods. *Upon receipt of your goods, please submit all invoices and/or packing slips to the Administrative Secretary so she may keep your account up to date.*

### Suspected Child Abuse

- 1 Staff member assesses possible child abuse (err in favor of child).
- 2 Principal or designee receives verbal report.
- 3 Principal or designee immediately reports by telephone to State of Maine Department of Human Services. Principal or designee may use his/her discretion to notify the parents of the report.
- 4 Principal or designee follows-up verbal report to DHS with private written report to Superintendent, all within 48 hours of verbal report.
- 5 Superintendent maintains file and monitors multiple referrals and brings these to the attention of DHS.
- 6 DHS informs principal or designee in writing when investigation is conducted or invalid case is closed.
- 7 Principal or designee notifies initiator of the report:
  - a) When investigation is being conducted.
  - b) When case is closed as an invalid referral.
- 8 All staff, through the principal or designee, will cooperate with DHS as to a treatment plan.

**Notes:** School personnel will provide pertinent information and personal observations when requested. A DHS protective worker may interview the child with or without parental permission. The principal will structure this interview. **This policy is to be distributed to all personnel and reviewed annually.**

### **Tardy/Admits**

1. If a teacher meets with or works with a student so that a student is late for the next class, that teacher must write an admit slip for that student. If a student does not have a valid admit slip, he/she will be considered tardy (unexcused). **In either case, please admit all students to class. Do not send any students to the office for an admit slip.** House/teams will address students who are consistently late to class.
2. Students who are tardy to school must report to the office to obtain an admittance slip before reporting to class.

### **Teachers Hours**

*As stated in the PEA contract, the school day for teachers will begin 15 minutes before the start of the student day. All teachers need to be on duty in their classroom/doorway by that time.* Teachers should inform students of their policy for after school assistance. Structured plans will enable students to access additional support when needed. **Teachers are expected to be in their classrooms whenever students are scheduled to be there.** An accident while the teacher is gone from the room may result in a teacher liability claim.

### **Teacher Mailboxes**

Visit your mailbox every morning as you come in and every afternoon before you leave. **Only messages of an emergency nature will be delivered to you.** All others will be placed in your mailbox.